

# CORPORATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN V.1

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## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** Recent emergency events and situations in London emphasises the need for the Council to have effective and efficient emergency plans in place which should cover three areas:-

1. Preventing an emergency
2. Reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency and
3. Taking other actions in connection with an emergency

Additionally the Council also recognises the need to collaborate with the emergency services and other agencies in order to plan for and respond to civil contingencies.

**1.2** Emergencies can affect the Borough, its residents, and the Council's service delivery at any given time, often without warning. To ensure the Council is able to support the affected community, a generic and flexible set of emergency response arrangements are required.

The Corporate Emergency Response Plan [CERP] provides such arrangements, which enable the Council to respond efficiently and effectively to any emergency, regardless of its nature and duration.

The council is unlikely to respond in isolation and, as such, the council often supports, or is supported by, partner organisations, such as the Metropolitan Police Service, London Fire Brigade, London Ambulance Service, health organisations and the voluntary services, whose scope is often London-wide. Therefore, this plan, and the council's emergency response arrangements in general, align to the latest guidance and London Strategic Emergency Plans.

London's local authorities work to the principles of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) and are supported by London Resilience Group, based at the London Fire Brigade HQ. They provide a central coordination function, known as the London Local Authority Coordination Centre (LLACC).

In addition, the plan contributes to fulfilling many of our duties as part of our classification as a Category 1 Responder as outlined within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

### **1.3 The Aim of the Plan**

The aim of the plan is to provide detailed information, procedures and actions that are required to be conducted to ensure the effective and timely response by the Council to emergency events, situations and major incidents.

### **1.4 The Objectives**

The objectives of the plan are to:-

- Outline the Council's emergency response strategy;
- Detail the key roles and responsibilities of Council services and staff;

- Detail the Council's emergency response capabilities and specific emergency plans;
- Ensure a rapid, efficient and coordinated mobilisation and direction of responding staff and resources during a major incident
- Ensure the swift restoration and resumption of normal service provision

### **1.5 Document Scope**

The plan follows the London Local Authorities Concept of Operations for Response and Recovery V1.0 dated June 2018 and encompasses the emergency response arrangements for the London Borough of Hillingdon

The plan outlines at a high level the role of services and the various capabilities at the council's disposal. Detailed role and capability specific procedures are annexed to this document.

### **1.6 Outside of Scope**

It is not a plan to be activated for Business Continuity events, situations and incidents, although some of the capabilities may be shared with those departments that have been affected.

The CERP does not replace local, building specific procedures such as fire evacuation plans and the plan does not detail recovery management arrangements, which can be found in the Council's Recovery Management Plan v3.0

The plan is not designed to be activated in the response to routine out of hour's minor emergencies that fall within the capability and capacity of individual departments and are dealt with by existing on call duty officer arrangements and their established procedures.

### **1.7 Intended Audience**

This plan is likely to be useful to all staff, in particular senior officers or managers, who may become involved in emergency response and recovery work. It is intended to be a stand-alone plan that can be used for training purposes in advance of emergencies and for reference purposes during an emergency event, situation or major incident.

### **1.8 Definitions**

The following three definitions underpin the Corporate Emergency Response Plan. These terms are used consistently, as defined below, throughout this document.

#### Emergency

An emergency is defined, in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as:-

- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom,

- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the United Kingdom, or
- war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom

Additionally to constitute an emergency, an incident or situation must pose a considerable test for the Council's ability to perform its functions. The common themes of emergencies are:

The scale of the impact of the event or situation  
The demands it is likely to make of local responders; and  
The exceptional deployment of resources

### Major Incident

A major incident is described as an event or situation requiring the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the emergency services, other agencies including London Boroughs. For the Council it is an incident that requires the activation from Council Gold through to the BECC.

### Response

The response encompasses the decisions and actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of an emergency. It is the decisions and actions taken in accordance with the strategic, tactical and operational objectives defined by responders. These will include protecting lives, containing and mitigating the impacts of the emergency and creating the conditions for a return to normality. The response phase may be relatively short lasting for a matter of hours or days, so rapid implementation of arrangements for collaboration, coordination and communication are vital. For the Council the response encompasses the effort to provide shelter for evacuated and displaced residents as well as the disruptive challenges and media interest.

### Recovery

In contrast, recovery may take months or even years to complete, as it seeks to support affected communities in the reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social and physical well-being. The process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency or disaster, continues until the disruption has been rectified, demands on services have been returned to normal levels and the needs of those affected have been met.

Although recovery is distinct from the response phase, recovery should be an integral part of the response from the very beginning, as actions taken during the response phase can influence the longer-term outcomes for a community.

## **1.9 Borough Profile**

Hillingdon is the second largest of London's 33 boroughs which was created in 1965 by an amalgamation of the Borough of Uxbridge and the Urban Districts of Hayes & Harlington, Ruislip-Northwood and Yiewsley & West Drayton.



Over half of Hillingdon's 44.6 square miles consists of countryside including canals, rivers, parks and woodland. The main rivers in the Borough include the Pinn, Colne, Yeading Brook and Frays. As the home of Heathrow Airport, it is also London's foremost gateway to the world, and it is also home to the RAF aerodrome at RAF Northolt, along with Brunel University and Uxbridge College's Uxbridge and Hayes campuses.

Hillingdon shares its borders with Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey, Hounslow, Ealing, and Harrow.

Hillingdon has a residential population of 309,300 and there are 70 primary, junior and infant schools, 22 secondary schools, 12 children's centres, and 17 libraries.

The borough maintains over 200 green spaces, and owns four theatres: the Beck Theatre in Hayes, the Compass Theatre in Ickenham, the Winston Churchill Theatre and Hall, and the Open Air Theatre at Barra Hall Park in Hayes.

The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provides health services at two hospitals in North West London, Hillingdon and Mount Vernon. There are two other hospitals, the Riverside Centre and Harefield Hospital which is part of the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust.

The Grand Union Canal passes through parts of the Borough including Hayes, Uxbridge, Yiewsley and West Drayton. Ruislip Lido was built as a feeder reservoir for the canal, but was eventually disconnected and changed to become a recreational lido. Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest are located next to the canal, Frays Farm Meadows and Denham Lock Wood, which are managed by the London Wildlife Trust.

Transport infrastructure within and running through the Borough includes the M4, A40, M25, A312 and other main arterial routes, Heathrow Express tunnel to Heathrow at Stockley Park; along with mainline rail stations: Hayes and Harlington, Heathrow Central, Heathrow Terminal 4, Heathrow Terminal 5, South Ruislip, West Drayton, West Ruislip in addition to 15 Underground Stations.

CrossRail is also currently under construction and has been renamed the Elizabeth Line. Royal Assent has been obtained for the construction of HS2, and the Phase 1 route will create a new high speed line between London and Birmingham by 2026. The route for this will exit London via a tunnel to

West Ruislip from where it crosses the Colne Valley (including the M25) on a major viaduct.

Hillingdon has a large economy which has been ranked 5th out of the London Boroughs.

British Airways is headquartered in Waterside, Harmondsworth, and an office of American Airlines is also located within Waterside; Cadbury plc has its head office in Cadbury House in the Uxbridge Business Park; Guoman Hotel Management (UK) Limited has its head office in the Thistle London Heathrow in West Drayton; British Midland International has an office in Stockley Close, West Drayton; Hellenic Imperial Airways has offices in the Axis House in Harlington and China Airlines has its UK office in the Hyde Park Hayes.

## 1.10 Risks

The key risks that are most likely to arise in Hillingdon are identified within in the Hillingdon Borough Community Risk Register. On the next page the Risk Matrix identifies the main risks to the Borough. The Council's Corporate Emergency Response Plan is based on the individual risk assessments and includes the identification of the Impact posed by a range of potential hazards and the subsequent Likelihood of the hazard causing an emergency event, situation or major incident. Consideration is also given to the consequences on health, social, economic and the environment in addition to removing, reducing and managing the consequences.

The Community Risk Register [CRR] is developed by all the London Boroughs within the Local Resilience Forum area, using a national template. The London Resilience Group, at the London Fire Brigade, is responsible for maintaining the CRR.

## 1.11 Risk-Specific Capabilities

As well as the Corporate Emergency Response Plan, the Council also has plans in place to deal with:

- i. Flooding
- ii. Structural Collapse (including Site Clearance)
- iii. Mass Fatalities
- iv. Excess Deaths
- v. Pandemic Influenza
- vi. Outbreak of a Notifiable Animal Disease
- vii. Adverse Weather (Heatwave, Drought, Extreme Cold, Extreme Rainfall & High Winds)
- viii. Fuel Disruption
- ix. Chemical, Biological, Radiological & Nuclear (Explosion) (CBRN(E))
- x. Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) for Upper and Lower Tier sites
- xi. Pipeline Safety Regulations
- xii. Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information (REPPIR)
- xiii. Mass Shelter

### 1.10 Risk Matrix

|               |   |  |   |  |  |
|---------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Impact</b> |   | <b>Severe Drought<br/>Fire Fuel Storage</b>  | <b>Toxic Chemical Release<br/>National Electricity Failure</b>                      | <b>Pandemic Disease</b>  |  |
|               | <b>Reservoir/Dam Failure<br/>Aviation Accident<br/>(Urban)</b>  | <b>Hazardous Goods<br/>Accident<br/>Oil/Gas Upstream Failure</b>   | <b>Fluvial Flooding<br/>Surface Water Flooding<br/>Regional Electricity Failure</b> | <b>Severe Space Weather<br/>Attacks on Crowded Places</b>  |  |
|               | <b>Fire Gas Terminal<br/>Pipeline Fire or<br/>Explosion<br/>Explosion at Gas Main<br/>Large Building<br/>collapse<br/>Bridge collapse</b> | <b>Fire at fuel distribution<br/>Road explosives accident<br/>Disruption to water<br/>supply<br/>Aviation Accident</b> | <b>Low Temperatures and<br/>Snow<br/>Industrial Accident</b>                        | <b>Emerging Infectious<br/>Diseases<br/>Flooding from other sources<br/>Heatwave<br/>Inland Water Pollution<br/>Railway Accident</b> | <b>Critical Service<br/>Strike<br/>Attacks on<br/>Transport<br/>System</b> |
|               | <b>Bio Release<br/>Maritime Pollution</b>   | <b>Wildfire<br/>Industrial explosions and<br/>fires<br/>Radiation Exposure<br/>Loss of Telecomms</b>                   | <b>Storms and Gales<br/>Fuel Supply Constraint<br/>Transport Industrial Action</b>  | <b>Volcanic Ash<br/>Inadvertent Bio Release<br/>Food chain contamination<br/>Influx of British Nationals</b>                         | <b>Building<br/>Collapse</b>   |
|               |   |  |   |  |  |
|               | <b>Likelihood</b>   |  |   |  |  |

## 2 The Council's Emergency Response Strategy

### 2.1 Strategic Aim

The council aims to support its residents to minimise the impact of an emergency event, situation or major incident, proportionate to their vulnerability, through the effective and efficient use of its resources.

### 2.2 Strategic Objectives

- To work with, and in support of, the emergency services
- To minimize the effect of any Emergency on the communities of Hillingdon
- To assess the impact on the communities of Hillingdon and to provide support in proportion to their vulnerability, including Humanitarian assistance
- To lead the community recovery within the Borough
- To maintain council services at a level commensurate with the circumstances
- To warn, inform and advise residents and business about the risks from emergencies

### 2.3 Key Responsibilities

- Identify affected vulnerable people and work with partner agencies and organisation to ensure their accommodation and welfare needs are met;
- Act as a conduit for information and advice to residents and businesses
- Provide mortuary facilities for fatalities, including 'mass fatalities' events;
- Activate recovery arrangements to return a normal level of service in an acceptable period of time;
- Coordinate site clearance, including the clearing and decontamination of the built environment following an emergency (public land only);
- Ensure that a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the Emergency is maintained, utilising the 'Common Operating Picture'.
- To prioritise "Humanitarian Needs"
- Ensure the development of an effective Communications Strategy incorporating both external and internal audiences
- To ensure an effective response through the declaration of an emergency event, situation or major incident, through to consolidation, recovery and the return to normality.



## 2.4 Principles of the Council's Emergency Response

The Council supports its residents, in so far as is reasonably possible, where the situation overwhelms their ability to support themselves.

The Council uses business continuity management to maintain critical services, including the emergency responses functions detailed in this plan. Business continuity management is detailed in the Corporate Business Disruption Response Plan.

Though elements of this plan can be used in isolation, it is better to activate all the departments identified and then to scale-down the response accordingly, rather than delaying their activation until the emergency event, situation or major incident escalates.

Incidents known or believed to involve Vulnerable Persons or Children need to be brought to the urgent attention of specialist council services such as Adult Social Care and Children's & Young Persons Services (out of hours, to the Emergency Duty Team) so that they can discharge the council's specific legal responsibilities as appropriate. For further information please refer to the 'Identifying Vulnerable People Protocol'.

## 2.5 Emergency Response Levels

### 2.5.1 Single Borough

The level of the Council's involvement in an incident is split into three broad categories:-

- i. **Monitoring:** a pre-response level, where a watching brief is maintained for signs of an incident. This includes passive monitoring of regional and national alert systems and maintaining an all-year-round point of contact for the receipt of notifications about an emergency. The Council remains at this level at all times when not responding to an emergency.
- ii. **Information Sharing and Communications:** the level used where the Council seeks to understand the scale of an emergency in another Council's administrative area and share information with and in support of the other London Boroughs at the "Incident Response and Coordination" level. Where the Council anticipates either a spread of the impact into its geographic area, or receives a request for mutual aid, it may communicate with its operational services in the form of an early warning so that services are placed on standby and able to move to an enhanced state of readiness.
- iii. **Incident Response and Coordination:** where the Council responds to the emergency by activating and deploying its incident response resources to support those affected by the emergency. This may include loaning resources outside the administrative area via mutual aid. To support situational awareness, the on call London Resilience Group

(LRG) Duty Manager is notified at the earliest opportunity after the Council moves to this level of response.

## Multiple Boroughs (Collective)

### 2.5.2

The collective response is complex, including factors such as:-

- i. The category at which each individual London Borough is operating
- ii. Whether the incident falls within just one or multiple borough areas
- iii. Whether the LLACC and LLAG are aware, monitoring or actively supporting

Therefore as a reference to the way in which the London Boroughs operate collectively the following three broad levels are used:-

|      |  |  |
|------|--|--|
| i.   | <b>Local</b>                               | Where an incident impacts a single London Borough and it is able to respond without external support. The LLACC and LLAG are unlikely to be aware until after the conclusion of the incident, if at all.   |
| ii.  | <b>Local Plus Locally Arranged Support</b> | This is an incident where low- levels of mutual aid can be easily arranged locally, without the need for LLACC support and coordination. This may include resources such as rest centre equipment, technical expertise (e.g. a dangerous structure engineer) or additional trained rest centre staff to supplement local resources. The LLACC is aware even if not responding. LLAG is made aware of the incident by the LLACC and may communicate with the Chief Executive and/or the on call Council Gold. |
| iii. | <b>Pan-London</b>                          | An incident of such severity, complexity or significance that the coordination arrangements for a collective response are required, even if the incident is contained within the Council's boundary. The LLACC and LLAG are actively involved in the incident response, attending the SCG and other multi-agency partnership coordination meetings as required. LLAG maintains dialogue with Chief Executive and/or the on call Council Gold.  |

### 3 Notification and Activation

- 3.1 The council receives information, either via Council Switchboard or the Out of Hours call centre, regarding emergency events, situations and major incidents from various sources. These include calls from the public, notification from the emergency services, the Met Office, or National Flood Forecasting Centre, the London Local Authorities Coordination Centre [LLACC] and other partner agencies switchboards. On receiving this notification, Switchboard will contact the on call Council Silver.

Calls for Council assistance could also be received from another London Borough seeking mutual aid, or from a Council department or service provider.

The London Borough of Hillingdon has an on call Council Silver. Any partner agency can contact them 24 hours a day, to notify them of a major incident.

The Emergency Response Officers are also able to deal with a range of scenarios, but also to assess an incident and escalate it to ensure a suitable mobilisation to deal with any major incident, either at the scene or within the BECC.

### 3.2 Emergency Response Staff

The Council's emergency response staff can be categorised into two broad groups:-

- i. **Dedicated Emergency Response Role:-** Council staff who apply and those who are nominated to undertake an emergency response role that is in addition to and separate from their main role.
- ii. **Extension of Main Role:-** Council staff who, as part of their main role are involved in the response to emergencies e.g. housing or highways officers.

### 3.3 Dedicated Emergency Response Role

The roles more commonly found to exist as a dedicated emergency response role include:-

- i. Council Gold
- ii. Council Silver
- iii. Resilience Adviser
- iv. Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO)
- v. BECC Manager and staff
- vi. Emergency Centre Manager and officers
- vii. Communications (including warning, informing and advising members of the public)

Additionally Council staff may be called upon as support staff whose role may vary depending on the incident. This support can include:-

- i. Providing information, advice and practical help to those affected at emergency centres
- ii. Outreach into communities
- iii. Providing support to vulnerable people
- iv. Coordinating the work of volunteers

### 3.4 Extension of Main Role

Those roles that are an extension of a main role tend to exist within the Council's services such as:-

- i. Children's and Adult's Social Care
- ii. Housing
- iii. Highways
- iv. Building Control
- v. Parking Enforcement
- vi. Waste

### 3.5 Activation Standards

The activation standards below sets out the aims for response times in the event of an emergency, which the Council aims to meet:-

| Role                             | Requirement     | Time Period                |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Emergency Response Officer       | Respond to call | 15 minutes                 |
| Council Silver                   | Respond to call | 15 minutes                 |
| Council Gold                     | Respond to call | 15 minutes                 |
| Media Relations On call          | Respond to call | 15 minutes                 |
| Local Authority Liaison Officer  | On Scene        | 90 minutes from activation |
| Borough Emergency Control Centre | Operational     | 2 hours from notification  |
| Emergency Centres                | Open            | 3 hours from notification  |

### 3.6 Stages of a Major Incident

Most major incidents can be divided into five main stages. The Council's involvement may vary during each stage.

The stages are:-

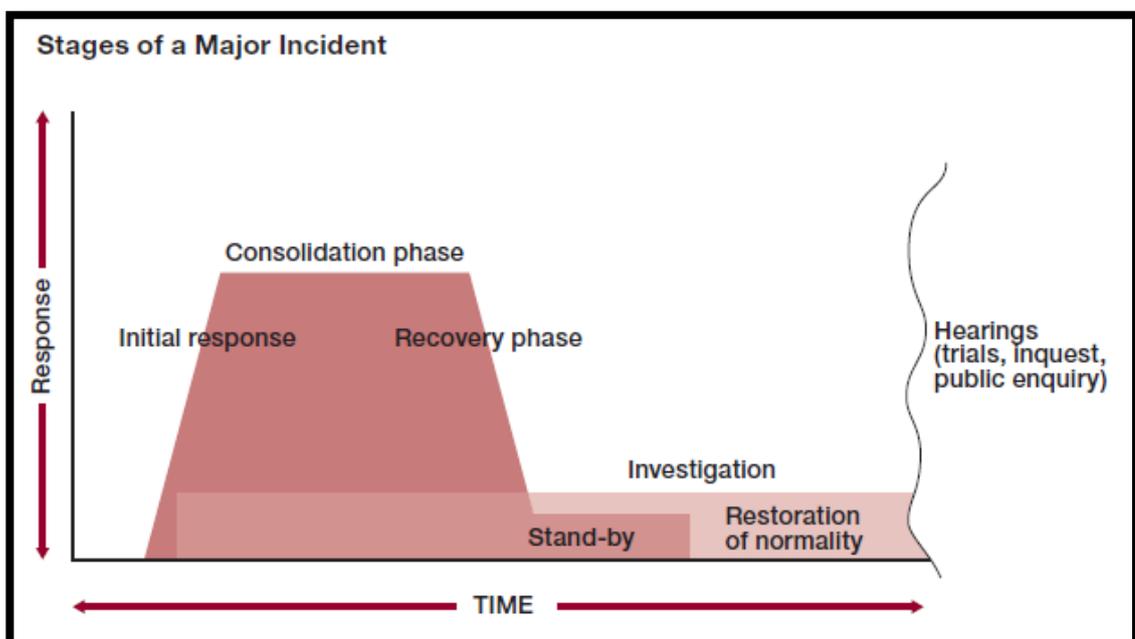
**The Initial Response:** during which the incident occurs and the emergency services have attended the scene and are responding. The rescue of those affected may be taking place by those immediately in the vicinity as well as by the emergency services.

**The Consolidation Phase:** when the emergency services are in attendance and the joint response to the incident is being fully coordinated at the scene.

**The Recovery Phase:** when the emergency services withdraw, and the Council's involvement moves from a supporting role, to the emergency services, to providing services and supporting the affected community. The Council will be mostly involved during this phase which may last between several days to several years.

**The Restoration of Normality:** normally after the reaction to the emergency has subsided and the departments continue to deal with the effects as part of their daily routine.

**The Enquiry Phase:** trials, hearings, public enquiries and coroner's inquests may follow significant major incidents, particularly those with loss of life and/or large numbers of injured, but this phase can be superimposed on the previous four phases.



## **4 Command and Control**

- 4.1** The Council has adopted the three tiered command and control structure that is based on the widely recognised Gold-Silver-Bronze/Strategic-Tactical-Operational command structure. This structure reflects the levels of command and control within the emergency services and many other partner agencies.

Regardless of the size of an incident, the Council will respond by activating part or all of its own command and control structure. Depending on the size of the incident the Council may seek or be sought to activate pan-London coordination arrangements, which is outlined within Section 5: Collective Emergency Response Arrangements.

Variations to command and control arrangements by scale of incident are:-

During smaller scale incidents (those which are not declared as major incidents) the Council communicate and coordinate their responses with partner agencies using local arrangements.

During a larger or regional incident, including those declared a Major Incident, local communication between the Council and its partner agencies continues. Additionally, coordination of the incident is enhanced by regional command and control arrangements. These are also outlined in Section 5: Collective Emergency Response Arrangements.

### **4.2 Strategic Command (Council Level)**

#### **4.2.1 Council Gold**

The Council has nominated a number of senior officers to perform the role of the strategic commander and who has the overall responsibility for the Council's response to a major incident, emergency event or situation.

This officer chairs the Council Gold Group (CGG) within the Council, inviting local partner organisations and agencies as appropriate

Attends the Metropolitan Police Service Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) meetings in a pan-London incident, or may delegate this role to LLAG by agreement.

#### **4.2.2 Council Gold Group**

The purpose of the CGG is to provide strategic coordination resources locally. It is chaired by Council Gold.

The focus of this meeting varies according to the circumstances, and at no point should an independent strategy be pursued that is at variance with the strategy set by LLAG or SCG (when active).

A CGG meeting is likely to focus on:-

- i. The impact of the incident on the local community

- ii. Continuity of local public services
- iii. The Council's resourcing needs along with those of other local partners
- iv. Local stakeholder management

#### **4.2.3 Council Silver**

Council Silver is the tactical manager of the Council's response to the incident. This offer determines the best way to achieve the strategic priorities as determined by Council Gold.

It is the responsibility of Council Silver to:

- i. Receive initial notification of the incident
- ii. Assess the incident and activate the Council's initial response as required.
- iii. Inform and liaise regularly with Council Gold.
- iv. Develop the Tactical Plan for responding to the emergency in accordance with the strategic direction provided by Council Gold.
- v. Determine the best place from where to manage the incident response.
- vi. Open and initially provide the function of the Borough Emergency Control Centre.
- vii. Activate and chair a Council Silver Group [CSG] where necessary.
- viii. Attend and brief Council Gold and the Council Gold Group [CGG].

Council Silver tends to be located away from the scene of the incident, though not in the BECC (although they may attend the BECC to receive updates from the BECC Manager). Council Silver may co-locate with tactical commanders from other responding organisations, where appropriate. However, at the scene of the incident the Council is represented by the Local Authority Liaison Officer [LALO].

At the start of the incident, prior to the opening of an appropriately staffed BECC, Council Silver may provide an initial coordination function.

#### **4.2.4 Resilience Adviser**

The Resilience Adviser provides advice and guidance on emergency management arrangements to enable them to access the right information and networks of support. They work closely with and on behalf of Council Gold and

Council Silver.

The Resilience Adviser is the Council's Emergency Management and Response Manager, or other members of staff who have a wide knowledge of the Council's and the pan-London emergency response and recovery arrangements. Their role is to:-

- i. Provide advice to Council management on emergency management arrangements in place across the Council
- ii. Provide advice about regional plans and arrangements
- iii. Provide advice about working arrangements with multi-agency responders
- iv. Assist Council Silver/Gold with decision making

#### **4.2.5 Local Authority Liaison Officer [LALO]**

The LALO represents the Council at the scene of the incident, reporting directly to Council Silver and providing regular updates to the BECC to maintain situational awareness. Other Council officers and assets deployed to the scene operate under the direction of the LALO.

During a major incident, it is the LALO who represents the Council at the Forward Control Point [FCP], which is a multi-agency location where on-scene coordinating meetings take place.

In larger incidents, it may be necessary to deploy two LALOs to work in partnership to cover:-

- i. Liaison with other agencies, including attending on-scene co-ordination meetings.
- ii. Coordination of the Council's resources at the incident scene

Operations that the Council may undertake at the scene include:-

- i. Looking after displaced people and provision of welfare support to those affected by the emergency event
- ii. Clearance and removal of debris and other waste
- iii. Supporting traffic management operations in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Service and Transport for London
- iv. Assessment of the stability of structures and buildings, and taking such action as may be required to deal with dangerous structures

- v. Undertaking the removal or clear-up of hazardous materials and/or substances
- vi. Provision of resources to support evacuations
- vii. Supporting on scene operations and investigations into the cause of the incident through the provision of CCTV footage.

Other Supporting Activities Include:-

- i. Providing information, advice and practical help to affected people at emergency centres
- ii. Outreach into communities
- iii. Providing support to vulnerable people
- iv. Coordinating the work of volunteers

### **4.3 Function Specific Capabilities**

#### **4.3.1 Borough Emergency Control Centre**

The Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) is vital to the Council's emergency response control function. The primary objectives of a BECC are to:

- i. Coordinate Local Authority operational services
- ii. Maintain Situational Awareness to support decision makers and inform communications and media handling
- iii. Maintain an operational record of the Local Authority's response to the incident
- iv. Produce situation reports (internal and external)
- v. Provide a Single Point of Contact for partnership liaison

The BECC opens only during an emergency and upon the decision of Council Silver (or the Emergency Management and Response Manager). The opening of the BECC is an indication of the higher severity of an incident, which requires a dedicated coordination function provided by those with set coordination roles.

The Council maintains a plan that details the way in which the BECC is operated. Much of the content of this BECC plan is standardised across London, including the BECC function and roles and responsibilities and the position of the BECC within a Local Authority's command and control structure.

#### **Emergency Centres**

The Council maintains plans and supporting resources to be able to open and

run emergency centres to support those affected by the incident, working in partnership with other responders. All emergency centres have a general purpose of providing both practical and emotional support, including psychological first aid and provision of information, from a location that is safe, conducive to offering such services and in a location accessible to those affected by the incident.

The following are the typical emergency centres:

#### 4.3.2

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Rest Centre</b>                                | A Rest / Reception Centre serves as a place of safety for those who have been evacuated from their home, work or other place or are unable to return to that place, but who are uninjured and not directly affected by the incident. Rest Centres vary in size, depending on the requirements arising from the incident  |
| <b>Survivor Reception Centre (SRC)</b>            | Provides survivors, who do not require hospital treatment, a place to be directed to, where they can be met by police and other services to obtain initial information and support in the immediate aftermath of the incident and give details to police investigating officers. The responsibility for opening an SRC lies with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) supported by one or more London Borough. Other agencies attend as required and requested by either the MPS or the Council.  |
| <b>Family and Friends Reception Centre (FFRC)</b> | Established by the MPS with one or more London Borough and/or NHS support. The purpose of the FFRC is to help reunite friends and relatives with survivors by providing a place for the MPS to record missing person enquiries and collect information that may aid their investigation. In addition, it provides family and friends a safe area to gather that is away from media attention while offering up-to-date and accurate information on the response arrangements as well as access to practical and emotional support.   |
| <b>Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC)</b>       | Provides a focal point for humanitarian assistance to bereaved individuals and families, survivors and impacted communities. Set up by the Council, working in partnership with a range of statutory and voluntary organisations, this centre offers individuals and families to gain as much information as is currently available about family members and friends involved in the incident and for these people to access a range of facilities that help them to make informed choices according to their needs. A HAC may remain open for weeks or months after the incident. |
| <b>Community Assistance Centre (CAC)</b>          | Provides a location from where the Council may undertake a detailed Community Impact Assessment, provide advice and support to affected people and support the recovery of the community in a local setting. Community Assistance Centres may be   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | considered particularly where a Humanitarian Assistance Centre has not been activated.                                    |
| <b>Family and Friends Assistance Centre (FFAC)</b> | Offering similar services to that of a HAC, however attendance is by invitation only via the MPS Family Liaison Officers. |

Emergency Centre staffing is led by the Council but can draw in support from other responders, including:

- i. Other statutory agencies, especially the MPS
- ii. Regional voluntary sector partners, such as the British Red Cross, St John Ambulance and Victim Support
- iii. Other agencies able to provide effective support and care, such as Rail Incident Care Teams
- iv. Local voluntary, faith and community sector organisations.

### **Emergency Centre Manager**

A Council officer is appointed as an Emergency Centre Manager to oversee the running of each emergency centre.

Where the centre is likely to be large, complex in operations and long-lasting (particularly HACs), this is a senior Council officer, with supporting Deputy Centre Managers appointed to lead particular shifts.

The Emergency Centre Manager is responsible for regularly reporting to the BECC, liaising as needed to meet the logistical needs of the centre.

#### **4.3.3**

### **Disaster Mortuaries**

Under the Coroners Act (2009) and the Public Health Act (1936), the Council is responsible for the provision of appropriate facilities for the storage of a body prior to interment in order to enable coroners to fulfil their duty to investigate those whose deaths are unexpected or violent. This responsibility extends to those whose deaths are caused as a result of the major incident, and where the demand for mortuary services outstrips supply the Council sets up a Disaster Mortuary.

#### **4.4**

Disaster Mortuaries are existing mortuaries where the services, including breadth of investigatory and storage facilities, are increased beyond normal levels. Due to the complexity of establishing and operating a Disaster Mortuary, the location has been pre-selected and is referred to as the Designated Disaster Mortuary (DDM).

Each Coronal Area in London contains one DDM. The London Borough of Hillingdon is in the West **London Coroner** District which also includes the **London** boroughs of Ealing, Hounslow, Richmond, Kingston and Hammersmith & Fulham. The lead London Borough is Hammersmith & Fulham and the DDM.

Hammersmith and Fulham is responsible for its operation along with maintaining the DDM emergency plans. In situations where a mass fatality

event occurs in a borough without a DDM, the Coroner will open the DDM in another borough. The borough in whose area the incident occurs shall be responsible for the operating costs of the DDM, even though they do not operate the DDM.

### **Identification of Vulnerable People**

Under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has a responsibility to ensure the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community that they serve. In emergencies, the Council supports the emergency services in mitigating its effects, coordinating the provision of welfare support to the community, and taking on a leading role in the recovery from emergencies. The Council and its constituent departments maintain agreed protocol and procedures to:

- i. Access information to identify known vulnerable people and to process the data into a useable format for multi-agency responders
- 4.5 ii. Work with multi-agency partners to identify all vulnerable people dependent to the type of incident
- iii. Share relevant information with each other

In doing so, the Council seeks to ensure that its emergency response activities and support to the community is proportionate and purposeful to the need of those within its community.

### **Community Engagement and Cohesion**

Linked closely to its lead role in the recovery from an emergency, the Council also has a key role in community engagement during an emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, operational services with direct engagement in community matters, locally elected Councillors and Members of Parliament and, indirectly, through the plethora of voluntary agencies, charities and faith communities with whom the Council operates on a daily basis.

In addition, Council Gold supports community engagement by working with partner organisations in order to promote combined and coordinated multi-agency community engagement activities.

- 4.6 This community engagement leadership and coordination is especially important in times of community tension. Led primarily by the Chief Executive and the local Councillors, coordinated community cohesion activities should prevent community tensions leading to serious disturbance wherever possible by accessing and utilising the existing relationships and systems that allow the Council and its partners to act quickly and coherently to reduce, control or mitigate the impact of disturbances on cohesion if they do occur.

### **Recovery Management**

For incidents occurring within the Borough, that do not activate LLAG, recovery management falls to the Council, which nominates the Director of Finance to coordinate the recovery phase. The council has a separate Recovery Management Plan which is activated to support the local recovery

management processes.

For larger incidents where LLAG is active, LLAG, under the London Resilience Partnership Recovery Management Protocol and LESLP, appoints a chief executive to establish a Recovery Management Group (RMG) during the response phase. The RMG coordinates the initial recovery activities in parallel with the response activities of the SCG, reporting to the SCG via LLAG.

4.7

At the point when the Response phase concludes and the SCG stands down there is a formal handover to the London Borough that chairs the RMG. That particular London Borough then takes overall strategic leadership of the incident on behalf of the affected London Boroughs.

The Recovery Coordination Group sits, at decreasing frequencies, until the point at which recovery management has passed entirely to business as usual activities. Compared with the response phase, which may last a matter of hours or days, the recovery phase may last months and years.

### **Warning, Informing and Communications**

Under the CCA 2004, The Council is required to put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform, and advise the public in the event of an emergency.

In support of this, the Council has a Communications Emergency Response Plan, which has been developed in conjunction with Corporate Communications, which outlines the way in which members of the public will be informed about an emergency.

4.8

The emergency communication plan includes arrangements to engage with news and social media and the way in which the messages are tailored to the needs of those within the borough.

### **Public Health**

As an Upper Tier Local Authority, the Council has appointed a Director of Public Health. In relation to emergencies, the role holder is responsible for holding to account those who provide public health services during an emergency.

The Local Authority Public Health function links closely with Public Health England (PHE) in the response to public health emergencies including communicable disease outbreaks, severe weather and CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear).

### **4.9 Additional Directorate/Section Emergency Responsibilities**

In addition to the civil protection emergency responsibilities many departments will have additional duties due to the day-to-day specialist skills they possess, some of which may be:

## 4.10

| Service                      | Responsibilities   | Procedures/<br>Capabilities   |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>ICT</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain critical IT systems and telephone services that are relied upon by critical Council services.</li> <li>Provide ICT support to Council Silver, BECC and Council Gold</li> </ul>   | ICT BC Plan<br>ICT DR Plan  |
| <b>Facilities Management</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying and making available buildings and open areas for emergency use (various types of survivor and evacuation centres, marshalling areas and emergency management control rooms)</li> <li>Supplying temporary and long-term building space and workstations for staff, due to lack of access (as a result of cordons) or serious damage, or the destruction of the building (e.g. business continuity arrangements).</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>Human Resources</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide guidance in respect of staff welfare and matters of HR policy</li> </ul>   | Staff Emergency Assistance Plan   |
| <b>Social care</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the need for and provide / commission welfare support / humanitarian assistance to residents</li> </ul>  | HA Capability Framework   |
| <b>Housing needs</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the need for and commission the provision of temporary accommodation to residents</li> </ul>   | HA Capability Framework   |
| <b>Highways</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the emergency services with road closures and diversions, signage, emergency repairs to the road, footpath and street lighting</li> <li>Removal and disposal (assisted with other agencies) of obstructions and debris from the highway</li> <li>Drain and gully clearance</li> <li>Damming or blocking of drainage entries to inhibit the entry of pollutants or contamination</li> <li>Assisting in the recovery and safe disposal of obstructions and either contained or uncontained chemicals on the highway, working in liaison with the Environmental Health Section and other organisations</li> <li>Gritting and other winter maintenance support</li> </ul> | Diversions<br>Provision of Plant equipment<br>Grit & Ploughs<br>HGV Drivers |
| <b>SEN transport / fleet</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the provision of emergency transport for staff and residents,</li> </ul>  | Mini buses<br>Drivers   |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>including children.</li> <li>Provide buses and drivers for transporting staff and evacuees</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>Parks</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide the capability to clear trees that either cause danger to residents or obstruct the emergency response.</li> </ul>  | 4x4 Vehicles<br>Access to tree surgeons               |
| <b>Building Control / dangerous structures</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide professional dangerous structures advice and assistance, to the emergency services, in assessing the stability of damaged structures and ordering emergency make-safe works as necessary</li> <li>Manage the Council's site-clearance capability (see 'site clearance plan')</li> </ul>   | Civil Engineers<br>Building Control<br>DS Specialists |
| <b>Environmental Health</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting in the identification, holding of and disposal of pollutants and contaminated debris etc in conjunction with Highways</li> <li>Active membership of the Health Advisory Team , if formed, to advise on health aspects of an incident</li> <li>Safety and health information for the local community</li> <li>Assisting with the establishment and staffing of any Body Holding Area or Temporary Mortuary Facility</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Bereavement services</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide additional interment capacity</li> </ul>  | 'excess deaths' documentation                         |
| <b>Waste Management</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource the clearance of waste (including potentially hazardous waste) from incident sites</li> </ul>  | Street Cleaning kit & Staff                           |
| <b>Contact Centre</b>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information to members of the public who contact the Council</li> </ul>   | Customer Service Staff                                |
| <b>All other services</b>                      | Implement business continuity solutions to minimise impact of Business disruption incident   |   |

### External (partner agencies)

Due to its location on the edge of London, and by the very nature that major incidents do not respect administrative boundaries, the Council may work with the emergency services and other partners from both the other London Boroughs and non-London areas. This adds an extra layer of complexity to the response and should be borne in mind for all incidents near to or spanning the borough's boundaries.

4.11

### Metropolitan Police Service

The primary areas of police responsibility at a major incident are:

- The saving of life together with the other emergency services;

- 4.11.1**
- The co-ordination of the emergency services, local authorities and other organisations acting in support at the scene of the incident;
  - To secure, protect and preserve the scene and to control sightseers and traffic through the use of cordons;
  - The investigation of the incident and obtaining and securing of evidence in conjunction with other investigative bodies where applicable;
  - The collection and distribution of casualty information;
  - The identification of the dead on behalf of Her Majesty's (HM) Coroner;
  - The prevention of crime;
  - Family liaison; and
  - Short-term measures to restore normality after all necessary actions have been taken.

### **London Fire Brigade**

The primary areas of LFB responsibility at a major incident are:

- 4.11.2**
- Life-saving through search and rescue;
  - Fire fighting and fire prevention;
  - Rendering humanitarian services;
  - Detection, identification, monitoring and management of hazardous materials and Protecting the environment;
  - Provision of qualified scientific advice in relation to HAZMAT incidents via their Scientific advisors;
  - Salvage and damage control;
  - Safety management within the inner cordon; and
  - To maintain emergency service cover throughout the LFB area and return to a state of normality at the earliest time

### **London Ambulance service**

The primary areas of responsibility for the ambulance service at a major incident may be summarised as:

- 4.11.3**
- To save life together with the other emergency services;
  - To provide treatment, stabilisation and care of those injured at the scene;
  - To provide appropriate transport, medical staff, equipment and resources;
  - To establish an effective triage sieve and triage sort system to determine the priority evacuation needs of those injured and to establish a safe location for casualty clearing i.e. triage sort area;
  - To provide a focal point at the incident for all National Health Service (NHS) and other medical resources;
  - To provide communication facilities for NHS resources at the scene, with direct radio links to hospitals, control facilities and any other agency as required;

- To nominate and alert the receiving hospitals from the official list of hospitals to receive those injured and inform the other agencies.
- To provide transport to the incident scene for the medical advisor (MA), Medical
- Emergency Response Incident Team (MERIT) and their equipment;
- To arrange the most appropriate means of transporting those injured to the receiving and specialist hospitals;
- To maintain emergency cover throughout the LAS area and return to a state of normality at the earliest time; and
- To act as a portal into the wider health services including the Health Protection Agency Regional Health Emergency Planning Advisors (HEPAs), and in the event of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) incident advise on the convening of the Scientific and Technical Advice Cell (STAC), which will be able to advise and lead as far as health advice is concerned.
- To provide a Mobile Emergency Response Incident Team

#### **4.12 Scene Management**

The principles for the management of the emergency services and the Council at the scene of a major incident or emergency are set out in the London Emergency Services Liaison Panel's Major Incident Procedures, from which the following paragraphs are taken.

The overall control of the scene of a major incident or emergency will be carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service, unless it is an incident on a railway in which case the British Transport Police will be in control of the Inner Cordon and matters on railway property.

It may be that the area inside the Inner Cordon will be controlled by the London Fire Brigade while rescue of people and fire fighting activities are being carried out. In this case the LFB will be responsible for the safety of all persons within the Inner Cordon.

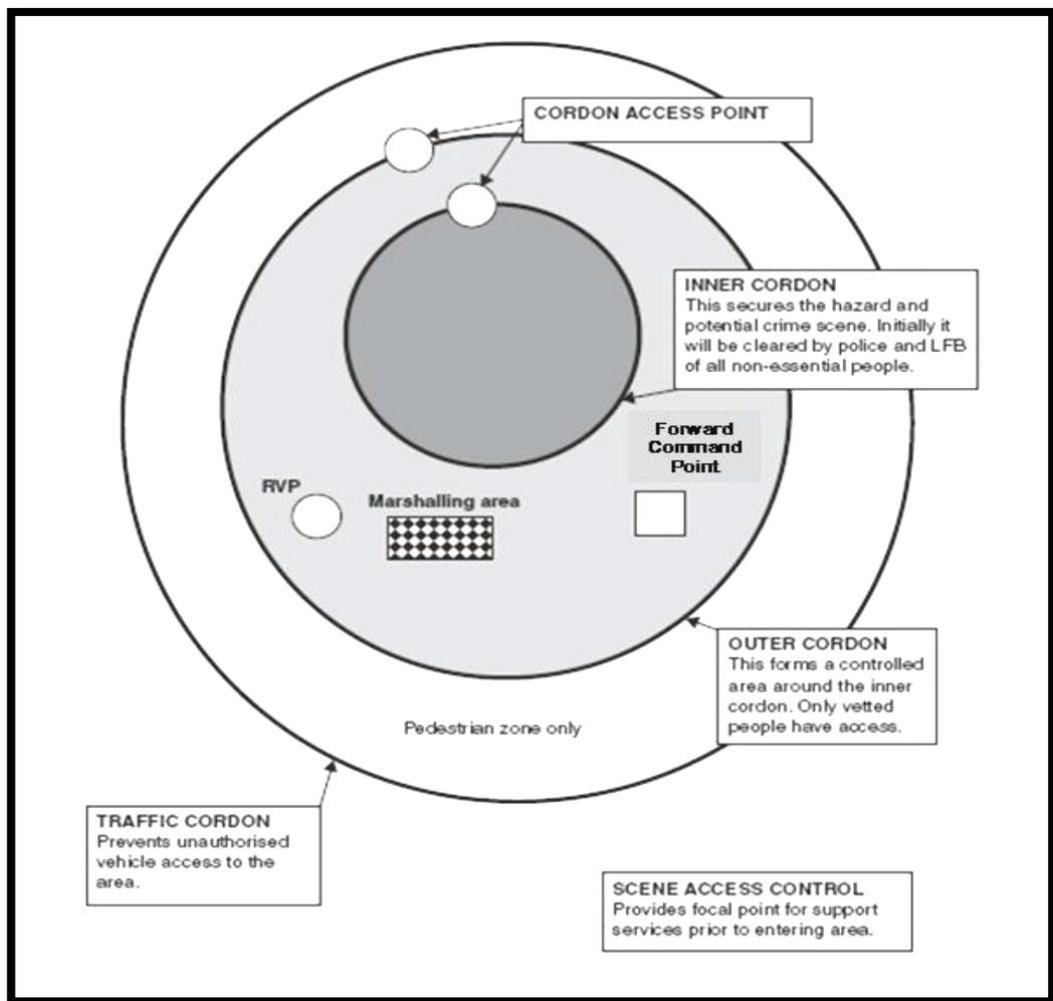
The main Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance Service Control/Command Units will form the focus from which the major incident will be managed. These units, together with those of the public utilities and the Council, will be located close to one another and be known collectively as the Joint Emergency Services Control Centre or JESCC. The tactical commanders ('Silvers') will jointly exercise their authority from this point in a co-ordinated manner.

It is essential that upon arrival at the incident scene, the Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO) finds the Incident Officer for each service present and informs that officer of the official presence of the Borough. If possible, the LALO's own vehicle should be co-located with the others at the JESCC.

A Rendezvous Point (RVP) will be established within the outer cordon under the control of a police officer wearing the appropriate reflective tabard. All emergency specialist, Council and voluntary services attending the incident will

be sent there in the first instance.

A Marshalling Area, under the control of an officer from each service, wearing appropriate reflective tabards, may be established between the RVP and the scene and may also be used to provide briefing/debriefing areas and recuperation of personnel involved in arduous work at the scene.



To aid identification, the blue, red or green identifying lights on each of the main control vehicles of the emergency services will be switched on. The identifying lights of all other vehicles will be switched OFF. All Council vehicles at the RVP and the scene MUST SWITCH OFF their orange lights, unless needed for safety reasons and for which the authority of the Police Incident Officer has been obtained for specific Council vehicles to use their orange lights.

## **5. Collective Emergency Response Arrangements**

- 5.1** Where major incidents either extend beyond the Council's boundary or, due to the scale of the response activity, requires the support of other local authorities, the London Boroughs have agreed the way they will work together for emergency events and situations that require more than one London Borough to invoke its emergency response and recovery arrangements.

The core elements of the collective arrangements, are:

- i. London Local Authority Gold (LLAG)
- ii. London Local Authority Coordination Centre (LLACC)
- iii. Mutual aid.

These collective arrangements are based on the expectation that each London Borough undertakes its fair share of the response and responds collectively alongside and in support of other London Boroughs in addition to the local-level arrangements, which exist in parallel.

### **5.2 Command and Control During a Regional Incident**

Command and control is depicted in the diagram in Appendix B, which outlines the complex relationship between the London Boroughs, Local Authority regional coordination arrangements and the multi-agency coordination arrangements.

#### **5.2.1 Strategic Level: London Local Authority Gold (LLAG)**

With the potential for 33 London Boroughs to operate at Incident Response level simultaneously, it is impractical for each individual Council Gold to attend the multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). Therefore, one Local Authority's Chief Executive represents all LLAs under the title London Local Authority Gold (LLAG).

The LLAG role was formalised in the Gold Resolution, which, in addition to a Local Authority Chief Executive representing all London Local Authorities at SCG meetings, it empowers LLAG, under certain circumstances, to commit and coordinate Local Authority resources and expenditure in support of affected London Boroughs.

To ensure year-round availability, two Chief Executives (primary and secondary) are always available through an on-call/duty system that is maintained by London Resilience Group, who notifies LLAG of an incident, who in turn makes a decision whether to activate. LLAG then determines whether to activate other local authorities.

There exists three routes to notifying LLAG, which are detailed in the LLAG Operating Procedures and are summarised below:

- i. Top Down – partner organisation requests involvement of LLAG
- ii. Situation Awareness – the developing situation across local authorities/the London Resilience Partnership indicates that LLAG involvement is required
- iii. Bottom up – where a London Borough requests the support of LLAG to an incident.

Once activated, the duty LLAG receives support from the LLACC in the form of advisors and regular, consolidated situation reports from all London Boroughs. LLAG sets the pan-London Local Authority strategy, which the LLACC disseminates to the Council's Borough Emergency Control Centres (BECC).

### **5.2.2 Strategic Level: London Local Authority Coordination Centre (LLACC)**

Many incidents are dealt with routinely by the London Boroughs with little need for outside support. However, wherever the Council has a declared major incident, there is an expectation to notify the LLACC.

The LLACC is operated on the Council's behalf by the London Resilience Group which is part of the London Fire Brigade and provides a regional coordination function with Information Management and Situational Awareness responsibilities. It supports the LLAG in a similar way to how the BECC supports Council Silver i.e. with the provision of a Common Operating Picture and turning decisions into actions.

### **5.2.3 Tactical Level: Off-scene Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG)**

In addition to a LALO attending the on-scene coordinating group at the Forward Control Point (FCP), Council Silver may attend in person or dial into the multi-agency Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG), based at the Special Operations Rooms (SOR) at the Metropolitan Police Service's Lambeth Headquarters.

This off-scene multi-agency tactical level group is chaired by the Metropolitan Police and involves other emergency services and partnership organisations as required. It focuses primarily on the coordination of resources to the incident scene(s) rather than the wider impact to London.

Council Silver, or a nominated silver-level representative, from the London Borough most affected by the incident represents the LLAs at the TCG. Where an incident has multiple sites across multiple London Borough administrative areas, more than one London Borough may attend the TCG, subject to availability of space at the TCG location. In all cases, attendance at the Off-scene TCG are agreed with LLAG.

## **5.3 Mutual Aid**

The London Boroughs have in place a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) in respect of mutual aid. The MOU provides for participating London Boroughs to actively, wherever possible aid another participating London Borough in the form of provision of personnel and/or equipment in the event of, or in the reasonable anticipation of, an emergency event or other disruptive situation, when asked to do so. The London Borough requesting the aid will undertake to reimburse the London Borough providing it on a cost recovery basis.

Although the London Boroughs may agree bilateral mutual aid the circumstances in which mutual aid is required more often than not involves the activation of LLAs regional coordination arrangements (i.e. the LLACC and LLAG). In such circumstances, the LLACC coordinates requests for mutual aid where it is more effective to do so.

In all circumstances, the London Boroughs follow an agreed Mutual Aid process, part of which is the requirement for requests to be made on a standardised Mutual Aid request form.

During a major incident, there is a presumption that the London Boroughs will use mutual aid as the route to augment their own response capabilities, making requests at the earliest opportunity, to ensure the optimum support is provided to their communities and partners. Subject to the nature of the request, the London Boroughs default position will always be to release their staff and other resources to the requesting authority and without delay.

#### **5.4 Humanitarian Assistance**

Strategic, multi-borough humanitarian assistance (HA) is guided by the multi-agency “London Resilience Partnership Humanitarian Assistance Plan”, and the responsibility to coordinate this London-wide HA activity falls to the London Boroughs.

To meet this responsibility, LLAG appoints a senior Local Authority officer (normally the Director of Adult Social Care) to act as the Humanitarian Assistance Lead Officer (HALO). The HALO convenes and chairs a multi-agency body known as the Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG), which assesses the needs of all those affected and develops and oversees strategies to ensure the provision of appropriate HA.

The HALO may activate a number of Humanitarian Assistance capabilities through which assistance is offered. These include:

- i. Humanitarian Assistance Centre (see *Emergency Centres*);
- ii. Humanitarian Assistance website
- iii. Humanitarian Assistance telephone line

Partner agencies link into and support the Humanitarian Assistance provision. These organisations are detailed in the London Humanitarian Assistance Plan.

#### **5.5 Mass Fatalities Coordinating Group**

In addition to the Mass Fatalities responsibilities outlined in Section 4, a senior representative from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will attend the Mass Fatalities Coordinating Group (MACG). This group, which is chaired by the lead Coroner for the incident, determines the most appropriate mortuary for the incident and maintains strategic oversight for the mortuary operation.

#### **5.6 Military Aid to the Civil Authority**

MACA sees a deployed military resource carrying out agreed activities at the request of the civilian authorities in response to an emergency or major incident. The Council, as a civilian authority may request MACA. The decision to request MACA is made by LLAG and the Chief Executive(s) of the London Borough(s) in need of military support, in consultation with the Chair of the SCG if activated.

## **5.7 Scientific and Technical Advice Cell (STAC)**

The purpose of the STAC is to ensure timely coordinated scientific and technical advice to the Strategic Coordinating Group during the response to an emergency, which is particularly important where there may be significant wider health and environmental consequences. It achieves this bringing together technical experts from those agencies involved in the response and who may provide scientific and technical advice. The Council is a member of the STAC and deploy to the STAC senior officer(s) with expertise relevant to the incident e.g. Environmental Health Officer.

## **5.8 Other Groups and Organisations**

There is a range of other groups and organisations that support the Local Authority response to incidents, which includes:

- i. London Councils Communications
- ii. The Prevent Network
- iii. Local Authority Directors of Public Health group
- iv. Local Authority Directors of Housing group
- v. Various London Councils Policy Groups e.g. Coroners.

## **5.9 Heathrow Travel Care**

Additionally, there are a number of voluntary organisations which also form part of the Council's emergency response, such as Heathrow Travel Care. Heathrow Travel Care was established in 1972. Their purpose is to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of any vulnerable person in crisis or distress at Heathrow Airport.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a legal obligation on the Council to plan for human welfare following an emergency, and on other local partners to co-operate with them in order to avoid, mitigate, respond to and recover from, major incidents, emergency events or situations in terms of human welfare. The coordination of humanitarian assistance at Heathrow had been delegated to Heathrow Travel Care as the local experts.

Heathrow Travel Care [HTC] is an established and trusted stakeholder within the emergency planning structure at the airport and beyond. They are members of the Hillingdon Resilience Forum and regularly attend meetings and participate in exercises.

HTC has an emergency on-call system activated by HAL. They aim to deploy coordinators to reception centres, and management locations as required, within 75 minutes of being alerted. In partnership with other key airport responders, including the chaplains, they will assess the potential for human distress and the options for delivering an initial response based on evidence of what is needed. They can then deploy appropriately trained and experienced personnel as required.

## **6. Elected Members**

### **6.1 Member Involvement**

In the early stages of a major incident, emergency event or situation, there is little direct action an elected Member can take. The emergency services and officers of the Council will need to be enabled to manage the situation.

In the first instance the Leader of the Council will be kept informed by Council Gold and will work closely with the Council Gold Group. The decision when to inform local Members, and the full Council, will be the decision of the Chief Executive, Council Gold and the Leader.

Members will continue to be free to speak to the media in the usual way and can comment on the crisis to offer condolences and extend sympathies. However, in a crisis, it is vital to avoid making controversial statements to the media such as allocating blame, or taking initiatives such as launching an appeal scheme without first consulting with the Chief Executive, Council Gold and the Leader.

### **6.2 Member Interface**

In the event of a major incident Council Gold will inform the Chief Executive and the Leader of the situation and the intended actions.

Between the Leader, the Chief Executive and Council Gold, the decision will be made if the local member(s) need to be informed and will check other Group Leaders have been informed.

Consideration will be given to calling a special meeting with the Leader, the Borough Mayor, Cabinet Members, ward members and Group Leaders.

### **6.3 Ward Members**

Ward Members have an important role because of their knowledge of residents, businesses, community representatives and the geographical area. They are also known locally and respected as community leaders. The role of Ward Members can therefore include:

- Visiting Evacuation / Rest / Reception Centres
- Helping to identify vulnerable residents and
- Helping to communicate with community groups

Members should always make contact with the BECC (if activated) before making visits and should also ensure they carry their Council ID card and mobile phone with them, and that the phone is charged at all times, in order to facilitate communication.

### **6.4 Guidance for Elected Members in a Major Incident**

Outlined below is the advice about the actions of the elected member with an area affected by a major incident.

Do not do anything initially, leave it to the emergency services

You will be kept informed. Arrangements have been made to keep the local ward member(s) and relevant Members of the Council informed. Once the Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) has been activated you will be given a central point of reference.

When speaking to the media please do not allocate blame or take any initiatives without first consulting with the Council Gold Group.

Help the flow of accurate information. As you will be regarded as an informed and credible source by the media and the public you will be invaluable in passing on information. Your best source of information will be from the Council Gold Group.

As time goes on the recovery process will develop and you can help assisting with the appeal funds, memorial services, VIP visits and so forth. However it is important that these initiatives are conducted and coordinated through the Council Gold Group.

## **7. Role of the London Mayor**

In the event of a major incident or any disruptive incident, emergency event or situation, it is likely that the Mayor's Office will require initial and regular information about the situation. This function will usually be carried out by the London Resilience Group in conjunction with the relevant organisations leading the response and by the Mayor's Press Office. Additionally, the Mayor may obtain specific advice at a senior level through the Mayor's Advisory Group (MAG).

The Mayor will collaborate closely with the MPS Strategic Coordinating Group, and where and when appropriate, central government. The Mayor may also be invited to attend COBR meetings.

The Mayor of London has a key response role as the 'voice of London'. The role of the Mayor is to support the operational response to an emergency in London by providing a unified statement - a "voice" for London. It will be the Mayor's role to provide regional information and reassurance throughout the duration of the response and into the initial stages of the recovery phase - this role is complementary to, and in support of, local responders and operational spokespeople. In addition to press briefings, the Mayor's Twitter feed (@MayorofLondon) may be used to communicate key information and reassurance messages.

## **8. Stand Down**

**8.1** It will be the responsibility of Council Silver to decide when it is appropriate to stand down the SCG, BECC and the management of the emergency response via this Corporate Emergency Response Plan. The LALO, if deployed to or still at the scene, will be consulted prior to a decision being made.

There are no set criteria for this decision. However, in most cases the decision to stand down will follow a reduction of liaison and co-ordination activity

between the BECC if opened, the responding services and departments and (if deployed) the LALO, to an extent that it is practical to continue with normal management arrangements.

If the Council Gold Group has been sitting, either a final meeting with the Gold Group or a discussion between the Council Silver and Council Gold should be held to confirm the status of the emergency before the decision to stand down is taken.

## **8.2 Retention of Evidence/Documentation**

Major incidents are often followed by calls for a public enquiry, and violent deaths bring Coroner's inquests. Investigations by enforcement authorities are certain and claims for compensation will be made early on in the incident.

The majority of council services are governed by statute or official regulations which state how long information should be retained. Not following these could result in unlawful retention and we risk breaching the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Data Protection Act 2004.

**Retention** - means to keep something and in this context it means the length of time for which we need to keep data, documents and records.

**Disposal** - what we do with something, in this case data, documents and records when they no longer need to be retained.

Therefore it is imperative that action cards, check-lists, personal and decision-making logs and other notes that have been made during the response to the major incident are collated and given to the Emergency Management and Response Manager to be retained.

## **8.3 Debriefing**

At some stage, when the incident has ended, the Council will need to a series of operational debriefs. Initially these will be confined to each particular department or service area, but later a structured debrief will be convened in order to identify any lessons, areas for improvement in procedures, equipment and systems. They are not be forums for criticising the performance of others.

A debrief is a facilitated discussion, which takes place after the response to any emergency and aims to identify two pieces of information: what went well and areas for development.

Following all major incidents, emergency events and situations, the Emergency Management & Response Manager facilitates the debrief process for corporate emergency response roles (EROs, Council Silver and Council Gold) and all stakeholders.

Service managers are responsible for debriefing their service's part of the response to a major incident (and bringing their findings to any corporate debrief session). The Emergency Management & Response Manager can provide advice to managers on how to hold a debrief.

Council representatives may also be required to attend multi-agency debriefs

in order to expand the knowledge and learning process.

Operational debriefs should not be confused with diffusing welfare sessions for staff, which should form part of the trauma support programmes.

It is important to note that such debriefs and related documents should be disclosed to individuals who are involved in legal proceedings.

#### **8.4 Welfare of Responders**

Recent incidents have shown that welfare and trauma support should be made available to staff who have been deployed in major incident scenarios. This support should be available from the very outset and early stages of the incident.

The responsibility for identifying the need for welfare support rests jointly with the individuals, their managers HR and the Employee Assistance Programme.

Those who are particularly traumatised will require skilled professional. Arrangements for this must be made in a way that ensures confidentiality and overcomes any resistance to such a step.

These facilities should also be made available to support staff even if they have not been directly involved at the scene.

