

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

24 November 2010

EMERGENCY PLANNING INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP - UPDATE

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR (GOVERNANCE)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report is submitted to the Winchester Town Forum at the recommendation of the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group.

The final report of the Group (Report EN100 refers – attached at Appendix 2) was considered at the meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Panel held on 20 July 2010 and subsequently at Cabinet on 15 September 2010. Cabinet agreed to the Panel's recommendations in principle, but the detail of the implementation was delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities. For completeness, the amendments to the recommendations that were submitted to Cabinet on 15 September and are set out in Appendix 1 in italics.

Subsequent to Cabinet, consultation has taken place with Hampshire County Council on the best way to implement the recommendations for which they have responsibility. These are incorporated into the letter from the Portfolio Holder for Communities to all Parish Councils (copying to all Members) explaining the Report's recommendations. This letter is attached to this Report as Appendix 3.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Winchester Town Forum notes the recommendations of the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group and the letter of the Portfolio Holder for Communities and identifies any further issues that it wishes to raise.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Amendments to the recommendations as requested at Environmental Scrutiny Panel on 20 July that were submitted to Cabinet on 15 September 2010.

Appendix 2: Report EN100 – Final Report of the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group.

Appendix 3: Letter of the Portfolio Holder for Communities.

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

24 November 2010

EMERGENCY PLANNING INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP - UPDATE

The amendments to the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group's recommendations that were submitted to Cabinet on 15 September 2010, are set out below in italics.

1. That in respect of the vulnerable:

1.1 That Hampshire County Council be aware of the need to provide assistance to the vulnerable, not already on the risk register, living in rural communities in the event of a loss of electricity or a pandemic situation.

2. That in respect of communications:

2.1 That *within Councillor Lipscomb's letter* the Parish Councils and community groups be encouraged to identify a person to champion and lead on emergency planning and provide a second individual to provide administrative support and to store and update emergency planning documentation.

2.2 That in the event of an incident, such as severe weather, frequent updates on the situation be circulated *by the Head of Communications* to all Members.

2.3 That further consideration be given *by Hampshire County Council* to publicising the opening of Prepared Rest Centres and Parish Community Halls when opened, to include signage and the use of Parish Notice Boards, in order that the public are directed to safe areas.

2.4 That resilient communication channels be established between *City Council's Emergency Planning Officer and Parish Councils and other Community Groups with Emergency Plans and an incident control point, such as through Hants Direct or Winchester City Council's out-of-hours service (though this would need enhancing for the purpose).*

2.5 That *Hampshire County Council increase public awareness of the need to tune into local radio stations and websites* ~~be increased.~~

2.6 That *Hampshire County Council, in consultation with City Council's Emergency Planning Officer, information be provided information* on the provision of grit bins, their location, their replenishment and responsibilities for spreading grit in the event of adverse weather.

2.7 That information be provided by *the Head of Access and Infrastructure in consultation with City Council's Emergency Planning Officer* on the availability, distribution and effective use of the provision of sandbags.

2.8 That a clear and positive message be given *by the City Council's Emergency Planning Officer* on the legal liabilities of homeowners clearing pathways of snow and ice outside of their properties.

3. That in respect of Community Plans:

3.1 That *Parish Council* plans include details of plant and machinery that can be called upon to assist in the event of an incident.

3.2 That identified high risks, such as flooding, be planned for in advance by *Hampshire County Council in consultation with City Council's Emergency Planning Officer*.

3.3 That *Hampshire County Council in consultation with City Council's Emergency Planning Officer* give special consideration ~~be~~ given to the needs of Whiteley (including the participation of the Whiteley Business Forum) and Winchester Town and that the final report be taken to the Winchester Town Forum.

3.4 That appropriate Parish Councils consider establishing links with major employers in their Parishes to improve resilience and establish the possibility of mutual aid and that Parish Councils be encouraged to work with neighbouring parishes to produce effective emergency plans.

3.5 That the resources and expertise available from Winchester Area Community Action be given consideration *by Hampshire County Council in consultation with City Council's Emergency Planning Officer* when preparing community plans.

4. That the Environment Scrutiny Panel should review biennially the effectiveness of the changes recommended by it to Cabinet, if adopted.

Cabinet agreed to the Panel's recommendations in principle, but the detail of the implementation was delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities.

**Environment Scrutiny Panel – 20 July 2010
Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group - Final Report**

**Report of the Chairman of the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny
Group - Councillor Lipscomb.**

Contact: Dave Shaw (01962) 848221 Email: dshaw@winchester.gov.uk

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Panel with the opportunity to comment on the final report from the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group (ISG) convened in November 2009 and make any amendments it considers necessary before being recommended to Cabinet.

1.2 The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider this matter as part of its role in holding the Portfolio Holder to account and monitoring the progress the Council is making in building emergency planning resilience at the community level. The ISG considered issues related to communication in the event of a civil emergency and the extent to which local communities are involved in planning for civil emergencies.

Recommendations

1. That the Scrutiny Panel considers the report and recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Group.
2. That the Panel request that Cabinet approve the recommendations of the ISG set out on page 13 of the report.
3. That the Portfolio Holder for Communities report on Cabinet's progress to implement the recommendations of the ISG to the Environment Scrutiny Panel in 2012.

Risk Management Issues

There are no risk management issues arising from this Report.

Background Documents

None

Appendices

Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group Report



Winchester
City Council

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

REPORT EN100

20 July 2010

**Report of the Chairman of the Scrutiny
Review**

Councillor Barry Lipscomb

**EMERGENCY
PLANNING
INFORMAL
SCRUTINY
GROUP**

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN – Cllr Barry Lipscomb

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At the Environment Scrutiny Panel on 11 November 2009, Councillors Lipscomb, Busher, Howell, Mather and Spender were appointed to the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group.

1.2 The Panel met on four occasions. At its first meeting held on 14 December 2009 the City Council's Chief Executive, Simon Eden and the Head of Emergency Planning at Hampshire County Council, Ian Hoults, were in attendance. The second meeting of the Group was held on 14 January 2010 with Kate Ball, Head of Communications, Hampshire County Council; Eleanor Hodge, Head of Communications, Winchester City Council, and Dennis Brady, Senior Emergency Planning Officer, Hampshire County Council in attendance.

1.3 The third meeting of the Group was held on 4 March 2010 with the following representatives of parish councils and voluntary and community groups in attendance:

Durley Parish Council - Frank Holtrum and Ann Collins
 Hursley Parish Council – Councillor Bell
 Northington Parish Council – Monica Nightingale
 Otterbourne Parish Council - Suzanne Hudson
 South Wonston Parish Council - Eileen Bolton
 Sparsholt Parish Council - David Parker
 Whiteley Parish Council - Kairen Goves
 Wickham Parish Council - Michael Bennett
 Winchester Area Community Action (WACA) - Paul Williams

1.4 The final meeting of the Group was held on 14 April 2010 and was attended by Simon Eden and Dennis Brady and gave consideration to the content of the final report of the Informal Scrutiny Group.

1.5 At the first meeting of the Group held on 14 December 2009, the following terms of reference were agreed, bearing in mind that, in initiating the ISG, the Environment Scrutiny Panel had asked it to concentrate its scrutiny on local communities' involvement with Emergency Planning

1. To review WCC and HCC procedures and plans that are in place to involve local communities in preparing for and reacting to civil emergencies.

2. To assess the extent to which there are emergency plans and procedures in place at the parish (or Winchester Town level).
3. To review the effectiveness of communications with the public and Parish Councils on arrangements to be followed in the event of a civil emergency (to include a review of work being undertaken by the Local Resilience Forum Warning and Informing Group).
4. To assess the extent to which local communities are involved in planning for civil emergencies.
5. To take oral evidence in pursuance of 2 to 4 above.
6. That the conclusions of the Panel be reported to Cabinet.

1.7 In terms of defining what constitutes an emergency, the guidance from the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 states that it is:

“Any event or situation, which threatens serious damage to human welfare, threatens serious damage to the environment and war or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to security.”

1.8 Of importance is who can declare an emergency incident. A major incident can be declared by any member of the emergency services, but in certain circumstances, such as flooding, it can be declared by a local authority. At the local level, communities that have prepared their own Emergency Plans would be able to consider their invocation to support the emergency services on declaration of an emergency incident, or could choose to implement them in part outside of a declared incident, such as in response to a minor flooding situation, or to clear a fallen tree.

1.9 During an emergency incident, Winchester City Council also provides support to the emergency services. If the incident is of significance, the City will establish its Emergency Control Centre in the City Offices. The City Council will provide expertise in the functions for which it has responsibility, principally environment health, housing, building control and engineering. It will also provide a point of contact and dissemination of information for the District’s population and undertake a coordinating role. The City can also provide equipment and plant as requested by the emergency services.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2.1 **At the first meeting of the Group**, Ian Hoults informed Members that the Cabinet Office was itself forming legislation to improve community resilience at the local level.

2.2 The objective of community resilience was to allow communities and individuals to harness local resources and expertise to join together to help themselves.

2.3 There had been a number of significant incidents such as flooding and severe weather that had highlighted the benefits that could be obtained through building community resilience.

2.4 Work had been carried out in recent years by Hampshire County Council prior to the forthcoming legislation to assist in building community resilience. The County Council had on its website under Emergency Planning Unit, Emergency Plans templates for preparing a Community Emergency Plan and associated guidance notes – these can also be viewed by this [link](#). These had been progressed through the Winchester Association of Parish Councils and via direct contact. Swanmore and Denmead Parish Councils had prepared their own plans with professional support provided by Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit.

2.5 It was for communities themselves to define the most appropriate boundaries and representation for their plan. For example, some community plans might be based on geographic boundary, such as a parish council ward area, but in other cases a cultural or ethnic Group or an individual housing development might be more appropriate. The template could be used in all circumstances with minor adjustment. A partnership approach was encouraged to develop the Community plan. An important message was for communities and individuals to protect themselves but not to put themselves in danger.

2.6 At the first meeting, two principal themes developed - the protection of the vulnerable and the importance of communications.

3.1 **At the second meeting of the Group**, the communication representatives stated that in response to the reporting of an incident, the emergency services would provide an immediate response where lives were threatened. Should the County Council's Emergency Planning Unit be contacted by the emergency services, the County's Communications Team would also be contacted through their 24 hour contact arrangements.

3.2 If the incident was of a significant nature, then a media cell would be established and the Local Resilience Forum's Major Incident Media Plan would be implemented. Within the Media Plan, mutual aid was important, with a duty officer on standby to provide an out-of-hours response if required.

3.3 During the heavy January snow, a telephone helpline was established through Hants Direct, with the Emergency Planning Unit working in association with Adult Services responding to calls. Adult services used their contacts with existing carers and the meals-on-wheels service to provide information about those at risk. Employers had been requested to allow staff to stagger their journeys and Local Resilience Forum agencies had worked together through the Media Plan to provide a consistent message.

3.4 Local media, such as BBC Solent, were used to provide a local message. Details on closures of schools were provided through radio and websites. In considering methods to provide local messages it was now recognised that social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, provided valuable sources of information.

3.5 Members agreed that a positive message should be given on the legal liabilities of homeowners clearing pathways outside of their properties.

3.6 The Group also discussed methods of communication with the public and parish councils. It was suggested that working through Neighbourhood Watch schemes, Residents' Associations, Scouting organisations and neighbours acting as volunteers could be useful. Information on access to sandbags would also be of use.

3.7 It was also recognised that for messages to be adopted, the timing of the message was important. Times of stress, such as in periods of heavy snow, were more likely times to stimulate public interest. Any proposal also needed to be resilient.

3.8 The Group supported the use of an emergency response card to promote the emergency planning message, including the promotion of wind-up radios and torches.

4.1 **At the third meeting of the Group**, representation was received from the following Parish Council and Voluntary Sector representatives:

Durley Parish Council - Frank Holtrum and Ann Collins
 Hursley Parish Council – Councillor Bell
 Northington Parish Council – Monica Nightingale
 Otterbourne Parish Council - Suzanne Hudson
 South Wonston Parish Council - Eileen Bolton
 Sparsholt Parish Council - David Parker
 Whiteley Parish Council - Kairen Goves
 Wickham Parish Council - Michael Bennett
 Winchester Area Community Action (WACA) - Paul Williams

4.2 Durley Parish Council had an emergency plan for the village and a list of vulnerable persons. Lessons learnt from the heavy snow in January had been the need for grit bins at crossroads and on steep hills, and also the importance of the parish hall for providing a safe refuge. The parish had no resources to provide bedding or emergency supplies. The publicity regarding the location of Rest Centres and local facilities was also raised.

4.3 Otterbourne Parish Council did have an emergency plan. What would be of use would be information on the availability of sandbags in the event of ground water flooding and also a building to store them in, together with information on their distribution and effective use. Neighbourhood and Civil Enforcement Officers also provided a valuable asset in protecting a community.

4.4 Sparsholt Parish Council sought clarity on methods of communication between parish councils and the Adverse Weather Unit, which had been established at Netley to co-ordinate the emergency response to the heavy snow in January. The awareness and sharing of information was extremely important.

4.5 The January heavy snow had caused considerable problems at Whiteley. Commuters had been trapped at Whiteley all night. No emergency refuge had been allocated and no signage or diversion signs had been provided to indicate that the Yew Tree Drive rising bollard system was open to all traffic. There was a need for digital information signs for Whiteley. In the event of an accident on the M27 or A27, Whiteley often came to a complete standstill. Unfortunately, when Whiteley traffic realised that there was a problem, residents were already committed to Whiteley Way and could not therefore turn around. Non urgent journeys could be postponed if digital traffic information signs were in place and this could reduce additional congestion. The principal issues arising were identifying who to call, the direction of people to an allocated safe area and the provision of improved information, perhaps through digital signs.

4.6 Hursley Parish Council did not have an emergency plan. However, a lot had been done to address the principal risks to the area including flooding, by installing pumps within cellars that were prone to flooding and also providing sandbags for individuals. Many properties within the community relied upon electricity for heating. During heavy snow and with the loss of power these properties would be unheated, perhaps for a period exceeding 24 hours. The provision of grit bins was now being looked into, as it had been found that in many areas their provision and the stockpile of grit had proved to be inadequate. The County Council had set aside financial provision for grit bins and had consulted with parish councils for their future provision. They would also ensure that they would be kept full.

4.7 South Wonston Parish Council did not have an emergency plan, and did not have a list of vulnerable people. The grit bins were also found to be empty in the January heavy snow. South Wonston was a compact community which aided communications, and information had been placed on Parish notice boards to inform the local community.

4.8 Wickham Parish Council did not have an emergency plan. The Parish Council did not have a list of vulnerable people and it was commented that such a list would be soon out of date unless it was frequently updated. The protection of the vulnerable relied upon neighbours checking each other's welfare. To improve communications in an emergency situation, it was suggested that a telephone number could be published to take calls and to receive, gather and collate information. For example in the recent heavy snow, parish councils had not been aware that the Adverse Weather Centre at Netley had been opened.

4.9 Northington Parish Council had coped well during the heavy snow. There was no provision of gas in the local area and following electricity cuts, hot drinks

could not be supplied. The Parish Council was unaware of the support that could be obtained from the County Council.

4.10 Winchester Area Community Action (WACA) supported voluntary and community Groups in parishes across the Winchester District. The organisation had 30 part-time staff. The organisation also provided skills in fund-raising, organisation and governance to voluntary and community organisations. WACA also had responsibility for dial a ride and community transport and had five minibuses and additional cars at its disposal. In the event of an emergency situation WACA could assist in compiling lists of vulnerable persons, provide transport, use its communication network and assist in co-ordination.

4.11 In respect of the involvement and support of WACA, the Group agreed that this should be investigated further but, due to the short lead-in time that was required to respond to an incident, for example in identifying vulnerable persons, the existing databases of Hampshire County Council Adult and Children Services should be relied upon.

5. Protection of vulnerable persons

5.1 Protection of those deemed to be vulnerable at local level was a major consideration for the Group. Mr Hoult informed Members that experience had shown that in the event of an evacuation of an area following an incident, some 70 per cent of those affected would self-evacuate. The focus of the emergency services was therefore to ensure the welfare of those remaining.

5.2 A major piece of work for the County Council at present was developing methods to identify and protect those deemed to be vulnerable. Work was progressing in conjunction with General Practitioners, the National Health Service and Hampshire County Council's Adult Services to identify those at risk.

5.3 Of importance to rural communities was the prolonged loss of electricity. Members of the Group identified that in rural communities which were without alternative means of power, such as gas or oil, the loss of electricity could leave a household without heating and a means of cooking for a considerable period. This situation was exacerbated where the vulnerable were involved. The electricity providers should prioritise restoration of services to take account of households that were most susceptible to the situation outlined above. Mr Hoult informed the meeting that the Emergency Planning Unit had close contact with Category 2 responders, such as the power utilities, to assist in prioritisation. During the heavy snow in early January 2010, 20,000 homes in the Hampshire Area had lost power, principally caused by trees falling against power lines.

5.4 The Group agreed that the Chairman would write a letter on behalf of the Group to all parish councils, to highlight the importance for residents and communities to build resilience at the local level in the event of a power failure.

5.5 The Group expressed concern that there was often no co-ordinated means of identifying the vulnerable within communities, though neighbour self-help was suspected to be widespread in varying forms. Members took this into consideration when taking evidence from Parish and Town Councils.

5.6 An additional consideration was the support to rural and vulnerable communities during a pandemic situation where communities and individuals could find themselves isolated from medical support and from neighbours to collect medical provision.

5.7 The Group acknowledged that in respect of the awareness of vulnerable people, the Winchester town area faced differing challenges from the rural communities due to its more transient student population and from visitors. It was agreed to take the Group's final report to the Winchester Town Forum.

6. Communications

6.1 Emergency planning had to strike a balance between raising awareness without raising alarm.

6.2 Of importance was finding a method to reach out into communities. A key objective was to identify a person to champion and lead on emergency planning at the local level and also a second individual to provide administrative support and be a custodian of emergency planning documentation. The Group agreed that the Chairman include reference to this in a letter to all parish councils.

6.3 The methods of communication employed were largely dependent on the nature of the incident. The emergency services would provide an immediate response where lives were threatened, and the "blue light" services were supported by their own communication teams.

6.4 In situations involving the County Council's Emergency Planning Unit, the means of contacting of the County's internal Communications Team was a priority. The Communications Team had a 24 hour contact arrangement. If the incident was of sufficient magnitude, then a media cell would be established and the Local Resilience Forum's Major Incident Media Plan would be implemented. The Media Plan also provided advice and guidance on disaster preparation and prevention. Members noted that this communication was perhaps more effective outward from the internal Communications Team and the Emergency Planning Unit than in the reverse direction.

6.5 The Major Incident Media Plan had been implemented on 5 January 2010, following notification of an extreme weather event by the Met Office. The Media Cell had been established at Gold Command at Netley Police Headquarters and had established a close working relationship with the national media to maintain a consistent message with the correct facts.

6.6 A telephone helpline had been established through Hants Direct. The filtering of calls provided the opportunity to check data on potentially violent clients and to use registered volunteers who had received the necessary clearance.

6.7 It was clarified that the Adverse Weather Office established during the January snows was part of the Police operation and was not for receiving public calls. However, consideration should be given to providing a point of contact for Parish Council's to use during an emergency as an alternative to the 999 number. Secondary points of contact in an emergency could possibly be through Hants Direct or Winchester City Council's out-of-hours service (though this would need enhancing for the purpose).

6.8 Appeals were made through local media and the County's own communications channels, such as its website, to encourage neighbours to provide support to those living within their local area. Messages had also been provided by radio and through websites to encourage employers to allow staff to stagger their journeys.

6.9 Examples of positive communications had been the update provided by the County's Director of Environment, which had been circulated to all Members and Parish Councils. In addition, frequent updates on the situation with regard to refuse collection had been circulated by the City Council.

6.10 The timing of promotional messages was important, for example to include items in the District's and County's publications in October prior to the winter season or to publish shortly after an incident such as the recent severe winter.

7. Methods to support community resilience

7.1 In planning for emergencies at the local level, the Group identified a number of key elements that should be given further consideration for inclusion within emergency planning.

7.2 To be effective at the local level a Community Plan needed to include details of plant and machinery that could be called upon to assist in the case of an incident. Examples included reference to local owners of chainsaws, tractors (with snow ploughs), four-wheel-drive vehicles and groups who may provide support, such as the Farmers' Union.

7.3 There were a number of high risk incidents that could be identified and planned for in advance. Such a situation might be the occurrence of flooding in a high risk area, such as an identified flood plain.

7.4 Although the County Council had opened five Prepared Rest Centres on the evening of 5 January 2010 due to the impact of heavy snow, two of which were in Winchester's area, the communication of their opening required further consideration. It was noted that the County Council was considering

mechanisms to open secondary buildings, for example schools and churches, to act as additional Rest Centres in times of an emergency.

7.5 The County Council and the supporting voluntary agencies, St John's Ambulance and the Red Cross, had committed considerable resources to provide these Rest Centre facilities and to support their continued opening, but the representatives of Whiteley Parish Council were unaware of their opening and had made representation to the Group that no facility had been provided. Appropriate signage should be provided, which could include the use of a parish notice board.

7.6 The means of communication between Parish Councils and the Adverse Weather Unit, which was opened at Netley to co-ordinate the emergency response to the heavy snow in January, needed to be established. There was a need to know who to call in the event of an emergency. The publication of a telephone number to take calls and to receive, gather and collate information would be of assistance. Parish Councils and residents needed to know who to go to for help. They also needed to be made aware that an incident was taking place and to be kept up-to-date on developments. There was also a need to know that a helpline for a co-ordinating body had been opened.

7.7 The use of local radio and websites was vitally important, for example in providing information on school closures as well as traffic information. It would be up to each Parish Council to decide how best to disseminate the information received within its own community.

7.8 The provision of salt and grit to cope with an extreme weather event, such as the heavy snow encountered in early January, required further consideration. It was noted that Hampshire County Council had contacted communities to treble the amount of grit bins provided in order that local communities could help themselves to improve community resilience.

7.9 In the parishes, it would be for the Parish Council to provide grit bins and Hampshire County Council would fill them free of charge. Winchester Town Forum was also considering provision of additional bins for the Winchester town area. The provision of grit bins at crossroads and on steep hills would be welcomed. There needed to be a regime to ensure that grit bins were kept full and there should be identification of who took responsibility for spreading the grit once it had been delivered by Hampshire County Council.

7.10 A clear and positive message should be given on the legal liabilities of homeowners clearing pathways of snow and ice outside of their properties prior to events.

7.11 The establishment of communication links with parish councils, neighbourhood watch schemes, residents' associations and scouting organisations could be useful. Methods of communicating information also

needed to be resilient and the messages themselves needed to be of sufficient quality, frequency and consistency to be of benefit.

7.12 Clarity of information on the provision of sandbags would be useful. This included information on their availability, distribution and effective use together with a means of storage.

7.13 The direction of people to allocated safe areas was of vital importance. Parish and community halls provided important safe refuges as part of community resilience. A number of parish councils had recognised the use of their parish hall to provide a refuge for stranded commuters, but they had no resources to provide bedding or emergency supplies. These parish halls were separate to the Rest Centres opened and operated by Hampshire County Council. Once opened, the Rest Centres and parish halls required sufficient publicity of their location.

7.14 The extent of the identification of the vulnerable between parish councils was variable, with some parish councils having a list of those deemed to be vulnerable, and with other parish councils relying on local knowledge and good neighbourly contact. Where a list existed it required frequent updating.

7.15 Retired military personnel had often been used at parish council level to prepare emergency plans.

7.16 Neighbourhood Wardens and Civil Protection Officers and PCSOs provided a valuable resource in protecting a community.

7.17 Special consideration should be given to Whiteley, which had been particularly badly affected in the January heavy snow. The provision of digital signage would have been of assistance to provide information that the Yew Tree Drive rising bollard system had been lowered and this access route was open to all traffic. Due to transport infrastructure issues, Whiteley was also vulnerable to other hazards, such as a major fire or an accident on the M27. The Group agreed that the County Council was making progress on a traffic management plan for Whiteley and it was satisfied that no further action needed to be taken. The Group was not supportive of the use of digital signs, as proposed by the Parish Council representative at Whiteley, in view of the balance of cost to benefits and the practicality of their use.

7.18 Parish Councils might consider establishing links with major employers in their areas to improve resilience and establish the possibility of mutual aid.

7.19 Winchester Area Community Action could provide assistance in compiling lists of vulnerable persons, providing transport and using its communications network to assist in co-ordination in the event of a major incident.

7.20 Parish Councils should establish a chain of command. Where possible, there should be a champion to lead on Emergency Planning and also a support

officer to collate documentation. There should also be a recognised point of reference such as the Parish Council Offices or the Clerk to the parish council.

7.21 The building of community resilience in Winchester Town required separate consideration. Due to the location within the town of the emergency services and Hampshire County Council's and Winchester City Council's Emergency Planning Units, an emergency would be readily dealt with through existing arrangements. It was agreed to take the Group's final report to a meeting of the Winchester Town Forum.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That in respect of the vulnerable:
 - 1.1 That Hampshire County Council be aware of the need to provide assistance to the vulnerable, not already on at risk register, living in rural communities in the event of a loss of electricity or a pandemic situation.
2. That in respect of communications:
 - 2.1 That Parish Councils and community groups be encouraged to identify a person to champion and lead on emergency planning and provide a second individual to provide administrative support and to store and update emergency planning documentation.
 - 2.2 That in the event of an incident, such as severe weather, frequent updates on the situation be circulated to all Members.
 - 2.3 That further consideration be given to publicising the opening of Prepared Rest Centres and Parish Community Halls when opened, to include signage and the use of Parish Notice Boards, in order that the public are directed to safe areas.
 - 2.4 That resilient communication channels be established between Parish Councils and other Community Groups with Emergency Plans and an incident control point, such as through Hants Direct or Winchester City Council's out-of-hours service (though this would need enhancing for the purpose).
 - 2.5 That public awareness of the need to tune into local radio stations and websites be increased.
 - 2.6 That information be provided on the provision of grit bins, their location, their replenishment and responsibilities for spreading grit in the event of adverse weather.
 - 2.7 That information be provided on the availability, distribution and effective use of the provision of sandbags.

- 2.8 That a clear and positive message be given on the legal liabilities of homeowners clearing pathways of snow and ice outside of their properties.
3. That in respect of Community Plans:
- 3.1 That plans include details of plant and machinery that can be called upon to assist in the event of an incident.
- 3.2 That identified high risks, such as flooding, be planned for in advance.
- 3.3 That special consideration be given to the needs of Whiteley (including the participation of the Whiteley Business Forum) and Winchester Town and that the final report be taken to the Winchester Town Forum.
- 3.4 That appropriate Parish Councils consider establishing links with major employers in their Parishes to improve resilience and establish the possibility of mutual aid and that Parish Councils be encouraged to work with neighbouring parishes to produce effective emergency plans.
- 3.5 That the resources and expertise available from Winchester Area Community action be given consideration when preparing community plans.
4. That the Environment Scrutiny Panel should review biennially the effectiveness of the changes recommended by it to Cabinet, if adopted.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations can be implemented from within existing resources, although if it is agreed that resilient communication channels are required to be established between Parish Councils and Winchester City Council's out-of-hours service there may be costs associated in enhancing it for this purpose.

RISKS

The Community Risk Register contains details of identified hazards and threats for the Winchester District.

HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED

That the Environment Scrutiny Panel biennially reviews the effectiveness of the changes recommended by it to Cabinet, if adopted.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ian Hault – County Emergency Planning Officer, Hampshire County Council.
Kate Ball, Head of Communications, Hampshire County Council
Eleanor Hodge, Head of Communications, Winchester City Council
Dennis Brady, Senior Emergency Planning Officer, Hampshire County Council

Durley Parish Council - Frank Holttrum and Ann Collins
Hursley Parish Council – Councillor Bell
Northington Parish Council – Monica Nightingale
Otterbourne Parish Council - Suzanne Hudson
South Wonston Parish Council - Eileen Bolton
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Whiteley Parish Council - Kairen Goves
Wickham Parish Council - Michael Bennett
Winchester Area Community Action (WACA) - Paul Williams

To all Town and Parish Clerks
Cc Winchester City Councillors

Your Ref:
Our Ref: DS/LIB 1
Enq to: Mr D Shaw
Direct Line: 01962 848221
Email: dshaw@winchester.gov.uk

November 2010

Dear Parish representative,

Community Emergency Planning

I am pleased to share with you the findings of the City Council Member scrutiny review which considered the involvement of local communities in preparing for and reacting to civil emergencies.

The review was undertaken by the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group established by the City's Environment Scrutiny Panel. The Group comprised of 5 City Councillors.

As part of the fact finding process the representatives of 8 Parish Councils attended one of our meetings held on 4 March 2010 and informed us of their knowledge and experience of emergency planning. I would like to thank these Parishes for their contribution.

The overriding conclusion of the review is the key role that local communities can take in planning for potential emergencies, in providing self help in response to an incident and in undertaking recovery.

The final Report of the Informal Scrutiny Group can be viewed from the following link ([EN100](#)).

In the event of an incident, the first to respond will invariably be the "blue light" services who are trained to a high level to protect our welfare. In support of these responders Hampshire County Council provides important services in caring for vulnerable people and providing safe places of refuge for those affected. The City Council will also provide support as requested, such as temporary housing, the assistance of Environmental Health Officers or the surveying of dangerous buildings for example. The County and City can also provide equipment and plant as requested by the emergency services.

However, public authorities alone cannot protect people from all the consequences of disasters. Resilience at the community level is crucial to maintaining safety and wellbeing, with communities and individuals harnessing local resources and expertise to help themselves. Developing more widely this kind of 'self help' approach will be a key activity in the coming years.

At the local level, communities that have prepared their own Emergency Plans would be able to consider their invocation to support the emergency services on declaration of an emergency incident, or could choose to implement them in part outside of a declared incident, such as in response to a minor flooding situation, or to clear a fallen tree. The objective of community resilience therefore is to allow communities and individuals to harness local resources and expertise to join together to help themselves.

Local elected members will also provide credible community leadership in times of need and play a leadership role in scrutinising local arrangements.

The scrutiny review recognised the importance of the protection of the vulnerable and having clear routes of communications. Guidance on these issues and additional detail, for example dealing with severe weather and the provision of sandbags and gritting, which were also considered during the review, are set out within the Appendices to this letter.

I do hope that you will find time to develop your own community emergency plans. The assistance of David Shaw from the City Council and officers from Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit can be called upon as required. Please contact David Shaw on 01962 848 221, email dshaw@winchester.gov.uk or please contact your District Ward Member who will make the contacts.

Kind Regards

Councillor Lucille Thompson – Portfolio Holder for Communities

Appendix 1 - Letter to Parish Councils

Appendix 2 - Government advice – [public self help guidance note](#)

Appendix 3 – [Parish Emergency Plan template and guidance note](#)

Appendix 1

Letter to Parish Councils

November 2010

Communications:

Local media, such as BBC Solent (96.1FM, 103.8FM and DAB), provide a local message and are the principal outlets for information from the Emergency Services. Details on closures of schools are provided through Radio Solent and on the BBC Hampshire and Isle of Wight and Hampshire County Council websites.

There are a number of potential incidents such as severe weather and flooding where, in advance of the event, the cascade of information will be top down. By this we mean that the Emergency Services, Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council and the City Council will be putting information into the community to warn and inform. As the incident progresses there may become a stage where the Parish may wish to input information from the local level to the responding agencies. This may be through Hampshire Direct (0845 603 5638) or the City Council's Customer Service Centre (01962 840222). Where the incident is of an extreme nature, the City Council may set up its Emergency Control Centre. If this is the case, an incident number will be published to deal with enquiries and provide a point of liaison.

As a Parish Council it would be for you to decide how best to disseminate the information received within your own community, but this method would be best decided in advance in order that parishioners are aware of how to access this information. For example, Parish Notice Boards could be used to inform the local community during an emergency.

Severe Weather

Snow

Clearing of snow – legal liabilities

During the heavy snow of January 2010 there were some mixed messages about the legal liabilities of homeowners clearing pathways outside of their properties.

By clearing the snow from your paths, you do not invite any extra liability that wouldn't have existed had you done nothing and left the snow on the ground. The only circumstance in which you might invite a claim was if you acted completely unreasonably, and somehow created a new hazard that had not existed before your actions. For example, if you poured huge quantities of water

on to your drive which then froze to create a dangerous hazard, this in theory might open you up to a claim.

Please also see the attached guidance note on self help from the Government.

Grit bins

The Scrutiny Review was made aware of the liaison between Parish Councils and Hampshire County Council on the provision of grit bins. In many cases the grit bins were being placed at crossroads and on steep hills and other strategic positions as agreed by the Parish. The County has provided additional grit bins to parishes following last winter's snow and will keep them topped up. The Parish might consider a local procedure for spreading the grit.

Gritting of highways and salt provision – Hampshire County Council

There is comprehensive information on winter salting and the prioritising of gritting on Hampshire County Council's website - [HCC guide to winter salting](#)

Following the snow in January 2010 it is likely that priority 1 and 2 gritting routes will be adjusted to include emergency services and transport hubs as well as some other key public transport facilities, such as main bus stations. Schools with 500 or more pupils are currently included on the priority 1 network and it is anticipated that combined school sites, or school sites in close proximity that exceed this figure will be included in this network in the future. Car parking in private premises (e.g. rail stations) are not the responsibility of the County Council.

The County is developing new 'community salting routes' using mini-salt spreaders to clear additional routes to local centres of activity such as smaller schools, health centres and community facilities. These will run separately to the priority 1 and 2 routes that are salted using the larger salt spreading lorries and cover 'A and B roads' as well as access to emergency services and the county's larger educational, retail and industrial establishments.

Salt stocks have been increased to 18,000 tonnes (from 12,000 tonnes) and a new salt barn has been constructed near Micheldever Station. The trigger for restocking salt had been increased from 75% to 85%. Additional salt suppliers have been identified.

Flooding

Role of the Environment Agency - Advance Notice of Flooding

The Environment Agency is the principal point for obtaining advance information on the possibility of flooding. The Environment Agency operates an alert system. The Environment Agency website or their Flood Line number on 0845 988 118 allows you to find out if you can register for flood line and warnings direct. This is a free service that provides flood warnings direct to you by telephone, mobile, fax or pager. Flood warnings are also on Ceefax Page 419 and Teletext Page 169.

The Environment Agency also provides practical advice on preparation for a flood or what to do if one occurs. Again the Environment Agency website provides information on preparing for flooding including simple ways to protect homes; installing your own flood defences, what to do during a flood and on clean up after a flood. There is also advice for businesses. Link to the Environment Agency Website: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk>

Availability of sandbags.

The Role of the City Council

The City Council does not have a duty to provide sandbags. The City Council will endeavor to assist individuals where it can, but in the event of widespread flooding the priority will be to protect the public at large. Individual homeowners need to make their own arrangements.

The Role of the County Council

The County Council will also assist where possible, but again its supply of staff and sandbags are very limited with a priority to keep highways open rather than to supply residents. Self arrangement will provide the most effective response.

Self Protection Arrangements

Sandbags can be obtained from any builders' merchant or DIY stores. Even grow bags will do. Any cloth bag that can hold sand or soil so that a low wall can be built to hold the flow of water is effective. The message for homeowners is that if your house is under threat and you have no sandbags, you'll need to improvise.

It is very unlikely that the Council or anyone else will be able to provide sandbags quickly enough in a real emergency. Bin-liners or plastic carrier bags filled with soil dug from the garden will serve. Soil wrapped in a rolled bath towel across the bottom of a door threshold, or a bin liner weighted with bricks will also help. Grow bags are the right shape and light enough to be carried around easily. Remember to cover air bricks as well.

There are now a number of approved systems which manufacturers have designed to alleviate the effects of flooding. Flood protection products will not form a total barrier, but they may be used to slow the flow of water into a property giving residents more time to move themselves and their belongings to safety.

The Environment Agency booklet - Flood Product Advice Guide - gives practical advice on making a home more flood resistant. Information is again contained on the Environment Agency Website or alternatively, you can phone for a copy on the Flood Line number, 0845 988 118.

Waste collection – City Council

In the event of disruption to the normal collection pattern, regular updates are provided by the Head of Environment on the latest situation, which are posted on the City Council's website.

Vulnerable persons – Hampshire County Council

The County Council is at present looking to extend the local facilities that could be used for providing a safe refuge in the event of an incident. It was observed that during the last winter snows that a number of Parishes opened their halls and community centres to accommodate travelers who had become stranded. Parishes commented that they had no resources to provide bedding or emergency supplies, nor was the notice of their opening particularly well communicated. Where a Prepared Rest Centre is opened the Parish Council should be informed and a Parish Council coordinator may choose to report to the Rest Centre to help with the local response.

In rural communities without alternative means of power, such as gas or oil, the loss of electricity can leave a household without heating and a means of cooking for a considerable period. This situation is exacerbated where the vulnerable are involved and consideration of this situation should form part of a Parish Plan. Parishes can also be of assistance in supporting communities and individuals who could find themselves isolated from medical support and from neighbours, for example in collecting medical provision.

Preparation of Community Emergency Plans

There is no statutory responsibility for town and parish councils to plan for, respond to, or recover from emergencies but the Scrutiny Review concluded that it is still good practice for communities to identify hazards and make simple plans on how they may respond when faced with an emergency.

Parishes are encouraged to identify a parish champion to lead on emergency planning at the local level. This would be the role of the Parish Emergency Coordinator. A second individual is also advisable to provide administrative support and be a custodian of emergency planning documentation and to keep it up to date. A recognised point of reference for the local community such as the Parish Council Offices or the Clerk to the parish council would also be helpful.

Parish Councils might consider establishing links with major employers in their parish to improve resilience and establish the possibility of mutual aid. Relevant Business Improvement District representatives may also be contacted where established.

The County and City Councils have developed a template for a Community Emergency Plan. These have been already adopted by Denmead and Swanmore Parish Councils. Parish Councils are encouraged to work with neighbouring parishes to produce effective emergency plans and to develop mutual aid arrangements.

Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit and the City Council's Emergency Planning Liaison Officer will provide advice and assistance in preparing the emergency plans, although the completion and maintenance of the plan by the town or parish council remains the responsibility of the town/parish council. At the local level, a Community Plan needs to include details of plant and machinery that can be called upon to assist in the case of an incident. This may include reference to local owners of chainsaws, tractors (with snow ploughs), four-wheel-drive vehicles and groups who may provide support, such as the Farmers' Union.

This document does not place any formal requirement on town and parish councils to make emergency plans. Any participation by the town/ parish council is purely voluntary.

Please find attached copies of the plan template and associated guide. Please email dshaw@winchester.gov.uk if you wish to receive an electronic copy. Please also in the first instance contact Dave Shaw if you wish to receive further guidance on the Plan's completion or to discuss how your Council might take this forward.

It is intended that once completed the City Council will host all of the town and parish council plans in a secured area of the City's Internet site with password control provided to the town and parishes so that they can be accessed as required.

Councillor Lucille Thompson – Portfolio Holder for Communities

Appendix 2

Government advice – public self help guidance note

CLEARING SNOW AND ICE FROM PAVEMENTS AND PUBLIC SPACES

This guide is designed to help you to act in a neighbourly way by safely clearing snow and ice from pavements and public spaces.

Will I be held liable if someone falls on a path I have cleared?

There is no law preventing you from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside your property, pathways to your property or public spaces.

It is very unlikely that you would face any legal liability, as long as you are careful, and use common sense to ensure that you do not make the pavement or pathway clearly more dangerous than before. People using areas affected by snow and ice also have responsibility to be careful themselves.

What can I do to help clear snow and ice from pavements and public spaces?

Practical advice from highway engineers is given below. This is not a comprehensive list.

- Start early: it is much easier to remove fresh, loose snow compared to compacted ice that has been compressed by people walking on it.
- **Do not use hot water.** This will melt the snow, but may replace it with black ice, increasing the risk of injury.
- Be a good neighbour: some people may be unable to clear snow and ice on paths leading to their property or indeed the footway fronting their property. Snowfall and cold weather pose particular difficulties for them gaining access to and from their property or walking to the shops.
- If shovelling snow, consider where you are going to put it, so that it does not block people's paths, or block drainage channels. This could shift the problem elsewhere.
- Make a pathway down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then you can shovel the snow from the centre to the sides.

- Spreading some salt on the area you have cleared will help to prevent any ice forming. Table salt or dishwasher salt will work, but avoid spreading on plants or grass as they may be damaged by it. A few grams (a tablespoon) for each square metre you clear should work. The salt found in salting bins will be needed for keeping roads clear.

Particular care and attention should be given to steps and steep gradients to ensure snow and ice is removed. You might need to apply additional salt to these areas.

- Use the sun to your advantage. Removing the top layer of snow will allow the sun to melt any ice beneath; however you will need to cover any ice with salt to stop it refreezing overnight.
- If there is no salt available, then a little sand or ash is a reasonable substitute. It will not have the same de-icing properties as salt but should offer grip under foot.

Where can I find out more information about what I can do in an emergency?

The Preparing for Emergencies web pages on DirectGov contain useful information on how you can prepare for the impacts of all emergencies. The pages can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/preparingforemergencies

Why is the Government publishing this information?

During the severe winter in 2009/10, many people across the country worked very hard to keep our transport network open. This included many members of the public who cleared pavements and public spaces around their homes. Some people, however, were deterred from taking action to clear pavements and other public spaces because they feared that they might be sued.

An independent review of the transport sector's response to the severe weather of 2009/10 recommended that the Department for Transport should publish this note on good practice for members of the public in clearing snow and ice from footways and other public spaces. The Local Government Association published a report on behalf of Councils which reached the same conclusion. The Government is committed, as a key part of the Big Society agenda, to remove the barriers which may unnecessarily prevent people from helping themselves and those around them.

Community Emergency Plan

For Town/Parish Council's and Communities in Hampshire

Parish/Town _____

Borough/District _____

Co-ordinator _____

Deputy _____

Effective date _____

Distribution List

1. County Emergency Planning Officer
2. District/Borough Emergency Planning Liaison Officer
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

Aim and Objectives

Aim of the plan:

To enable community support, self-help and resilience when faced with an emergency situation.

Objectives of the plan:

1. Conduct a risk assessment, identify hazards and possible mitigation
2. Identify vulnerable groups within the community
3. Identify key contacts
4. Identify a community emergency management team
5. Identify resources available to the community in the event of an emergency

Risk Assessment Analysis

Risk Matrix Score: A = HIGH Likelihood and HIGH Impact
 B = LOW Likelihood and HIGH Impact
 C = HIGH Likelihood and LOW Impact
 D = LOW Likelihood and LOW Impact

Hazard	Impact	Mitigation in Place	Mitigation possible	Risk Matrix Score
Flooding	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
Total or partial loss of gas	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
Total or partial loss of electricity	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
Total or partial loss of water	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	

Total or partial loss of telephone	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
Severe Weather	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
Major Fire	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
Loss of road access	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	

Risk Assessment Analysis (cont.)

Risk Matrix Score: A = HIGH Likelihood and HIGH Impact
 B = LOW Likelihood and HIGH Impact
 C = HIGH Likelihood and LOW Impact
 D = LOW Likelihood and LOW Impact

Hazard	Impact	Mitigation in Place	Mitigation possible	Risk Matrix Score
	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	

	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	
	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	

Community Resources

Medical / First Aid

In the event of injury or illness within the community the assistance of professional medical support should be sought e.g. Ambulance, Doctor, Paramedic, First Responder, Qualified First Aiders. List details of the medical support available in your area.

Name	Address / Tel no.	Additional Info

Voluntary Groups

The following local voluntary groups have pledged voluntary support in an Emergency

Name	Address / Contact details	Additional Info

Tradesmen

The following tradesmen or members of the community with trade skills, have volunteered their support or can be called upon in the event of an Emergency. They are known by the Parish Council to be bona fide tradesmen.

Vulnerable Groups in the Community (e.g. Care Homes, Nursery Schools)

Name of Group	Address	Special needs

Additional Community Resources

Item Details	Location	Additional Info

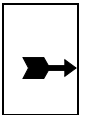
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Communications

Communication System	Contact / Responsibility	Comments
Information Boards (including location)		
Parish Council Meeting		
Parish Magazine		
Cascade phone system		
Email / Website		

Emergency Action Check list

Activation and Call out



- Dial **999** if Life or Property are threatened in your community by an incident or emergency
- Contact your District Council (see contact sheet)
- Use the suggested log sheet at the back of the plan to record:
 - Any decisions you have made
 - Who you spoke to and what you said
- Contact other members of the Community that need to be alerted:
 - Those specifically under threat
 - The Parish Council via the Parish Clerk
 - Volunteers and key holders that may be needed

Contact initially may be to inform them of the emergency or inform them of current Emergency Service advice regarding any action to be taken.

Community Emergency Meeting

- Is a Community Emergency Meeting necessary?
- Is the venue safe to hold the meeting and can people get there safely?
- Has the District Council been informed you are holding a Community Emergency Meeting?
- Has the community been informed there will be a meeting?
- Take a copy of the First Agenda to the meeting.

Under no circumstance should you put yourself or others at risk to fulfil these tasks

Contacts

Service / Role	Telephone Number	Website/email
Emergency Services	999	N/A
..... Emergency Co-ordinator		
Deputy Emergency Co-ordinator		
..... District Council		

Hampshire County Council	01962 841841	www.hants.gov.uk
Emergency Planning Unit HCC	01962 846846	epoffice@hants.gov.uk
Police HQ	08450454545	www.hampshire.police.uk
Fire Service HQ	02380 644000	www.hantsfire.gov.uk
NHS direct	0845-4647	www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
EA Floodline	0845-988-1188	www.environment-agency.gov.uk
Hampshire Highways	0845 8504422	Hantsweb www.hants.gov.uk
Local Doctors Surgery		
..... Parish Clerk		
Post Office		
Religious Building		
Key holders		
School		
School		

Log Sheet

Date	Time	Information / Decisions / Actions	Initials
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Map of your Community

Is your Community Prepared for an Emergency? *A Guide for Developing a Community Emergency Plan*

Version 2 - RG 1

Produced by Hampshire County Council Emergency Planning Unit

The Emergency Planning Unit would like to acknowledge the contribution of Norfolk Major Incident Team in preparing this guide.

Version 2 - RG 2

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There is no statutory responsibility for town and parish councils to plan for, respond to, or recover from emergencies. However it is good practice for communities to identify hazards and make simple plans on how they may respond when faced with an emergency.
- 1.2 This document does not place any formal requirement on town and parish council to make emergency plans. Any participation by the Parish/Town council is purely voluntary.
- 1.3 It should also be recognised that the Parish/Town council is not an emergency service. It is not trained, equipped, empowered or resourced to carry out the functions of an emergency service. The response should generally be confined to looking after the welfare of people in the community or helping to maintain the infrastructure.
- 1.4 Whilst Hampshire County Council Emergency Planning Unit and the District Emergency Planning Liaison officers will provide advice and assistance in preparing emergency plans, the completion and maintenance of the plan by the town or parish council remains the responsibility of that town/parish council.
- 1.5 This plan is generic and can be applied to any town/parish council in Hampshire. No changes should be made to the framework without first consulting with County Emergency Planning Officer.
- 1.6 This Emergency Guidance is intended as general information about planning for emergencies. To the extent provided by law Hampshire County Council excludes any liability arising from the use of these plans. Nothing in these plans removes the requirement to have adequate insurance in place.

2. Community Emergency Structure

Hampshire County
Emergency Services

Hampshire County
Emergency Planning
Unit

District Council
Emergency Planning

Parish Emergency
Co-ordinator

The Community

During a major emergency the Emergency Services will lead the operational response.

As the structure suggests the County and District Councils provide support to the Emergency Services. They also undertake a number of actions specific to them.

The Emergency Co-ordinator for your Parish would enhance the link from the community to the response via the District Council and the role of the Parish is to provide self-help and support the District/County Emergency Planning Officers.

Version 2 - RG 3 Version 2 - RG 4

3. Why Plan?

Any emergency can have a real impact on the well-being of your community. The emergency services, District/County Council and other professionals may well find themselves overloaded and not able to support you immediately. Even after some time the support from other agencies may be limited. It would help them and those living or working in your community, particularly the vulnerable, if you could promote or activate some self-help. Indeed the value of planning at the community level cannot be underestimated.

So what emergencies may severely disrupt your community?

Well, they can occur due to;

- Natural Occurrence
- Human Error, or
- Criminal Act

Examples include:

- Flooding
- Fire
- Extreme Weather
- Failure of Gas, Water, Electricity or Telephones
- Chemical Spill
- Transport Accident/Incident e.g. Aircraft, Shipping, Road, Rail
- Disease

4. What are the possible consequences of an emergency? If an emergency effects your community you can expect some of the following consequences to occur. They may be short term or in many case the consequences can last for years after the emergency.

Version 2 - RG 5

- Injury or loss of life
- People needing support, welfare and care
- Environmental damage
- Loss or damage to property
- Possible evacuation
- Contamination of air, ground or sea
- Loss or disruption of the transport infrastructure
- Loss of power
- Loss of water
- Disruption
- Loss of communications - telephone/radio/TV
- Media intrusion
- Loss/disruption to local business and economy
- Spotlight on the community

5. How can the Parish/Town Council help the community? Obviously the council will look to professional responders to provide help but if the emergency is widespread or complex and the emergency responders are very busy help may not be immediately available or may be a long time in coming.

When it does eventually come it may be limited. The following list is not exhaustive but gives an idea of the kind of help that may be provided:

- By identifying local risks, resources and vulnerable groups
- By using local resources to help in the response by providing support to emergency services
- By helping those that are vulnerable and by providing care, support, information or practical help
- By initiating a crisis management group to provide a point of contact and determine priorities
- Maintaining communications within the community and with the District Council
- Managing the response of Parish voluntary organisations

Version 2 - RG 6

- Representing the community
- Assisting with community recovery
- Assisting with managing emergency funds

6. Preparing the Community Emergency Plan In an emergency situation anyone should be able to pick up the plan and activate it. It should therefore be:

- Simple to understand
- Easy to follow
- Concise and to the point
- Kept updated - particularly contact details
- Aimed purely at the Parish/Town level i.e. be realistic about what the plan can achieve.
- Recognise that other plans and arrangements exist and that the Parish/Town Plan is complimentary to these.

7. Plan Guide Use this guide to complete the plan template. The guide provides a description of the relevant part of the plan and the requirements.

7.1 Parish/Town

The recognised name of your Parish, Town or Community 7.2

Borough/District The Borough or District Council which your area sits in.

7.3 The Emergency Plan Co-ordinator/Deputy

The Emergency Co-ordinator is the key focal point in the community for planning and responding to an emergency.

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The Emergency Co-ordinator must:

- Be responsible for the completion and maintenance of the Community Emergency Plan.
- Provide the focal point for the community in response to an emergency.
- Provide the point of contact for the District Emergency Liaison Officer.

The Emergency Co-ordinator should:

- Reside in the community.
- Have the backing of the Town/Parish Council to represent the community.
- Have a good understanding of the community and surrounding area
- Be able to activate the support of the community and speak on behalf the community.
- Ensure that the identification of the vulnerable is a principle aim.
- Ensure that the vulnerable are a priority.
 - Ensure that communications are maintained within the Town/Parish and with the District Liaison Officer wherever possible.
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained where necessary.
- Be covered by insurance for making decisions affecting the community.
- Consider the assembly of a Council Community Crisis Team.

7.4 Effective Date The date when the plan was last updated.

Version 2 - RG 8

7.5 Distribution List The distribution list identifies who has a copy of the plan. This is important in knowing who to inform when there are any amendments to the plan. When new plans are distributed the holders should be notified to destroy old copies. 7.6 Aims and Objectives The aim of the plan describes precisely what it is trying to achieve and the objectives show what specific tasks need to be undertaken to meet the aim.

7.7 Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment Definitions

'Hazard' Is anything that can cause harm to your community.

'Risk' Is the chance "high or low" , that someone or something in your community will be harmed by the hazard.

'Risk Assessment' Is the process of identifying the hazards present within your community, and an estimate of the risks

involved, having taken into account any precautions that are already in place.

There are many hazards that may disrupt your community, these could possibly include:-

- Flooding
- Utility failure (electricity, water, gas, telephones)
- Fire or explosion
- Transport accident (road, rail, air, sea)

Version 2 - RG 9

- Extreme weather
- Disease

The risk assessment analysis in the Plan Template lists a number of hazards that could impact on your community, any mitigation in place or possible and the Risk Matrix score.

You will need to consider and add to the table, any additional hazards that are identified in your community.

Hazard	In this column list the hazards that have been identified in your community. This list will need to be reviewed and updated regularly.
Hazard Impact	List the physical disruption that may be caused. Consider any vulnerable members of the community i.e. Care homes, Schools etc. e.g. Flooding <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of access and utilities (electricity, phones, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Water damage to homes, and buildings, <input type="checkbox"/> Pool lane prone to flooding including the location of the care home.

Mitigation In Place	List what you currently do that prevents or reduces the likelihood and or the impact of the hazard on your community e.g. Flooding <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Flood warnings issued by the Environment Agency
Mitigation Possible	List what additional actions can be taken to prevent or reduce the likelihood or the impact of the hazard on the community e.g. Flooding <input type="checkbox"/> Floodgates / sandbags stored and ready for use.

B High Impact Low Likelihood	A High Impact High Likelihood
D Low Impact Low Likelihood	C Low Impact High Likelihood

Risk Matrix Score:	As described below.
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The Risk Matrix, shown below, will help you to identify the higher priority risks for your community.

When you consider the score you should think about any mitigation currently in place.

By determining the likelihood of the hazard occurring (either high or low), then determining the impact that the hazard will have on your community, it's possible to rate the risk as A, B, C, or D.

For example:

The likelihood of flooding in your community: LOW (B or D)

The impact flooding would have on your community: HIGH (A or B)

The resultant score would be: B

Increasing Likelihood

Increasing Impact

Version 2 - RG 11

When completed, the Risk Assessment shows which are the highest risk to your community. A being the highest priority risks and D being the lower priority risks.

7.8 Community Resources

- What resources can be called on to support the local community?
- Consider how the resources would be activated, particularly out of hours and at weekends.
- The list does not need to include every facility or resource. Do not aim to audit and include everything in the Parish. Keep it relevant and concise including only the major resources that would be available to you. Some principal headings for your more obvious resources are shown but remember the more you have the more you will need to update. Keep it simple.

The risk assessment process you undertake may indicate that specific resources may be required e.g. if your community is isolated and not easily reached then 4x4 vehicles and other vehicles of that nature may be priority. On the other hand if your parish is predominantly urban in nature this may not be such a priority or indeed may not need to be considered. If your area is prone to flooding then a boat to undertake the rescue of the vulnerable would be a priority - if not then this would not necessarily need to be considered. Therefore the resources contained in the plan will depend on:

- a) the type of risk anticipated such as flooding, road closures, utility failure etc which might benefit from certain resources being readily available.
- b) the nature of the town or parish, such as how close it is to larger urban areas which could provide support.

Version 2 - RG 12

c) the community profile, which may include a significant disabled or elderly population, large numbers of unoccupied homes, a special needs facility, etc.

7.9 Vulnerable Groups

There are a number of groups of people who, in a crisis, should be considered as potentially vulnerable and a priority for support and the deployment of resources:

- The elderly who may not be very mobile.
- Those who may physically disabled.
- Those with learning difficulties.
- Parents and others looking after very young children.
- Those who are unable to see or have a severe sight impairment.
- Those who are unable to hear or have a severe hearing impairment.

It may not be practical to identify vulnerable individuals in advance as this will be constantly changing. It should be possible to identify vulnerable groups in advance e.g. sheltered housing complexes, accommodation for those with learning difficulties etc.

It would be good practice to make an offer to help in a crisis to vulnerable groups and to identify individuals who may need help as a priority.

7.10 Communications Identify in advance how you could maintain contact with the community and share information with them.

What methods for sharing information are available?

- Notice Boards
- Meetings

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- Telephone ring round or cascade
- Website information - Parish/Town/District
- E-mail distribution
- Volunteer groups

These methods would be helpful to the responding agencies to communicate to a significant amount of the population as quickly as possible.

What can we do to maintain communications if we lose telephones?

- This may not be significant enough to be an emergency situation unless it effects the vulnerable
- Maintain physical contact with vulnerable groups/individuals

- Consider volunteer groups such as Raynet (Radio Amateurs Emergency Network) activated via District Council.
- Listen to radio/television information.
- Consider how information can be shared e.g. via schools, shopping centres, libraries, faith groups
- Mobile telephones may not work.

7.11 Your response to an emergency - things to do The following are some of the actions that should be considered following an emergency. A checklist is included in the plan for you to follow. Firstly, if you become aware of an emergency from a source other than the County/District Emergency Planners or the Police, do not assume that they know about it. Make sure that the police and your District Council Liaison officer are aware. Other Points to consider;

- Keep a record of your key decisions, actions and conversations on the log sheet at the back at plan.

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- As a priority start to contact other members of the community that need to be alerted.
- Obtain what advice and information is being provide by the emergency services in respect of action to be taken.
- Formulate the crisis management team if required. The agenda for the first meeting should include:

a) Briefing of the current situation. If possible the briefing should be provided by a member of the emergency services or the District emergency Planning Officer.

b) Immediate actions to support the response to the emergency.

c) Future actions to aid the recovery.

d) Time and date of next meeting

7.12 Key Contacts This contact list should remain as the last part of the plan so it is both easy to update and easy to find in the event of an emergency. The contacts should be regularly updated i.e. 6 monthly.

7.13 Log Sheet This is also at the back of the plan so that it can be easily found. It is essential to keep a record of actions and the time that they were taken.

This will serve as an aide memoir to help you keep track of things and act as a briefing note when updating others. It also serves as proof of what you

have done. 7.14 Geographical map of your community Include a small scale map of the community in the plan and ensure that larger Ordnance Survey or similar map is available in the event of an emergency .

