



Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team

London Borough of Bexley

Major Emergency Plan

Version 4.0



Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team — October 2014

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Document Control, Distribution and Review

This Major Emergency Plan is prepared, maintained and updated by the **Borough Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team**.

The intended audience of this plan is to all key London Borough of Bexley staff and key voluntary response organisations that operate in Bexley.

This plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. However new risk assessment, lessons identified from incidents or exercises, restructuring of organisations or changes in key personnel should also prompt updates to the plan.

Author and Version Control

Author	Role	Date
Kevin Toal	Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Officer, London Borough of Bexley	September 2010

All changes will be tracked and marked by the **Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team**

Date	Version	Details of amendment	Approved by
April 2011	2	New Council Structure	Tony Plowright
April 2013	3	NHS Changes	Kevin Toal
Oct 2014	4	Revised Chapter 5	Tony Plowright

Date of next Review

September 2012	September 2014	October 2017		

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Foreword

The London Borough of Bexley like any other Council faces a number risks for which it must be prepared. Aside from plans for specific risks such as flooding, the Council must also plan for any other risk of disaster that may affect the people of Bexley. Hence the need for a General Emergency Plan. The adverse nature of some of our weather in recent years and events such as major power failures serve to emphasise our responsibility to be ready to respond to the unpredictable.

This plan sets out our response arrangements if we are needed as part of the response to an emergency. We are a key partner in a multi agency response and this plan will enable us to deliver our best level of support to the emergency services as they provide the initial response.

The broad range of responsibilities of a local authority ultimately means that our involvement in major emergencies, more often than not, goes way beyond the initial response. This document provides a framework for the discharge of it's responsibilities at such times, providing linkage to other emergency plans, both within and beyond the Council and enabling it to deliver the best possible service to the people of Bexley at what will be a most challenging time.

Graham Ward
Deputy Director Customer Relations
January 2011

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Introduction

Bexley Council have a legal duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to provide and maintain robust and resilient contingency plans. These plans are designed to enable the mobilisation of resources, at short notice, in response to an emergency.

This plan is a guidance document for staff who are responsible for implementing and managing the council's response. It sets out what action the council will take including the command, control and communication structures. It highlights the roles and responsibilities of Council services, and how the Council will work with others to respond to a major emergency.

The Council's roles will include:

- Providing support for the emergency services
- Providing support and care for the local and wider community
- Using resources to mitigate the effects of an emergency
- Leading the recovery stage
- Maintaining the normal day-to-day services

Emergency planning enables the Council to use its normal resources in an emergency and to respond in a controlled and planned way as possible in the circumstances. Most emergency incidents occur with no warning and at unexpected times of the day. This will put key staff under pressure and they will need to make decisions, confidently and swiftly in situations where there will be high levels of stress and where communications normally used could be interrupted or non-existent. This plan aims to keep it simple and tries to remove complications or surprises for those dealing with the emergency.

The aim of this generic emergency plan is to ensure that a common framework of actions and activities exist that can be applied to a broad range of incidents and emergencies. This prevents the need for a large number of specific plans for each individual circumstance. Also, where specific plans exist they are all linked into this common framework for dealing with emergencies. The key specific plans that link into this plan include the following:

- Identifying Vulnerable People in a Crisis Plan
- Multi Agency Flood Plan
- Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan
- Rest Centre Plan
- Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) Manual
- Corporate Business Continuity Plan
- Major Incident Recovery Plan
- Severe Weather Plan

This plan does not cover the emergency arrangements for other third party organisations, councils or the emergency services. It does, however, highlight the key responsibilities of these organisations to enable understanding of their role in a major incident. In particular the role of a coroner if fatalities occur during an incident needs to be understood.

South London Coroner

Bexley is situated within the South London Coronial Area. The other boroughs that make up this jurisdiction are the London Boroughs of Bromley, Croydon and Sutton. The Coroner's Court is situated at Croydon. The Coroner is assisted in his/her role by two Coroner's Officers, employed by the Metropolitan Police Service.

The Coroners are independent judicial officers whose appointment and duties are regulated by law. They inquire into certain kinds of death set out in the Coroners Act 1988, s 8(1), namely those which the coroner has reasonable cause to suspect (a) are violent or unnatural, (b) are sudden, of unknown cause, or (c) occur in prison. As part of their statutory duties they must establish the identity of the person who has died and when, where and how they died.

The death may result from a major disaster and for a particular coroner to have jurisdiction, it does not matter where the death occurred (even outside the UK). Jurisdiction is established as consequence of 'where the body now is'

Only the Coroner can authorise procedures relating to the deceased and human remains in circumstances outlined above. Thus, in the event of a disaster it is only the Coroner who can authorise the moving of deceased victims and/or human remains at or from the associated scene(s).

In addition, it is only the Coroner who can authorise:

- a post-mortem examination of a dead person
- the taking of forensic samples or specimens for analysis
- the retention of forensic samples or specimens for further investigation, and
- the release of the deceased and residual human tissue

The role of Coroners and other death related issues are covered in two other plans that should be read in conjunction with this plan if fatalities arise out of an incident or event.

The London Mass Fatality Plan

The London Borough of Bexley Multi-Agency Excess Deaths Plan.

There are occasions when an emergency affects more than one borough council and London has a co-ordinating system if such events occur. All London Boroughs participate in these arrangements which are explained below:

Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC)

The SCC is a location nominated by the police at which the gold co-ordinating group will convened. This is formed of the appointed strategic level representatives from the responding organisations and the Government Liaison Team. This group will set the strategy for dealing with the incident and respond to information and requests supplied by the organisations involved.

London Local Authority Gold (LLA Gold)

If the emergency is of such significance the 'on call' London Local Authority Gold (LLAG) - a role shared by London Borough Chief Executives - will attend the SCC and assist with the development of strategy by the gold co-ordinating group. LLA Gold is mandated to represent all 33 London Local Authorities on that group. The Chief Executive at Bexley forms part of the rota for performing this role. Every chief executive that performs the role is supported by a team from their borough.

London Local Authority Control Centre (LLACC)

The LLACC co-ordinates the London Local Authority response to the incident. It is established to provide communications with and information flow between LLA Gold and London boroughs. The boroughs will supply and receive information through the establishment of their Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC). A full explanation of the BECC is provided later in this plan.

London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP)

The London Emergency Services Liaison Panel, upon which London local authorities are represented, have produced a manual that is a protocol for the response to major emergencies in London. The purpose of LESLP Manual is to document the agreed procedures and arrangements for the effective co-ordination of all the emergency responders to major incidents. It provides summaries of the response capabilities and responsibilities of the emergency services as well as the support role offered by local authorities. The procedures within the manual provide the framework for how this plan will be activated in Bexley.

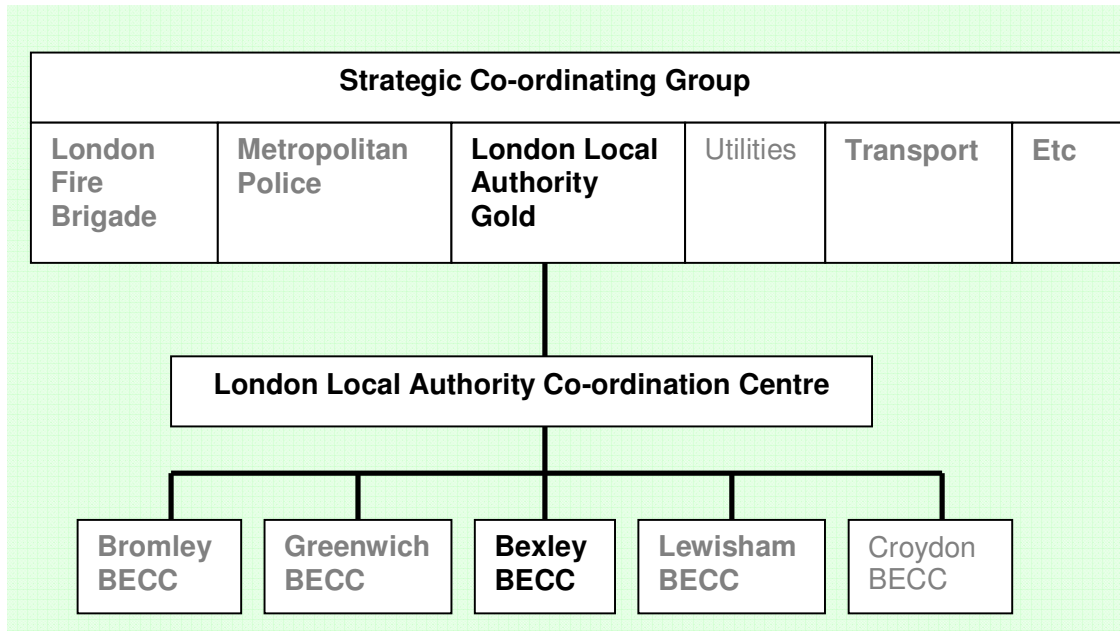
Joint Emergency Services Control Centre (JESCC)

In a multi agency response, as with the strategic management, a multi agency silver group may be formed. This Group may be referred to as the JESCC and in this form will consist of the Metropolitan Police, LFB (London Fire Brigade), and the LAS, (London Ambulance Service) control vehicles located close together and in the vicinity of the incident. Operating at the tactical level, it puts into place the strategy determined by the Gold Co-ordinating Group. If convened this Group meets as soon as possible after the major incident has been declared and thereafter as required.

London Regional and National Plans

In addition to the London arrangements Bexley is also guided and governed by regional and national plans. A full list of the regional and national plans can be found at Annex C.

Coordination Structure



Chapter 1

Bexley Risks

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Chapter 1 - Bexley Risks

1.1 Risk Registers

The government has produced the first official National Risk Register. It sets out the Government's assessment of the likelihood and potential impact of a range of different risks that may directly affect the resilience of the UK, and is designed to encourage individuals and organisations to think about their own preparedness. This document can be found at [National Risk Register](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/national-risk-register) .

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/national-risk-register>

A Community Risk Register London is held by the GLA London Resilience Team and can be found using this link [CRR](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/mayor/london-resilience/risks) .

<http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/mayor/london-resilience/risks>

In Bexley, a Borough Risk Register has recently been compiled linked to both of the above risk registers but focussing upon the risks that exist locally. This register is maintained and updated by the Borough Resilience Forum with reference to updates from the London Risk Advisory Group.

The preparation of this plan is based upon an understanding of the major risks to Bexley. The Borough Resilience Forum regularly assesses local risks and considers whether to add to or modify emergency plans.

1.2 Risk Categories

Risks are placed into various risk categories and listed below are types relevant to Bexley

- **Industrial Accidents / Environmental Pollution**
- **Transport Accidents**
- **Severe Weather including flooding**
- **Structural Hazards**
- **Human Health**
- **Industrial Action**
- **Terrorism**

The following have been highlighted as key risks to Bexley:

1.2.1 Flooding - Bexley has the potential to receive tidal flooding from the River Thames. Thamesmead is an area of reclaimed marshland spanning Greenwich and Bexley and presents a major tidal flood risk from the Thames. The area contains over 21,000 commercial, community and residential properties and covers an area of 20 sq km. Although Thames tidal defences are designed to protect against a 1:1000 year return period event for the year 2030, most of the ground level behind the defence at

Thamesmead falls away to create floodplain. Tidal flooding would have a serious impact in this area should it occur.

Bexley is also at risk of fluvial flooding from the Rivers Cray and Shuttle. The River Cray is the largest non-tidal river within the borough. It rises outside the borough (to the South) and joins the River Darent at the borough's eastern boundary with Dartford Borough Council. The River Shuttle is the second largest non-tidal river. It rises in the south-western part of the borough and joins the River Cray near East Rochester Way (A2), in Bexley. The Wyncham Stream flows into the River Shuttle in Holly Oak Wood Park in Blackfen. The base flow of both rivers is made up of local spring water but the flooding flow is made up of storm water run off from surface water sewers and highways.

Surface water flooding caused by heavy torrential rain is a high risk to the Borough.

At Danson Park there is a reservoir that has a dam at the eastern end. There is a controlled flow of water away from the dam but heavy rain inundation creates a risk of overtopping and consequently the level of the lake is monitored and alarmed.

The response arrangements for all major flooding events in Bexley are contained in the Multi Agency Flood Plan, maintained and updated by the Emergency Planning Team.

1.2.2 Severe Weather – While severe weather in the form of rain storms can cause flooding, Bexley is regularly impacted by other severe weather events. These have included high winds in 2009 and heavy snow in 2009, 2010 and 2012. The response arrangements for any severe weather event can be found in the Severe Weather Plan

1.2.3 Transport - The over ground rail network is a prominent part of Bexley transport infrastructure with Network South East running three separate lines through the borough from London To Dartford. One to the north through Belvedere and Erith. One to the centre through Bexleyheath and Welling and one in the south through Sidcup and Bexley. There are a total of 11 railway stations along these three lines situated at:

- Belvedere, Erith and Slade Green
- Falconwood, Welling, Bexleyheath and Barnehurst
- Sidcup, Albany Park, Bexley and Crayford

Important roads which serve the area include the A2 which is six lanes in places and the A20. Though air transport is not a major feature in the area, Biggin Hill Airport can be found in the south of Bromley and Bexley is less than a mile from the flight path of the London City Airport. In the north of the Borough the industrial areas are serviced by HGV's that place additional risks and hazards to the area.

1.2.4 Hazardous Sites - There are no longer any Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) sites in Bexley. The last one at Nufarm UK Ltd in Belvedere which manufactured hazardous chemicals was closed in 2010. However, running through Bexley is a Major Accident Pipeline carrying gas at high pressure. In Thamesmead there is a Sewerage Treatment Plant. Over the last ten years as Bexleyheath has been developed a number of unexploded world war two bombs have been discovered.

1.2.5 Pandemic Influenza - Influenza is a familiar infection in the UK, especially during winter. Almost every year new strains emerge giving rise to morbidity and mortality, mainly in older people and young children. Pandemic influenza is different: its emergence and potential impact are both difficult to predict and it occurs when the influenza virus

undergoes a major change and a new virus emerges to which humans are not immune. It could emerge outside of the winter months. The first UK flu pandemic of the 21st century was the Swine Flu, H1N1 virus, that emerged in 2009.

The Council maintain their own Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan. They are also a key partner in the local multi-agency response which is provided for in the plan now compiled on behalf of the Bexley Borough Resilience Forum.

1.2.6 Power Failure - The power supply systems are well protected, maintained and improved but faults and incidents can occur. These faults may affect one property or sometimes many thousands. In 2009 a major power failure affected large parts of Bexley; the worst in 30 years. The risk of this happening again along with the failure of other utilities such as gas, water and communications must be considered.

1.2.7 Terrorism - The threat to the UK remains high. It is not possible to produce a definitive statement on how to assess the threat of terrorist attack. However it is known that across the UK there is a general threat to what are termed crowded areas of which The Mall Shopping Precinct in Bexleyheath is believed to be the busiest in Bexley. Within Bexley any sites that are believed to be under threat are known to and monitored by the police. In addition the Council work with the police and businesses to promote awareness within crowded areas.

1.2.8 Oil Pollution – The tidal River Thames carries a significant amount of marine traffic and there consequently exists an ongoing risk of oil pollution. The Council do not maintain a separate plan for this risk but are party to the Port of London Oil Spillage Response Plan.

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Chapter 2

Initial Activation

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Chapter 2 - Initial Activation

2.1 Activation Procedures

The Council can be informed of an emergency by variety of sources:

- The police or other emergency service
- Another local authority
- From within the Councils own work force by those who are performing their day to day duties.
- From the news media or social media
- By a member of the public.

This notification can occur either during or out of normal hours and there are separate procedures for each.

This plan may be invoked by any member of Management Board or the Emergency Planning Team which includes the Acting Controllers whose role is explained below.

Out of hours activation, (Acting Controllers)

All calls will be received by the Council's Emergency Duty Officer (EDO). They will contact the Acting Controller (AC). The Acting Controllers are a group of Council officers who receive regular training in responding to emergency situations. The AC is on call during all out of hours periods including weekends and bank holidays. Their role is to initially take charge of and co-ordinate the involvement of all Council services in a major emergency. A list of Acting Controllers and their contact details is maintained by the Emergency Planning Team in the Acting Controllers Handbook and with the EDO.

The AC will make some initial assessments based on the information supplied by the EDO and from direct contact with the emergency services on scene. This assessment will determine if a number of actions are required, such as:

- sending a liaison officer to the scene
- mobilising other Council Services
- opening a Borough Emergency Control Room (BECC)
- informing senior management including the Chief Executive
- opening a Rest Centre

If following this assessment the AC decides to activate any of the actions above they can do this by two ways. Use the EDO to make calls to activate staff. This maybe time consuming and there could be an increase in incoming calls. Alternatively the *Imodus* warn and inform system could be used that delivers a template message to all by way of a mass message system.

During Office Hours

Notification will generally be sent to the Emergency Planning Team or the Chief Executive's Office. The Emergency Planning Team will make an assessment identical to

that of the AC for out of hour's activations. However, consultations can take place with the Chief Executive or other senior officers as necessary.

The notifications to other key staff can either be carried out by phone or use of the Textmarketer mass text message system, (see Acting Controllers Handbook).

2.2 Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO)

The mobilisation of a LALO to the scene is crucial at an early stage to obtain the information necessary to inform the Council response. The LALO is the representative of the Council able to react to requests for local authority assistance at the scene and is the link between the incident and the Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC).

A LALO will normally be appointed from the list of Council officers who are trained as Acting Controllers. Please see 2.1 above.

All Council LALO's are trained and equipped to perform this role. They will also be in possession of alternative forms of communication. On arrival they will obtain a clear understanding of what has happened and what is happening. They will meet with the emergency services incident officers to assist on any immediate Council actions. The first action will be to gather the necessary information for a clear, accurate and relevant situation report. To assist a mnemonic 'METHANE' has been designed.

M Major Incident declared?
E Exact Location
T Type of incident
H Hazards present or suspected
A Access routes that are safe to use
N Number, type, severity of casualties
E Emergency Services and other agencies present and required

The LALO's responsibilities will include:

- To liaise with the emergency services and act as the single point of contact at the scene for request for Council assistance.
- To facilitate entry to the incident scene for incoming Council services and personnel.
- To meet incoming personnel and to ensure they are properly briefed and equipped before deployment.
- To provide a forward communication point for Council personnel at the Incident scene.
- To keep a comprehensive log of events, as circumstances allow, but not to the detriment of the main tasks.
- To use own initiative to deploy Council resources in relation to the requirements of the BECC.

- If required attend the silver co-ordinating meetings on behalf of the Council silver at the Joint Emergency Service Control Centre (JESCC) near to the scene of the incident.

In London wide emergencies, (see para 2.10 below), the deployment of a LALO is subject of the Minimum Standards for London. This requires that the LALO is deployed within one hour of being requested.

2.3 Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC)

The BECC is established to ensure effective command and control of an incident by the Council. It is important that it is opened and brought to a state of readiness as soon as possible.

A number of Council staff have been trained and exercised in opening and operating a BECC. This includes the out of hours activation and how to gain access to the location of the BECC. A list of the trained staff is maintained by the Emergency Planning Team and can be found in the Acting Controllers Handbook and with the EDO.

The decision to open a BECC can be made by the Chief Executive, Acting Controller, or the Emergency Planning Team. The assessment will include if there is likely to be a demand on the Council for resources from a variety of departments.

If the decision is to open the BECC then the activation and opening procedures are found in the BECC Manual and Acting Controllers Handbook. The BECC is located at Civic Offices room G.04 with a fall back facility at Central Library, Townley Road, Bexleyheath.

The telephone numbers for the BECC, not including the fax, are specific to the BECC. They are never used for normal business. The full contact numbers will be published at the time of the incident but the main contact numbers are shown below:

BECC Controllers Room

Incident Controller
Staff Officer (EPO)
Information Officer

Extension Direct Dial

Call Handlers Room

BECC Link
BECC Operator 1
BECC Operator 2
BECC Loggist
Fax

The BECC operates an E mail account. One of the BECC staff is nominated to manage and operate this, known as the 'BECC Link'. One of the primary purposes of the BECC Link is to provide an electronic message link between the BECC and the London Local Authority Control Centre, (LLACC). Communication with the LLACC will primarily take place using E Mail.

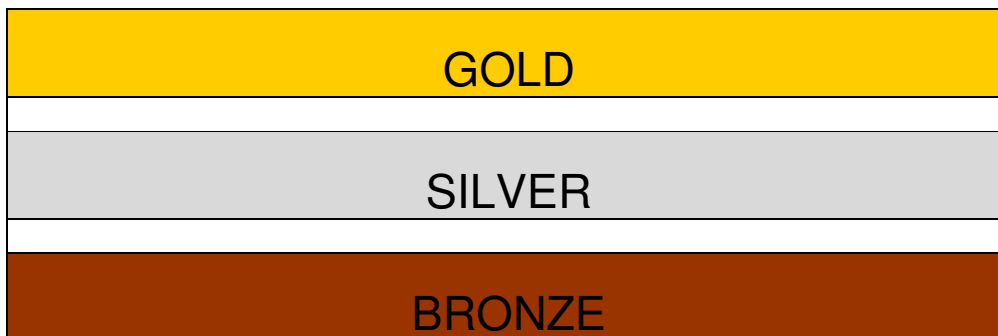
In light of modern communication it is not always necessary to have all those elements of the Council, involved in a response, present in the BECC. Departmental Liaison can be established remotely provided there is a single point of contact for the BECC.

In any emergency situation the public will ultimately want information and many will contact the Council. The Contact Centre, if not already open, may need to be opened to deal with this demand. The Contact Centre will be able to assist in providing front end messages on the Council's public number, 020 8303 7777, to help manage the likely increase in calls. It will also be necessary to establish a protocol with the Contact Centre Manager as to which calls from the public are to be passed to the BECC..

2.4 Command Structure

The emergency services in London use the gold, silver and bronze system of command and control when responding to major emergencies and incidents. London local authorities use the same system and this is explained as follows:

- Gold (Strategic) - The Chief Executive or a designated deputy will be in overall charge for the Council response and will formulate the strategy for the incident. The role will also include membership of the incident Gold Co-ordinating Group chaired by the Police.
- Silver (Tactical) - The Deputy Director Customer Relations or an Acting Controller will take charge and be responsible for formulating the Council's tactics to achieve the strategy set by Gold. This controlling role will normally take place within the BECC .
- Bronze (Operational) - The various Council managers from the different service areas involved in the response will control and deploy resources within their specific area and implement the tactics defined by Silver.



2.5 The Strategic (Gold) Group

To support Gold a Strategic Group will be set up consisting of Management Board members and any other senior Council representatives considered necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the response. The role of this Group is to establish a policy framework for the Council's response and to support tactical and operational groups

in prioritising work and providing resources. In the longer term the Group will oversee the recovery from the incident and the return to normality.

Unless directed otherwise the Group will meet in the Board Room at the Civic Offices and as the incident progresses will maintain contact with the Incident Controller, (Silver), for updates and decisions. The main considerations for the Gold Group are as follows:

- Formulate the Council's strategy for dealing with the incident and regularly review that strategy in the light of any change of circumstances.
- Oversee the Council's response to the incident, assessing short medium and long term priorities
- Allocate roles of the Strategic Group and decide on programme of meetings
- Prioritise demands on potential limited resources
- Consider press releases in conjunction with the Leader of the Council and the emergency services.
- Ensure a log of events and decisions are recorded from the outset
- Consider the activation of the Communications Plan, (see Chapter 5), the need for a communications strategy and information for the public, members, staff and the media.
- Assess need to invoke mutual aid or support from neighbouring boroughs.
- Consider at an early stage a Recovery Liaison Group especially if flooding is the cause.
- Consider the business continuity implications of the incident upon the delivery of the Council's priority services.
- Determine plans for a return to a state of normality.

2.6 The Tactical (Silver) Group

The officer taking initial charge of the Council response will be the Deputy Director Customer Relations or other member of the Emergency Planning Team or out of hours the on-call Acting Controller. They will attend the BECC, assume the role as Council Silver and if necessary form a silver group made up of managers from directorates involved in the response.

The group will be responsible for the tactical implementation of this plan. They will determine and coordinate the actions to be taken and direct resources, to achieve the strategic intention set by Gold, so as to contain and recover from the incident. They will keep Gold, and/or the Gold group regularly updated as to how the emergency is developing and being addressed

The silver group will be made up of key managers depending on the circumstances of the incident and which departments are involved. The role of the group is to advise and assist Silver in carrying out tactics to deal with the emergency and to allow the community to recover. They will provide updates to Silver on the impacts the incident is having across the Council and be responsible for implementing the actions deemed necessary by Silver.

The meetings of this group will usually be held in close proximity to the BECC at times to be set by Silver, depending on the emergency. Silver and the silver group will ensure that following actions have or will be take place::

- Contact and appropriate liaison has been opened with the emergency services.
- The BECC is open as appropriate and a log of events is being maintained.
- Any messages received from LLACC are being acted upon.
- Assess the situation report supplied by the LALO
- Ensure the single points of contact are in place for departmental liaison .
- Assess Gold's strategy to see if achievable or if additional resources are required.
- If the incident involves Highways ensure that the appropriate duty manager has been informed.
- Ensure that the Care First21 vulnerable persons register is checked for persons living in the affected area and take steps to check on their welfare.
- Obtain, through CYPS, a list of schools in the area of the incident and provide detailed information to allow head teachers to make decisions on closure or retention of pupils
- Consider invoking other relevant emergency plans such as the Flood, Vulnerable Persons and Multi-faith Plans.
- Hold regular updates with Gold..
- Implement as necessary the Communications Plan, (see Chapter 5), to ensure that steps are being taken to warn and inform the public, Council Members and staff.
- Consider whether the impact of the incident will affect the provision of Council services to the extent that the Business Continuity Plan or plans need to be implemented.

2.7 Operational Management (Bronze)

At the operational level of this structure are the managers responsible for delivering the response on the ground referred to as Bronze. In the event of a major emergency, service areas will need to consider the implementation of their own emergency plans.

The manager responsible for the implementation of a service area plan is the person best suited to undertake the Bronze role. In addition to their responsibility for implementing their service area plan they also be responsible for linking their response into the overall Council response by coordinating with officer nominated as the Council Silver.

2.8 Warning and Informing - Textmarketer

Bexley uses the Textmarketer bulk SMS system for warning and informing purposes. It is to be used for sending alerts by text, within the Council, giving notification of a major emergency or business continuity incident.

The Emergency Planning Team and all Acting Controllers have individual access to the system and can send messages individually and collectively using the database of contacts on the system. The address book includes all senior managers and key staff for dealing with an emergency, the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet and all members.

2.9 CCTV

Command and control of an emergency can be enhanced by use of the Council CCTV..

The CCTV Control Room is based locally and the address details can be found within the Acting Controllers handbook. If an incident falls within one of the town centres covered then live footage could be of beneficial to the incident controller situated in the BECC. It may aid decision making and briefing preparation. However, other than at the time of the initial response it is unlikely that the Emergency Planning Team would attend the CCTV Control Room. That said the availability of images through IT links can be explored with the CCTV Manager. Alternatively, the Council have access to a number of mobile cameras and the deployment of these can also be discussed with the Manager.

2.10 Geographic Information System (GIS)

Command and control of an emergency can also be enhanced by use of the geographic information system, (GIS), available through the Council's IT system.

GIS provides a map of the borough which can be viewed in varying scales and overlaid with information that may relevant to the emergency response. For example, flood zones, locations of schools, care homes, and some key infrastructure. As with CCTV, this could aid decision making. The Emergency Planning Team can make it available in the BECC.

2.11 Mutual Aid

If the incident or emergency is of a significant level there maybe need to seek support and assistance of neighbouring boroughs. A mutual aid agreement exists between South East London Boroughs and a London wide Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Aid have been developed and are available from the Emergency Planning Team. These should be activated at an early stage as arrangements may take some time. The likely assistance includes :

- Rest centre bedding and other resources
- Emergency generators and lighting
- Transport resources
- Sandbags and other flood resilience resources
- Tree and debris clearance equipment
- Water pumps
- Staffing
- Facilities

If this assistance is considered necessary then a formal request will be made direct to the neighbouring local borough. Communication links should be maintained between the boroughs via airwave radio. In some situations it may be necessary for liaison officers to attend the BECC to ensure effective liaison and communication.

2.12 London Wide Emergencies

In emergencies affecting all or a significant part of the capital a BECC activation may also be called by London Local Authority Gold. They do this through the London Local Authority Control Centre, (LLACC), (see page 8), using the London Local Authority Mass Messaging System. The Council are activated out of hours by telephone, fax and through a pager held by the Emergency Planning Team.

Upon receipt of such an activation a decision will be made by the Acting Controller, in consultation with the Emergency Planning Team, as to the level of the BECC to be opened. This could be a partial opening for monitoring purposes. The level of opening will depend upon the scale of the incident and how it is likely to affect Bexley.

Once the BECC is open it will be necessary to inform the LLACC of the 'Operational Status'. There are 3 levels as follows:

1. Monitoring
2. Information Sharing and Communications
3. Incident Response and Coordination

Full details of these procedures can be found in the BECC Manual.

In London wide incidents the opening of the BECC and the deployment of a LALO is subject of the Minimum Standards for London. These require that the BECC is operational within 2 hours of receipt of the activation message.

Chapter 3

Humanitarian Assistance

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Chapter 3 - Humanitarian Assistance

3.1 Introduction

In a capital city with the size and population of London there are unlikely to be many major emergencies that do not impact upon people. Indeed it can reasonably be predicted that support to people affected by a major emergency is likely to be a key priority in the strategy for the multi agency response. It may even be the most important aspect.

Responders to any major emergency where there is a human element also need to consider whether there is a specific need to support vulnerable people. Care for this section of the community will need to be prioritised and consequently a specific plan exists for that purpose.

3.2 Options for Humanitarian Assistance

It can be assumed that there will be a need for some form of humanitarian assistance within the first few hours of a major emergency. Some of this befalls the responsibility of the local authority as follows:

- Identification of Vulnerable People
- Rest Centres
- Humanitarian Assistance Centres

Others options are the responsibility of other agencies, principally the police, but the Council may be asked to support their provision:

- Survivors Reception Centre
- Friends and Relatives Reception Centre
- Deployment of staff to hospitals and A&E
- Central Casualty Bureau

And there are other organisations prepared to become involved in the providing humanitarian assistance at the time of a crisis:

- Assistance from the voluntary and private sector

All of the above are hereafter explained.

3.3 Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO)

In large scale incidents where the provision of humanitarian assistance can be determined as complex the appointment of a Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer, (HALO), is recommended. Indeed, the concept of a HALO comes from the London Humanitarian Assistance Plan and it should be borne in mind that in incidents affecting more than one London borough, this plan may be invoked.

The nomination of a HALO should be considered in all emergencies and the following is copied from the London Humanitarian Assistance Plan to assist in understand the role and responsibility undertaken:

5.12 A Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) will be nominated by the Gold Local Authority representative, to lead the Humanitarian Response. This will typically be a director responsible for adult social care

5.13 This officer will chair the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG), and ensure the attendance of appropriate representation.

5.14 The HASG will determine the appropriate approach for the Humanitarian Response, in liaison with Gold where necessary.

Guidance on determining who should be HALO	
<i>The incident is predominantly confined in impact to a single borough</i>	<i>The HALO should be drawn from that borough</i>
<i>The incident spans two boroughs</i>	<i>The HALO should be drawn from one borough – other factors may determine the choice</i>
<i>The London HAC Plan has been activated, for an emergency which has affected multiple boroughs</i>	<i>HALO should be drawn from the borough hosting the HAC</i>
<i>For a widespread emergency affected very many boroughs (e.g. a regional flood event) - the HALO role may be more consultative and direction-setting</i>	<i>The HALO may best be drawn from a borough with substantial experience or willingness to undertake the role.</i>

Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group

5.15 The purpose of the HASG is to determine the direction of the Humanitarian Assistance response, and to ensure coordination of the activities of the responders involved. Terms of Reference and key responsibilities of the HASG include:

- Triggering the deployment of key capabilities*
- Monitoring the performance of capabilities, and intervening to bolster the response where necessary*
- Ensuring that the needs of affected people are understood and met*
- Initiating consultation with communities and individual to ensure the response is effective*
- Coordinating the psychosocial and health aspects of the response, and that effective pathways exist*
- Ensuring effective mechanisms exist for sharing of information*
- Ensuring effective promotion of services to affected people.*
- Financial control*

5.16 Suggested composition:

- Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO) (Chair)
- Representative from the Metropolitan Police Service (e.g. Family Liaison manager)
- Representative from the Clinical Commissioning Group
- Representative from the Mental Health Trust
- Representative from adult social care services
- Representative from the Children's and Young People's Service
- Information Management Officer (Local Authority)
- Communications Cell representative (Local Authority / Police)
- Emergency Planning representative (Local Authority)
- Chair of the Humanitarian Assistance Centre Management Group (if activated)
- HM Coroners Officer
- Representative from the London Resilience Team (if required)
- Voluntary sector representative(s) – for example British Red Cross, Salvation Army etc.
- Health Protection Agency
- Secretariat (Minute-taker and meeting organiser)

HASG meetings

Frequency and timing

5.17 The HASG would be expected to meet frequently in the immediate aftermath of an incident, but less often in later stages. In the initial stages meetings should be at least daily. (If more than one meeting is held per day, it may be difficult to discharge actions between meetings).

5.18 Meetings should be timed with regard to the timings of GCG / GRG meetings to enable discharge of actions emanating from Gold, and upward reporting.

Focus

5.19 Meetings should focus on managing the overall humanitarian response, in line with the strategic direction from Gold. In practice this should focus on:

- Setting objectives and monitoring outcomes
- Understanding user needs
- Coordinating between agencies to provide a coherent response
- Transitioning between phases

In addition the following key considerations are likely to be applicable for the HASG to address in most incidents:

- Assessing what centres have been established, the take up of services and forward planning what types of centres will be required in the next stage of the response.

- *What other methods of support have been set up? e.g. website, Helpline.*
- *Devising a clear communications, media and marketing strategy to promote the services available*
- *Support available to persons living outside of London – can support be accessed through local services?*

5.20 Meetings should not be focussing on the detail of the operational response. This is the responsibility of tactical responders managing individual capabilities deployed. However, the meetings should be an opportunity to escalate issues, if needed.

5.21 The meetings should, if possible, avoid spending excessive time on sharing information on progress of the overall response. The time required for this will be shortened by the timely provision of Situation Reports.

3.4 Identification of Vulnerable People

One of the first considerations in the humanitarian response to a major emergency will be in respect of any people who are vulnerable. In a fast moving event, where speed is essential to protect life, the emergency services may have to take action without reference to others. Where there is more time available the agencies will be able to coordinate their response in this respect.

A key factor to consider is that there is no one single list of vulnerable people available. It is therefore necessary to check multiple lists and for each agency to be prepared to share their vulnerable people information. A process for this activity has been prepared by way of the Identifying Vulnerable People in a Crisis Plan. This identifies which agencies in Bexley hold information on vulnerable people and coordinates this as a list of lists.

The agencies who hold information on vulnerable people may be reticent about sharing it for fear of breaching the law on the disclosure of personal information. The Identifying Vulnerable People in a Crisis Plan the information addresses this by the provision of an information sharing protocol. This provides a number of safeguards for information sharing at the time of an emergency.

It is often difficult to determine whether vulnerable people are involved in an emergency. It is therefore important that the Identifying Vulnerable People in a Crisis Plan is activated as soon as possible to confirm this or otherwise.

3.5 Rest Centres

A Rest Centre will be established to provide short-term accommodation; feeding facilities and the provision of other humanitarian aid for those who have been evacuated as a result of a crisis and are therefore rendered temporarily homeless.

In Bexley the Education and Social Care Directorate hold and maintain the Rest Centre Plan. It provides for activation, staffing and roles including that of the voluntary agencies. This plan contains a number of dedicated locations for our together with an extensive list of halls for use for evacuees in the short term. These could also be utilised for some of the other types of assistance centres referred to here.

The objectives of the Rest Centre Plan are :

- Minimise the discomfort and anxiety of those who are temporarily displaced by an incident or an emergency.
- Support the emergency services dealing with the incident
- Use resources to mitigate effects of an emergency
- Assist in the identification of survivors/witnesses
- Return to normality those evacuated or to provide longer term accommodation for those made homeless

3.6 Humanitarian Assistance Centre

A Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) would be set up with the following objectives:

- Act as a focal point for humanitarian assistance to bereaved individuals and families, survivors and impacted communities;
- Enable individuals and families to gain as much information as is currently available about family members and friends involved in the incident;
- Enable the gathering of mass forensic samples in a timely manner, in order to enhance the ability to identify loved ones quickly;
- Offer access to a range of facilities that will allow individuals, families and survivors to make informed choices according to their needs;
- Provide a coherent multi-agency approach to humanitarian assistance in emergencies that will minimise duplication.

It is the responsibility of local authorities to set up and run a HAC with support from the police and other agencies following a request from the Strategic (Gold) Group).

The location and size of this HAC will depend on the severity and size of the major emergency. If it is of such a scale that Bexley would be unable to deal with such a centre in isolation the Council Gold may seek for the London Humanitarian Assistance Plan to be implemented. This provides for sites within each London Local Resilience Forum (LRF) area that could be used as a HAC – Croydon Town Hall is the designated site for South East London.

For incidents that are within Bexley's capability, the arrangements for the nomination of a HALO described above, will apply. Staffing and location of the HAC will require consideration of implementation of the Rest Centre Plan. Other suitable venues will include the local hotels and the list of community halls maintained in the Acting Controller's Handbook.

A HAC differs from rest centres or FRRC in the respect that these are generally used in the immediate aftermath of an incident with specific purposes, for example to reunite relatives with survivors or to provide temporary shelter. The HAC should not interfere with the function of these or other initial support areas. Instead it should have a broader remit and longer term role whilst investigation and recovery operations are taking place.

A HAC is unlikely to be fit for purpose and open for use until up to 72 hours after the incident. It should be set up with the primary aim of providing a focal point in which information and humanitarian support can be provided to bereaved families, survivors and other persons affected by a major incident. The centre may also be used to enable investigating officers to obtain information and forensic samples from those directly involved to aid the identification process.

The local authority will be responsible the provision of a HALO as described above who will establish and chair a Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group, (HASG) who will be responsible for running the centre. There will be a range of other statutory organisations (e.g. police Family Liaison Officers) and voluntary agencies (e.g. British Red Cross) present who can provide information and support for survivors and their relatives. This will include practical advice such as compensation, benefits support, travel assistance and information on the investigation process. It will also provide befriending and listening services, (offered by local authorities and voluntary agencies), that will enable those who wish to access further support the signposting to access these services.

All staff deployed by local authorities and voluntary agencies to the HAC should be properly trained and briefed on their role within the centre and that of others working alongside them. This should include awareness of their remit and avoid attempting to provide support for which they are not trained e.g. avoid formal counselling which is not appropriate immediately after the incident.

A HAC will remain open for as long as its services are required. This is likely to be a number of weeks or possibly months. The HASG should consider the exit strategy for the centre from the outset.

3.7 Survivors Reception Centre

The purpose of a Survivor Reception Centre (SRC) is to:

- Provide immediate shelter for persons who have been directly involved in an emergency;
- Allow documentation of the survivors;
- Enable the interviewing of potential witnesses by the police;
- Provide first aid to those in need of it and not requiring hospitalisation;
- Provide initial care and welfare support to survivors;
- Organise onward travel where appropriate;
- Provide information to survivors.

An SRC is a temporary but secure area close to the incident scene setup for survivors not requiring acute hospital treatment, but who may have been slightly injured / contaminated or otherwise involved in the event. This facility will be set up in the immediate aftermath of the incident, usually by the police, offering short-term shelter and first aid, plus the collection and recording of details for those involved.

The SRC will be set up immediately at a location as near as practicable to the incident site as determined by police silver at the time of the emergency. The police are responsible for opening a SRC, supported by the local authority, in accordance with arrangements in the London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP) Manual.

A SRC will be run initially by the Police (who will be first on the scene) in isolation until the local authority becomes engaged and can provide additional support. The police will deploy a Documentation Team to the SRC who will pass on details gathered from survivors to their Central Casualty Bureau. A police security team should also be deployed to the SRC.

Within Bexley the police may consult with the Council for a suitable location for the centre but in practical terms they are likely to find a suitable location before the Council can be activated. If the request is received for premises the EP Team or Acting Controller will refer to the Halls List in the Rest Centre Plan, (also contained in the Acting Controllers Handbook). A LALO should be sent to the SRC to assess whether any Council assistance is required. However the SRC is likely to be activated for only a limited period of time and then may cease operations or migrate into a rest centre facility. The Council will prioritise the setting up of a rest centre and only provide limited support to the SRC.

Within the SRC persons should be provided with whatever 'psychological first aid' is appropriate to the situation. This is likely to include befriending and reassurance alongside practical support such as access to telephones to inform loved ones that they are safe and well, and help with onward travel arrangements.

3.8 Friends and Relatives Reception Centre

The purpose of a Friends and Relatives Reception Centre (FRRC) is to:

- Help reunite friends and relatives with survivors;
- Provide a place for the police to record missing persons enquiries and to collect information that may aid their investigation;
- Provide friends and relatives with a safe area to gather, away from media attention;
- Provide friends and relatives with up-to-date and accurate information on the response arrangements that have been put in place;
- Provide access to practical and emotional support to those friends and relatives affected.

Past emergencies have shown that in the immediate aftermath of an incident, many people will travel to the scene in order to find family and friends that they believe to be

involved. If large numbers of people are converging on the scene, the police may decide that it is necessary to have a separate area where family and friends can gather to receive information as it becomes available.

A FRRC, (also known as a Family and Friends Reception Centre), may be located near to the scene, in the area of the community affected or near transport hubs such as major train station terminals. It is the responsibility of the police to set up a FRRC as part of the wider Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) process.

A FRRC is likely to be set up within first 24 hours of the incident occurring and should be a safe place for friends and relatives to gather where they can receive up-to-date information about the situation and response. As with survivor reception centres the Council will assist the police with the location of such a site if required. If required the Council will also help in providing immediate practical and emotional support for friends and family.

The Council do not maintain a separate plan for the establishment of a FRRC. As with the Survivor Reception Centre, the police will take the initial steps probably very soon after their arrival at the scene. The Council will be able to assist through the provision of staff, chiefly those who are trained in rest centre provision and accommodation from the list of halls maintained in the Rest Centre Plan and Acting Controllers Handbook. The Rest Centre Plan should therefore be activated accordingly.

3.9 Deployment of staff to hospitals and A&E departments.

The police will deploy Documentation Teams to all receiving hospitals in order to gather information on those involved. In addition to dealing with forensic issues and security advice they will collate details of received patients to enable the information to be added to their Central Casualty Bureau records.

All hospitals have major incident plans and these are likely to be activated following any incident in London that involves a large number of casualties and/or fatalities. Hospitals will also have detailed arrangements for supporting friends and relatives of those that have been admitted. They work alongside police Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) to ensure practical and emotional support is provided. The Council will only play a part in this if called upon to provide some form of assistance such as transport or rehousing victims.

3.10 Central Casualty Bureau

The police may establish a central casualty bureau where details of all dead, casualties, survivors and evacuees will be collated. This centre will also take telephone enquiries from the friends and relatives of people who are believed to be involved in the incident. Casualty bureau staff will then match details of persons involved with enquiries. Where a match is made, appropriate contact with the enquirer will be made.

The central casualty bureau will not close until all the casualties have been identified, all next-of kin informed and telephone enquiries have diminished to a level where they can be dealt with by the local police area. To avoid discrepancies in casualty figures all information must be routed through the casualty bureau, which will be the sole source of casualty information. Casualty figures must only be released following consultation with police gold or their press officers.

The Council will not be involved in managing or providing premises for the bureau as the Metropolitan Police have a purpose built site in existence in North London. However the Council could receive the calls from concerned friends and media. In the early stages callers should be advised that details of missing relatives and those injured will be taken as soon as possible and to refer to the media for the publishing of the bureau phone number. The following maybe useful suggested points to bring to the callers attention:

- Do not ring the published number unnecessarily.
- Do ring if you have reason to believe that a relative or close friend has been involved and you need to report them missing, or you have information to give which may be of help to the Police enquiries.
- Do let other friends and relatives know that you are ringing, or have rung, so that they do not call unnecessarily in duplicating the call.
- If your relative or friend turns up after you have reported them missing, please ring back and let the Police know.
- If you call to report a missing person, please have as many details about them as possible to hand. You will be asked questions such as:
 - 'Why do you think they may be involved?'
 - 'What is their name and address?'
 - 'How old are they?'
 - 'Do you know their date of birth?'
 - 'What were they wearing?'
 - Who were they with?

3.11 Assistance from the Voluntary Sector

Voluntary groups

The nature, range and scale of services offered by the voluntary sector may alter depending upon the context of the emergency situation at the time. The voluntary sector can provide support in a number of generic areas specifically:

- Welfare
- Social and psychological aftercare
- Medical support
- Search & Rescue
- Transport
- Communications
- Documentation

British Red Cross

- Provide emotional and practical support
- Provide access to a range of practical support services
- Offer therapeutic care (relaxing massages) for clients and staff
- May provide first aid for both clients and staff

The Salvation Army

- Co-ordinate the provision of faith support, accessing appropriate faith leaders as necessary
- Listen and provide emotional support
- Provide access to a range of practical support services

Victim Support

- Provide emotional and practical support to those affected by crime and other emergencies
- Offer advocacy and help with navigating the criminal justice system
- Provide information on the services provided by other agencies and referrals, where appropriate

Cruse Bereavement Care

- Listen and provide ongoing emotion support
- Provide bereavement and contact information

St Johns Ambulance

- First aid and healthcare
- Medical support to ambulance service / hospitals / mortuaries

Samaritans

- Listen and provide ongoing emotion support
- Provide bereavement and contact information

Disaster Action

- Offers support and guidance to survivors and the bereaved

- Guidance and consultation for responding agencies

Faith Groups

Faith Groups have a role in:

- Recognising the spiritual dimension of life and death
- A ministry of care and comfort to relatives and others caught up in the Disaster
- Providing a ministry with Hospital Chaplains in hospitals
- Providing a ministry at temporary mortuary facilities
- To organise local church services as required by the community
- To assist with the organisation of memorial services
- Engage with partner agencies to support community cohesion work

3.12 Assistance from the Private Sector

National Rail (Care Teams)

- Will provide information and practical assistance to those involved and those affected by the incident
- Will establish and maintain close contact with police FLOs
- Will work alongside and seek to complement the efforts of other responding agencies. Primary among these will be police FLOs, with whom early and close contact will be established, along with hospital staff, local authorities and voluntary sector and faith communities.
- Will support communication infrastructure with family and friends of those involved in the incident (by the provision of telephones and generally providing communication support, internet access, phone calls etc.)
- Will make arrangements and, where appropriate, pay for travel for family and friends, including taxi fares, overseas flights etc.
- Will arrange and, where appropriate, pay for accommodation for family and friends.
- May provide financial assistance for food, clothing, toiletries etc.
- Will arrange to meet family and friends from locations within the transport infrastructure
- May arrange and, where appropriate, pay for child or elder care.

- Will assist in the tracing of luggage and other items of property lost as a result of incidents.
- Will respond to any other needs and concerns which become apparent and generally attempting to help out wherever possible
- Transport company staff will not provide any form of counselling services but would help to put individuals in contact with the appropriate specialists agency where appropriate.

UK Airlines

Following an aviation incident in the UK that involves UK airlines, they:

- Will provide information and practical assistance to those involved and those affected by the incident
- Establish a telephone helpline for the relatives of those that may be affected
- Will establish and maintain close contact with police FLOs
- Will support communication infrastructure with family and friends of those involved in the incident (by the provision of telephones and generally providing communication support, internet access, phone calls etc.)
- Provide representatives to attend Gold Command meetings
- Assist in the establishment and operation of a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (where required)
- Will make arrangements and, where appropriate, pay for travel for family and friends, including taxi fares, overseas flights etc.
- Will arrange and, where appropriate, pay for accommodation for family and friends
- May provide financial assistance for food, clothing

Chapter 4

Roles of Other Responding Organisations

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Chapter 4 - Roles of Other Responder Organisations

4.1 Response Category

The organisations that respond to emergencies have been divided into two categories by the Civil Contingencies Act as shown below:

Category 1

Emergency Services
Local Authorities
NHS Bodies
Environment Agency
Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Category 2

Utilities
Transport Operators & Companies
Public Communications Suppliers
Health & Safety Executive
Highways Agency

The Category 1 responders duties include:

- Risk assessments
- Business Continuity Management
- Emergency Planning and
- Maintaining public awareness and arrangements to warn, and inform the public.

Category 2 organisations are placed under lesser obligations by the Act. Primarily their role is co-operating and sharing relevant information with Category 1 responders. They should be engaged in discussions where they can add value. Furthermore, they must respond to reasonable requests.

The roles of those responder organisations that are likely to be involved in emergency and major incidents within Bexley are contained in the following pages and are broken up into 5 areas:

- Emergency Services
- Health Services
- Other Government Departments
- Voluntary Groups
- Utility Companies

The Contact details for each of the organisations listed can be found in the Acting Controllers Handbook

4.2 Emergency Services

4.2.1 Metropolitan Police

Responsibilities at a major incident:-

- Saving of life in conjunction with the other emergency services
- Co-ordination of the emergency services and other organisations

- Protection and preservation of the scene
- Setting up controlled access cordons
- Evacuation of the affected area
- Setting up of Rendezvous Points and vehicle Marshalling Areas
- Traffic control and diversions
- Investigation of the incident and obtaining and securing the evidence
- Liaison with other investigative bodies where applicable
- Collation and dissemination of casualty information
- Identification of victims on behalf of the Coroner
- Media liaison and arrangements for VIP visits
- Prevention of crime (e.g. looting) and the protection of property
- Restoration of normality after all necessary actions have been taken.

4.2.2 London Fire Brigade

Fire Brigade responsibilities at a major incident:-

- Life saving through search and rescue
- Fire fighting and fire prevention
- Rendering humanitarian services
- Controlling chemical incidents
- Detection and management of hazardous materials
- Provision of qualified scientific advice
- Salvage and damage control
- Safety management within the inner cordon (rescue zone)
- Maintain cover through rest of London
- Return to normality at the earliest time

4.2.3 London Ambulance Service

Ambulance Service responsibilities at a major incident:-

- To save life in conjunction with other emergency services;
- To provide treatment, stabilisation and care of injured
- To provide sufficient ambulances, staff, equipment and resources
- To provide triage points and determine priority evacuation of injured

- Establish safe location for casualty clearing
- Provide focal point for all NHS medical resources
- To provide transport to scene of mobile medical and surgical teams
- To nominate and alert receiving hospitals to receive injured.
- Arrange appropriate means of transporting injured to hospitals
- Maintain cover for rest of London and return to normality at earliest time

4.3 Health Services

4.3.1 NHS Commissioning Board (NHS CB)

The role of the NHS CB is as follows:

- Leadership and coordination of the NHS, including provision of information on the NHS position, during national emergencies
- National link on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery between the NHS CB, Department of Health(DH) and Public Health England(PHE)
- Provides assurance to DH of the capability of the NHS to respond to emergencies
- Participates in national multi-agency planning processes, including risk assessment, exercising and assurance
- Provides a link with national NHS bodies, e.g. NHS Blood and Transplant, health care regulators, etc
- Supports the response to incidents that affect more than one region

4.3.2 Public Health England (PHE)

The role of PHE is as follows:

:

- Responsible for leading the mobilisation of PHE in the event of an emergency or incident
- Undertakes at all levels, its responsibilities on behalf of Secretary of State for Health as a Category 1 responder Managing some incidents directly
- Participates in and provides specialist expert public health input to national, sub-national and LHRP planning for emergencies
- Delivers public health services e.g. surveillance and microbiology services to emergency responders, Government and the public during emergencies, at all levels Providing a strategic view on long term threats
- Works together with the NHS at all levels and where appropriate develop joint response plans

4.3.3 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

- Support NHS CB in discharging its EPRR functions and duties
- Provide a route of escalation should a provider fail to maintain necessary EPRR capacity and capability
- Fulfil the responsibilities as a Category 2 responder under the CCA including maintaining business continuity plans for their own organisation
- Ensure contracts with NHS funded provider organisations contain relevant emergency preparedness, resilience (including business continuity) and response elements

4.4 Other Agencies

4.4.1 Government Departments

There may be specific incidents that may require central government departments to play an active role in the response or management of an emergency. For example providing specialist advice to local authorities when the main source of information lies at central government level (e.g. in the case of an overseas nuclear or satellite accident). On other occasions they may have a limited role to undertake when dealing with parliamentary, media and public enquiries. In such cases, the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) at the Cabinet Office will take the lead role.

The CCS will undertake some or all of the following tasks:

- Co-ordination of the activities of central government departments in the response to an emergency providing a framework within which individual departments can discharge their specific responsibilities (an important part of this would be establishing links with the Council)
- Co-ordination of the collection of information relating to the emergency and its effects for the purpose of □ briefing ministers, □ informing Parliament, and providing information to the public and the media at national level.

4.4.2 Environment Agency

The EA are the lead public body for protecting and improving the environment. They have a responsibility to maintain their flood defences and collect flood data for historical records and to enhance future mapping. They have a responsibility to issue alerts of a flood event . Once flooding has receded they will repair their damaged defences.

The main roles include:

- Prepare and maintain London local Flood warning Plan
- Protection/Control of pollution and improvement in river quality
- Update flood risk maps
- Management of water resources
- Conservation of natural environment, including fisheries development

- Provision of Flood Warnings
- Maintain flood management structures

4.4.3 HM Coastguard

London Coastguard will be responsible for the co-ordination of Search and Rescue(SAR) on the River Thames between Teddington and Canvey Island. This included the activation and deployment of civil SAR response to vessels or persons in need of assistance. The Coastguard will identify Casualty Landing Points along the Thames and this includes sites in Bexley. The coastguard will communicate to the other agencies the location of these points.

4.4.4 Port of London Authority (PLA)

- Maintain radio contact with shipping
- Possess salvaging and dredging equipment
- Operate a team of divers
- Central control of a marine accident from one of the Authorities communications centres.
- The phrase “**PLA Major Incident Procedure**” will be broadcast as part of an alert message by London VTS, advising all river users that a Major Incident response is in progress within the port.

4.4.5 Military Assistance

The Armed Forces may be called upon to assist the civil authorities in major emergencies when civil resources are inadequate or cannot be mobilised quickly. In certain circumstances, where there is a threat to life or when the community is in danger of being deprived of the essentials of life, they have a duty to provide whatever assistance is possible.

While the military have substantial resources it should be noted that in an emergency they cannot be deployed without the invocation of the Military Aid to the Civil Power arrangements which have to be authorised by Government. It is likely that any such a emergency would have a London Local Authority Gold involvement by whom such a request would have to be first considered.

4.5 Voluntary Groups

4.5.1 Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)

The RNLI’s primary area of responsibility is the rescue of persons in distress. They have permanently staffed stations on the River Thames at Gravesend, Waterloo Pier and

Chiswick, each having one fully crewed lifeboat on stand-by 24 hours a day. They are co-ordinated by the Coastguard.

4.5.2 British Red Cross (BRC)

The BRC provide assistance to the Council in the reception and care of evacuees and relatives affected by an emergency. A formal protocol has been agreed between the Council and BRC for the provision of short term support at the time of a major emergency in Bexley.

This organisation can:

- Provide staff and equipment at designated Rest Centres, for the running of first aid facilities within the Centre
- Provide leaflets at Rest Centres
- Provide blankets for use at Rest Centres
- Provide short term support (befriending) to those people affected by the emergency
- Supply vehicles, where available, to assist in the transport of people during the incident
- Provide a Tactical Manager to co-ordinate the Red Cross response at the BECC if required

4.5.3 Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is called by the London Fire Brigade to attend any major incident requiring eight or more pumps and are primarily involved in providing catering facilities for the Emergency Services. However, the Salvation Army can also provide support to the Council, where resources allow.

The organisation can provide:

- Assistance at the incident scene, including spiritual assistance
- Care of friends and relatives, particularly the bereaved
- Emergency Services catering support
- Overnight/short stay shelter provision
- Assistance with other welfare agencies
- Mobile units can be on the road in 30 minutes

4.5.4 St John Ambulance

The primary role of this organisation during an emergency is one of support to the London Ambulance Service in the saving of life and care of survivors. They will also upon request:

- Transporting infirm/disabled people to and from Rest Centres
- Work with the London Ambulance Service at major incidents.

- Provide staff and equipment at designated Rest Centres, for the running of first aid facilities within the centre
- Provide a range of equipment e.g. blankets, stretchers, first aid and camping equipment

4.5.5 Radio Amateurs Emergency Network (RAYNET)

RAYNET is a group of amateur radio operators licensed to provide and operate radio communications in support of the emergency services and local authorities. RAYNET will usually operate from the BECC and can provide:

- Assistance with the provision, operation and maintenance of additional radio communications.
- Transmit and receive messages on behalf of the emergency services, local authorities, public utilities and voluntary organisations
- Provide emergency communications equipment and operators at the BECC
- Provide emergency communications support to officers at the scene of the incident.

4.5.6 Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS)

The WRVS provide assistance to the Council in the reception and care of evacuees affected by an emergency at designated Rest Centres. They can also upon request provide:

- Assistance in setting-up and running Rest Centres
- Co-ordinate the provision and distribution of emergency clothing to people affected by an emergency
- Thermos urns, insulated containers, clothing, bedding and blankets, but not beds or bedding
- Assistance in Setting up and staffing Rest Centres, emergency feeding centres, information centres and centres for clothing distribution.

4.5.7 RSPCA

The RSPCA provide a safe environment and welfare for animals and can assist with finding temporary accommodation for pets. They can also if requested provide transport for animals and advice on their welfare.

4.6 Utility Companies and other Miscellaneous Organisations

4.6.1 Belfor UK Ltd (Disaster Call)

Belfor UK Ltd is a private company offering 24 hour direct damage recovery services including:-

- Specialist cleaning and decontamination
- Water removal and drying
- Reclamation of damaged office records

4.6.2 Network Rail- South East

Network Rail maintain all the rail network that runs through the Bexley area. Their key responsibilities include:

- Providing assistance during emergencies
- To clear, maintain and open network lines as necessary and provide staff for these duties
- To provide specialist teams with heavy lifting gear and cranes. Whilst most of these are railway orientated various road rescue vehicles are available.

4.6.3 TFL- London Buses

London Buses is the subsidiary of Transport for London (TfL) that manages bus services within the Bexley area. They operate a 24hour Command and Control centre based in Southwark. In most incidents involving bus routes they will send a silver to the scene. The buses can also be requested for use in the evacuation of the public during a major incident. The buses equipped with radio communications can also pass key information on the situation to their control room and their silver that can form a clearer picture of the incident.

4.6.4 Electrical Distributors and Transmitters

During an emergency affecting electrical supplies, the companies retain control of their operations and have to meet their obligations as prescribed by the regulator. It is crucial that the planning arrangements are in place so that at the time of an emergency they can work closely with emergency services and local authorities to deliver timely restoration of essential services to help minimise the wider impact on the community. In particular their role includes:

- locate damaged supply lines and make secure against the risk to life and property
- advise the Police and Fire and Rescue Service of any actual hazard
- render safe any damaged or threatened apparatus on the local grid
- restore electricity supply when the situation permits
- investigate the cause of any fault or breakdown and the consequences of such occurrences..

4.6.5 Gas Distributors

Currently Southern Gas Networks are the main company affected by the act but this could change. During an emergency similar arrangements are in place as for the other utility companies. In a major incident Southern Gas Networks would:-

- search for and locate the presence of free gas and to make it secure against the risk to life and property
- advise the Police and Fire and Rescue Service as to the extent of the area of risk of gas hazard and the need to evacuate people
- render safe damaged or threatened plant or gas supply networks
- reinstate gas supplies when the situation is considered safe
- investigate the cause of any gas escape and the consequences of such escapes.
- in conjunction with the relevant local authority, ensure that any residual gas deposits are vented from the premises affected by the event.

4.6.6 Water Supply and Sewerage

The supply of potable water in Bexley is the responsibility of Thames Water. The Environment Agency is also concerned with water quality and should be contacted whenever there is a threat or damage to water courses in Bexley. Thames Water are also responsible for sewerage in Bexley and should be contacted in any actual or potential alert.

Roles and Responsibilities in a major incident, would include:-

- render safe any damaged or threatened water plant or supply pipes
- advise the Emergency Services of any potential hazard
- cut off supply should the situation demand
- ensure supply of water for fire fighting
- divert or reinstate supplies where necessary
- deploy emergency potable water supplies to an affected locality during a protracted incident. (This action would also cover any water shortage situation)
- provide scientific advice

4.6.7 Telephone Communications

The standard method of communications during the course of any major incident will continue to be the British Telecom telephone network augmented by the Emergency Communications Network (ECN). Additional communications are available via the use of the Cellular Telephone System , or other landline providers. The network providers role during an incident includes:

- to provide temporary and/or additional lines as requested
- to reinstate damaged lines

4.7 Emergency Services and Hospital Locations in Bexley

Within Bexley the blue light emergency services have a number of bases but none of these lie within the flood plains. The times of openings of these premises vary and are not fixed permanently so not included in this plan. This information can be obtained if required at the time of an incident. Queen Mary's Hospital is no longer an accident and emergency department but is an Urgent Care Centre

4.7.1 Metropolitan Police

Bexleyheath Police Station,
2 Arnsberg Way, Bexleyheath DA7 4QS

4.7.2 London Fire Brigade

Bexley Fire Station
172 Erith Road, Bexleyheath, DA7 6BY

Erith Fire Station
52 Erith Road, Belvedere, DA17 6HR

Sidcup Fire Station
162 Main Road, Sidcup, DA14 6NZ

4.7.3 London Ambulance Service

Barnehurst Ambulance Station
164 Erith Road, Bexleyheath, Kent, DA7 6BZ

4.7.4 Hospitals

Queen Mary's Hospital Sidcup (Urgent Care Centre)
Frognal Avenue, Sidcup, DA14 6LT

Erith and District Hospital (Northumberland Heath Health and Minor Injuries Clinic)
Park Crescent, Erith, DA8 3EE

Chapter 5

Communication

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Chapter 5 - Communication

5.1 Communicating with the Public

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on the Council as a Category One responder to:

- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters
- Maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency

Effective communication with the public at the time of an emergency is vital. During any crisis, the public or a section thereof will have a thirst for information and updates. Effective communication can help: save life, prevent injury, mitigate the impact of an emergency and support community resilience.

Whatever the scale of the event, and whether multi agency or just involving the Council, the guiding principles of this plan are to be adhered to. This will ensure uniformity in what we do so as to provide the people of Bexley with the best information available at the time of a crisis.

Outside of emergency situations the Council's strategy for making information available to the public about civil protection is:

- to undertake an annual campaign based upon the local risk assessment. The campaign undertaken is to use the most appropriate media such as the Council Website, Bexley Magazine, local poster campaigns and booklets.

5.1.1 Management of Communication during an emergency

The scale of the emergency will largely dictate the complexity of communication means employed for informing the public. In this context, in large scale incidents involving a multi agency response, it is important to acknowledge that communication is likely to be managed or led by another agency. This will be the emergency services and most likely the police while they are involved. On such occasions the importance of providing consistent messages to the public cannot be over emphasised.

The local authority will contribute to the management of the communication process adopted for large scale incidents. For more information on communication with the public at the time of a large incident involving a multi agency response, please see the LESLP Manual.

In larger incidents it is important to acknowledge that there will be different communication issues affecting both the strategic and tactical management. With this level of complexity it is important that a communication strategy is put in place. Communication with the public will be an important part of the strategy.

During lesser events, only involving the Council, management of communication will be in accordance with this plan. Here again the scale of the incident determines the response.

This can range from the ad hoc involvement of the Council's Communications Team, through to some form of dedicated involvement; for example a Communications Officer working in the Borough Emergency Control Centre.

5.1.2 Options for Communicating with the Public

The Council has the following communication means at its immediate disposal:

- London Borough of Bexley Website
- The Civic Offices Contact Centre
- Social media: Twitter, You Tube and Facebook
- Receptions at other Council premises
- Council libraries
- Local Media Contacts
- National Media
- Through specific service areas, e.g. Schools, Adult Social Services, Neighbourhood Services,
- Councillors community links within their ward
- Communication with staff, many of whom live in the borough

The Council can also seek to exploit the communication networks of partner organisations:

- Police, Fire and Ambulance and Services. The police in particular have a warning and informing system, Neighbourhood Link
- Bexley Clinical Commissioning Group
- Local business contacts
- Bexley Borough Neighbourhood Watch
- Neighbouring local authorities, particularly where there is potential for cross border issues

The above list is not exhaustive but will serve as a checklist to be regularly considered.

5.1.3 Use of Social Media – Twitter

The emergence in the use of Twitter in recent years has been significant. There is growing evidence of organisations embracing it as a highly effective means of communicating key messages and, very importantly, dispelling rumour. Bexley have two main Twitter accounts '@bexleycomms' and '@whatsoninbexley'. The Communications Team use both to share information, monitor issues online, correct negative comments about Council services, for emergencies and to advertise events.

5.1.4 Timing of Communication

It is important that communication with the public is opened as early as possible. If there is a delay, the reason for it is to be recorded in a decision log.

Communication with the public must be seen as in need of a beginning and an end. Therefore, after informing the public of an incident it is important they are regularly updated and lastly informed that it is finished. The options for communication are to be reconsidered at each stage.

5.2 Communication with Council Members at the time of an emergency

Part of any response is ensuring that relevant Council Members are informed of any emergency that may be relevant to them. This could be for reasons of the location of the incident or because of their Cabinet responsibilities. A protocol has been drawn up to ensure that communication at the appropriate time is maintained with members in an emergency.

5.2.1 Means of keeping Members informed

There are three ways of communicating with Council Members when emergencies occur:

1. Use of the Textmarketer bulk text messaging system.
2. E mail.
3. Telephone or mobile phone contact.

None of these take primacy over the other. It is a matter of choosing the most appropriate method when judging the nature of the incident, who needs to know and how quickly. Where appropriate, and usually after the response phase of the incident, a briefing may be offered or the incident reported to Overview and Scrutiny.

5.2.2 Who to alert and when

Council Members to be informed of incidents can be listed as follows:

- The Council Leader and Deputy Leader
- Cabinet Members
- Leader of the Opposition
- Ward Councillors

The Council Leader, Deputy Leader, Leader of the Opposition and Cabinet Members will be informed of all major incidents by the Emergency Planning Team officer dealing. The timing of this information is dependent upon the severity of the incident and the time of day it occurs.

The relevant Ward councillors will also be included in this informing where the incident occurs in their ward, is very close to it, or may be adversely affected by it.

All Councillors will be informed where the incident is of such a scale or impact that it affects the whole borough. During such large incidents, the use of Councillors to assist in keeping the public informed should be considered.

The overriding principle is that it is the responsibility of the Council Officer dealing with the emergency to decide who and when to inform of these incidents and this protocol serves as guidance only.

5.2.3. Local Members of Parliament, (MPs)

Consideration should also be given to informing local MPs and a similar principle as for Councillors should be applied as follows:

- The relevant MP will be informed where the incident occurs in their constituency or is very close to it, or may be adversely affected by it.
- All MPs will be informed where the incident is of such a scale or impact that it affects the whole borough.

The e mail addresses for the borough's three MPs can be found in the Acting Controller's Handbook.

5.3 Communications and the Media

The media have an important role to play in any major emergency incident. There is a need to establish contact with press and other media, but this must be done in such a way that does not hinder the Council's response to the emergency itself. Any comments to the media must only be made after consultation with Gold or Silver.

Almost all major incidents will generate huge media interest – on a national or even international scale. Working with the media must be seen as an integral part of the Council's emergency planning because;

- Relations with the media need to be managed so that they can do their job effectively and the Council can concentrate unhindered on responding to the incident;
- The media is the main – sometimes only – source of information for the public in an emergency. In the early stages this will include the families of those involved;
- The media are informing millions of people – it is important to ensure they have accurate, timely information.

In a major incident, attending media personnel may well include regional and national TV and radio, national newspapers, cameramen, film crews and freelancers and the numbers involved will be considerable. The media work around the clock and respond to a major incident with speed. They may clog up the Council's switchboard and are likely to arrive on site within minutes.

5.3.1 Good Media Relations

It is important to remember that the media have an important, positive role in reassuring the public (which comes from giving them the facts) and can help with mass broadcasts of vital information e.g. "Stay indoors" in the case of a chemical leak, or "Take an alternative route" in the case of a road traffic accident.

Developing a good relationship with the media can deliver these objectives:

- Sympathetic coverage for victims generating support from opinion formers and the wider community.

- Positive coverage of the work of the Council, reinforcing morale and developing understanding of difficulties being encountered.
- Public confidence in the handling of the aftermath
- Goodwill among the media for help with publicity or for restraint
- The high moral ground from which to deal with misbehaviour.

For the local community, including relief workers, local media play a critical role. Their audience sees them as part of the community, sources of information and advice, as well as news.

Whatever the disaster and whatever its size, the pattern of media enquiries and subsequent reporting always falls into four recognisable phases:

<u>Mayhem</u>	The immediate aftermath: a mad scramble to know what, where, when, why and how; and to get pictures
<u>Mastermind</u>	A search for all the relevant background information and history.
<u>Manhunt</u>	The search for error, fault, and the head that must roll.
<u>The Epilogue</u>	The long-term aftermath and follow-up; the inquiries, trials, memorial services, reconstructions and documentaries; the pressure groups.

5.3.2 Public Information Team

If necessary a Public Information Team will be established. Its core will be in the Council's Communications Team and it will respond to press calls as directed by the Head of Communications (does this mean me or a person appointed to manage communications relating to the particular incident?). Dependent on availability of staff, it will be lead by the Head of Communications or one of the officers from the Council's Communications Team. Representatives of the Communications Team will be sent to the Borough Emergency Control Centre and to the incident site as necessary.

The Public Information Team will liaise with the Police Casualty Bureau, press officers from emergency services and other organisations involved in the incident, directorate spokespersons and where necessary libraries staff in dealing with enquiries from the public and the media.

Should the emergency situation be prolonged or be such that immediate public attention is considered necessary, the formulation and issuing of advice pamphlets/posters etc. should be considered.

5.3.3 Press Liaison Point

The Police Incident Officer or other emergency services officer in charge at the scene will make arrangements for a Press Liaison Point near to the scene of the incident or, where appropriate, a Media Centre. He or she will also arrange for the attendance of a Press and Publicity Officer who will be the main contact point for other organisation's press officers in the co-ordination of press statements and conferences. It is recommended that the Council's Communications Officer makes contact with this officer as soon as possible,

liaising with him/her and other Communications/Press Officers to ensure a co-ordinated press release system, thus avoiding possible ambiguity in press statements.

Sending a Council Communications Officer to the scene as quickly as possible should be a priority, provided that this is done with the consent of the emergency services. This will ensure the establishment of the close link required with the media liaison officer for the emergency services and practical help can be provided where required.

5.3.4 Release of Information to the Media

No Council officer should make any statement or comment about any aspect of the major incident to any person representing the media except by prior arrangement with the Council's Communications Team and the Borough Incident Controller. The Communications Team have details of the BBC's facilities for broadcasting civil emergency arrangements. Casualty figures must only be released through the Police Incident Commander who will have been in contact with the Central Casualty Bureau.

Until arrangements have been made for information to the public to be available at reception points and at any other public information points, such as libraries and council buildings etc., enquiries from the public will be dealt with by the press officer. Recording calls and requests for information from the media and public could tie up the limited Communications Team resources for days, or even weeks, and therefore wherever possible appropriate message forms should be passed to the Communications Team (again – is this us or something specific to the incident?) who will concentrate on providing a response by speaking to reporters or faxing prepared statements. It is therefore important that staff taking initial calls from the media record fax as well as telephone numbers.

Press Conferences

Press conferences at the time of an emergency are a popular method of updating the media. However, they are intensive in terms of the organisation needed and highly pressurised for those nominated to speak at them. The fact that they are generally live events means there is no margin for error and there is a capacity for reputational damage should a spokesperson be tripped up by difficult questioning.

Consideration should be given to the pre-recording of a press statement. This can be released to the media and at the same time made available on You Tube. It represents a recently developed and successfully used alternative to a press conference and the use of You Tube means that it is immediately widely available on the internet.

5.3.5 Emergency Press Service

If necessary an expanded Emergency Press Service will be established by the Head of Communications and they will arrange to call in an extended team of Council staff with journalistic experience .

The Head of Communications will:

- Act as Emergency Press Officer
- Arrange with Facilities Manager to bring in additional phone lines and if necessary for special accommodation for the media.
- Contact officers nominated to form Emergency Press Service.

- Attend or establish regular liaison with the BECC.
- Ensure that interview facilities are available.
- Brief the senior officer or Council member nominated to make a statement to the media.
- Arrange for communications officer to go to Media Centre, (see below, para 5.2.10 and act as part of the press liaison group assisting with journalist's enquiries.
- If not already in place, consider establishing a Media Centre and officer to manage this.
- Attend meetings of Gold Group and brief Silver as necessary
- Liaise with Chief Executive and other directors regarding arrangements for VIP visits.

The Emergency Press Officer should quickly establish ground rules with the media representatives to determine for example:

- Who is the Council's principal spokesperson.
- When regular press briefings will be held.
- Who will be available to give briefings at other times.
- Importance of permitting Council Officers to get on with their duties.

5.3.6 Media Centre

If a Media Centre is required then it should be sited as close as possible to the incident but the needs of officers who will need to travel to the Centre from the Borough Control or elsewhere must also be considered. The location of the Centre will depend on the scale and nature of the incident. When a large number of press/media are involved the Centre should ideally be a large hall with sufficient power supply and a public address system. There should be sufficient car parking space to accommodate the large number of vehicles currently used by the press and media.

5.4 VIP Visits

It is usual for visits to be made by VIPs to the scene of a disaster and to injured survivors. These visits place additional strain on the officers involved in mitigating the effects of the disaster in terms of the extra need for security, public order, increased media attention, and the interruption to normal recovery functions.

The Chief Executive will be responsible for co-ordinating the Council's involvement in VIP visits and liaising with the Emergency Press Officer as necessary.

5.5 Resilient Communications at the time of an Emergency

Communications are vital during a major emergency and it is almost inevitable that there will be communications problems, particularly in the early stages. There always needs to be diverse methods of communications available to the Council in an emergency situation.

This was highlighted in the power outage in 2009 where email, phones and use of the Council website were all out of action and other methods of communication had to be used.

This section will be used to explain the different communication methods available and including a chart showing the communication hierarchy used in local authority emergency planning in London.

A key part of communication and coordination at the time of a major emergency is the opening of a Borough Emergency Control Centre hereafter referred to as the BECC, (See Chapter 2, section 2.3)

5.5.1 Types of Communication

The following is a list of the communication methods available together with some of the features they offer:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. E mail | Own accounts
BECC accounts |
| 2. Phones | Outside/internal lines
BECC direct lines
Log in and transfer abilities. |
| 3. Mobile Phones | Council mobiles
5 Emergency mobiles, (held in the BECC)
MTPAS System (explained in para 5.5.3 below). |
| 4. Satellite Phone | Explorer 500 Inmarsat and user guide,
(held in the BECC) |
| 5. Airwave | Resilient trunked radio with inbuilt encryption.
Local authority talk groups and interoperability with
emergency services. 2 radios held by Emergency
Planning Team. |
| 6. Borough Radio | Localised communications network operated chiefly
by Highways and Amenities Area Teams. 6 radios
held by Emergency Planning Team. |
| 7. Textmarketer | Use of mass texting service, (operating
instructions contained in the Acting Controllers
Handbook). For warning and informing Council staff
only. |
| 8. Neighbourhood Link | A communication and alerting system operated by |

the local Metropolitan Police. It can send automated text and email messages. Use in an emergency would have to be agreed by the local police management.

- 9. **RAYNET** Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network. A Voluntary group able to provide alternative radio communications. (Alerting information contained in Acting Controllers Handbook).
- 10. **Fax** Internal and external fax machines.
- 11. **Council Website** The Council's Communications Team can arrange for internet pages to be dedicated to an incident or Emergency.
- 12. **Resilience Direct** *Awaits implementation* but will provide resilient web based communications between central/local government and the emergency services.
- 13. **Remote Meetings** Telephone Conferences can be set up by the Emergency Planning Team using BT Conferencing

5.5.2 Communications Hierarchy

Where there is a loss of a means of communication it will be a decision for the Council's Incident Controller as to which alternative method of communication to fall back on. This decision will have to be taken in consultation with the other agencies involved in the response to ensure compatibility, particularly with such methods as radios.

The type of communication to use will depend on the message, the urgency and availability at the time. However, when using the following communication methods the respective hierarchies should be applied.

VOICE	Phones, landline/mobile	Use telephones as the primary voice communications
	Airwave Radio	Use airwave as a resilient and secure means of voice communication if security is required and/or telephone system fails
	Borough Radio system	Will be used by some departments dealing with emergency and additional LALO's if Airwave fails.
	Satellite Phone	Satellite phones are an extremely resilient means of voice communications, used when all other systems

		have failed or are inoperable.
	RAYNET	Use Raynet to assist with communications with emergency services if all other types of voice communications fail.
DATA	Email	Email is the primary method of communicating data
	Textmarketer	Use of a bulk texting service particularly where the Council own IT network fails
	Fax	Use Fax as a resilient method of data communication to be used if IT systems fail
Warn/inform	Email	Use Communication links within neighbourhoods and communities to pass key messages to public
	Internet site	Use website to pass on key messages to the public about an ongoing emergency
	Neighbourhood Link	Seek authority from police to pass key messages out to community if website unavailable

5.5.3 Mobile Telecommunications Privileged Access Scheme (MTPAS)

It is not uncommon at the time of a major emergency for mobile telephone networks to become overloaded. Should this occur one or more Network Service Provider (NSP) may decide to impose network access restrictions which only allow users with handsets equipped with special privileged access SIM cards (MTPAS SIMs) to connect to those networks.

This provides users of MTPAS SIMs with a much higher likelihood of completing a call while they are located within the area in which restrictions have been imposed. Under the Scheme, selected mobile telephones in Entitled Organisations are provided with a MTPAS SIM. The Scheme allows for the Police to inform Network Service Providers (NSPs) of a major incident and to request that priority is given to MTPAS SIM cards.

Chapter 6

Council Directorates Roles and Responsibilities

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Chapter 6 - Council Management Groups - Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Introduction

The Council's role at a major emergency will include:

- Providing support for the emergency services
- Providing support and care for the local and wider community
- Using resources to mitigate the effects of an emergency
- Leading the recovery stage
- Maintaining the normal day-to-day services

In April 2011 the Council was reorganised as part of Strategy 2014. A key element of the strategy is the 'One Council' approach to the delivery of services. The fact that the roles referred to above will always be undertaken across the Council's services makes our emergency response entirely compatible with this.

The overall structure of the Council has changed from 6 directorates to 4 management groups, two of which are involved in direct service provision. This Chapter sets out the responsibilities of each of the groups and briefly explains how they are likely to be involved in an emergency response.

6.2 Education and Social Care

The first of the new management groups deals with issues relating to services to communities. The following service groupings are included in this theme:

- Youth and Inclusion - This includes youth services, the Youth Council and participation, services around youth crime and antisocial behaviour, as well as services intended to address attendance and behaviour of students at school.
- Schools and Educational Improvement - This includes services around school improvement and educational achievement, early years, children's centres and extended services and the Council's relationship with schools.
- Children's Social Care, Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs - This includes children's social care, child protection and safeguarding and all services to support children including placements and early intervention. It also includes responsibility for corporate parenting and the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Adult safeguarding is included reflecting the similarities in the safeguarding processes for all client groups. It also leads on health partnership arrangements in respect of children.
- Adult Social Care - This includes the management and delivery of all services for adults including client side monitoring and arrangements with partners and providers. It will oversee the delivery and coordination of services across the whole range of client groups where specialist services are required.

A significant part of the Council's response at the time of an emergency will focus upon care for those affected and this management group will be principal in this provision. With its leadership in matters relating to social care for both adults and children the group is responsible for the Council's Rest Centre Plan. It also maintains a database, Care First 21, of people who receive care services in the borough, which is an indicator of those who may be vulnerable in a crisis.

In an emergency it will lead on the broader provision of humanitarian assistance as detailed in this plan. In terms of rest centre provision it maintains and coordinates a list of staff trained for this purpose.

6.3 Environment and Wellbeing

This is the other management group in the direct service delivery function. It brings together the following service groupings:

- Strategic Planning and Regeneration - This includes responsibility for land use policy, local development framework, regeneration strategy and implementation, transport planning, housing strategy, town centres and business liaison.
- Public Realm Management - This includes highways and amenities, neighbourhood services, car parking, traffic management, the CCTV client management and all services for managing the physical environment in Bexley.
- Leisure, Arts & Tourism Services - Responsible for strategy and management of cultural services, sport and leisure, heritage and tourism. It is also responsible for parks, allotments, events management and libraries.
- Public Protection and Housing - This Department includes development control, land charges, and all functions related to housing. It also leads on all issues relating to community safety and protection including community safety policy, trading standards, environmental health, licensing and public health. The housing function includes the allocation of temporary and permanent accommodation, and management liaison with RSL's (Registered Social Landlords).
- Public Health – This is a new department within the Council brought about by legislative changes in the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This department will tackle public health challenges such as smoking, alcohol and drug misuse and obesity. They will lead health and wellbeing boards to bring together local agencies to plan services according to the health needs of the local community. They will also commission care and support services to work together to respond to people's individual needs and choices.

Major emergencies will have an impact on the highway even if only for access purposes. On a daily basis the Public Realm Area Teams and associated contractors provide a wide range of resources to ensure the upkeep and safety of highways parks and open spaces. Many of these may be required to supplement the Council response to a major emergency.

The Neighbourhood Services Teams work closely with partners particularly the police in addressing a range of community problems and consequently maintains contact with key

community leaders. The value of their involvement in the Council response to a major emergency cannot be underestimated.

Public Protection and Housing may also have an important role in an emergency. Our Housing Department are a key feature of our Rest Centre response as residents may need re-housing. Environmental health officers feature in a number of our response plans such as that for Animal Diseases and their involvement needs to be considered in any emergency where there may be an impact upon public health.

6.4 Customer and Corporate Services

This management group is central to the way the Council will deliver services to residents. It includes what were previously the Customer Services function and the Democratic and Corporate Core function. It includes the following groupings:

- Customer Contact - This grouping includes responsibility for customer contact across Council Services so that Customer Services acts as the Council's single point of contact and delivers the broadest range of services possible. This is principally through the Contact Centre and Libraries. This grouping also includes the Emergency planning and Business Continuity Team.
- Democratic and Legal Services, HR & Organisational Development (OD) – In addition to HR and OD, including schools HR, this service grouping comprises Legal Services, including Members and Committee Services, Registrars and Elections.
- Corporate Policy and Communication – This grouping is responsible for analysis and forecasting, policy development and coordination across the Council as a whole, and for monitoring performance and delivery. It also ensures that the Council fully consults, engages and informs residents in what it is seeking to achieve.

Because this grouping holds corporate responsibility for Emergency Planning and Business Continuity it follows that some of its senior managers undertake the lead strategic and tactical roles set out in this plan.

Of the groupings themselves it will be important to involve our Legal Services Department in the management of an emergency from an early stage. This is so they can advise as to any legal implications that that may emerge. The Registrars Service will be involved if there are fatalities. HR and OD will be able to advise on any staffing issues that come about as a result of the emergency.

The Communications Team will be vital in the Council response to an emergency. It will work with our partners in order to manage involvement with the media and ensure that messages are provided to the public more generally.

6.5 Finance and Resources

This management group is be responsible for management of resources that are key to supporting service delivery and includes the following service groupings:

- Financial Management - responsible for financial advice to Members and all senior managers, financial planning and budgeting across all services, statutory financial accounting, internal audit and risk management.
- Procurement and Exchequer, Property and Building Services - the Council's "corporate landlord" with responsibility for the strategic planning, provision, maintenance and facilities management and is responsible for meeting all of the Council's property requirements. Also responsible for transforming the way the Council manages its procurement, management of revenues and benefits and financial assessment.
- Information, Communication and Technology Management - responsible for ICT policy and strategy development, internet and intranet development and managing the ICT contract with our provider.

Major emergencies by their very nature have serious financial implications for any local authority. The management group prepares us for this as best it can through such measures as insurance. The involvement of the group will be crucial particularly when it comes to the recovery stage in which the Council take the lead. (See Bexley Major Emergency Recovery Plan).

The group's broader role in emergencies will also be required through Property and Building Services should there be any dangerous structures or where Council property, including schools, may be required such as for use a rest centre.

Chapter 7

Recovery, Stand Down and Post Incident Actions

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Chapter 7 – Recovery, Stand Down and Post Incident Actions

7.1 Introduction

This plan deals with the response to any major incident and includes the Council's main role of supporting the emergency services. However there comes a time when the response to the incident comes to a conclusion and the recovery process begins. The recovery process for Bexley is set out in detail in the Major Incident Recovery Plan. This chapter gives brief details of that plan.

It is worthwhile highlighting that the recovery phase starts whilst response is still ongoing and completes with a return to normality and normal Council business coping with any outstanding issues.

This process can be lengthy particularly if flooding is involved and may involve many more agencies and participants than the response phase. It will be led by the local authority and there will be a formal handover from the emergency services to the lead officer from the Council.

If there are London regional consequences arising from the incident then the actions taken locally will also need to take account of the London Recovery Management Protocol, a copy of which is held by the Emergency Planning Team.

Recovery is defined as the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency, but it is more than simply the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected. It is a complex social and developmental process rather than just a remedial process. The manner in which recovery processes are undertaken is critical to their success. Recovery is best achieved when the affected community is able to exercise a high degree of self-determination.

The recovery should begin before the response to the emergency has ended and should run for sometime in tandem with the incident. Recovery will not end until the disruption has been rectified, demands on services have returned to normal levels and the needs of those affected have been met.

7.2 Activation of Major Incident Recovery Plan

The activation of the Major Incident Recovery Plan begins with the appointment of a Recovery Liaison Group (RLG). If the incident involves flooding the early establishment of this group is encouraged. Gold will nominate a director to lead the RLG according to the nature of the incident and the likely recovery priorities. Gold will set some initial strategic guidelines for the group and this will be consolidated later when response is handed over to the Council for the recovery phase to begin in earnest.

The RLG will have a broad section of Council involvement but will also be multi agency with representatives from business, the health sector, utilities, insurance companies and the community.

The work of the RLG will be led by the initial strategic guidelines issued by Gold. In addition they will need to assess the impacts the incident is having and is likely to have on the community. The impact assessment is probably the most critical objective to achieve any success in recovery. It requires an understanding of how the community has been affected and who has been affected and is divided into the four areas of infrastructure, humanitarian assistance, environment and economic aspects.

7.3 Handover from Response Phase to Recovery Phase

There will come a time when the immediate response is at an end and the police will hand over the chair of the strategic co-ordination group to the Council. This marks the start of a new phase of the incident. This period is unpredictable; can be labour intensive; and may stretch the Council to extraordinary levels.

It is at this stage that the RLG should develop sub groups to look at the four themes that Bexley will use to drive the recovery:

- Rebuilding the community
- Managing financial implications
- Responding to community welfare needs
- Managing resources

The four sub groups are each headed by a Council deputy director and have a specific purpose and objectives.

7.4 Recovery Exit Strategy

As the recovery process evolves the Recovery Liaison Group should constantly reassess whether or not the recovery framework continues to be fit for purpose. The group should consider a move towards normalisation and mainstreaming (i.e. the incorporation of recovery work into the usual patterns of service delivery) to ensure recovery does not distort longer term agendas.

When there is no longer a need for regular multi-agency co-ordination and the remaining issues and tasks can be dealt with by individual organisations as part of business as usual then the Recovery Liaison Group should be stood down.

Early consideration will ensure a smooth return to normality in a timely fashion. As the recovery process could take days, weeks, months or even years and is likely to involve changing organisations and challenges it is important to consider ongoing and effective ways of evaluating and sharing learning.

The length of time that the Recovery Liaison Group is required to continue meeting will vary according to the nature and scale of the emergency. Some emergencies may have long term issues to consider, such as health monitoring or environmental cleanup. However, consideration should be given to whether individual agencies are best placed to deal with the issues as part of normal business practice.

7.5 Post Incident Actions

7.5.1 Stand Down

Notwithstanding that recovery phase may have just got under way, It is a decision for the Gold Group to determine when to stand down the response set out in this plan. This will be determined by whether they believe the strategic intentions of the response have been completed. The Gold Group will pass their decision to Silver for implementation.

It is important to ensure that everyone involved in the response to a major emergency, including both our partners and all Council staff, are aware that the response has concluded. Thereafter the process for identifying any lessons learned from the incident can commence.

It is important that notes, messages, decision logs and other written or IT records relating to the major emergency response are carefully retained. These will be vital should there be any form of legal proceedings or other enquiry following the incident. The Emergency Planning Team will retain records associated with the Borough Emergency Control Centre and rest centre. It will be worthwhile reminding staff of the need to retain any personal records for a minimum of 6 years.

7.5.2 Debriefing

At some stage when the incident has ended each of the services and agencies involved will hold a series of operational debriefs. These will be confined to each particular service but a multi agency debrief should also be held.

The aim of the debrief is to reflect upon the event in an open and honest way, identifying and sharing personal experiences so the learning from them can be used positively in the future for the benefit of that person, other individuals and the organisation for whom they work. The ethics of the process should be consistent with professional responsibilities, respecting the rights of individuals and adding value to all those involved.

The multi agency debriefs should also consider the contribution provided by other non-emergency service agencies to expand the knowledge and learning process that debriefs should collate. This is notwithstanding the potential conflict of interest that may result in later investigations. This aspect should be considered when inviting agencies other than emergency service to the debrief.

Operational debriefs should not be confused with welfare sessions for staff which should form part of the trauma support programmes arranged by individual organisations.

The principle criteria of any debrief is to identify areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They should not be forums for criticising the performance of others. Debriefs should not interfere with or comment on investigations into the incident carried out by investigative or judicial authorities. A record of debriefs and

related documents would be subject to disclosure to individuals involved in legal proceedings.

The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team will ensure that, where all or part of this plan is invoked, a suitable debriefing process is undertaken within the Council and that where necessary that this plan is amended accordingly.

7.6 Staff Welfare

It should be borne in mind that some staff may be traumatised by their involvement in the response to a major emergency. It is not too fine an appointment to emphasise that everyone reacts differently to unusual events such as major emergencies and there may be a greater traumatic effect on those undertake tasks such as answering the telephone calls than those who may have to attend the scene.

Immediately at the conclusion of the response to a major emergency, if not already under way, the Council will need to make an immediate assessment of the need to implement a trauma support programme. This will be undertaken through the Occupational Health Service at the behest of Deputy Director HR and Corporate Support.

Annex A

Training And Exercising

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ANNEX A

Training and Exercising

Training

It is essential to train responding officers in their roles and responsibilities before they need to use the plan during an exercise or an actual event. Training should take place at appropriate intervals to maintain awareness and to inform responding officers of any amendments. Various parts of the plan such as the running of the BECC and LALO training will be held regularly during the year.

Exercising

Exercising the plan and responding officers will identify areas for improvement and ensure that staff are able to deal with an incident, should one occur. Exercises aim to validate the plan, train staff and test procedures.

Such exercises may be internal, or tied into other multi-agency exercises to confirm roles and responsibilities of responding departments / agencies as well as the adequacy of communications, resources and equipment.

It is recommended that exercising this plan at operational and strategic levels is undertaken whenever there is a major revision or at least every three years.

Training and exercise schedule

Organiser	Name of Event	Type	Date	Relevant lessons / links
LB Bexley	Multi Agency Contingency Exercise, Terrorist Incident	Table Top	8.7.09	Review of Emergency contacts in AC Handbook
LB Bexley	Exercise Abbey	Rest Centre Live Exercise	28.7.10	LALO deployment and Communications Plan tested.
LB Bexley	BECC Staff Annual Training	BECC Live Exercise	March 2010	See EP Team Training Schedule 2010
LB Bexley	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	2010	
LFB-EP	Multi-agency London wide Exercise	Live exercise	Aug 2011	See EP Team Training Schedule 2011
LFB-EP	Multi-agency London wide Exercise	Live exercise	Jan 2012	See EP Team Training Schedule 2012
LFB-EP	Multi-agency London wide Exercise	Live exercise	Apr 2012	
LB Bexley	Survivor Reception Exercise	Live exercise	March 2012	
LB Bexley	Olympic Torch Relay Exercise	Table top	May 2012	

Organiser	Name of Event	Type	Date	Relevant lessons / links
Humanitarian Assistance	Delivering HA in Major Emergencies	Training Seminar	10.5.12	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	23.7.12	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	31.10.12	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO & BECC Staff	Quarterly Training & BECC Refresher	31.1.13	See EP Team Training Schedule 2013
Multi Agency NHS Changes	Pre SRRF Exercise	Table top	26.2.13	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	30.4.13	
Multi Agency	Pre SRRF Exercise	Table top	25.6.13	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	23.7.13	
Multi Agency	Pre SRRF Exercise Focus – Utilities failure	Table top	12.11.13	
LFB EP	Exercise Safer City	Full BECC exercise with LLACC	29.11.13	
LB Bexley EP Team	Exercise Navette	Table Top Flood Exercise	3.12.13	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	21.7.14	See EP Team Training Schedule 2014
Royal Borough Greenwich	Exercise Blue Ditch	Table Top – Major Emergency	1 Oct 2014	Casualty Landing Points – require clarification between MCA and LFB
LB Bexley EP Team	Introduction Rest Centre/Humanitarian Assistance	Presentations by EP Team and BRC	7.10.14	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	13.10.14	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	Jan 2015	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	April 2015	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	July 2015	
LB Bexley EP Team	Acting Controller/LALO	Quarterly Training	October 2015	

Annex B

Links to Other Council Plans

ANNEX B
Links to Other Council Plans

<u>Name of Plan</u>	<u>Purpose of Plan</u>
Bexley Identifying Vulnerable People in Crisis Plan	A framework and protocol for agencies to share the information they hold about vulnerable people.
Corporate Business Continuity Plan	This plan provides the framework and processes for responding to events that affect the critical functions of this local authority and require a coordinated cross directorate response.
Influenza Pandemic Plan	This document provides a framework for the planning, preparation and integrated response to pandemic influenza by the Council
Multi Agency Flood Plan	The aim of this plan is to provide a coordinated multi agency response framework for any incident that presents a risk of flooding and, where significant flooding occurs, to mitigate the impact for the people
Bexley Rest Centre Plan	The aim of this plan is to act as the template for the delivery of a Rest Centre to care for evacuees who need temporary accommodation or shelter due to an incident or emergency
Borough Emergency Control Centre Manual	A guidance document for those running a BECC
Bexley Multi Agency Excess Death Plan	This Plan has been developed as a template of activity for the local authority and key partner agencies involved in the management of excess deaths caused by a flu pandemic
Severe Weather Plan	The Plan provides a framework for the activation, allocation and deployment of Council resources in the event of severe weather including storms and gales, low temperatures and heat waves.
Bexley Fuel Crisis Plan	This plan provides details of the local response required to deal with a disruption to fuel supply and links into the national and regional response plans.
Bexley Site Clearance Plan	This aim of this plan is to aid to those officers responsible for responding to and recovering from a catastrophic event in Bexley by providing guidance about site clearance
Bexley Mass Evacuation Plan	This plan is linked into the London Mass Evacuation Plan and brings together those parts of the plan that are relevant to Bexley
Bexley REPIIR guidance	This document sets out guidelines for this borough on actions around communicating with the public during the times of a radiation emergency
Bexley Notifiable Animal Disease Contingency Plan	This plan ensures the correct level of emergency preparedness is in place in Bexley for any contingency that involves notice of a notifiable animal disease.
Multi-Agency Major Accident Hazard Pipelines Emergency Plan	This plan links the Bexley Response to those mentioned in the London plan and the LESLP manual for dealing with major hazard pipelines
Bexley Major Incident Recovery Plan	A framework to enable the Council to manage the recovery from the initial response to a return to normality.

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Annex C

Links to London Regional and National Plans

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ANNEX C

Links to Other National and Regional Plans

<u>Name of Plan</u>	<u>Purpose of Plan</u>
London Emergency Services Liaison Panel Manuel	Provides summaries of the responses and responsibilities of each of the emergency services at a major incident, as well as an outline of the support role offered by local authorities.
London Regional Command and Control Protocol	Details strategic co-ordination arrangements for London's response to an "emergency" that is either "Immediate Impact" or "Rising Tide" and the structure for Pan London strategic emergency planning.
London Flood Warning Plan	Describes the arrangements the Environment Agency have in place and the systems they use to issue Warnings, to locations at risk of flooding within the London area.
London Regional Resilience Flu Pandemic Response Plan.	Provide the agencies that make up the London Resilience Partnership with a strategic framework to support their integrated preparedness and response to pandemic influenza
London Fuel Disruption Protocol	This document is intended for organisations within the London Resilience Partnership and neighbouring regions that would participate in the management of fuel disruption
London Humanitarian Assistance Plan	This plan is a Capability Plan, enabling an appropriate humanitarian assistance response to a major emergency, where a substantial psychosocial response is required
London Humanitarian Assistance Centre Plan	Provide a contingency plan which will act as the multi- agency template for the delivery of a London Humanitarian Assistance Centre (LHAC) in the event of an 'emergency'.
London Mass Fatality Plan	Focused on facilitating the response to a 'sudden impact' event or 'emergency' which involves mass fatality.
London Science and Technical Advice Cell (STAC) Arrangements	Outlines the role of STAC and sets out how STAC will be established in London.
London Strategic Emergency Plan	Summarises the plans for the strategic regional response of the London Resilience Partnership in responding to incidents requiring multi-agency co-ordination on a pan-London regional basis
London Flood Response Strategic Plan.	To set out the principles that govern the multi-agency response to a significant flood in London; specifically the area of the London regional government
London Mass Evacuation Plan	Provide the agencies and relevant responders in neighbouring regions, with a strategic framework and operational guidelines to support an evacuation of an area or areas of London.
London Major Incident Multi-Faith Plan	To enable the faith communities to provide an effective response to any major incident.
NHS Heatwave Plan	Provides important guidance on how to reduce the impact they will have upon health and in doing so, will save lives.
National Emergency Plan for Fuel (NEP-F)	Emergency response plan for Government and the downstream oil industry