

# Sandwell Council Emergency Plan

In the event of activation turn to [Page 13](#)



## **Chief Executive's Foreword**

Major emergencies disrupt lives and cause significant anxiety. Although rare and unpredictable, the council must respond swiftly and effectively when they occur. While these are low-probability events, the council must be prepared to respond to the best of our abilities.

Meeting public expectations and reassuring our communities requires effective crisis management and thorough preparation. At Sandwell Council, emergency planning is embedded across all service areas, ensuring services can continue under extreme circumstances.

Public confidence in the council is shaped by our ability to respond effectively to incidents. Ensuring our services can function in an emergency requires strong leadership and effective management.

This Emergency Plan is 'owned' by everyone in the council. Managers play a key role in embedding emergency planning within their service areas, ensuring they can fulfil their responsibilities in a crisis.

Effective internal and external collaboration is also essential before an emergency occurs. Clear roles and responsibilities enable a well-coordinated response. While each service, agency, and organisation operates differently, managers must align their objectives to ensure a unified approach.

### **Sandwell Council's emergency management framework:**

- Provides a structured approach for delivering services in a crisis and preparing for emergency responses
- Is simple, flexible, and adaptable to a wide range of circumstances
- Focuses on people rather than prescribing responses for every unforeseen situation
- Recognises that preparation is key to success , with all participants actively involved in developing emergency procedures alongside their response partners.

**Shokat Lal**

*Chief Executive, Sandwell Council*

**Item Record Table**

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## Authorisation

The Resilience Team (RT) is responsible for publishing plans within a hierarchy of similar publications. Readers wishing to quote these plans as reference material in other work should confirm with the RT whether the individual publication and amendment state remains authoritative.

## Distribution

Distribution of plans is managed by the RT, Requests for issue of this publication, or amendments to its distribution should be referred to the RT. All other Sandwell Council Emergency Plans can also be obtained from the RT.

## Amendments

Date of Change	Description of Change	Version
04/1/2012	Initial Plan Created	1.0
03/2018	Layout and content update	2.0
08/12/2021	Full Review	3.0
31/03/2025	<b>Full Review.</b> Addition of Incident Classification, Section 7 Voluntary Sector, Section 8 SMBC Vulnerable people (ASC) and <b>3.5</b> Understanding Risks and Developing a Working Strategy. Restructured Sections 2,3, 4 & 5	4.0

Comments on factual accuracy or proposals for amendment are welcomed by the RT at [emergency\\_planning@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:emergency_planning@sandwell.gov.uk).

To ensure the integrity of this document, holders are requested to inform the Resilience Team, in writing, of any amendments to the information relating to their organisation or authority. All amendments should be addressed to the Resilience Team at the above address.

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## Section 1 Introduction

The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) legislates the local authority to undertake emergency response and recovery planning within the borough of Sandwell. The purpose of this plan is to act as an overarching reference document for those involved in responding to an emergency. Sandwell Council works closely with responding partner organisations including the emergency services to produce plans, train personnel and test emergency procedures. This is to ensure a prompt and effective response to any major emergency or incident.

The principal objectives of an emergency response are to:

- preserve life, property, and the environment.
- reduce to a minimum the harmful effects of a major emergency.
- bring about the return of 'normal life'.

### 1.1 Aim

To provide a framework for the preparation and effective management of the response to major emergencies following the Integrated Emergency Management principles of: **Anticipation, Assessment, Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery.**

### 1.2 Objectives

To achieve the aim, the Emergency Plan will:

- define internal roles and responsibilities.
- detail command and control structures.
- identify activation and escalation procedures.
- provide a summary of incident specific plans.
- integrate with the corporate business continuity management process.

### 1.3 Definition of an Emergency

An emergency is a situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK; and:

- arises with or without warning.
- causes or threatens death, injury or serious disruption to normal life.
- affects more people than can be dealt with under normal conditions.
- requires special mobilisation and organisation of resources.

## 1.4 Definition of a Major Incident

A Major incident is an event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency (JESIP).

### Notes

1. A major incident is beyond the scope of business-as-usual operations, and is likely to involve serious harm, damage, disruption or risk to human life or welfare, essential services, the environment, or national security.
2. A major incident may involve a single-agency response, although it is more likely to require a multi-agency response, which may be in the form of multi-agency support to a lead responder.
3. The severity of the consequences associated with a major incident are likely to constrain or complicate the ability of responders to resource and manage the incident, although a major incident is unlikely to affect all responders equally.
4. The decision to declare a major incident will always be a judgement made in a specific local and operational context, and there are no precise and universal thresholds or triggers. Where LRFs and responders have explored these criteria in the local context and ahead of time, decision makers will be better informed and more confident in making that judgement.

## 1.5 Causes of Emergencies and Incidents

There are many causes that give rise to such situations, categorised as follows:

**Political:** Acts of terrorism or acts of a hostile state, public disorder or civil unrest, hostile protest, and industrial blockade. (e.g. Public Disorder 2011, Manchester Arena Bombing 2017)

**Environmental:** Storms, floods, landslides, hurricanes, snow, drought, earthquake, contamination or pollution of land, water and/or air. (e.g. Flash Floods 2020, Severe Weather 2018)

**Social:** Poisoning or contamination within the food chain, epidemics, and health emergencies. (e.g. COVID19)

**Technological:** Structural damage, industrial or transport accidents, release of toxic or radioactive substances, cyber-attacks (e.g., Grenfell Tower Fire 2017, WannaCry Cyber-attack 2017, Main Pipeline Incident 2023)

## 1.6 Civil Contingencies Act, 2004

The Civil Contingencies Act, and accompanying non-statutory guidance, delivers a single framework for civil protection in the UK. The Act is separated into local arrangements for civil protection (Part 1); and emergency powers (Part 2).



**Part 1** sets out roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at the local level. It also divides local responders into 2 categories, depending on their roles and responsibilities.

Category 1 Responders are organisations at the core of the response to most emergencies (the emergency services, local authorities, NHS bodies) and are subject to the full set of civil protection duties, outlined in the Act:

- risk assessment.
- emergency planning.
- business continuity management arrangements.
- warning and informing the public.
- information sharing between responders.
- co-operation between responders.
- business continuity advice for businesses/voluntary organisations (LA only).

Category 2 Responders are considered ‘co-operating bodies’ (Health and Safety Executive, transport/utility companies); likely to be heavily involved in incidents that affect their own sector and are subject to co-operation and information sharing duties.

**Part 2** of the Act updates the 1920 Emergency Powers Act, allowing for the creation of temporary special legislation (emergency regulations) to help deal with the most serious of emergencies. The use of emergency powers is a last resort; local planning arrangements should take this into consideration as they may only be available in exceptional circumstances.

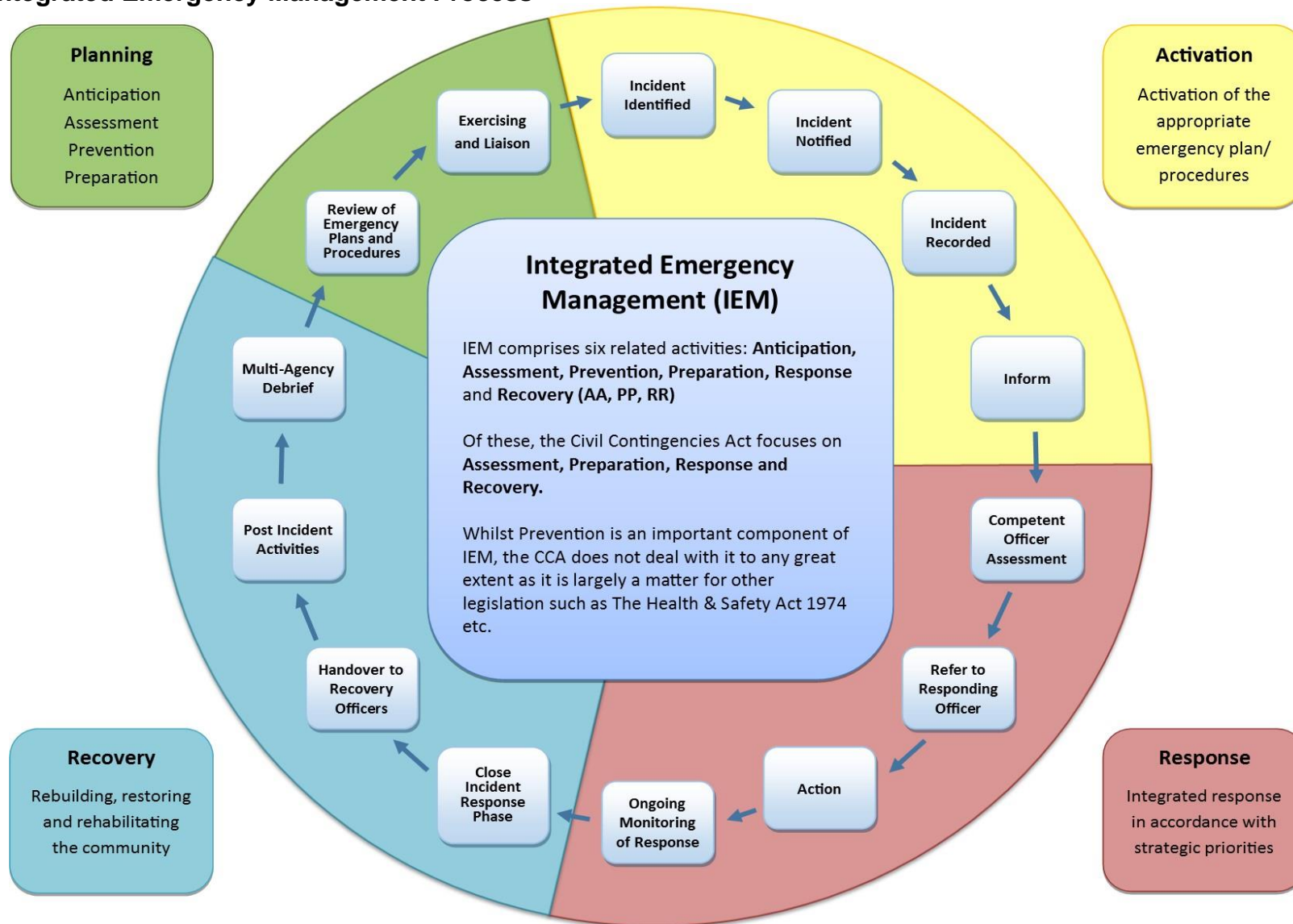
## **1.7 Integrated Emergency Management (IEM)**

The process of resilience nationally, has developed following the principles of Integrated Emergency Management (IEM). The aim of IEM is to develop flexible and adaptable arrangements for preventing and managing emergencies, based on a multi-agency approach and the effective coordination of those agencies. IEM focusses on 6 key activities – **Anticipation, Assessment, Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery** (AA, PP, RR).

Successfully dealing with a major incident requires many service areas and external organisations working together in the most effective manner possible. For such co-operation and collaboration to happen in practice, requires an understanding by all service areas of their role and responsibilities and those of others when faced with a major incident.

To achieve this, an Integrated Emergency Management process has been established to provide the basis for identifying issues, developing ideas and increasing understanding of emergency planning matters. Doing this increases the ability of the council to respond effectively to a major incident.

## 1.8 Integrated Emergency Management Process

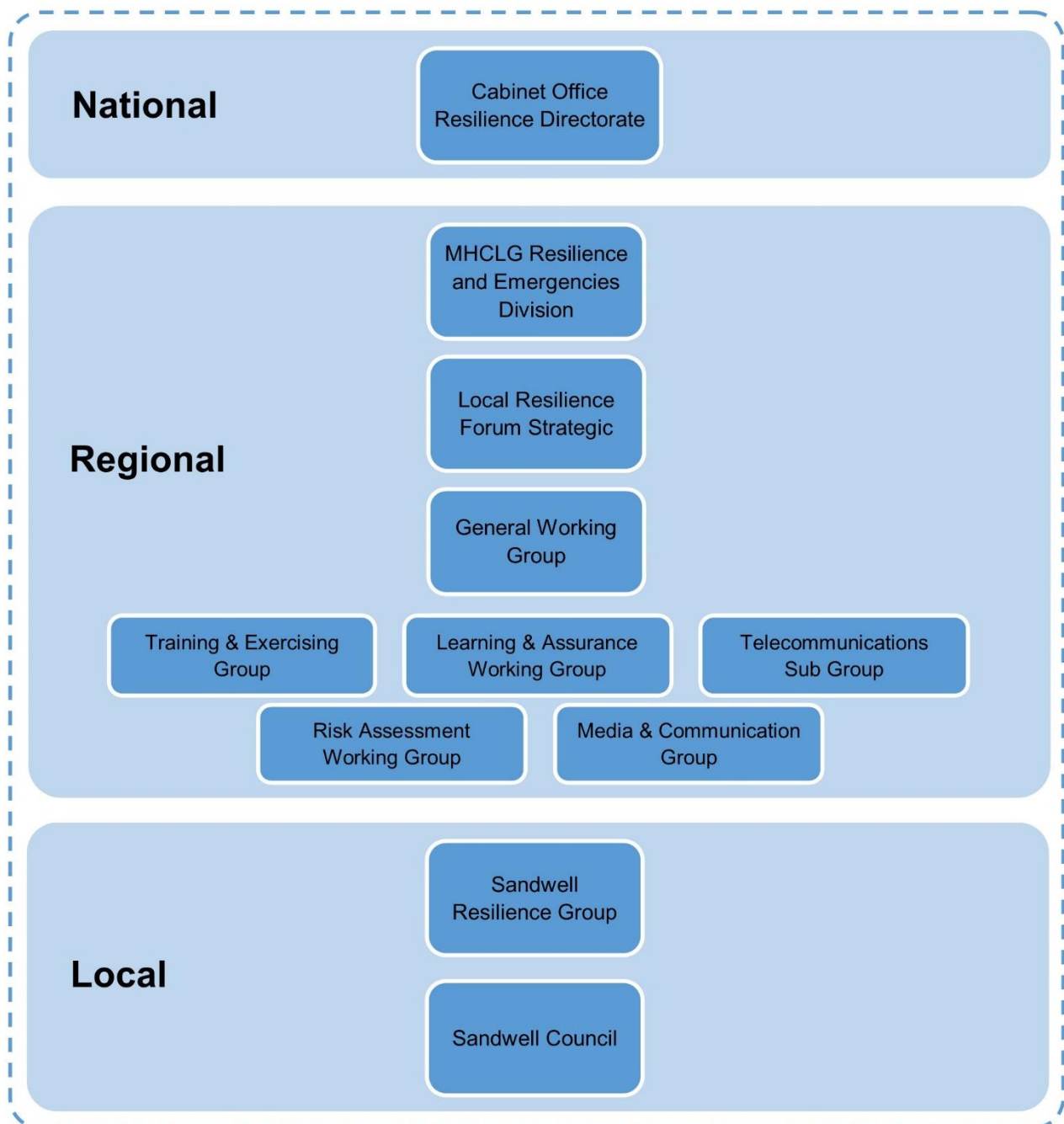


## Section 2 Planning

### 2.1 Emergency Planning Structures

The Resilience Team collaborates with representatives from various organisations at the National, Regional, and Local levels to ensure effective emergency preparedness and civil protection arrangements are established.

The structure chart below illustrates the groups at different levels, with brief descriptions provided on the following pages.



### 2.1.1 National Arrangements

The UK's national resilience efforts are overseen by the Resilience Directorate within the Cabinet Office, which implements the Government Resilience Framework to enhance preparedness, risk management, and overall resilience. The directorate coordinates with government agencies, local authorities, and emergency services and works closely with the COBR Unit, which manages national crises and contingency planning.

In emergencies that require central government involvement, the Lead Government Department (see [Appendix A](#)) collaborates with the Resilience Directorate to support ministers in strategic decision-making. For more information, visit [here](#).

### 2.1.2 Regional Arrangements

Regional arrangements operate at two levels: across the wider West Midlands region and specifically within the West Midlands Conurbation.

**MHCLG** (Ministry Housing and Communities and Local Government) oversees resilience and emergency response coordination below the national level. The Resilience and Emergencies Division (**RED**) within MHCLG supports local organisations and works with Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) to enhance local emergency preparedness.

### 2.1.3 Local Arrangements

The **West Midlands Conurbation Local Resilience Forum (WMRF)** coordinates emergency planning across the conurbation, including Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, and Wolverhampton. The WMRF promotes joint working between agencies to ensure preparedness, identify risks, and coordinate public communications.

The **Strategic Group** and **General Working Group (GWG)** supports effective coordination of tasks such as risk assessments, multi-agency plans, and training programmes.

- **Subgroups** address specific emergency planning needs:
  - **Risk Assessment Working Group** maintains the Community Risk Register (CRR) and assesses local risks.
  - **Telecommunications Subgroup** handles strategic responses to telecoms failures.
  - **Training & Exercising Group** implements responder training based on risk assessments.
  - **Communications Group** manages internal and external messaging.
  - **Learning & Assurance Group** ensures lessons learned are embedded for continuous improvement.

### 2.1.4 Sandwell Arrangements

Sandwell's arrangements are divided between internal council procedures and borough-wide coordination.

- The **Resilience Team**, part of the Place Directorate, prepares and implements council policy on emergencies, working with senior management and external partners including the emergency services, NHS, utilities, and voluntary agencies.
- The **Sandwell Resilience Group (SRG)**, chaired by Sandwell Council, meets quarterly to discuss current and future issues in a multi-agency setting.

## 2.2 Plans and Policies

Sandwell Council and the WMRF maintain a variety of single and multi-agency plans for potential emergencies. These plans, either generic or specific, cover roles, activation, and incident-specific actions (see [Appendix C](#)). Plans are available via Resilience Direct and on request.

**Plans are available on request and accessible via [Resilience Direct](#).**

Sandwell Council Plans:

- Extreme Weather Health Plan
- Flood Plan
- Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) plan
- Media Crisis Plan
- Recovery Management Framework
- Reservoir Plan
- Rest Centre Plan
- Sandwell Council London Bridge Protocol
- Sandwell Elections Contingency Plan
- Schools Emergency, Business Continuity & Recovery Plan
- Severe Cold Weather Plan
- Pandemic Influenza Plan (*replaced Covid-19 plan*)

Multi-Agency Plans:

- Pipeline Contingency Plan (Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996)
- Radiation Emergencies (REPPiR)
- Black Country Excess Deaths Plan.

West Midlands LRF Plans:

- Community Risk Register
- National Emergency Plan – Fuel
- Strategic/Tactical Coordinating Group (SCG/TCG) Plan
- Voluntary Organisations Capabilities Guidance

Relevant corporate policies, including Safety, Health, Welfare, GDPR, Finance, and Equality, can also be found in [Appendix C](#).

## **2.3 Mutual Aid**

There are informal mutual aid agreements between the WMRF Local Authorities and those from neighbouring counties. If a major incident exceeds the resources of a single local authority, neighbouring local authorities agree to assist.

## **2.4 Business Continuity Management**

BCM is a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004, for all Category 1 responders. It ensures that organisations can continue critical functions in the event of disruption, reducing the impact on services, staff, and the public.

Disruptions can include utility loss, IT failures, or loss of staff. Severe weather, in particular, poses significant risks by affecting utilities, staff, and access to buildings, as well as prolonging recovery times.

The Council's approach is set out in its Business Continuity Policy.

### **2.4.1 Sandwell Council Business Continuity Management System**

This system ensures the continuation of essential services during an emergency, protects revenue, and meets legal requirements. Regular audits, exercises, and reviews help maintain effective arrangements.

## Section 3 Response

### 3.1 Incident Management

Each incident presents unique challenges, and this plan offers general guidance while recognising the need for professional judgment and flexibility. Effective response requires collaboration across internal council services and external partners. All responders must understand each other's roles and responsibilities (see [Appendix D](#) for Roles and Responsibilities).

Accurate record-keeping is essential during the response phase for debriefs or investigations. Handover of information is also critical, especially during protracted incidents where staff may work in shifts (see [Appendix G](#) for the Incident Information Handover Sheet).

### 3.2 The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP)

JESIP provides a standard approach to multi-agency incident responses, focusing on lifesaving and harm reduction.

The key components of the Joint Doctrine are:

- **Principles for Joint Working** – Guidelines for planning and responding to incidents.
- **M/ETHANE** – A standard method for passing incident information between services.
- **Joint Decision Model (JDM)** – A national framework for collaborative decision-making



### 3.3 Principles for Joint Working

The principles for joint working should be used during all phases of an incident, whether spontaneous or pre-planned and regardless of scale.

They support the development of a multi-agency response and provide structure during the response to all incidents. The principles can also be applied during the recovery phase.

The principles illustrated in the diagram below are presented in an indicative sequence, although they can be applied in a different order if necessary.



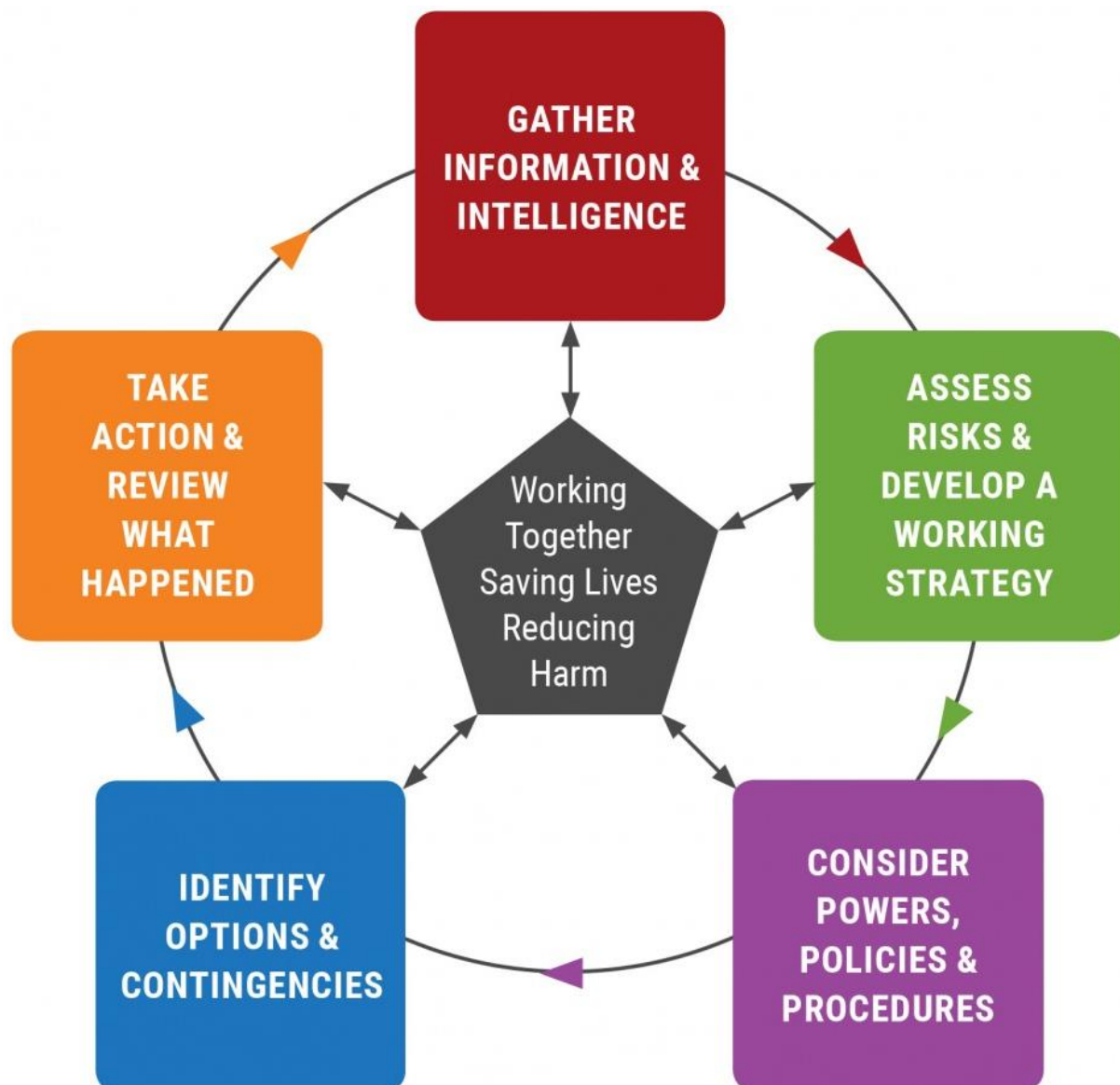


### 3.4 Joint Decision Model

Decision making in incident management follows a general pattern of:

- Working out what's going on (situation),
- Establishing what you need to achieve (direction)
- Deciding what to do about it (action), all informed by a statement and understanding of overarching values and purpose.

The JESIP Joint Decision Model (JDM), shown below, was developed to allow emergency responders to bring together the available information, reconcile potentially differing priorities and then make effective decisions together.



The joint decision model can be used by commanders to explore considerations and set out the various stages of reaching joint decisions. Decision makers must use their professional judgement and experience in deciding any additional questions to ask and considerations to take into account, so that they can reach a jointly agreed decision.

### 3.5 Understanding Risks and Developing a Working Strategy

Responders should jointly assess the situation, considering threats, hazards, and risks. They need to evaluate how risks may change based on decisions and actions. Each responder organisation offers unique insights, which, when shared, help establish a Common Operating Picture (COP) for informed decision-making and risk control. Time-critical tasks should proceed without delay. Understanding each service's risk control measures is crucial to avoid unintended consequences, enhancing operational effectiveness and the likelihood of successful incident resolution. In rapid onset incidents, a complete picture is rare, especially early on. The working strategy should be based on available information and continuously reviewed, with resources deployed for life-saving activities as soon as possible.

For an effective multi-agency response, objectives and priorities must be agreed upon jointly, with each organisation prioritising their plans and activities. Strong leadership, teamwork, and communication are key to reducing risk. A jointly agreed strategy that clearly outlines the responders' goals is essential for this purpose.

When developing a working strategy, responders should consider these questions:

- **What:** Are the aims and objectives?
- **Who by:** Police, fire and rescue service, ambulance service, local authority other organisations?
- **When:** Timescales, deadlines and milestones?
- **Where:** Locations?
- **Why:** What is the rationale? Is it consistent with the overall strategic aims and objectives?
- **How:** Will these tasks be achieved?

Common objectives for responders are:

- saving and protecting human life;
- protecting the health and safety and welfare of responding personnel;
- protecting and minimising the impact on the environment;
- containing the emergency – limiting its escalation or spread and mitigating its impacts;
- providing the public and businesses with warnings, advice and information;
- maintaining or restoring critical infrastructure and utilities;
- facilitating the recovery of the community (including the humanitarian, economic, infrastructure and environmental impacts);
- Treating the deceased and injured and their families with respect and dignity at all times;
- facilitating investigations and inquiries (e.g. by preserving the scene and effective records management);
- Identifying and taking action to implement lessons identified.

## Section 4 Notification and Activation

### 4.1 Notification

Incidents can be reported to the Council by partner agencies or internal services. Notifications may be basic details or full M/ETHANE messages. Should council support be required, the Duty Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO) or Community Alarm Service (CAS) will be notified. Services must ensure CAS has up-to-date contact details for emergency response capabilities.

If a senior manager, the Duty Emergency Planning Officer or Resilience Manager becomes aware of pressures on council services due to a civil emergency or business disruption, this should be escalated to the Duty Director.

### 4.2 M/ETHANE

Effective management is essential for fulfilling roles and responsibilities during an incident. This is achieved through consistent communication and coordination among agencies.

The **M/ETHANE** mnemonic is a reminder of key information first responders need to relay to control rooms:

<b>M</b>	<b>MAJOR INCIDENT</b>	Has a major incident or standby been declared? (Yes / No - if no, then complete ETHANE message)
<b>E</b>	<b>EXACT LOCATION</b>	What is the exact location or geographical area of the incident?
<b>T</b>	<b>TYPE OF INCIDENT</b>	What kind of incident is it?
<b>H</b>	<b>HAZARDS</b>	What hazards or potential hazards can be identified?
<b>A</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	What are the best routes for access and egress?
<b>N</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CASUALTIES</b>	How many casualties are there, and what condition are they in?
<b>E</b>	<b>EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>	Which and how many, emergency responder assets/personnel are required or are already on-scene?

### 4.3 Incident Classification

Upon receiving a notification of an incident, the DEPO will determine its classification. This classification will help to determine the council response and appropriate escalation. Incidents will be classified as follows:

Classification	Description of incident type	Types of Incidents	Council Response	Multi -Agency Response
Black	Whole-system incidents requiring a full organisational response which may have a range of catastrophic impacts.	National Power Outage / Global Pandemic	Strategic Incident Management Team.	ResCG / SCG
Red	Large-scale major incidents requiring full activation of the Emergency Plan to utilise the council's full range of resources.	Red Heat Health Warnings / Major flooding	Incident Director appointed; Incident Management Team formed.	SCG
Amber	Incidents requiring specialist support from multiple council services, necessitating partial activation of the Emergency Plan.	Amber Weather Alerts / Major Fire	Notification to Duty Director, consideration of Incident Director.	TCG
Yellow	Small incidents manageable by the DEPO with available council services, without need for escalation.	Yellow Weather Alerts / Serious house fire	No escalation to Duty Director unless incident is anticipated to escalate.	Locally led
Green	Minor incidents managed by Community Alarms.	Minor house fires	Business As Usual.	None

#### 4.4 Major Incident

Any Category 1 or 2 responder can declare a Major Incident. The declaration of a major incident requires the Council to be prepared to support the emergency services and other partners. (see 1.4 for 'Major Incident' definition)

The decision to declare a 'Major Incident' can be taken by the following:

- the Chief Executive (or nominated deputy);
- Duty/Incident Director.

This will include the activation of the Emergency Plan and/or Business Continuity Plans.

#### 4.5 Escalation Process

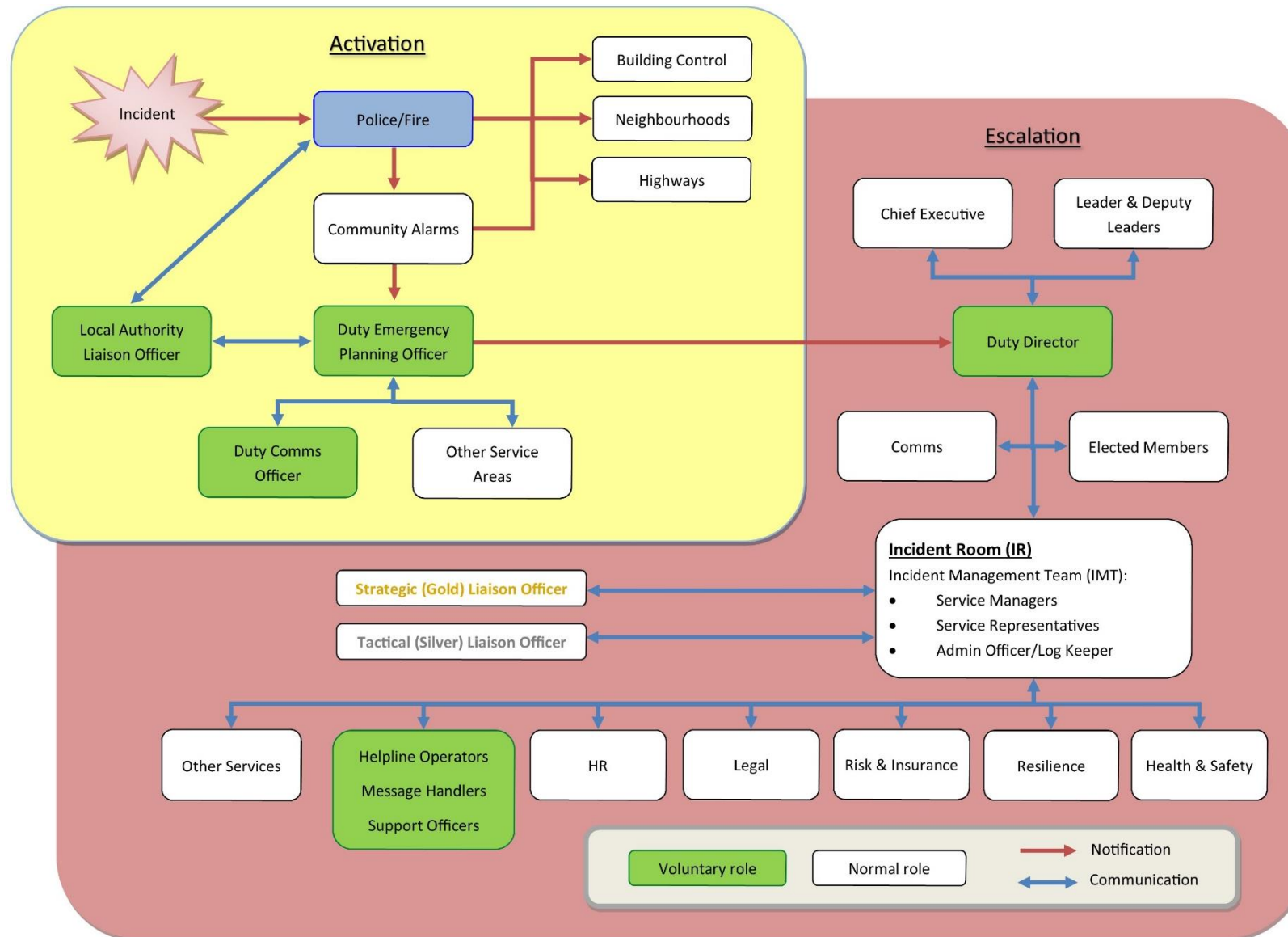
On notification of an **Amber**, **Red** or **Black** incident, the DEPO will notify the Duty Director, who will:

- assume or appoint an incident director.
- review the available information.
- seek to quickly convene an Incident Management Team comprising relevant managers, who will:
- ensure personnel, equipment, accommodation, and transport are available to support the response.
- mobilise resources to support emergency response, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of business continuity.
- liaise with other Service Areas and external agencies, as required.
- brief and advise Leadership Team and service teams.
- activate the Incident Room (refer to IR procedure).
- facilitate the engagement / withdrawal of employees from normal work duties as required.

On notification of a **Yellow** incident the DEPO will not escalate to the Duty Director unless they consider that the scale of the incident it is anticipated to escalate.

The following diagram illustrates the incident management activation and escalation process from the initial response to the escalation of resources and focus depending on the circumstances.

#### 4.6 Activation and Escalation Process – Sandwell Council



## Section 5 Command and Control Structure

The **Strategic–Tactical–Operational** structure establishes a hierarchical framework for command and control of major incidents and emergencies. The command level required depends on the incident's scale, duration, impact, and necessary resources. No single agency has command authority over another's personnel or assets.

To minimise the consequences of a developing incident, the three-tier structure and its responsibilities should be activated and established promptly.



### 5.1 National Response - COBR (Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms)

For major emergencies with national implications, COBR convenes, chaired by the Prime Minister, or Lead Government Department (LGD) Minister, and supported by relevant Ministers and high-ranking representatives from responding organisations to discuss strategic national issues.

### 5.2 Regional Response - Response Coordinating Group (ResCG)

Most emergencies are managed locally via Strategic Coordinating Groups (SCGs). However, a ResCG may be convened when incidents affect multiple police force areas, typically initiated by the MHCLG at the request of local responders or the LGD. Meetings are usually held via teleconference but can be in person if needed.

## **5.3 Local Response**

### **5.3.1 Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG)**

The SCG operates at the local strategic command level, typically hosted by the police. It establishes a policy framework for all Category 1 and 2 responders and is activated for significant, long-lasting events that involve substantial resources or multiple organisations.

### **5.3.2 Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG)**

Tactical command is established first, as initial officers at the incident. Following an assessment of the incident's scale and impact, organisations appoint tactical representatives to formulate an initial tactical plan. Changes from the SCG are reflected in this plan.

Effective communication and coordination among organisations are essential. Tactical representatives meet virtually or at an agreed location (C3) to manage operations, including:

- Joint working with other services;
- Overall incident management;
- Resource prioritisation;
- Task planning and coordination;
- Inter-agency communication.

The Duty Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO) typically represents the council as the tactical liaison.

### **5.3.3 Operational**

Operational commanders control and deploy their organisation's resources within a defined area, implementing the tactical plan. They collaborate with colleagues from other responding organisations at or near the incident scene. Sandwell Council operational representatives, including personnel from Building Control and Highways, will:

- Be present at the scene or nearby;
- Attend multi-agency briefings;
- Obtain risk assessments;
- Assess the incident's extent;
- Coordinate council resources;
- Identify and prioritise tasks as needed.

Local Authority Liaison Officers (LALOs) facilitate communication between emergency services and the council.



## **5.4 Sandwell Council Response**

### **5.4.1 Strategic/Tactical Incident Management Team (S/T IMT)**

The IMT manages the council's response to major incidents. For the most serious of incidents a Strategic IMT will be activated formed of the Strategic Leadership Team and key service representatives chaired by the Chief Executive. The SIMT sets the strategic direction and prioritises services.

Most incidents can be managed by a Tactical IMT that is formed with the responsibility to interpret strategic direction, develop a tactical plan, and coordinate activities. The IMT is chaired by the Duty Director or Incident Director if appointed. If one is not available, the Resilience Manager may chair. The chair facilitates IMT meetings to manage the incident and ensures regular situational updates are prepared and issued.

The TIMT is normally comprised of:

- Duty / Incident Director (Chair)
- Resilience Manager / DEPO;
- Communications Manager / Duty Comms Officer;
- Assistant Directors, or representatives of responding or affected Service areas, including but not limited to:
  - Adult Social Care (ASC)
  - Children & Education
  - Commercial;
  - Environmental Health;
  - Facilities;
  - Finance;
  - Highways;
  - Housing;
  - Human Resources;
  - ICT;
  - Legal;
  - Asset Management;
  - Public Health;
  - Registrations and Bereavements;
  - Risk & Insurance.

The team composition may vary based on the incident. Each service must provide information and act on decisions made by the IMT.

[Appendix F](#) provides a flexible Incident Management Agenda to guide tasks at various response levels throughout an incident, helping to maintain coordination during the response.

### **5.4.2 Incident Room (IR)**

The IR is activated by the IMT or DEPO during complex incidents requiring coordinated efforts. It serves as the central location for coordinating the council's response and disseminating information.

### 5.4.3 Work Cells

If a SIMT is formed tactical level work cells may be activated to support the response. Work cells will be led by a senior manager and report into the SIMT.

Work cells contribute to the Local Authority's emergency response. Although specific roles may vary, flexibility is crucial to address diverse needs. The main roles and responsibilities are outlined in [Appendix E](#), with additional guidance applicable to all seven work cells provided in the same appendix.

Work cells should:

- Address tasks assigned by the SIMT;
- Define their roles and responsibilities during a major emergency;
- Identify and escalate operational issues to the SIMT;
- Support key services facing business disruptions;
- Include multi-agency partners in recovery efforts;
- Direct and focus the work cell during recovery, guided by [Appendix E](#) and relevant Local Resilience Forum Recovery Protocol;
- Ensure necessary arrangements for a resilient response.

#### 5.4.3.1. Activation

If support from a specific work cell is required, the Resilience Team identifies and contacts a work cell lead to attend the IR or another agreed location. After being briefed by the SIMT, the work cell lead informs other members and provides necessary instructions and situational awareness. A meeting schedule (battle rhythm) should align with the incident's battle rhythm.

### 5.4.4 Operational

Operational commanders control and deploy their organisation's resources within a defined area, implementing the tactical plan. They collaborate with colleagues from other responding organisations at or near the incident scene. Local Authority Liaison Officers (LALOs) facilitate communication between emergency services and the council while wearing identifiable high-visibility clothing.

Operational representatives, including LALOs and personnel from Building Control and Highways, will:

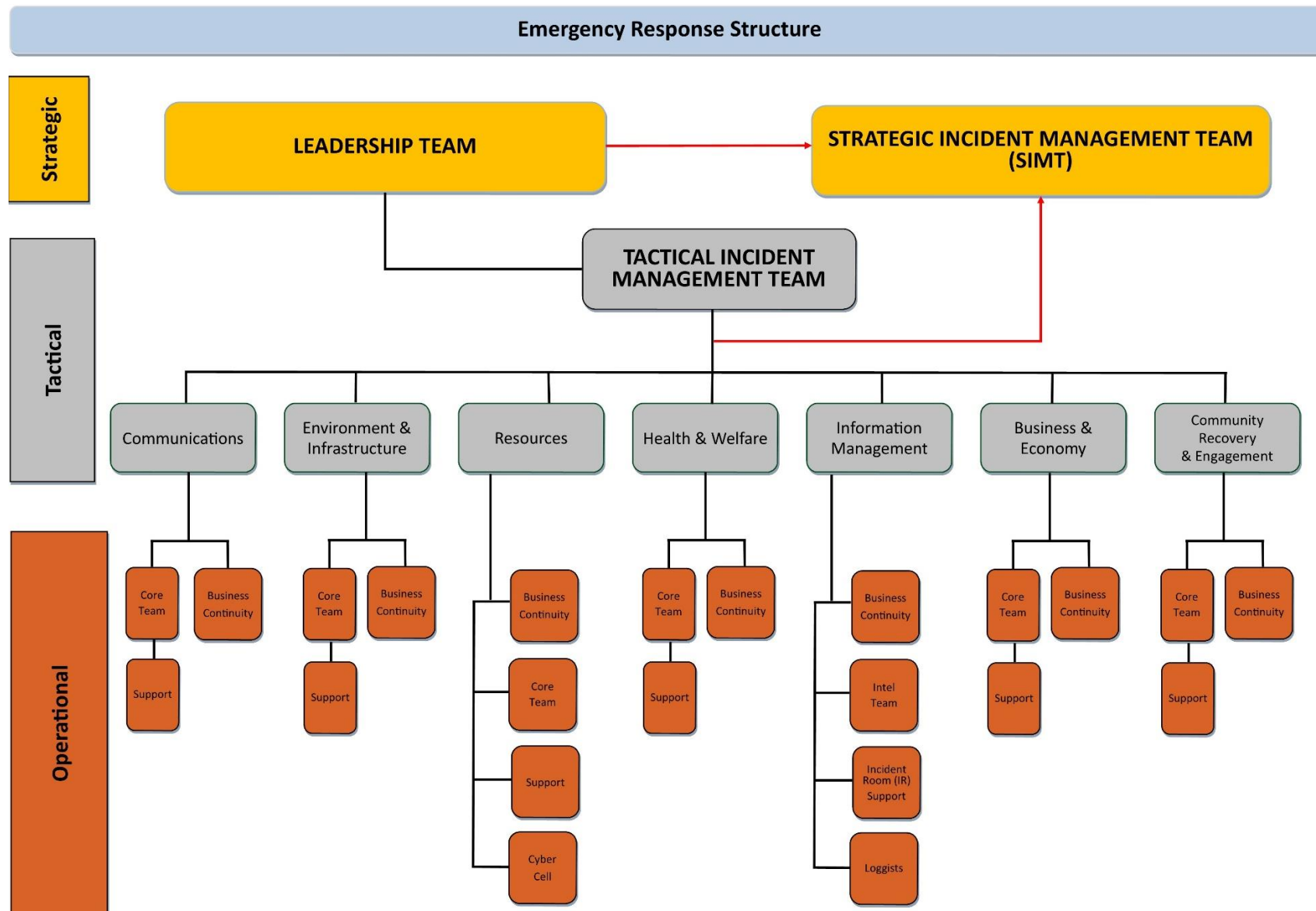
- Be present at the scene or nearby;
- Attend multi-agency briefings;
- Obtain risk assessments;
- Assess the incident's extent;
- Coordinate council resources;
- Identify and prioritise tasks as needed.

## **5.5 Emergency Committee**

In serious incidents, the Chief Executive, or nominated Deputy, may convene the Emergency Committee to:

1. Approve funding requests beyond normal budgets;
2. Provide guidance on national significance issues;
3. Assist in briefing Council Members;
4. Authorise necessary actions that would otherwise require Cabinet or Council decisions.

## 5.6 Incident Response Structure



## **Section 6 Media and Public Information**

Effective handling of media and public information is essential in the council's emergency planning and response. A collaborative approach involving the Communications Team, elected members, council services, and partner organisations is crucial for delivering timely information and advice to the public.

The Council's Media Crisis Plan provides crisis management guidance for the Communications for incident response and recovery.

Effective messaging via media, social media and other channels can provide important information to those affected, reassure the public, foster sympathetic coverage for victims, promote positive recognition of our work, and build public confidence in our post-incident handling.

The media may request various forms of access and information, including:

- Access to the emergency site
- Regular updates with accurate information
- Interviews with councillors, heads of service, and frontline responders
- Interviews with victims or witnesses
- Photographs of the scene
- Factual information about the incident and involved agencies
- Historical details of the site or event
- Filming permissions

In emergencies, social media often serves as the primary source for information. Swift updates on the council's channels are vital for sharing information and managing reputation. The Communications Team operates an out-of-hours rota to support responding officers, monitor communications, update social media and the council website, and issue staff messages and media statements as needed.

## Section 7 Voluntary Sector

Sandwell Council works with various organisations via the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and the Voluntary Sector Civil Protection Forum to support incidents and rest centres. Several West Midlands voluntary organisations provide assistance, including:

### **SCVO** (Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations)

SCVO coordinates the voluntary sector's efforts in Sandwell, collaborating with Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, West Midlands Police, and local services. They offer support in financial management, funding, safeguarding, and volunteering. SCVO also manages the Let's Go Sandwell website. ([scvo.info](https://scvo.info)).

### **British Red Cross**

Operating across the UK, the British Red Cross offers emergency response, first aid training, and health and social care support. They help communities prepare for and recover from crises.

### **Rapid Relief Team (RRT)**

RRT provides catering services during emergencies and supplies food and essentials to emergency services and vulnerable communities.

### **St John Ambulance**

St John Ambulance delivers first aid and emergency medical services. In Sandwell, volunteers support public events, offer first aid training, and assist with emergency response.

### **Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army offers emergency assistance, homelessness support, and community programmes, partnering with local authorities to support vulnerable populations.

### **REACT**

REACT supports families with terminally ill children, providing financial and practical aid in coordination with local health and social services.

## Section 8 Vulnerable People in Sandwell

The Council aims to protect and support the most vulnerable during an emergency and will work with other agencies and organisations to achieve this. Information about vulnerable people may be available from various responder agencies. Sandwell Councils Adult Social Care Services have a data base of vulnerable persons known to the organisation. Other organisations within the borough of Sandwell, and the West Midlands Conurbation, also retain information on those that are potentially vulnerable:

Sandwell Council	24 hours Community Alarms, Adult Social Care, Children Services. Safeguarding
Health	GP's, Pharmacists, Sandwell Hospitals
Utility Companies	South Staffs Water, Severn Trent, National Grid, Cadent Gas, individual utility suppliers

### 8.1 Vulnerable Individuals and Groups

Whilst this is not a definitive list, the following individuals / communities should be considered in the response to an emergency as they may require specific additional support.

Potentially Vulnerable Individual /Groups	Examples and Notes	Target via the following
Children	Childrens in Need / Care Whilst children are at school, it is the school who have duty of care responsibilities (children under the age of 5 are extremely vulnerable).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sandwell Childrens Trust</li> <li>- Schools through Local Authorities and through their Governing body or proprietor</li> <li>- Creches/playgroups/nurseries</li> </ul>
Older people	Some elderly people require regular medication and/or medical equipment, especially those who are ill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nursing homes</li> <li>- Adult social care</li> <li>- Residential care home</li> </ul>
Mental/ Cognitive function impaired	Development disabilities; clinical psychiatric needs' learning disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Residential care homes</li> <li>- Charities</li> <li>- NHS providers</li> <li>- Local Authorities</li> </ul>
Mobility impaired	Wheelchair users; leg injuries (e.g. crutches); bedridden/non-movers; slow movers; bariatric patients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Residential care homes</li> <li>- Charities</li> <li>- NHS providers</li> <li>- Local Authorities</li> </ul>

Potentially Vulnerable Individual /Groups	Examples and Notes	Target via the following
Temporarily or permanently ill	There are people with chronic illness that need to be considered. They may be exacerbated or destabilised in the event of evacuation. There is a possibility of vital medication / equipment is left behind in an evacuation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NHS providers</li> <li>- GP surgeries</li> <li>- Other health providers</li> <li>- Community health teams.</li> </ul>
Sensory impaired	Blind or reduced sight; deaf; speech and other communication impaired.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Charities</li> <li>- Local Groups</li> </ul>
Individuals supported by health or Local Authorities	Those that require additional support, particularly during an evacuation and/or during recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adult social services</li> <li>- Children's social services</li> <li>- GP surgeries</li> </ul>
Individuals cared for by relatives	May require additional support, particularly during an evacuation and/or during recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GP Surgeries</li> <li>- Carers Groups</li> </ul>
Pregnant women	May require additional support, particularly during an evacuation and/or during recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GP Surgeries</li> </ul>
Homeless	A small group within Sandwell, early engagement with these individuals during severe weather is key.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shelters</li> <li>- Soup Kitchens</li> </ul>
Minority language speakers	May require additional support, particularly during an evacuation and/or during recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Groups</li> <li>- Job Centre Plus</li> </ul>
Tourists and Commuters	May require additional support, particularly if they are unable to leave the area. Additional support with shelter, basic toiletries and access to food may be required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transport and travel companies</li> <li>- Hoteliers</li> </ul>

## 8.2 Accessing Information on Vulnerable People During Emergencies

Sandwell Council currently accesses information on vulnerable people known to the council via Adult Social Care (ACS). This information is held on LAS and in the event of an emergency can be provided by the Duty Social Care Manager.

If emergency responders request this information to protect the health and wellbeing of vulnerable individuals, then this should be provided as soon as possible.



### **8.3 Key Considerations and Process:**

1. The Duty Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO) must provide the location of the incident and specific details of affected people or addresses. This enables Adult Social Care to check records and identify individuals who may require specialised assistance. Additionally, ASC will assess whether the incident could impact care services that they provide or commission, such as care staff accessing buildings, carers reaching vulnerable adults, or the potential need to relocate vulnerable residents.
2. ACS can share relevant information from LAS with the DEPO, including names, addresses, disabilities, communication or mobility needs, specialist equipment requirements, and details of known carers supporting vulnerable adults.
3. ASC can provide this information verbally or via email, depending on the urgency and sensitivity of the situation.
4. Business continuity reports are generated daily from key business-critical systems. If ICT networks or systems become unavailable, ASC services will still have access to essential data to maintain operations.
5. ACS's primary aim is to safeguard the wellbeing of vulnerable individuals. ASC can coordinate immediate welfare responses, including emergency Mental Health Act assessments, relocation of vulnerable people to suitable care settings, and the provision of emergency medication or food.
6. ASC can be contacted by telephone. Outside of office hours, calls are diverted to the Emergency Duty Service. Staff working in the office, Emergency Duty Service personnel, and on-call Mental Health Act Assessors all have access to LAS and contact details for on-call managers and Directors 24/7.

## **Section 9 Recovery**

### **9.1 Overview**

Recovery is a coordinated process to rebuild, restore, and rehabilitate the community after an incident. It focuses on reconstructing physical infrastructure and restoring emotional, social, economic, and physical well-being. While full restoration to pre-incident conditions may not be possible, recovery can present opportunities for growth and regeneration.

The Local Authority leads recovery under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Recovery often starts alongside the emergency response and can last weeks, months, or longer, depending on the scale of the incident. A formal handover from the strategic response lead (typically the Police) to the recovery lead (usually the Local Authority) occurs when both parties agree. This is formalised by signing a Handover Certificate (see Recovery Management Framework).

### **9.2 Sandwell Council Recovery Management Framework**

The Recovery Management Framework guides the Leadership Team through the recovery process after a major incident. It provides clarity on:

- Structure;
- Strategic objectives;
- Short and long-term consequences;
- Essential tools and skills.

The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Resilience Team, Duty/Incident Director, or LRF Strategic Coordinating Group, can activate the framework.

## **Section 10 Post Incident**

### **10.1 Stand Down**

Once emergency services leave, the council begins recovery. Stand down occurs when the response phase is nearing completion, and recovery can proceed through normal operations. Response and recovery may overlap for some time.

Stand down will be agreed with emergency responders and will occur when:

- There is no imminent threat;
- The incident is fully resolved;
- Emergency assistance centres (e.g. rest centres) are vacated;
- Transition to recovery is clear;
- Media interest subsides to manageable levels.

The leading response agency usually initiates the stand down, but for council-led responses, the Chief Executive or Duty/Incident Director will make the final decision.

### **10.2 Debriefing**

After any major incident, debriefing is essential to evaluate the response, recognise good practices, and address improvements. Debriefs may also provide information for legal investigations.

Debriefing can be:

- Organisational;
- Multi-agency;
- A combination of both.

Debriefs should include personnel directly involved and be chaired by someone independent from the incident. Confidentiality is critical, especially if legal action is involved. Considerations for effective debriefing include:

- Conducting a 'hot debrief' immediately after stand down to address urgent issues;
- Arranging formal debriefs as soon as possible;
- Including all personnel, even those remote from the event, like Control Room Staff;
- Holding additional debrief sessions for specific operations.

Videos or photos taken during the incident can aid in the debrief.

## Section 11 Glossary of Terms

Term/Acronym (acronym in bold)	Definition (text in <b><i>bold italics</i></b> indicates a related definition)
Category 1 Responder (Cat 1)	A person or body listed in Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the <b><i>Civil Contingencies Act</i></b> . These bodies are likely to be at the core of the response to most emergencies. As such, they are subject to the full range of <b><i>civil protection</i></b> duties in the Act.
Category 2 Responder (Cat 2)	A person or body listed in Part 3 of Schedule 1 to the <b><i>Civil Contingencies Act</i></b> . These are co-operating responders who are less likely to be involved in the heart of multi-agency planning work but will be heavily involved in preparing for incidents affecting their sectors. The Act requires them to co-operate and share information with other <b><i>Category 1 and 2 responders</i></b> .
Civil Contingencies Act 2004 ( <b>CCA</b> )	Act of 2004 which established a single framework for <b><i>Civil Protection</i></b> in the United Kingdom. Part 1 of the Act establishes a clear set of roles and responsibilities for Local Responders; Part 2 of the Act establishes emergency powers.
Civil Protection	Preparedness to deal with a wide range of emergencies from localised flooding or terrorist attack.
Command and Control	Processes adopted by an agency acting with full authority to direct its own resources (both personnel and equipment). (For more information regarding the <b><i>Strategic – Tactical – Operational</i></b> command structure, see section 5. Response)
Community Risk Register ( <b>CRR</b> )	An assessment of the risks within a local resilience area agreed by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) as a basis for supporting the preparation of emergency plans.
Control of Major Accident Hazards ( <b>COMAH</b> )	Control of major accident hazards regulations 2015. Regulations applying to the chemical industry and to some storage sites where threshold quantities of dangerous substances, as identified in the Regulations, are kept or used.
Duty Emergency Planning Officer ( <b>DEPO</b> )	(Local authority guidance term for) On-call local government officer responsible for dealing with civil contingency matters including requests for mutual aid.
Incident Room ( <b>IR</b> )	Generic term for a hub for controlling and co-ordinating the response of an organisation to an incident or an emergency.
Emergency planning	Aspect of <b><i>Integrated Emergency Management</i></b> concerned with developing and maintaining procedures to prevent emergencies and to mitigate the impact when they occur.
Local Authority Liaison Officer (Council) ( <b>LALO</b> )	Attends the scene of an incident or rest centre to become the eyes and ears of the Council on site and acts as liaison officer

Term/Acronym (acronym in bold)	Definition (text in <b><i>bold italics</i></b> indicates a related definition)
	between the emergency services, utilities, voluntary sector and the Council's employees and/or service providers.
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Resilience and Emergencies Division (MHCLG-RED)	MHCLG-RED act as a conduit for communications between central government and the local level. They are responsible for supporting local response and recovery efforts and ensuring that there is an accurate picture of the situation in their area.
Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA)	Any category of assistance provided by the Ministry of Defence to the civil authorities.
National Inter Agency Liaison Officer (NILO)	An officer who can advise and support <b><i>Incident Commanders</i></b> , Police, Medical, Military and other Government Agencies on the organisation's operational capacity and capability to reduce risk and safely resolve incidents at where an attendance may be required. This will include <b><i>major incidents</i></b> , public order, domestic or any other situation benefitting from ILO attendance.
National Risk Register (NRR)	A publicly available statement of the assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different risks that might directly affect the UK.
Rest Centre (RC)	Building, which could include overnight facilities, designated by the local authority for the temporary accommodation of evacuees.
Safety Advisory Group (SAG)	Multi-agency group set up to provide advice on safety matters for a specific event, or events, such as a major sporting event or a concert held in a stadium.
Situation Report (SitRep)	Report produced by an officer or body, outlining the current state and potential development of an incident and the response to it. (See Appendix H for SitRep Template)

For the full Glossary of Terms list please use the below link:

<http://www.jesip.org.uk/glossary>

## Appendix A Lead Government Departments (LGD's)

The following government department and agencies will lead on certain types of incident or emergency.

Lead Government Department	Type of Emergency	Lead Agency
Cabinet Office (CO)	Satellite Incidents	Cabinet Office
	Civil Defence	Cabinet Office
	Major Software Failure	Cabinet Office
Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ)	Disruption to supply chains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telecommunications and postal services;</li> <li>• Oil, gas and electricity;</li> <li>• Strategic chemicals and manufacturing</li> </ul>	DESNZ
	Radiation and Nuclear Hazards	DESNZ
	Serious Industrial Accident with commercial/economic impacts	BEIS
	Severe Storms and Weather resulting in loss of power	Met Office
Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	Earthquakes	MHCLG
	Severe Storms and Weather impacting on the built environment	Met Office
	Industrial Action	MHCLG
	Reception and housing of British Nationals evacuated from overseas	MHCLG
Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)	Disasters in Sports Grounds	DCMS
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Drought	Environment Agency
	Pollution to ground and surface waters (up to 3 mile limit)	
	Flooding	
	Major Explosion from landfill gas	
	Dam Failures	
	Serious Industrial Accident resulting in pollution	Animal & Plant Health Agency
	Animal Disease and Welfare	
	Plant pests, including major outbreaks	Drinking Water Inspectorate
	Drinking Water Contamination	
	Food Contamination	Food Standards Agency
	Disruption to food, water and waste supply chains	Food Standards Agency and

Lead Government Department	Type of Emergency	Lead Agency
		Drinking Water Inspectorate
Department for Transport (DfT)	Disruption to land, sea and air supply chains	DfT
	Accidental release of CBRN in transit	DfT
	Severe Storms and Weather impacting on land, sea and air travel	DfT
	Coastal Incidents	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
	Maritime Salvage	
	Marine and Coastal Pollution	
	Emergencies and Pollution – vessels and offshore installations	Health and Safety Executive
	Transport Accidents – shipping, land and air.	
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	Serious Industrial Accident or Major Structural Collapse resulting from health and safety issues	Health and Safety Executive
Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC)	Infectious Diseases	UKHSA and NHS England
	Disruption to medical/healthcare supply chains	DHSC
Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT)	Severe Space Weather	DSIT
His Majesty's Treasury (HMT)	Disruption to financial supply chains	HMT
Home Office (HO)	Major fires in buildings	Home Office
	Terrorism: conventional/siege/hostage/CBRN	Home Office
	Cyber/Electronic Attack	National Cyber Security Centre
	Major Public Order Incidents	Home Office
Ministry of Defence (MoD)	Defence of Nuclear Installations and material in transit	MoD
	Military transport accidents	MoD
	Unexploded Wartime Ordnance	EOD – Explosive Ordnance Disposal
Ministry of Justice (MoJ)	Emergencies in Crown Dependencies	MoJ

## Appendix B Incident Specific Plan Summaries

The following list is a summary of council, multi-agency and West Midlands LRF plans. Copies of the plans are available, on request from the Resilience Team.

### Sandwell Council Plans

#### Extreme Weather Health Plan

A response framework for a prolonged period of Cold and Hot Weather, following Department of Health and Social Care guidance. It outlines LA and NHS responsibilities, local command and control and escalation to multi-agency response.

#### Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) Plan

Lists the potential emergency uses of pre-identified buildings – Humanitarian Assistance, information centres, vaccination centres etc. This facility (whether physical or virtual) is set up during response to and recovery from an emergency to provide a range of assistance to different categories of people affected by the emergency. i.e. **Family and Friends Reception Centre**; Friends and Relatives Reception Centre; **Humanitarian Assistance Centre**; **Public Information Point**; Responders Welfare Centre; **Rest Centre**; Survivor Reception Centre.

#### Flood Plan

Details responsibilities, clarifies flood warning arrangements, highlights problem areas and lists response actions.

#### Media and Crisis Communications Framework

Outlines media relations in an emergency and provides guidelines for media statements and interviews.

#### Operation London Bridge

Details the Council response for marking the death of the Sovereign and Senior Members of the Royal Family.

#### Recovery Management Framework

A strategic response framework to ensure the Council and other agencies meet the needs of the communities and drive recovery after a major emergency or incident.

#### Reservoir Plan

This plan addresses the on-site consequences and response arising from an actual or potential dam breach at the reservoirs at Dartmouth Boating Lake, Swan Pool, Sheepwash and Sandwell Valley Storage Lake.

#### Rest Centre Plan

Details pre-identified facilities used to provide emergency shelter to evacuated people.



**Schools Emergency, Business Continuity & Recovery Plan**

To help manage incidents and emergencies that occur at an Educational Establishment – School, College, Nursery etc. or that affects staff and/or pupils.

**Multi-Agency Plans****Oldbury Energy Solutions (formerly Solvay) COMAH External Emergency Plan**

The plan aims to increase resilience by providing detail on procedures and available resources for all those involved in a multi-agency response.

**Black Country Excess Deaths Plan**

This plan details contingency arrangements for Bereavement Services managing excess deaths in the Black Country.

**Pipeline Contingency Plan (Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996)**

The plan details actions to be taken to minimise injury caused by a major incident involving high-pressure pipelines in the West Midlands.

**Radiation Emergencies (REPPiR)**

The aim of this plan is to ensure arrangements are in place to supply information and advice to affected members of the public in the event of a radiation emergency.

**West Midlands LRF Plans and Supporting Documents****Community Risk Register**

This outlines hazards within the West Midlands, the likelihood that they will occur and any vulnerabilities. It also details current and future action to mitigate the risk.

**National Emergency Plan – Fuel**

This is a fuel shortage response plan; it includes a section on operating the priority use scheme during a fuel emergency.

**WMRF - Multi-Agency Command and Control, Tactical & Strategic Co-ordinating Groups**

During an emergency, it may be necessary to activate a TCG/SCG, bringing together executive level personnel from responding organisations. This document outlines the role of a TCG/SCG, how it would be activated and key operational considerations.

## **Appendix C Corporate Policies**

### **Safety, Health and Welfare**

Duties under the Health & Safety at Work Act require the Local Authority as an employer, to “ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare” of our employees and others. This is reinforced by duties under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations, which require risk assessment of work undertaken and the use of suitable control measures to manage risk.

In an emergency, the Local Authority is still required to protect the health & safety of staff and others. Where appropriate, preparations should be made in advance to deal with the risks posed by emergencies – for instance key responders should have any training and equipment they could reasonably be expected to need to safely perform their role in managing the emergency.

The nature of an emergency is that all eventualities cannot be foreseen and prepared for; consequently, key responders must also be equipped with the skills to undertake dynamic risk assessments as issues emerge.

Regardless of the emergency, the law and Sandwell Council policies and procedures make it clear that, staff should not put themselves or others at risk.

### **Legal Background**

The council must ensure that it acts within the general public law framework and relies on the powers and duties given to it by Parliament. Such powers once identified must be exercised in a proper and lawful manner.

The council is also regulated by its constitution which, for example, recognises in the rules governing the executive decision making process, that there may be situations where urgency requires a decision to be made very swiftly.

In an emergency, the council is likely to need to work with other stakeholders in the borough, all of whom may have their own external and internal controls and constraints to work within.

Where swift action needs to be taken it is important to ensure that procedures are followed and recorded as accurately and completely as possible. It is then possible for actions to be followed up and built upon to minimise any risk to the organisation and the individual of subsequent potential challenges.

In terms of risk management generally, training in relevant procedures needs to be kept up to date, reviewed and adequately resourced and managed at all levels.

**Finance Arrangements - Authorisation for Emergency Expenditure**

In the event of a major incident requiring immediate response, any officers pre-authorised by the S151 Officer may commit expenditure in effecting such a response. Only those named officers may commit funds under this authorisation and must report such expenditure to the S151 Officer as soon as possible.

The council liaison officer at the SCG must have the requisite authority to spend without having to refer back for authorisation.

It is vital to keep account of all expenditure incurred from the commencement of the council's involvement in the emergency response. The Council will provide the emergency budget code to cover expenditure as soon as a financial commitment is indicated.

**Bellwin Scheme of Emergency Financial Assistance to Local Authorities**

The Bellwin Scheme provides emergency financial assistance, under Section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. It details thresholds relating to claims specific to each local authority.

'the scheme provides reimbursement for local authority costs incurred on, or in connection with, immediate action to safeguard life and property or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience as a result of a disaster or emergency in the local authority area.'

Examples of expenditure likely to qualify under a scheme of emergency financial assistance are:

- setting up temporary premises, including temporary mortuaries;
- hire of additional vehicles, plant and machinery;
- removal of trees or timber dangerous to public;
- initial repair to highways, pavements, footpaths and clearance of debris;
- repair, removal or replacement of street lighting, furniture and signage;
- initial land drainage works to clear debris and unblock water courses;
- temporary employees/contactors to work on the emergency or replace permanent employees diverted from normal work;
- special overtime for employees, either during the emergency or after to catch up on work from which they were diverted by the incident;
- emergency works required to safeguard dangerous structures;
- cost of evacuating people from dangerous structures and temporary rehousing;
- cost of supplying food, provisions and key services to affected communities;
- costs incurred under Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) scheme;
- legal, clerical and other charges incurred to enable the above work.

**Insurance and Indemnity**

*Volunteers:* Insurance cover for volunteer staff working under the auspices of the council exists under the Local Authority's Public Liability Insurance Scheme. Should a volunteer be injured, lose or damage personal property or cause injury to a third party or property no admission of liability should be made or acknowledged by council members or staff. However, full details should be recorded and reported to the Insurance Section.

*Indemnity for Military Assistance:* The Ministry of Defence requires indemnity against any claim or loss arising from providing the assistance requested. When urgent attempts to save life preclude a prior written indemnity, the individual or organisation requesting the assistance will be required to give a verbal undertaking to sign an acceptance of liability as soon as possible, that person must possess the appropriate executive authority. There are two forms of indemnity, one for use when aircraft are involved and a second for all other types of military assistance.

**Working Time Directive – Withdrawal from Normal Work**

All managers are to make arrangements to advise their own staff of the initiation of these procedures; welfare provisions including rotas must also be agreed at the earliest opportunity. In the event of a major emergency or incident a wider corporate approach may be discussed and agreed at Leadership Team. Full details can be found in Contracts of Employment.

**General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Freedom of Information**

Any information collected in relation to this plan will be used for the sole purpose of planning, preparing and response to a major emergency or incident. GDPR and Freedom of Information legislation applies, however, may be superseded during emergency response by the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 (see Appendix A)

GDPR legislation does not prohibit the collection and sharing of personal data - it provides a framework where personal data can be used with confidence that individuals' privacy rights are respected. Emergency responders should consider the risk and potential harm that may arise if they do not share information; including balancing any damage to an individual and where appropriate, the public interest of keeping the information confidential against the public interest of sharing the information.

**Equality and Diversity**

Planning and response activity will always pay regard to specific and individual needs of those responding to an incident and the communities affected. For full considerations see the Rest Centre Plan, Emergency Assistance Centre Plan and Human Resources E&D policies.

## Appendix D Roles and Responsibilities

### Sandwell Council

Roles and Responsibilities	<p>As a Local Authority, Sandwell Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide support to the emergency services and other organisations involved in the response;</li> <li>• provide a wide range of support services to protect vulnerable people in the community;</li> <li>• take part in single and multi-agency training, testing, exercising and debrief events in order to prepare for and improve emergency response;</li> <li>• facilitate the withdrawal of key staff from routine duties to support and undertake emergency response duties;</li> <li>• ensure provision of health, safety and welfare for responding staff;</li> <li>• provide suitable transport, accommodation and welfare for evacuees;</li> <li>• support the overall response to an emergency by making staff and equipment available for the purposes of mutual aid;</li> <li>• maintain records of actions taken and costs incurred;</li> <li>• maintain normal services at an appropriate level – business continuity;</li> <li>• lead the Recovery Phase.</li> </ul>
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### Strategic Leadership Team

The Leadership Team is made up of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, and Director of Public Health. They provide strategic leadership for the council during a major emergency or incident.	
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>SLT have a collective remit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that the aim and objectives of the emergency response are clearly outlined and fulfilled;</li> <li>• promote and encourage a fully integrated emergency response by Council staff;</li> <li>• encourage cooperation, mutual assistance and support between responding organisations;</li> <li>• develop strategies and policies to support the response;</li> <li>• ensure arrangements for the Recovery Phase are considered alongside response actions;</li> <li>• facilitate VIP visits and public events;</li> <li>• ensure effective resource allocation and withdrawal;</li> <li>• prioritise the health, safety and welfare of council responders;</li> <li>• activate Business Continuity Plans, if necessary, to</li> </ul>

	support the emergency response and to allow services to continue to be provided to the public with minimal disruption.
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### Duty Director

The Duty Director is a senior manager, who covers a one week period on a 24/7 rota. Their role is to provide strategic support out of hours and/or when the Chief Executive is not available. At times it may be necessary for another Director to take over the role of Duty Director; for example, if the Duty Director is also the Incident Director.	
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Main duties are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider, in consultation with the DEPO, whether the incident requires escalation;</li> <li>• Escalate and notify the Chief Executive, or nominated deputy, of the incident and agree an Incident Director if required;</li> <li>• Notify the Leader and Deputy Leaders of the incident;</li> <li>• Assume the role of Incident Director if necessary</li> <li>• Provide advice and assistance;</li> </ul>

### Incident Director

The Incident Director is a senior manager, who takes on the role of the Council's Strategic or Tactical commander for an incident.	
The Incident Director is empowered to authorise all necessary actions in relation to emergencies and business disruptions as designated under the Council's Emergency Plan when activated.	
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Main duties are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• declare a 'Major Incident' and activate the Emergency Plan or other plans/procedures, as required;</li> <li>• activate and Chair the Incident Management Team;</li> <li>• provide advice and assistance;</li> <li>• act as liaison between responding officers, Leadership Team and elected members;</li> <li>• attend strategic, multi-agency meetings, as required;</li> <li>• discuss any media strategies and approve press releases;</li> <li>• ensure the mobilisation and allocation of council resources is coordinated and balanced between the incident response and business as usual;</li> <li>• consider requests to/from other local authorities, regarding mutual aid;</li> <li>• provide briefings for a variety of audiences, as required;</li> <li>• ensure retention of documentation for enquiry purposes and enable the preservation of evidence.</li> </ul>

**Chief Executive (or nominated deputy)**

The Chief Executive (or nominated deputy) provides strategic oversight of Sandwell Council's response to a Major Incident.	
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Main duties are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To receive a Strategic situational update from the Duty/Incident Director on the incident and clarify strategic plan.</li> <li>• Brief Portfolio Holders and Elected Member(s) on incident.</li> <li>• Provide feedback to the Duty/Incident Director on the on-going response.</li> <li>• Convene Strategic Incident Management Team if incident requires additional strategic co-ordination.</li> <li>• Consider convening the Council's Emergency Committee.</li> <li>• Ensure continual operation of non-affected council services.</li> </ul>

**Cabinet Members**

Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Cabinet Members have a collective remit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authorise additional financial expenditure, if required;</li> <li>• support and advise on reallocation of resources;</li> <li>• act as a focal point for those Members whose electoral areas are affected;</li> <li>• take part in press conferences, to assist in informing and reassuring residents;</li> <li>• monitor the response, as necessary, and raise any issues with relevant parties;</li> <li>• be accountable for the council response.</li> </ul>
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**Elected Members**

Roles and Responsibilities	<p>As representatives of the council and the public, Councillors will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safeguard the interests of their constituents;</li> <li>• provide local knowledge;</li> <li>• act as a channel for information between the council and the public;</li> <li>• assist in the handling of the media through liaison with the Duty Comms Officer and senior officers;</li> <li>• manage the expectations of the public during the response and recovery phases of an emergency;</li> <li>• support council responders, when required, but ensure they have the space and ability to complete response tasks;</li> <li>• act as the public face of the council in interviews, if required.</li> </ul>
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**Duty Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO)**

There is a Duty Emergency Planning Officer available 24hrs a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year to coordinate Sandwell Council's emergency response.	
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Main duties are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• receive incident reports and alerts;</li> <li>• determine an appropriate level of response;</li> <li>• consider an appropriate method of escalation should the incident increase in scale and seriousness;</li> <li>• liaise with the emergency services, central government and other support organisations;</li> <li>• receive requests for Local Authority assistance from the emergency services – plant and equipment, representative for SCG/TCG/Control Rooms etc.</li> <li>• consider the needs of vulnerable citizens in the community;</li> <li>• liaise with all affected Service Areas within the Council;</li> <li>• produce timely situation reports to Members, IMT and responding officers;</li> <li>• arrange for the Incident Room to be opened and staffed accordingly;</li> <li>• arrange for the opening of, transportation to and staffing of an emergency Rest Centre(s);</li> <li>• facilitate the provision of beds and bedding at the Rest Centre(s);</li> <li>• advise the Incident Management Team, as required;</li> <li>• act as Tactical Advisor for representatives at multi-agency meetings;</li> <li>• resolve emergency response issues that may arise.</li> </ul>



**Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO)**

There is a Local Authority Liaison Officer available 24hrs a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to support Sandwell Council's emergency response at the scene of an incident.

Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Main duties are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To attend the scene of an incident, a Rest Centre or another location to act as Sandwell Council's representative.</li> <li>• To act as a liaison officer between the Emergency Services, Voluntary Sector. Utilities and the council's employees and/or service providers on site.</li> <li>• If attending the incident scene to obtain a risk assessment report (verbally) from the emergency services' incident control point regarding site safety (recording an entry in log book)</li> <li>• To work with the emergency responders on site by implementing JESIP</li> <li>• To assist the emergency services in evacuating members of the public liaising with the Duty Emergency Planning Officer regarding council provided transport, rest centres etc.</li> <li>• To agree with the Duty Emergency Planning Officer the most appropriate Rest Centre facility to be opened</li> <li>• If attending a Rest Centre to open up the building if necessary and conduct a dynamic risk assessment of the facility and agree suitability with the Duty Emergency Planning Officer</li> <li>• To greet and work with the British Red Cross at the facility who will man and run the Rest Centre</li> <li>• To liaise with transport providers at the site or rest centre with regard to H&amp;S and suitability of the vehicles etc.</li> <li>• To keep the Duty Emergency Planning Officer briefed</li> <li>• To refer all media enquiries to the Duty Comms Officer or the Incident Room.</li> </ul>
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**Duty Comms Officer**

There is a Duty Comms Officer available 24hrs a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year to coordinate Sandwell Council's media, social media and digital response in an emergency.

Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Main duties are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide an out-of-hours media management service;</li> <li>• liaise with the DEPO and regularly update internal communication channels;</li> <li>• keep the DEPO, IMT and other relevant parties briefed on media interest and issues;</li> <li>• liaise with and support media officers from the emergency services and other responding organisations to ensure consistent messages reach the public;</li> <li>• update public-facing communication channels, including the council website, Facebook, Instagram, X and LinkedIn, and provide the media with information.</li> </ul>
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**Service Liaison Officers**

According to the nature of the incident Service Areas will ensure a Service Liaison Officer is available to provide advice. The Service Liaison Officer will be an experienced member of staff with a sufficient level of authority.

Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Main duties are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider the incident and any impact on their service;</li> <li>• inform the Incident Management Team of the severity of the incident and request that resources be made available;</li> <li>• seek solutions to problems identified;</li> <li>• maintain a log of decisions and actions during the event;</li> <li>• feedback problems/ issues affecting the Service Area as part of the overall response of the council;</li> <li>• attend meetings and Incident Room (IR), as required.</li> </ul>
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## Appendix E Tactical Cells

Work Cell Name	Roles & Responsibilities	Who should be involved	Considerations
<b>Communications</b>	<p>Manage both internal &amp; external messages, working closely with the media and partner agencies undertaking tasks such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media briefings, conferences &amp; statements (Media enquiries, media analysis)</li> <li>Intranet, internet &amp; social media content (social media monitoring)</li> <li>Communications with elected members</li> <li>Supporting the LRF comms response</li> <li>Staff briefings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comms manager / Duty Comms officer</li> <li>Elected members</li> <li>Relevant council services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All messages to the public or any media reps should be channelled via the comms work cell.</li> <li>Liaise with and support media officers from the emergency services and other responding organisations to ensure consistent messages reach the public;</li> <li>Manage Social Media aspects during an incident</li> <li>Update public-facing comms channels, incl. council website, X, Facebook and provide the media with information sharing of official updates</li> </ul>
<b>Environment &amp; Infrastructure</b>	<p>Oversight and management of the authority's response to 'open world' and environmental issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Health &amp; Pollution issues</li> <li>Environment &amp; Infrastructure Recovery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highways</li> <li>Environmental Health</li> <li>Assets &amp; Land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish risk registers for each work stream</li> <li>Corporate Risk Register / Strategic Risk Register /</li> </ul>

Work Cell Name	Roles & Responsibilities	Who should be involved	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flood Risk Management</li> <li>Support to affected Council services</li> <li>Road traffic management</li> <li>CCTV network</li> <li>Waste Management</li> <li>Animal Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serco</li> <li>CCTV Control Room (Roway Lane)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Risk Register</li> <li>Consider &amp; agree risk description</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<p>Provide the physical and structural resources and the corporate technical advisers to respond to an incident. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finance</li> <li>Legal</li> <li>ICT, Cyber &amp; Telephony</li> <li>Facilities</li> <li>Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>Housing Repairs / Property services</li> <li>Human Resources</li> <li>Transport</li> <li>Security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities manager</li> <li>Finance manager</li> <li>ICT Strategic Lead / ICT Business Partner</li> <li>Business Excellence Service Manager</li> <li>Legal Manager</li> <li>HR Manager</li> <li>Health &amp; Safety Manager</li> <li>Housing Manager / Service manager</li> <li>Internal Transport Manager</li> </ul>	<p>Assess for the need of and allocate financial support where deemed necessary.</p> <p>Liaise with transport providers and ensure that transport is arranged if required.</p> <p>Ensure that health and safety risk assessments are current and adhered to.</p>
<b>Health &amp; Welfare</b>	<p>Proactively provide support to Council Officers, residents, visitors to the area and others, in order to reduce the health &amp; social impact of an incident. This will include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience Team</li> <li>Duty Officers</li> <li>Public Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguard Vulnerable children &amp; adults</li> <li>Support identification of</li> </ul>

Work Cell Name	Roles & Responsibilities	Who should be involved	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency Social Care</li> <li>Emergency Centres (Rest centres / HACs)</li> <li>Public Health</li> <li>Bereavement Services</li> <li>Advice &amp; support for Education</li> <li>Health &amp; Welfare Recovery</li> <li>Accommodation, feeding &amp; benefits</li> </ul>	Consultant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revs &amp; Bens</li> <li>Adult &amp; Social Care</li> <li>Education officer</li> </ul>	vulnerable persons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placing relevant officers on standby (LALO, Transport officers, Duty Comms Officer)</li> </ul>
<b>Information Management</b>	<p>The Information Management work-cell will NOT provide technical support to service areas during an emergency. The main responsibility of the Information Management Work-Cell is to meet the needs of the IMT, providing support as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting the set up &amp; running of the Incident Room</li> <li>Taking partners, staff &amp; elected members messages</li> <li>Assigning messages to responders</li> <li>Monitoring of outstanding messages &amp; recording when they are actioned</li> <li>Incident Logs, information points &amp; boards</li> <li>Admin support including loggists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience Team</li> <li>Information Management Officers</li> <li>Loggists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support staff emergency hotlines</li> <li>Support to Incident Management Team</li> <li>Managing data to aid effective decision making</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Business &amp; Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assesses the short- &amp; long-term economic impacts for the area</li> <li>Provides assistance to the business</li> </ul>	Business sector managers, both within the council and from external agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide support &amp; guidance for businesses affected to resume trading as soon as</li> </ul>

Work Cell Name	Roles & Responsibilities	Who should be involved	Considerations
	sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate engagement with businesses in area on behalf of the council and relevant partners in respect of the crisis or major incident</li> <li>• Support &amp; influence the development and delivery of the regional plans or arrangements by engaging with relevant groups, bodies and projects</li> <li>• Liaise and work with local &amp; Regional support organisations to coordinate and promote the uptake of business and employment support</li> </ul>	Consumer and trade bodies	possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise an economic recovery strategy that takes account of regeneration and economic development opportunities in the affected area</li> </ul>
<b>Community Recovery &amp; Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing engagement/support to communities &amp; individuals affected</li> <li>• Wider voluntary sector engagement</li> <li>• Management of spontaneous volunteers &amp; donations</li> <li>• Management of Disaster appeals</li> <li>• Receiving and escalating feedback from communities and individuals affected</li> <li>• Supporting council services that have post-incident statutory responsibilities in locations affected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Safety Team</li> <li>• Voluntary and faith sector leads</li> <li>• Welfare rights and Citizens Advice Bureau</li> <li>• Wellbeing service providers</li> <li>• SCVO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longer Term community recovery</li> <li>• Signposting to support mechanisms such as food and financial assistance</li> <li>• Data collection and gathering from affected communities</li> <li>• Recruitment of volunteers and their H&amp;S and wellbeing</li> </ul>

## Appendix F Incident Management AGENDA

Incident Management Meeting Agenda	
Emergency/Major Incident:	Describe or detail the event
Meeting Number:	
Time and Date:	
Location:	
Chair:	
Minutes:	

	Name	Role
Attendance:		
Apologies:		

Item	Summary
1.	Welcome & Introductions/apologies approval of previous minutes (if applicable)
2.	Background to Incident:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information</li> <li>• Intelligence (If applicable)</li> <li>• Scale</li> <li>• Duration</li> <li>• Impact</li> </ul>
3.	Appoint Council Representatives/Leads:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Coordinating Group Liaison</li> <li>• Tactical Coordinating Group Liaison</li> <li>• Operational</li> <li>• Public Relations</li> <li>• Recovery</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
4.	Strategic Council aim, objectives and priorities
5.	Issues for immediate action/decision

6.	Service Updates
7.	Considerations:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Legal</li> <li>• Health, Safety &amp; Welfare Issues</li> <li>• Resources (equipment, personnel)</li> <li>• Business Continuity</li> <li>• Mutual Aid/Contractors</li> </ul>
8.	Liaison and Communication:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Services/Teams/Responders</li> <li>• External Responders/Partners</li> <li>• Public</li> <li>• Elected Members</li> <li>• Government – MHCLG Resilience and Emergencies Division</li> </ul>
9.	Battle Rhythm:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting Frequency</li> <li>• Situation Reports Frequency</li> <li>• Mutual Aid/Contractors</li> </ul>
10.	Summary of Actions allocated during meeting
11.	Time, date & place of next meeting



**Appendix G Incident Information Handover Sheet**

Date		Outgoing Officer	
Time		Incoming Officer	

Summary of Events	
Major Decisions Taken	
Unresolved Issues	
Information required still	
Activities still in progress	
Anticipated decisions required	

## Appendix H Situation Report Template

Incident			Report No.	001
Date		Time		
DEPO			0121 569 4123	
Duty/Incident Director			0121 569 4133	
LALO			0121 569 4101	
Incident Classification				
Major Incident				
Exact Location				
Type of Incident				
Hazards				
Access				
Number casualties				
Emergency services				
Live Map Link				
<b>Situation</b>				
<b>Response</b>				
<b>Forward Look</b>				