

TITLE OF REPORT: Strategic Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework

REPORT OF: Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities & Environment

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's endorsement of the reviewed Strategic Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework.

Background

2. Over the past six months there have been a number of incidents that have changed the national landscape of the Resilience and Emergency Planning portfolio. Acts of mindless terrorism in both London and Manchester have dominated a very changeable and dynamic background that is now very much in the spotlight and recognised as a key national priority. Following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire incident in June 2017, there will be much to review and reflect on especially when the Public Enquiry is concluded.
3. As a result it is an appropriate time to review the Strategic Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework. The key focus for Resilience and Emergency Planning over the last six months has been to review priorities and actions within the Strategic Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework; continue to review planning, response and recovery arrangements whilst intensively training and exercising; continue to work in collaboration with our local and regional partners and communities to respond to incidents and issues.
4. Cabinet originally approved the Resilience Strategy in 2010, with subsequent reviews undertaken in June 2013 and March 2015. Progress has been monitored on a six monthly basis by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee throughout this period.
5. The purpose of the Framework is to determine the future focus for the Council working in collaboration with partners and the community. This will ensure that we continue to have robust arrangements in place to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and major incident situations.
6. The current framework has been updated and includes further information on the Statutory Legislative Requirements and the National Context; the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum; Gateshead Council Emergency Response Arrangements; Training and Exercising; Council Liability; Emergency Response to incidents and pre-planned operations; Local Governance

Arrangements; a Strategic Vision for Resilience and Emergency Planning; Service Key Objectives; the Priorities and Quality Assurance.

7. The framework will be reviewed on an annual basis or as required, taking into account any new and emerging national and local issues. The three main areas of work have identified as:
 - Building resilient and stronger communities
 - Assessing risk
 - Enhancing our partnership arrangements to respond and recover
8. This framework is supported by Service Key Objectives which are part of Gateshead Council's Business Planning process and sets out the specific measures, targets, responsibility and activity necessary to deliver the priorities identified in the framework.
9. The proposed reviewed framework is attached as appendix 2.

Proposal

10. It is proposed that Cabinet endorses the Strategic Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework.

Recommendations

11. Cabinet is asked to endorse the Strategic Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework as set out in appendix 2 to the report.

For the following reasons:

- (i) To ensure compliance with our statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- (ii) To ensure that the Council has robust arrangements in place to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from major incidents and emergency situations.

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Policy Context

1. The reviewed framework is in line with Vision 2030. This is in particular to the 'City of Gateshead' outcome relating to ensuring that Gateshead remains a safe place to live and visit; 'Gateshead Volunteers' outcome encourage more of us to volunteer and contribute to our communities and; 'Sustainable Gateshead' improve how we live, travel and use resources.
2. The framework is in line with the Council Plan 2015-2020 and supports the delivery of all policy objectives within this.

Background

3. Resilience is the ability to anticipate risk, limit impact and recover quickly and effectively from emergencies and disruptive events affecting organisations, businesses, individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities.
4. The national context for Resilience and Emergency Planning has remained quite static over the last 12 months. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory duty on local authorities and other agencies to work together to develop emergency and business continuity plans and arrangements to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.
5. All local authorities are classed as 'Category 1' Responders in the event of an emergency/major incident under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). The Act requires all Category 1 Responders to undertake these wide ranging statutory duties to help to protect the population within their boundaries. The aim of the framework is to support Gateshead Council to meet the duties as identified in the Civic Contingencies Act. These duties include:
 - assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
 - put in place emergency plans
 - put in place business continuity management arrangements – this is undertaken by the Council's Internal Audit and Risk Team in Corporate Resources
 - put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
 - share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination
 - co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency
 - provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (local authorities only)
6. As a result of a very changing landscape and various ongoing changes at a national, regional and local level, it is an appropriate time to review the

Framework which fits the needs of the Council, partners, residents and businesses in Gateshead.

7. Whilst there are effective plans and arrangements already in place to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, the purpose of the framework is to determine the future focus of resilience planning for Gateshead Council. This will be achieved by working in collaboration with partners and the community to ensure that we continue to have robust arrangements in place.
8. To continue to achieve this at a local level the following themes and priorities have been reviewed and specific future actions updated which include:

Building resilient and stronger communities – engaging with businesses, the voluntary sector, partner agencies, communities and individuals to ensure they are better prepared for and able to recover from emergencies. Future actions include:

- Work with partner agencies and local communities to promote community resilience including the pilot of Community Resilience Plans
- Further develop our arrangements for sharing and mapping information about vulnerable people, the use of the Cabinet Office Resilience Direct system, the prioritisation of assistance and identification of support that needs to be provided during and after an incident
- Develop an approach to explore and utilise spontaneous volunteering in an emergency or incident situation
- Continued recruitment and engagement of Community Resilience Wardens across the borough
- Work in partnership with event organisers to promote a consistent approach to ensure compliance with both resilience and the Government's Crowded Places Guidance

Assessing Risk – identifying new hazards and threats that may affect Gateshead implementing measures that may prevent an emergency or incident occurring. Future actions include:

- Continue to identify risks and hazards throughout Gateshead and ensure that any new risks and hazards are mapped, mitigated and communicated
- Review and adapt the criteria used to assess critical services within internal business continuity planning in conjunction with the Audit and Risk Team in Corporate Resources
- Undertake work to understand the implications of an increase in the counter terrorism threat level
- Continue to protect the health of the public in relation to preventing threats arising and the assurance of appropriate responses when things go wrong

Enhancing our partnership arrangements to respond and recover – the effective response and co-ordination of arrangements in the event of an

emergency or incident occurring and achieving a rapid return to normality.
Future actions include:

- Continue to collaborate with council services and multi-agency partner organisations to ensure that any emerging themes and issues can be planned for and responded to
 - Develop and undertake an awareness raising programmes in relation to the response provided to modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation issues, and counter terrorism issues
 - Review our humanitarian assistance arrangements and continue to develop relationships with voluntary organisations and community facilities, utilising the Government's Human Aspects Guidance
 - Continue to develop the use of the Cabinet Office Resilience Direct System as a multi-agency response tool
 - Further develop a coordinated approach to the recovery process following an emergency or incident
9. The framework is supported by service key objectives which are part of Gateshead Council's Business Planning process and sets out the specific measures, targets, responsibility and activity necessary to deliver the priorities identified in the framework.

Consultation

10. Following lessons learned from recent exercising and incidents, the reviewed framework has been reviewed and updated by the Emergency Planning and Resilience Team in consultation with various council groups and services and multi-agency partner organisations.
11. The framework has been submitted to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation in September 2017. Multi-agency partner organisations within the Gateshead Multi-Agency Resilience and Emergency Planning Group (November 2017), Leader's Portfolio (November 2017) and the Communities and Volunteering and Culture, Sport and Leisure Portfolio (November 2007) have also been formally consulted on the contents of the framework.

Implications of Recommended Options

12. Resources:

a) Financial Implications – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that there are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

b) Human Resources Implications – There are no human resources implications from the recommended options.

c) Property Implications - There are no property implications arising directly from the recommended options

18. **Risk Management Implications** - The effective implementation of this framework will mitigate the risk to the achievement of the Council's objectives and legal obligations in the event of an emergency. Failure to implement this strategy effectively could lead not only to a failure to meet statutory responsibilities and Council objectives but could result in deaths, damage to local infrastructure and economy, and potential damage to the Council's reputation.
19. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.
20. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications from the recommended options.
21. **Health Implications** - This framework will ensure that everyone in Gateshead will have access to the necessary information to remain safe and healthy before, during and after an emergency.
22. **Sustainability Implications** - There are no sustainability implications from the recommended options
23. **Human Rights Implications** - The framework is compliant with article 8 the Human Rights Act.
24. **Area and Ward Implications** - This report affects all wards.
25. **Background Information**
 - Civil Contingencies Act (2004)
 - Vision 2030
 - Council Plan 2015-2020