

Report to	Scrutiny Committee for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date	19 June 2012
Report By	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment
Title of Report	Emergency Planning
Purpose of Report	To update the committee on the work of Emergency Planning

RECOMMENDATIONS: Scrutiny Committee are recommended to consider and note

- (1) The work that Emergency Planning carries out on behalf of the County Council;**
 - (2) The revised and updated 'Guidance for Elected Members on the Management of an Emergency' for East Sussex County Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, Lewes District Council and Wealden District Council (Annex 3); and**
 - (3) The summary of drought issues and activities as a basis for discussion (Annex 4).**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There are no financial implications relating to this report.

2. Supporting Information

Introduction

2.1 The purpose of 'Emergency Planning' is to reduce the potential impact of major incidents on the residents and environment of East Sussex. The Team (see annex 1) seeks to achieve this by preparing the Council to respond in an appropriate and effective manner to any major emergency while at the same time maintaining, so far as possible, its normal services through Business Continuity arrangements.

2.2 The response to most emergencies is a multi-agency one, so the Team operates very much with professional partners. These include the Borough and District Councils, Environment Agency, emergency and health services, the utilities, voluntary organisations, military and any others who might be involved in the local response. This includes residents who volunteer to assist their town or parish council in planning for and responding to an emergency. It is also appropriate to regard the Department for Communities and Local Government Emergency Management teams, and neighbouring counties, as partners.

2.3 For consistency and efficiency the County Council Emergency Planning Team undertakes some wide area co-ordination, for example providing the emergency services with a single 24-hour point of contact into local authorities, and it provides direct support to Lewes District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council and Wealden District Council on a contractual basis. It participates in and contributes to the work of the multi-agency Sussex Resilience Forum.

Key Issues

2.4 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 sets out the role of Emergency Planning, and indeed its wider remit, for example, the duties to incorporate and promote Business Continuity Planning. It has also created clear boundaries within which to work, and subjected it to influence from central and regional government through the development of capability work streams and their input to the Community Risk Register.

2.5 These influences have a direct bearing on goal-setting as the Service has to respond to the priorities identified in the Community Risk Register and/or by partners. New priorities can emerge which will have an impact on those goals, e.g. The Olympic Games, natural disasters or the national security situation. In addition, the inter-agency arrangements necessary to support this process can take time to resolve.

2.6 The financial challenges facing the Council have meant the team has reduced in size. Prioritisation of the work activities utilising the available resources is key part of the management of this service.

Statutory Requirements

2.7 The *Civil Contingencies Act 2004*, effective since November 2005, along with the accompanying regulations and non-statutory guidance, places clear duties upon the Council, and these are summarised in annex 2.

2.8 Both the *Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations 1999* and the *Radiation (Emergencies Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001* require the County Council to carry out some specific emergency planning. The only upper-tier COMAH site in the County is at Rye Harbour and the Dungeness Power Stations are located only 7 km from the county boundary. The *Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996* require principal local authorities to prepare emergency plans for pipelines which have potential to cause a major accident.

2.9 The Government has introduced the Floods and Water Management Act. This Act means the Council plays a significantly greater role in the management of flood risk; this includes, amongst other things, a requirement for County Councils to take the lead in coordinating flood risk planning in partnership with other Local Authorities and the Environment Agency, which ESCC does through its recently established Flood Risk Management team. Linked to this activity, is a requirement to prepare a generic off-site flood plan for reservoirs by the Emergency Planning Team.

3. Comments/Appraisal

3.1 Goals for 2012/13; The main areas of focus for the year are the following:-

- Participation in the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) multi-agency Olympic resilience programme.
- Development of an emergency coordination centre at County Hall and a strategic incident management structure.
- Review and exercising of the East Sussex coastal pollution plan and support to the East Sussex Flood Partnership.
- Enhancement of the team skills by attendance at suitable cost effective training events.
- Prepare the ESCC Humanitarian Assistance Centre Plan
- Review the council's vulnerable people plan.
- Support of the SRF work stream programme.
- Continue the provision of an Emergency Planning service to Lewes and Wealden District Councils and Eastbourne Borough Council.
- Review the Pandemic Flu Plan
- Review ESCC Drought arrangements
- Develop and exercise emergency evacuation arrangements
- Deliver an exercise of the generic Off-site Plan for Reservoirs in partnership with West Sussex County Council
- Support the Councils corporate Business Continuity arrangements.
- Continue to help improve emergency preparedness and Business Continuity among members of the public, businesses and the voluntary sector
- Supporting Rother District Council and Hastings Borough Council in exercising Bulverhythe and Rye Flood Plans.

3.2 Due to the nature of resilience work, emergencies or potential emergencies often require the team's attention. Therefore, team goals and objectives need regular review to allow this small specialist team time to deal with these additional pressures.

4. Environmental Issues

4.1 Emergency Planning contributes to the East Sussex Flood Risk Partnership and prepares plans for responding to severe weather, flooding and coastal pollution.

5. Community Safety Issues

5.1 Along with the Sussex Resilience Forum, Borough and District Councils, Emergency Planning promote emergency preparedness to communities within East Sussex mainly through Parish Council Emergency groups and attendance at selected public events

6. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

6.1 This report is provided as an overview of Emergency Planning following its transfer into Economy, Transport and Environment and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the work of the Emergency Planning team and the information provided in the Appendices.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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Local Member: All

The Emergency Planning Team

1. Emergency Planning Officers' portfolios:

Jim Foster – Business Continuity, Pandemic Flu' plans, SRF Training group, local flood planning, SRF Category Two group, Wealden District Council support.

Ian Hodgson – Emergency mortuary, Emergency centre, SRF Excess Deaths group community resilience, Lewes District Council support.

Yvonne Riedel-Brown – Recovery, coastal pollution, severe weather, flooding (co-ordination & reservoirs planning), SRF Severe Weather group, Animal Diseases plan, public awareness, recovery planning.

John Wood – Fuel shortage, COMAH, Chemical, Biological, Radiological Nuclear Explosive (CBRNE), SRF Evacuation & Shelter group, Generic Emergency Plan, Humanitarian Assistance plan, Eastbourne Borough Council support.

David Broadley – Team manager (incl. policy & business planning), corporate Business Continuity, corporate emergency response, Sussex Resilience Forum strategic support. Liaison with Seine-Maritime Prefecture (cross channel emergencies), Military liaison, emergency services. Chair SRF Risk Group, SRF Finance Group, chair SRF Recovery group. Borough and District liaison.

2. Financial position

Income: - £48,000

Total budget costs £181,300

In a recent bench marking exercise carried out by Lewes District Council based on a cost per head of population, our costs were well below that provided by West Sussex (£0.39 per head of population against £0.50).

Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Part 1 directly affects local authorities and is summarised below. Part 2 relates to powers of HM Government to declare a State of Emergency, which, as it does not directly impact upon this service is not covered in this plan.

Two categories of organisation are identified. Category One organisations –which includes local authorities, health and emergency services etc. – have duties as identified below. They are obliged to work with each other across a ‘*Local Resilience Area*’ (i.e. Sussex) and with Category Two organisations. The latter consists of utilities, transport providers etc., and they are obliged to ‘co-operate’. This process is led by a ‘*Local Resilience Forum*’ in Sussex this known as *The Sussex Resilience Forum* or *SRF*, comprised of chief officers (at its highest level) from the Category One organisations, and some other invitees.

There are 33 Category One and 39 Category Two organisations in Sussex. This will change as the restructuring of the NHS becomes known:

Community Risk Register: Category One organisations have to carry out a joint risk assessment to identify those risks that are likely to occur. They must also take note of risks notified by central or regional government. The result of this process must be published in the form of a ‘*Community Risk Register*’. The register can be seen at <http://www.sussexemergency.info> and is subject to continuous review.

Emergency Plans: Each authority should publish a ‘generic plan’ to identify how it will deliver its response to emergencies generally. In addition, there should be site and incident specific plans for those high risks identified by the risk assessment. Plans should be ‘inter-agency’ where appropriate.

Training and Exercising: Each authority should ensure that anyone likely to be involved in emergency arrangements is fully prepared for the role, and there should be a system in place to validate plans through training and exercising. Those who prepare and deliver training should be ‘experienced and competent’.

Warning and Informing: There must be arrangements in place to educate the public as to what they should do in an emergency, and how warnings might be circulated in a given emergency. A ‘*lead responder*’ organisation should be appointed to co-ordinate the work.

Maintaining Critical Services: Each authority must have plans to show how it will continue to deliver its critical services during an emergency.

Promoting Business Continuity: This duty applies to local authorities only. Arrangements must be put in place to promote Business Continuity planning within the community, including voluntary organisations. It does not require the local authority to actually write the plans.



Guidance for Elected Members on the Management of an Emergency

East Sussex County Council in partnership with



Version 0.9ESCC

Produced jointly by the Emergency Planning Officers of East Sussex CC, Eastbourne BC, Lewes DC, Wealden DC

(This supersedes the document entitled 'Guidance for Elected Members on the Management of a Major Incident' dated April 2003 issued by the six East Sussex Local Authorities)

VERSION CONTROL

Version	1.0
Author	Jim Foster, East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council
Primary reviewers	David Broadley, East Sussex County Council Ian Hodgson, Lewes District Council John Wood, Eastbourne Borough Council
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References and acknowledgements

The following documents have been used in developing this Guidance:

East Sussex Local Authorities (2003) *Guidance for Elected Members on the Management of a Major Incident*

Sussex Resilience Forum (2008) *Emergency Linking Document 4th Edition*

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (2007) *Civil Protection & Emergency Preparedness for Elected Members*

Nottinghamshire County Council (2009) *Elected Members Emergency Plan*

Cabinet Office (2011) *National Recovery Guidance - Generic Issues - The role of Elected Members* available from:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/national-recovery-guidance-generic-issues-role-elected-members>

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide elected members with a brief summary of how emergencies (major incidents) are managed and to give some guidance as to how they can assist.

It is in four parts:

Section A	Outlines the roles elected members can play in a major emergency
Section B	Describes how we plan for and respond to major emergencies
Section C	Gives additional specific information for your Council
Appendices	Give details of Local Authority duties during an emergency; the legal background; and the main organisations involved

The Civil Contingencies Act defines an emergency as:

- (a) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare;
- (b) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment; or
- (c) war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to security

It must be borne in mind that all incidents are different and individual councils have their own policies and procedures. This guidance must be read in that light: it contains general principles and suggestions, but due account must be taken of the circumstances of the particular incident.

Section A Role of Elected Members in a Major Emergency

“As community representatives and figureheads in their local community, elected members for the affected community have an important role to play (particularly) in assisting with the recovery process. Although they have a limited role in the operational response phase, the role of the local authority’s elected members is vital to rebuilding, restoring, rehabilitating and reassuring the communities affected and speaking on their behalf” (from National Recovery Guidance).

1 Stages of involvement

Elected members can become involved in major emergencies at four separate stages:

- Prior to an incident – developing understanding of emergency planning
- During an incident – limited role
- During the recovery stage – major role as this is usually led by the local authority
- Issues which arise after the incident

2 Record Keeping

During a major emergency it is important that good records are kept of actions taken and reasons for decisions made as there will often be an Inquiry. It is recommended that Members keep a log of any involvement they may have in a major incident.

3 Role of Elected Members – (a) During the Planning Stages

During the planning stage Members can develop an awareness of:

- Civil protection legislation, including the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA)
- General duties of local authorities and other responders under the CCA.
- The support role of local authorities during the response to an incident
- The specific duties of local authorities during the response to an incident
- The lead role of local authorities during the recovery from an incident
- The arrangements for emergency planning within their Authority
- The arrangements for business continuity within their Authority
- The preparation of community plans
- Practical aspects by attending appropriate training and exercises

The Council’s Emergency Planning Officer can provide further information on all these matters.

4 Role of Elected Members – (b) During an emergency

For the emergency responders, the period at the start of an emergency is a crucial time for the protection of people, property and the environment. The role played by the local authority is a supporting one, liaising with the emergency services, providing resources and other facilities as required.

Communications can be very difficult in the immediate aftermath of a major incident with telephone lines handling potentially thousands of calls. As soon as possible the Chief Executive will brief the Leader of the Council and provide continuous updates on the emergency response. The Council's Members' Services Officer or Press Officer will advise Members when a detailed briefing is likely to be available. For Health and Safety reasons, Members are asked not to go to the scene or attempt to cross police cordons. While Members may become aware that an incident has happened in their ward it is requested that they do not try to contact the Council call centre, the Emergency Control Room, or the Emergency Response Team for information during the impact phase.

As the situation becomes clearer and the immediate danger is brought under control, briefings will be available to Members and, in particular, to those whose wards are involved who may wish to assist by:

- Being aware of the latest position by attending briefing sessions, etc;
- Supporting and providing reassurance to the affected community;
- Supporting officers involved in the response to the emergency
- Support the response with local knowledge e.g. identifying vulnerable people;
- As a community leader acting as a channel of communication with public;
- Act as a voluntary helper (depending on individual skills);

5 **Role of Elected Members – (c) During the Recovery Stage**

The recovery process involves re-establishing the community and local businesses and restoring 'normality' which, depending on the nature of the event, may be different from what existed before.

During this phase, the strategic coordination of the incident is handed over from the emergency services to the Local Authority. This will be led by a Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG).

As community leaders, elected members may become involved through:

- Providing a political lead on the way in which decisions are made.
- Being community supporters and champions
- Using local knowledge and community contacts to identify priorities
- Representing their community on the Community Recovery Committee.
- Supporting efforts to repair and reconstruct the affected community
- Promoting joint working between County, District and Parish authorities.
- Liaising with other elected representatives including MPs / MEPs
- Seeking additional resources and financial assistance from Government
- Approving regeneration issues;
- Considering the need for longer term accommodation;
- Involvement in the management of any appeal funds and memorials;
- Anniversaries and commemoration.
- Ensuring that the lessons learnt are applied to the emergency plans.

6 **Role of Elected Members – Dealing with the Media and VIP Visitors**

Media relations in an emergency incident are crucial and can often be an important factor in determining how well (or otherwise) the Council and Emergency Services are reported as dealing with the situation.

Members may be approached to give media statements and interviews.

To ensure a consistent and accurate approach it is important that Members are fully briefed by the appropriate Council's Press Officer. Any Council communication with the media will be in accordance with the agreed procedures and, in the early stages, in consultation with the police and fire services. Members should refrain from speaking to the media direct, unless guided to do so by their Council's Press Officer, to avoid any mixed messages which could have a detrimental effect on the community and overall emergency response.

If the incident is of such magnitude as to attract regional or national interest, Members may become involved in meeting and greeting VIPs and briefing visitors on the progress being made.

7 **Role of Elected Members – Post Incident Issues**

Members also need to be aware of other issues that may arise in the aftermath of an emergency incident. These can include:

- Civil litigation
- Criminal proceedings
- Public inquiries
- Loss of income for the Council
- Anniversaries
- Insurance and claims to the Government
- Long term effects on the community
- Business regeneration

Section B How we plan for and respond to major emergencies

8 **Legal requirement to cooperate in preparing emergency plans** (Appendix 2)

It is a legal requirement that plans must be prepared to deal with major emergencies. This involves local authorities, emergency services, health bodies and others working together to produce coordinated plans.

In this area, the coordination is achieved through the ‘Sussex Resilience Forum’ (SRF) on which all the organisations are represented. Through this body,

- The risks facing the community are assessed
- Plans are prepared to meet those risks
- Exercises are undertaken to test those plans

Individual organisations, including local authorities, also have their own plans which detail their response to a major emergency and their contribution to the overall effort.

9 **Three levels of response**

In the event of a major incident there will generally be three levels of multi-agency management: Strategic, Tactical and Operational (often referred to as Gold, Silver and Bronze).

A Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG - ‘Gold’) would be set up (usually at Police headquarters in Lewes). This would include senior managers from all relevant organisations involved in the emergency. This Group takes responsibility for the strategic management of the incident and ensuring sufficient resources are made available. Local authority representation on the SCG would be through a senior officer from both the District / Borough involved and from the County Council.

Tactical Command (Silver) is the multi-agency group which meets near the scene to assess risks, identify the resource needs and coordinate the response. The local authority response will be led by a ‘Tactical Commander’ called the Local Authority Incident Liaison Officer or LAILO. This will usually be an officer from the District or Borough in which the incident has happened. The LAILO will normally represent all local authority interests.

Operational Command (Bronze) are the responders at the scene responsible for implementing the decisions of the tactical group and managing the immediate “hands-on” work.

10 **The Local Authority’s Emergency Control Centre**

For most major emergency incidents, the District or Borough concerned would set up an Emergency Control Centre (ECC). This would be used to coordinate the local authority response – to receive requests and action them and to monitor progress. Officers from the County Council, Police, etc may attend the ECC to assist the cooperative working.

Where an incident involves more than one District / Borough it may be necessary to open the County Council's Emergency Centre as well to co-ordinate the county-wide response.

11 **Business Continuity**

Each Council has a duty to continue to deliver its essential services during an emergency. To help prepare for this, and because it is good business practice, all local authorities have developed business continuity plans.

12 **Roles and Responsibilities of Local Authorities**

The principal duties of local authorities in an emergency include:-

- Support and care of the community
- Support for the emergency services
- Co-ordination of the response by the voluntary sector
- Liaison with utility companies
- Leading the rehabilitation of the community by aiding the recovery process.

The local authorities in Sussex have agreed a mutual aid protocol that enables them to call upon each other for support during a major emergency.

A list of the duties of local authorities during a major emergency is given in Appendix 1

13 **Recovery from an Emergency**

The Police normally chair the Strategic Coordinating Group during the response stage of an emergency. However, depending on the size and nature of the incident, it may be appropriate to set up a multi-agency Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) to plan the return to normality once the response phase has passed. The local authorities have a major role to play in the recovery process and this RCG is normally led by a chief officer from the local authority area in which the incident occurred.

The Recovery Coordinating Group would normally be set up soon after the incident started so that planning for the return to normality can begin at the earliest possible time. There is an agreed Sussex Resilience Forum Recovery Plan which sets out the framework in accordance with national guidelines.

As part of this Recovery Plan, it is proposed to set up a Community Recovery Committee consisting of representatives of local groups. Local Elected Members will have an important part to play on this Committee.

14 **Role of Emergency Planning Officers**

Emergency Planning Officers prepare plans to cover a variety of potential emergencies. They maintain important links with numerous different organisations. They develop and

deliver training programmes and exercises, all intended to prepare local authorities to deal with a major incident when it occurs.

The plans are developed in such a way that the local authority's response can be implemented without the direct input of the Emergency Planning Officer although, if available, he or she will often be able to provide invaluable advice and guidance.

All Sussex local authorities provide an out-of-hours 'Duty Officer' as a point of contact in case a major incident occurs or is anticipated.

This 'Duty Officer' is responsible for:

- Liaison with the Emergency Services
- Alerting and calling out other Council officers as required
- Alerting and calling out other agencies and organisations as required
- Briefing senior officers as required
- Making an assessment of the support the local authority can provide

15 Who Pays for the Council's Emergency Response?

Each Council has a responsibility for its own costs incurred in dealing with emergencies in its area. Depending on the scale and nature of the emergency, the Government may make grants available in respect of some expenses (in accordance with the Bellwin Scheme).

16 Further information

Contact your Council's Emergency Planning Officer for further information and / or check the Council's Intranet or external web-site under 'Emergency Planning'.

Section C Specific Local Authority Information

(This space is available to add any specific Local Authority information or contact arrangements.)

East Sussex County Council

	Name + Job Title	Contact Number
First contact number for information about a major emergency		
Lead Chief Officer for Emergency Planning	Rupert Clubb Director of Economy, Transport & Environment	01273 482200 rupert.clubb@eastsussex.gov.uk
Manager responsible for Emergency Planning	David Broadley Emergency Planning Manager	01323 747085 David.Broadley@eastsussex.gov.uk
Communications		

Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities of Local Authorities

A1.1 All Local Authorities

All local authorities may be required to provide:

- Information and advice to the public
- Media officers to liaise with SRF partners to co-ordinate release of information
- Help lines
- Appeal fund arrangements
- Plant and equipment
- Clearance of debris
- Alerting arrangements for other local authorities
- Alerting arrangements for relevant internal departments.
- Liaison officers to relevant joint commands
- A Strategic level officer to the Strategic Coordinating Group
- An emergency control and co-ordination arrangements
- Arrangements to collect, collate and disseminate information
- Alerting arrangements for voluntary organisations and co-ordinate their support.
- Long term support to the local community
- Liaison with government departments, public utilities and other organisations
- Arrangements to co-ordinate the Council's response with adjacent areas.

A1.2 County Councils

- Provide Social Care and welfare arrangements to Rest Centres
- Provide trained social care staff to assist Police Family Liaison in the Victim Identification Process
- Provide and manage Humanitarian Assistance Centres.
- Arrange road closures and diversions
- Co-ordinate aftercare, in conjunction with the police, health services and voluntary organisations.
- Request military assistance in support of the civil community
- Alert the relevant Director of Public Health to all emergencies posing actual or potential toxic hazards, including oil pollution,
- Establish an Emergency Mortuary on instruction of HM Coroner
- Set up an Emergency Mortuary (at Woodvale, Brighton)
- Request the National Emergency Mortuary Arrangements (NEMA)
- Prepare site to accept the NEMA
- Coordinate Tier 2 and 3 oil spills, providing a Shoreline Response Centre

A1.3 District and Borough Councils

- Set up and manage Rest Centres
- Arrange temporary accommodation
- Provide building and safety inspections
- Provide maps and building plans
- Provide environmental health services

- Arrange emergency feeding
- Organise transport (with the County Council)
- Shoreline clean-up of oil or harmful materials (coastal authorities)
- Support to major public events

A1.4 **Unitary Authority (Brighton and Hove CC)**

The Unitary Authority has all the same responsibilities as the two County Councils plus all the responsibilities of Boroughs and Districts. In addition the City Council is responsible for:

- Hosting major political party conferences
- Providing the Emergency Mortuary at Woodvale, Brighton

Appendix 2 Legal Background to Local Authority Duties

A2.1 **The Civil Contingencies Act 2004**

During the early part of the last decade, the United Kingdom experienced the impacts of a number of large-scale emergencies. The widespread flooding, fuel shortages, the outbreak of foot-and-mouth in 2000, along with the subsequent terrorist attacks in New York on 9/11, demonstrated the need for a more integrated approach to emergency planning.

This led to a Government review of emergency planning in England and Wales. The outcome of this was the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which provided an improved, more consistent and more resilient approach to emergency planning.

The Act is in two parts

Part 1: relates to local arrangements for civil protection and responsibilities of local responders.

Part 2: covers emergency powers that can be used by Central Government.

A2.2 **Category 1 Responders and their Duties**

The Act places statutory duties on those organisations that have responsibilities to respond to major emergencies affecting communities. These include the emergency services (Police, Fire and Ambulance), health agencies, Local Authorities, the Environment Agency and others. These are known as Category 1 responders.

These 'Category 1' responders, are subject to six duties:

- A duty to carry out **risk assessments** and publish all or part of a Community Risk Register
(This is published on the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF) web-site)
- A duty to **plan for emergencies**
- The requirement to have robust **business continuity arrangements** in place to maintain service delivery
- A duty to have in place to **arrangements Warn & Inform** the Public both before and during emergencies
(There is a Sussex Warning and Informing Group of communication officers)
- A duty to **co-operate with partner agencies**
- A duty to **share information** with partner agencies
(The duties to cooperate and share is achieved through the SRF)

In addition, Local Authorities have a seventh statutory duty:

- To **promote business continuity** to local businesses and the voluntary sector.
(A Sussex-wide leaflet and DVD have been produced by the LAs)

A2.3 **Category 2 Responders**

The Act also defines a secondary group of responders. These 'Category 2' responders are those organisations which, although not 'primary' responders, could potentially have a significant role. For example, utility companies, communication agencies and transport operators. Category 2 responders have statutory duties to cooperate and to share information with Category 1 responders in the planning and response to major emergencies.

A2.4 **Definition of an Emergency (Major Incident)**

The Civil Contingencies Act defines an emergency as:

- (a) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare;
- (b) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment; or
- (c) war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to security.

Threats of 'serious damage to human welfare' include:

loss of human life; human illness or injury; homelessness; damage to property; disruption of a supply of money, food, water, energy or fuel; disruption of a system of communication; disruption of facilities for transport; or, disruption of services relating to health.

Threats of 'serious damage to the environment' include:

contamination of land, water or air with biological, chemical or radio-active matter; or, disruption or destruction of plant life or animal life.

A2.5 **Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF)**

There is a requirement under the Civil Contingencies Act for responders to cooperate in planning for and responding to civil emergencies. This is achieved through the Sussex Resilience Forum (SRF). This is a body comprising representatives of all Category 1 Responders and representation from Category 2 Responders to ensure effective delivery of those duties under the Act that need to be developed in a multi-agency environment.

The area covered by the Sussex Resilience Forum is based on the police force area (geographically: East and West Sussex and Brighton and Hove).

The plans, training and exercising developed through the Sussex Resilience Forum are designed to develop an integrated emergency management process. However, the responsibility for the actions of each Category 1 or Category 2 Responder remains with that organisation and ultimately with its chief officer.

A list of the Category 1 members of the Sussex Resilience Forum is shown in Appendix 3.

Appendix 3 Members of the Sussex Resilience Forum Category 1 Responders

Local Authorities

Brighton & Hove City Council
East Sussex County Council
West Sussex County Council

Adur District Council
Arun District Council
Chichester District Council
Crawley Borough Council
Eastbourne Borough Council
Hastings Borough Council
Horsham District Council
Lewes District Council
Mid-Sussex District Council
Rother District Council
Wealden District Council
Worthing Borough Council

Emergency “Blue Light” Services

British Transport Police
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Sussex Police
West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

Health Authorities & Trusts

Brighton & Hove City Primary Care NHS Trust
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust
East Sussex Downs and Weald Primary Care NHS Trust
East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust
Hastings and Rother Primary Care NHS Trust
Royal West Sussex NHS Trust
Surrey & Sussex Health Protection Unit
West Sussex Primary Care NHS Trust
Worthing and Southlands Hospitals NHS Trust

National Agencies

Environment Agency
Maritime & Coastguard Agency

**Current drought issues, actions and summary of situation
(25 May 2012)**

Sussex is among the areas of the country declared as being in a state of drought by the Environment Agency, and on 5th April 2012 the relevant water companies introduced restrictions on non-essential water use.

The Emergency Planning Team is represented on fortnightly drought teleconferences, held in line with provisions in the Sussex Resilience Forum's (SRF) Adverse Weather Framework. Participants include other local authorities, emergency services, water companies, DCLG and the Met Office, and conferences are chaired by the Environment Agency. These regular interchanges allow for information-sharing, joint preparation and escalation of the multi-agency response if required.

The Emergency Planning Team

- contributed to the review of the SRF's Drought appendix to its Adverse Weather Framework, which was approved in September 2011,
- contributed to East Sussex County Council's response to the consultations held by Southern Water and South East Water on their drought response plans
- will review the East Sussex County Council's drought arrangements in summer / autumn 2012.
- Updated In conjunction with the web team ESCC's web pages on drought to reflect the current situation. They remain under review.
<http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/home/water.htm>

Extracts from the SRF's Drought Teleconference on 23 May 2012 are provided below. (A copy of the minutes is available on request.)

Environment Agency

- Recent rainfall has increased flows and helped the environment. Groundwater levels however, remain low.
- As a result of recent rainfall the EA has lifted drought status for several parts of the country but Sussex remains in drought (with the exception of areas served by Portsmouth Water in West Sussex).
- Reservoir levels at Ardingly have increased to 88% and Arlington remains at 100%. EA has been in discussion with South East Water about the potential for a Drought Permit application for the lower Ouse, but this has been pushed back to later summer/autumn if at all.
- Currently no additional restrictions upon water abstractors.

Met Office

- May rainfall reached 100% of the Long Term Average in the first 15 days.

South East Water

- There are no plans for any further restrictions.
- Have lifted some restrictions on horticulture and turf growers enabling watering for the first 28 days of turf being laid.

The Sussex Resilience Forum website now carries a drought briefing linked to this page <http://www.sussexemergency.info/events/drought/>
It is currently still April's briefing, but this is due to be replaced with the May briefing.

National lines on drought – in full for information

DROUGHT - HEADLINE MESSAGES FOR LRFS

- Rainfall in April in May has alleviated many of the immediate symptoms of drought, notably in respect of agriculture and public water supply. However, groundwater levels remain low;
- The Environment Agency (EA) has moved 19 counties out of official drought status. The 19 areas no longer in drought are South Yorkshire, East Yorkshire, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Bristol, Parts of Gloucestershire, Parts of Hampshire, most of Wiltshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Warwickshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire;
- The lifting of the drought makes it clear that there is no threat to the public water supply in these areas this summer. However, they are still subject to some environmental pressures and could move back in to drought if there is another prolonged dry period;
- East Anglia, London and the South East remain in drought and have water restrictions in place. The rainfall in April and this month currently will not make up for the water shortages in these areas caused by two extremely dry winters;
- EA's national and local drought teams will continue to lead on managing and monitoring drought and its effects locally and are working to understand what different volumes of rainfall over the winter months might mean for the drought situation in 2013.

Restrictions

- Seven water companies ([Anglian Water](#), [South East Water](#), [Southern Water](#), [Sutton and East Surrey Water](#), [Thames Water](#), [Veolia Water Southeast](#) and [Veolia Water Central](#)) introduced temporary use bans, commonly known as hosepipe bans, from 5 April 2012. This enables these companies to restrict certain uses of water to help them conserve their supplies;
- Whilst the recent rain has reduced the likelihood of more people facing water restrictions, it will still be important to conserve supplies over the summer until groundwater stores are back to normal. This means that the current restrictions are likely to remain in place until at least the autumn;
- Water restrictions are part of the planned response to drought situations. By acting early on to reduce demand for non essential uses, water companies help to protect their supplies for more essential uses.

Leakages

- Water companies are doing a lot to tackle leakage with rates having fallen by nearly 40% since the mid 90s and due to fall by a further 3% by 2015. They are expected to increase their activities to reduce leakage at times of drought;
- Although we would like to see all leakages fixed it is important to remember that in some cases it would cost more to reduce leakage further than it would be to save water in different ways or develop additional supplies;

Olympics

- With so many visitors expected in London and throughout the UK measures have already been taken to help us ensure that our water supply will stand up to demand; 40% of the water expected to be used during the Olympics will come from recycled supplies, taking pressure off the public water system.