

Report for:	<b>Shadow Executive</b>
Meeting Date:	<b>10th March 2020</b>

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Emergency Plan</b>
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<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>That the Emergency Plan for Buckinghamshire Council is considered and agreed.</b>
Corporate Implications:	This plan has been developed following the approval of the Civil Contingencies Policy by the Shadow Executive and is a key requirement of the Structural Changes Order. The plan sets out the command and control procedures for responding in the event of a major incident.

## 1. Purpose of Report

The Shadow Authority is required to prepare, approve and publish certain emergency and civil contingency plans before Vesting Day.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019, the Shadow Executive agreed the Civil Contingencies Policy which defined the overall approach and direction of travel for dealing with emergency planning and business continuity.

This report relates to the production of the Buckinghamshire Council Emergency Plan and defines the main responsibilities and roles for the response at the local level.

## 2. Content of Report

The Emergency Plan is a generic response plan required by Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Category 1 responders are those organisations at the core of emergency response (e.g. emergency services, local authorities, NHS bodies)

It is also a requirement of the Structural Changes Order for Buckinghamshire to produce such a plan.

The aim of the emergency plan is to define 'the command, control, coordination and communication' arrangements of the Council in the event of an emergency response.

It has been written collaboratively with the emergency planning specialists from each of the existing local authorities.

The objectives of the plan are:

- To link the Emergency Plan with the emergency response arrangements of the former Councils in order to facilitate an effective response with the Council structure that exists on Vesting Day.
- To detail the response roles of key Council responders.
- To define the mechanism for activating the Emergency Plan and the response arrangements.
- To outline the command and control arrangements that will be adopted by the Council for an emergency response.
- To describe how the Council's emergency response and recovery processes will be activated.
- To provide a source of information and reference to those with key roles in the emergency response of the Council.

It has been written in such a way as to remain consistent with national guidance and the multi-agency plans of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF) and other organisations. Local Resilience Forums bring together Category 1 and 2 responders within a local police area for the purpose of cooperation in fulfilling their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act. There are also a number of Local Resilience sub-groups that cover specific subjects such as severe weather and flooding. These take relevant experts from across the agencies and ensure a combined and informed approach to each topic.

Therefore, the emergency plan does not stand alone but should be used in conjunction with such other relevant multi and single-agency plans and procedures during an incident.

The plan also contains a summary of the different levels of incident response with examples of the type of activities involved in each. These are: Operational ('Bronze'), Tactical ('Silver') and Strategic ('Gold'). These are also linked with the multi-agency co-ordinating groups that the Council may be required to attend as part of a larger response involving a number of category 1 responders.

The principal concerns of the local authority in the early stages of an emergency include support for the emergency services, support and care for the local and wider community and co-ordination of the response by organisations other than the emergency responders, e.g. the voluntary sector. As time goes on, and the emphasis switches to recovery and the return to the new normality, the local authority will take the lead role in coordinating the multi-agency management of impacts on local people, the economy, environment and infrastructure.

When a council responds to a major emergency, Members also have a central part to play in providing visible leadership and reassurance to local people, as well as supporting and enabling council officers who are involved in any response effort (Member Role card can be found in appendix 10).



Members will also have the opportunity to attend a training session on Emergency Management in June / July 2020 - Further details will be provided in due course. Follow up training opportunities will also be provided throughout the year.

Other key council staff who have volunteer roles and responsibilities such as rest centre managers and liaison officers to support this plan are already being trained and exercised. This has included the development of standardised training across each of the existing councils and also shared delivery allowing staff volunteers to mix and get to know each other.

Corporate and Service Directors will be receiving further information, detailed contact lists and the required training in March 2020.

Moving forward it will also be important for the new council to ensure a continuing supply of volunteers who, once trained, are happy to undertake a supporting role in the event of responding to a major emergency. This becomes even more important where the Council is required to respond to an extended event.

Stakeholders will be given access to the plan through ResilienceDirect (a secure government portal), in other cases it will be sent electronically to those in the distribution list.

In addition, when the civil contingencies policy was agreed by Members, it was suggested that Officers may wish to consider that the appropriate levels of emergency signage and high-visibility clothing were available to respond effectively. This has now been completed with appropriate equipment is now in place.

The Emergency Plan is a key document in ensuring the new council is ready to respond, by setting the appropriate levels of Command, Control and Co-ordination. As the Council develops, the plan will be further updated to reflect the organisational or operational changes.

### **3. Financial Implications**

The plan itself contains no new financial implications or requirements.

The local authority has a responsibility to deal with emergencies. Depending on the scale and nature of the emergency, the government may make grants available in respect of some expenses

### **4. Legal Implications**

Regulation 11 of the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No.2) Regulations 2008 requires the new council to have in place the following 4 statutory plans in relation to emergency planning:

- Emergency and business continuity plans under Section 2(1) (c) and (d) of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Off-site emergency plans under Regulation 10 of the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999 [Replaced by 2015 Regulations] – Only if a relevant site within the Council's area.
- Off-site emergency plans under Regulation 9 of the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001 - Only if a relevant site within the Council's area.

- The plan prepared under Regulation 25 of the Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996 (emergency plans in case of major accidents)

The principal legislation governing civil contingencies work is the CCA and associated statutory guidance. Under section 2 of the CCA Councils have a duty to assess, plan and advise on the risk of an emergency occurring, the effect on their functions, how to prevent, reduce and mitigate the effects of emergencies and to publish all or appropriate parts of those emergency and business continuity plans.

## 5. Other Key Risks

There are no identified key risks relating to adoption of this plan, however for the plan to be effective operationally, those undertaking voluntary roles that have transitioned to the new Buckinghamshire Council will continue to be required. It is therefore important that their significance in supporting an emergency response continues to be recognised.

## 6. Dependencies

There are no key dependencies associated with the recommendation or the adoption of this plan.

## 7. Consultation

The plan is predominantly an 'operational document' and will be used as the starting point for continued training of those staff involved in an emergency response. The Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum has also been made aware of the forthcoming changes to the structure of local government in Buckinghamshire and will be alerted to the key operational changes. These will also be communicated via ResilienceDirect.

## 8. Communications Plan

The plan will be communicated to both internal and external stakeholders. The level of detail and information provided will reflect the role and/or level of interest in the plan.

## 9. Equalities Implications

No specific equality implications for this plan.

## 10. Data Implications

There are no changes to the nature, scope, context or purposes of data used in connection with emergency planning.

## 11. Next Steps

If the Shadow Executive is minded to agree the emergency plan, the civil contingencies workstream will continue to develop associated operational plans and deliver the scheduled training sessions.

<b>Background Papers</b>	None
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