

For General Release

REPORT TO:	Cabinet 23 March 2020
SUBJECT:	Emergency Preparedness (Resilience) at Croydon Council
LEAD OFFICER:	Shifa Mustafa, Executive Director Place Sarah Hayward, Director Violence Reduction Unit
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Tony Newman, Leader of the Council Councillor Hamida Ali, Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon, Communities and Resilience.
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/ AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON Corporate Plan for Croydon 2018-2022 <i>Our outcomes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone feels safer in their street, neighbourhood and home <i>Our Council</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operating Model - a system wide approach• The importance of partnership	
FINANCIAL IMPACT This report does not propose any changes nor request amendments to the existing budget strategy in relation to Resilience.	
FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: Not a key decision	

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to

- 1.1 To note the Council's established and robust resilience arrangements, and the continued commitment to continuous improvement of the arrangements.
- 1.2 Elected Members are encouraged to attend the locally delivered London Councils Civil Resilience Training for Councillors.
- 1.3 To note that local authority resilience-related Grenfell Tower Fire Inquiry Phase One Report recommendations will be included in the resilience team's work programme and overseen but the corporate Resilience Board.

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| 1.4 | Acknowledge the on-going pandemic preparedness activity with internal stakeholders and local partners. |
| 1.5 | To note the criticality of positive partnership relationships and importance of shared commitment to the development of local civil emergency preparedness, response and recovery. |

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 London local authorities have a central role to play in responding to major emergencies and other significant crises primarily within their borough boundary, but also across the capital. When such events happen, people expect councils to respond swiftly and effectively alongside other organisations, whilst continuing to deliver essential 'business-as-usual' services.
- 2.2 This report is to provide an overview of the resilience arrangements at Croydon Council whilst highlighting recent activity and current good practice in relation to:
- London local authority resilience structures and regional assurance protocol
 - Croydon Council's overarching emergency response plan
 - Elected Member civil emergency guidance and future training opportunities
 - Regional and local approach to the Grenfell Tower Fire Inquiry Phase One report local authority resilience recommendations.
 - The Council's and Croydon Resilience Forum's preparedness and approach to the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

3. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (RESILIENCE) IN CROYDON

Civil Contingencies Act and principles of emergency preparedness at Croydon Council

- 3.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act, local authorities have a responsibility to plan for, and respond to, major incidents. This includes the coordination of information sharing (internally and with partners) as well as response and recovery activities. Croydon Council's responsibility not only lies with on-borough incidents, but those within London and the UK that may have an impact on our staff and community.
- 3.2 The role of a local authority in an emergency or major incident includes:
- Supporting the emergency services and other organisations involved in the response;
 - Providing support and care for the local and wider community; and
 - Working with the local community to ensure recovery and restoration of normality as soon as possible.
- 3.3 Services the local authority will provide include the provision of:
- Assistance in the evacuation of the affected population;
 - Engineering services and structural advice;
 - Rest Centres for evacuated residents;

- Information to those affected by the incident;
- Temporary accommodation;
- Humanitarian Assistance activities such as welfare and psychosocial support;
- Counselling to survivors and council employees; and
- Short, medium, and long term recovery activities such as memorials, commemorations, regeneration.

3.4 The council works to the emergency management cycle, indicated in the diagram below, which comprises four main phases:

1. Preparation (plan development, training, and exercising);
2. Response (reducing an immediate risk or stopping things getting worse);
3. Recovery (a longer-term activity of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community); and
4. Mitigation (learning lessons, and ongoing work to build resilience and reduce vulnerability).



Figure 1 - Emergency management cycle

3.5 The Corporate Resilience Team coordinates the activities in this area. The team is substantively 4 staff (1 manager, 3 officers), however, since August 2019 one officer has been on secondment. The team has recently transferred from risk, insurance and corporate programme service in Resources to the violence reduction network in Place.

3.6 The team's responsibilities includes the maintenance of the council's generic Corporate Emergency Response Plan which describes the way the organisation responds to emergencies. This plan outlines the council's emergency command and control structure and links to other documented capabilities and emergency plans that the Corporate Resilience Team maintain, such as the Fuel Disruption Plan, Emergency Centres Plan, and the Severe Weather Plan. Emergency plans are reviewed and updated on a 3-year basis, or sooner if they are activated. The Corporate Emergency Response Plan has been recently reviewed and can be found in Appendix 1.

3.7 If required in the response to an incident, the Chief Executive (or her deputy), known as Council Gold, will be the representative for the Council in multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) meetings. A full council incident command

and control chart can be found on page 11 of the Corporate Emergency Response Plan in Appendix 1.

- 3.8 Councillor Hamida Ali was appointed in 2018 as a portfolio holder specifically for Resilience who also maintains an oversight of the resilience team activities and organisational resilience. The [February Scrutiny report](#) provides further operational detail of the team's operational activities over the past 12 months.
- 3.9 A corporate resilience board (CRB) was introduced by the chief executive in 2019, to maintain oversight of the corporate resilience programme and assist in setting the priorities for the resilience team and organisation. The board meets bi-monthly and is chaired by the chief executive.

Wider emergency preparedness (across Croydon and London)

- 3.10 As a category one responder, Croydon Council works within the emergency response frameworks of JESIP ([Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme](#)), LESLP ([London Emergency Services Liaison Panel Major Incident Manual](#)) and the [London Resilience Strategic Coordination Protocol](#) (SCP).
- 3.11 Locally, the Croydon Resilience Forum (CRF) is a statutory borough forum with the aim to co-ordinate, develop and implement an integrated approach to emergency response and management for the borough of Croydon. Its membership is varied and includes emergency planning officers/ representatives from a number of sectors with a role in emergency preparedness and response, including local authority, health, police, fire, voluntary, utility, environment, community, business, faith, and transport. CRF members are required to keep their organisations informed of actions and developments agreed in the meetings and associated training and exercises. The CRF is chaired by the council's resilience manager with secretariat provided by the resilience officers. Regular reports of CRF activity are made to the Croydon Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 3.12 The Corporate Resilience Team work closely within the London Resilience network in support of the London Local Authority Gold (LLAG) arrangements for emergency planning and response within London.
- 3.13 Local Authorities, as part of the London Resilience Partnership and Forum are coordinated by the Local Authority Panel (LAP), a partnership sub-group. A further structure chart with annotation from the Local Authority Panel Business Plan is attached in background paper 4. A significant part of Croydon Council's contribution to building London's collective resilience arrangements is the Chief Executive chairing the LAP-implementation group and being a central member of the Local Authority Panel (LAP).
- 3.14 A major part of the Local Authority Panel (LAP) business plan has been the development and introduction of the Resilience Standards for London (RSL) which were introduced in Autumn 2019. The aim of the standards is to support better delivery of the regional local authority collective resilience programme and assess capability and organisational resilience levels. RSL replaced the previous London assurance programme Minimum Standards for London.

- 3.15 A self-assessment of the organisation's resilience in alignment to the RSL was undertaken in December/ January. It was a great tool for identifying the organisation's strengths as well as areas for improvement in regard to resilience. Outcomes will be informing the resilience board's priorities for 2020 and 2021. Part of the Local Authority Panel (LAP) assurance framework in regard to the RSLs is to undergo a Local Government Association (LGA) resilience audit every 4 years. It is not known when Croydon Council will undergo their LGA audit, however, the RSL, resilience work programme and overall commitment to resilience is good preparation for when it is scheduled. A summary of the self-assessment against the new standards is included as Appendix 2.
- 3.16 The Local Authority Panel (LAP) business plan and Resilience Standards for London (RSL) (background paper 5) content largely reflects the emergency planning 'Standardisation' programme, which has involved the standardising of emergency response protocols and procedures throughout all local authorities to raise the bar of incident response and recovery as well as enabling better cross-working and mutual aid provision during large incidents. The standardisation concept first started to be developed in 2015 following the Croydon floods with proof of concept demonstrated during the large London response exercise, 'Unified Response', in 2016 and then particularly in the response to the Grenfell Tower Fire and Chalcots Camden evacuation in 2017. Croydon's adoption of standardisation is reflected in a number of documents in procedures such as the Concept of Operations, the introduction of Council Silver role and changes to operational tools such as situation report templates and incident log keeping procedures.
- 3.17 Good organisational resilience and preparedness includes a robust business continuity management programme embedded within organisational culture. Over the last 7 years, the resilience team have persevered with a revised corporate programme to improve the Council's business continuity arrangements. The service arrangements includes heads of service reviewing/ completing their business impact assessment, followed by team managers reviewing/ completing their service business continuity plan.
- 3.18 The organisation achieved its highest ever completion rate of 96% during the annual review of 2019, which took approximately 6 months. The review's success is considered to be due to a very supportive corporate leadership team, persistence of the resilience team and the review taking place annually rather than biennially meaning there isn't a large amount to change making it more palatable for managers to complete. It also demonstrates the improvement in the embedment of business continuity planning as an everyday process which the resilience team have consistently promoted since refreshing the programme in 2013.
- 3.19 Business continuity workshops are being delivered to individual teams by the resilience team throughout 2020. This programme aims to bring teams together to support the validation of their team business continuity plan, raise awareness amongst team members and encourage the identification of gaps or improvements to the plan. The workshops have been very successful thus far and individual feedback forms confirm increased knowledge of business continuity as a result from attending the workshop.

3.20 A focus area for 2020/21, as identified through Resilience Standards for London (RSL) will be business continuity arrangements within the council's procurement, commissioning and contract management procedures. The preparations for the UK's exit from the European Union identified some good practices as well as identified areas for development.

Elected Members' Role in Civil Emergencies

3.21 The concept of standardisation has extended further than officers. It is well known the important role elected Members have in the response to civil emergencies. In response particularly following learning from the London incidents of 2017, a regional project between the Local Authority Panel (LAP) and London Councils resulted in a [Civil Resilience Handbook for London Councillors](#) (background paper 6) being published in 2019. One of the aims of the handbook is to ensure that political Leaders and Ward Councillors understand their clearly defined roles and responsibilities in relation to civil resilience and that the necessary support arrangements are put in place to enable Councillors to fulfil their roles effectively.

3.22 An additional output has been for London Councils to develop training packages aligned to the new guidance specifically for Leaders and elected Members. The Leader and Chief Executive attended the Leader training on 21 February in central London. A local version of the package for all Members will be available to boroughs from April and the resilience team are currently making arrangements to deliver sessions locally with the hope that all Members will be able to attend one of the sessions.

Grenfell Tower fire phase one inquiry recommendations for local authority resilience teams

3.23 Following the publication of the [Grenfell Tower Fire Phase 1 report](#) (background paper 7) on 30 October 2019, a review of the findings was been undertaken by London Resilience Group on behalf of the Local Authority Panel (LAP). The aim being to identify key learning relevant to London local authority resilience arrangements.

3.24 Particular attention was paid to Chapter 30 of the inquiry report, which examined the joint working arrangements in place for Category One responders on the night of the fire, in particular, how and the extent to which they communicated and co-operated with the London Fire Brigade and with each other. Local authorities are a Category One responder.

3.25 As detailed Appendix 3, each Inquiry recommendation relating to local authority resilience arrangements has firstly been assessed at a regional level via the Local Authority Panel (LAP), with an associated action and delivery lead. A number of the actions will first be incorporated via regional working groups such as Standardisation Group and delivered via the new LAP Business Plan. Other actions are for the direct responsibility of boroughs to self-assess.

3.26 All recommendations will be subsequently monitored through the Resilience Standards for London (RSL) assurance process of self-assessments, peer challenges and LGA audits. The resilience team will be making a formal

assessment of the recommendations in relation to Croydon Council and providing this to the Corporate Resilience Board on 27 April 2020.

- 3.27 Prior to the Grenfell Inquiry report, the [Hackitt Report](#) (background paper 8) was published in May 2018 following examination of the building and fire safety regulations and associated enforcement, focussing on multiple occupancy high-rise residential buildings.
- 3.28 Immediately following the Grenfell Tower Fire, Croydon Council were one of the first local authorities to take action in regard to the fire safety systems in its own housing stock. The fire safety and sprinkler installation programme took place throughout 2017 and 2018 as a direct response from learning from the Grenfell Tower Fire, demonstrating how committed the Administration and organisation are to mitigating against similar incidents and keeping our residents safe.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic Preparedness in Croydon

- 3.29 Council officers from resilience and public health have been closely monitoring the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) since first reported in Wuhan, China in January 2020.
- 3.30 Pandemic infectious disease presents a unique scenario in terms of prolonged pressures through a reduced workforce and potentially increased workload for some responders. Organisations are therefore expected to have business continuity plans to ensure that critical services and outputs continue to be delivered throughout a pandemic. Croydon Council annually reviews its business continuity preparedness, and has service reporting mechanisms should this be required to monitor the impact to council service delivery.
- 3.31 Representatives of relevant, key teams within Croydon Council and Croydon Resilience Forum are meeting and conversing on a regular basis to ensure the response is proportionate, and that robust plans are in place for escalation should that be required.
- 3.32 A current situation report regarding the council's response to the virus is included in Appendix 4. A similar summary report was provided to the [Health & Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee](#) (background paper 9) on 10th March.
- 3.33 Pandemic influenza arrangements are well established across the system, and so these planning assumptions have been used as a basis to inform planning until further information is known about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).
- 3.34 The Croydon Council Pandemic Response Plan has been reviewed (March 2020) with the previous version of this plan was tested during Exercise Pandemic in November 2017, evidenced by the post exercise report. The plan is available in Appendix 05.
- 3.35 The Croydon Resilience Forum have reviewed the Multi-Agency Pandemic Response Plan (February 2020), by key stakeholders such as Croydon Health Services and the Clinical Commissioning Group. The previous version of this

plan was tested during Exercise Fever in October 2017, evidenced by the post exercise report. The plan is available in Appendix 06.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 This report does not contain a request for decision. Thought it should be noted that as part of emergency management good practice, engagement and consultation during the preparation and planning phases is imperative. This supports a wide ranging view on response structures and procedures, raises awareness of preparedness activities and increases buy-in with stakeholders.
- 4.2 The corporate resilience team naturally collaborate and seek opinion from a number of stakeholders during plan review. Consultation audiences will differ depending on the plan or procedure that is being reviewed.
- 4.3 Wider consultation is also undertaken amongst the Croydon Resilience Forum when the resilience team/ council lead on the development or review of multi-agency plans. This has been recently undertaken with the multi-agency pandemic response plan review and multi-agency flood response plan review.
- 4.4 It is also standard practice at Croydon Council, following an emergency exercise/ test or response to an incident to conduct debriefs to identify learning, areas for improvement and good practice. This often covers a broader range of stakeholders and perspectives ranging from the very operational to highly strategic.

5 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 5.1 This report does not contain a request for decision. However, an initial report and update on the operational achievements of the resilience team and organisational resilience was presented at Scrutiny on Tuesday 25 February 2020 by Councillor Hamida Ali, [Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon, Communities and Resilience](#) (background paper 11).
- 5.2 In addition to the Scrutiny paper of 25 February, a short general overview of the council's emergency preparedness in respect to Covid-19 (coronavirus) was included in the presentation to Health Scrutiny on Tuesday 10 March 2020 by Rachel Flowers, Director of Public Health. A progression of this report is provided as the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Preparedness in Croydon in Appendix 4.

6 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This report is for noting, and there are no direct financial implications arising from it.

Approved by: Ian Geary, Head of Finance, Resources & Accountancy

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that the report is for noting. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Approved by: Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 8.1 This report does not propose any immediate changes or to the workforce or the HR policies and procedures framework. If any future changes are required there will be separate consultation in line with usual consultation processes.

Approved by: Sue Moorman, Director of Human Resources

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1 There is no change proposed nor key decision required, there are no equalities concerns in relation to this Cabinet paper. However, any future projects initiated from the incident report recommendations will undergo an equalities impact assessment where applicable.

Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Manager

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 10.1 There is no environmental impact arising directly from this report.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 11.1 There is no anticipated crime and disorder impact arising from this report.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 12.1 To acknowledge the current and ongoing work of the Corporate Resilience Team and note Croydon Council's preparedness as per the statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

13. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 13.1 Not applicable.

14. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

No

This paper is for general awareness and not a proposed change. However, any processing of personal data in emergencies is compliant to current government guidance as per the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

14.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

No

This paper is not presenting new or proposing any changes to current arrangements. As this part of the resilience planning process, DPIAs are completed as required and are often done collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders.

Approved by: Stephen Tate, Director Growth, Employment and Regeneration on behalf of Sarah Hayward, Director Violence Reduction Network

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Sarah Hayward, Director Violence Reduction Network

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

1. Croydon Council Corporate Emergency Response Plan February 2020 (Cabinet)
2. RSL Summary report 2019 LB Croydon January 2020
3. Local Authority Panel: Grenfell Tower Fire – Phase 1 Inquiry Recommendations for Local Authorities (Resilience)
4. COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Preparedness in Croydon [to be published closer to time of Cabinet]
5. Croydon Council Pandemic Response Plan v2.0 March 2020 (Cabinet)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme
<https://www.iesip.org.uk/home> [link only]
2. London Emergency Services Liaison Panel Major Incident Procedure Manual
https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/leslp_mi_procedure_manual_2019_version_10.1.pdf [link only]
3. London Resilience Partnership Strategic Coordination Protocol
https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/strategic_coordination_protocol_version_7_3_web.pdf [link only]
4. London Local Authority governance structure January 2020 [provided]
5. Resilience Standards for London (RSL) Final v1.0 June 2019 [provided]

6. London Councils Civil Resilience Handbook for Councillors in London Local Authorities 2019 <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/members-area/civil-resilience-handbook-london-councillors> [link only]
7. Grenfell Inquiry Phase One Report: <https://www.grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk/phase-1-report> [link only]
8. Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety Report (Hackitt Report) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-building-regulations-and-fire-safety-final-report> [link only]
9. [Scrutiny: Health and Social Care Sub-Committee, Emergency Preparedness March 2020 report](#) [link only]
10. [Cabinet Member for Safer Croydon and Communities, Question Time February 2020 report.](#) [link only]
11. [DRAFT] Croydon Resilience Forum Multi-Agency Pandemic Response Plan March 2020 (Cabinet)