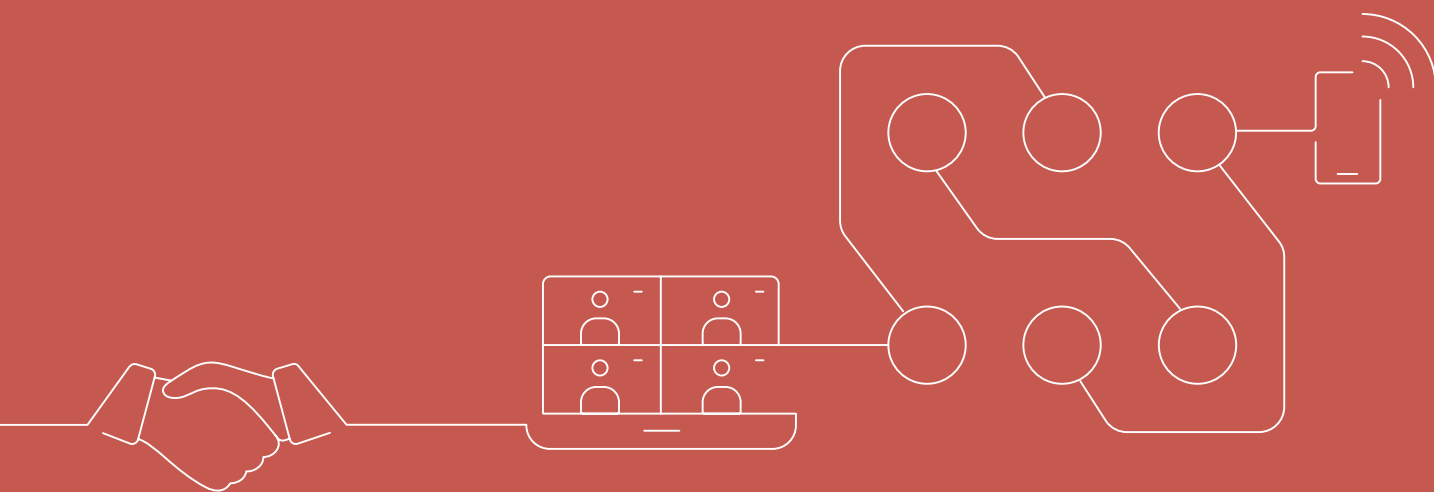




# INTEGRATED RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

## - PART ONE

## RESILIENCE POLICY



# Part One: Resilience Policy

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## **1.1 Introduction**

A Resilience Policy provides an overarching framework with a clearly defined scope encompassing strategies, plans, actions, legal norms, and operating programmes aimed at resilience-building. The policy also sets out the organisation's commitments, roles, and responsibilities; and guides and informs the planning process at all levels.

## **1.2 St Helens Borough Council Commitment**

St Helens Borough Council fully acknowledges the criticality of its role before, during, and after emergencies, and is fully committed to the protection of the public, businesses, infrastructure, and the environment of the borough. St Helens Borough Council will fulfil its Civil Protection duties through effective collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, the emergency services, and other partner agencies and organisations such as the Local Resilience Forum and the voluntary sector.

In order to prevent and manage emergencies and major incidents, St Helens Borough Council shall uphold the principles of Integrated Emergency Management through effective anticipation, assessment, prevention, preparation, response, and recovery. This will entail the development and maintenance of all necessary arrangements for major incidents response and recovery.

Additionally, St Helens Borough Council recognises the importance of Business Continuity Management which enables the organisation to overcome disruption, continue to provide critical services, and ensures resources are effectively deployed to manage emergencies and support other responder agencies. Therefore, Business Continuity Management constitutes an integral part of St Helens Borough Council Resilience Policy, and each council service must maintain effective and up to date Business Continuity plans in line with this policy.

Moreover, and in partnership with the Merseyside Resilience Forum, St Helens Borough Council shall pursue a coherent and coordinated approach to all activities that enable community networks (which includes individuals, businesses, community groups and voluntary organisations<sup>1</sup>) to build resilience and develop the capacity to self-help and support one another before, during, and after emergencies.

## **1.3 Statutory Duties of St Helens Borough Council**

As a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, St Helens Borough Council plays a vital role in Civil Resilience, and thus is required to:

- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning.
- Put in place emergency plans.
- Put in place business continuity management arrangements.

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<sup>1</sup> Cabinet Office: National Resilience Standards for Local Resilience Forums (2020).

- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.
- Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination.
- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency.
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

The requirements above place the following responsibilities on St Helens Borough Council:

- Support the emergencies services and those agencies engaged in the response to an incident.
- Act as the lead agency in certain incidents.
- Mobilise and coordinate all council resources in the response to an incident.
- Assume a leading role in community resilience, communication of risk information, advice, and public reassurance.
- Activate and coordinate the response of utilities companies, voluntary, and other supporting agencies.
- Provide transportation and appropriate temporary accommodation to those impacted by an incident.
- Provide, equip, suitable premises for use as emergency mortuaries and body holding facilities.
- Provide a Media Centre.
- Provide emergency catering.
- Provide engineering, highways, environmental health, communications, and other specialist support services.
- Maintain service delivery under the principles and provisions of Business Continuity Management and ensure a speedy return to normality.
- Provide Business Continuity Management advice to the businesses of St Helens.
- Lead recovery operations in order to restore the community, infrastructure, and the environment whilst incorporating the build back better principle.

#### **1.4 Policy Leadership**

The Resilience Policy, and associated plans of Incident Response, Recovery, and Business Continuity Management are endorsed and promoted by the Executive Leadership Team for use by all Council directorates, services, and staff.

The Senior Leadership Team, On-call Officers, and the Incident Management Team may act outside the scope of this policy in exceptional circumstances. In this case, a clear justification must be recorded to maintain transparency, ensure accountability, and inform potential inquiries.

## **1.5 Scope, Aim, and Objectives**

### **1.5.1 Scope**

St Helens Borough Council Resilience Policy covers the following functions:

- Arrangements for Preparedness.
- Major Incident Response.
- Business Continuity Management for the Council and local businesses.
- Recovery (usually led by Local Authority).

This policy and all subsequent plans and arrangements shall not impact on the daily operations of St Helens Borough Council.

### **1.5.2 Aim**

This policy aims to enact the Civil Resilience duties of St Helens Borough Council; ensuring appropriate levels of Preparedness, Response to, and Recovery from all incidents and emergencies in the Borough; whilst maintaining the delivery of Council services.

### **1.5.3 Objectives**

In pursuit of the above aim, St Helens Borough Council will prioritise the following objectives:

- The preservation of life, health, and welfare of the residents and visitors of St Helens.
- The provision of adequate care to vulnerable people.
- The protection of property.
- The protection of the economy.
- The protection of the environment.
- The provision of information to the public to warn, inform, advise, and promote community preparedness for emergencies.
- Collaborative work with Category 1 and Category 2 responders and other relevant organisations.
- The provision of Business Continuity Management support to Council services and advice to local businesses.
- The facilitation of investigations and inquiries.
- The promotion of holistic organisational and community resilience across the Borough.

## **1.6 Legislative Framework**

The following laws, regulations, and non-statutory guidance are the subject of this policy and the resulting plans:

Laws and Regulations:

- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

- The Health and Social Care Act 2012.
- The Public Health Act 1936.
- The Pipeline Safety Regulations Act 1996 (PSR).
- Radiation Regulations 2019 (REPPIR).

Non-statutory Guidance:

- Cabinet Office - Emergency Preparedness Guidance.
- Cabinet Office - Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance.
- Cabinet Office - Recovery: An Emergency Management Guide.
- Cabinet Office - Evacuation and Shelter Guidance.
- Cabinet Office and Home Office - Guidance on Dealing with Fatalities in Emergencies.

### **1.7 Equalities and Human Rights**

St Helens Borough Council shall uphold the commitments stipulated by The Equalities Act 2010 and the pertinent Human Rights Act 1998 Articles in the development and implementation of this policy and subsequent plans.

### **1.8 Roles and Responsibilities**

- *Audit and Governance Committee:* The Committee will receive assurance on the effectiveness of Civil Resilience arrangements and their implementation across the Council (*Civil Resilience arrangements encompass Preparedness, Response, Recovery, and Business Continuity Management; hereafter referred to as the Integrated Resilience Framework or the Framework*). This will be facilitated through regular internal audit reviews, the Council's Annual Governance Statement assurance collation process and via the Committee's oversight of Risk Management.
- *Audit and Risk:* Audit and Risk Teams within Corporate Services develop, implement, maintain, and monitor the Integrated Resilience Framework for the Council on behalf of the Executive Leadership Team. This includes the provision of training on; and exercising of the Framework. Specific responsibility for all aspects of corporate level planning, training, exercising, advice, and briefings within the Resilience Function lies with the Resilience Team. Additionally, the Team coordinates Business Continuity Management Planning (BCMP) at service level, provides advice to internal and external stakeholders, and promotes compliance with the Framework. Furthermore, Internal Audit provides independent assurance on the Integrated Resilience Framework by monitoring compliance with this policy and the effectiveness of resilience arrangements and measures.
- *Communications:* The role of communications and media is indispensable to resilience and applies before, during, and after all incidents and emergencies. Robust communications arrangements aim to alert, inform, and influence

behaviour without causing alarm in a transparent, clear, concise, and timely manner. To this end, the Communications service maintains ownership of St Helens Borough Council's Crisis Communications Plan ensuring arrangements are in place for alerting and informing internal and external stakeholders including the public and Council Members.

- *Elected Members<sup>2</sup>*: While Councillors are not involved in any operational response led by officers, they play an important leadership role during business as usual and emergencies alike in three core areas. Firstly, they provide political leadership by ensuring that the council is effectively preparing for, and responding to emergencies, thus meeting its obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Secondly, provide civic leadership by being a focal point for the local area during emergencies. Thirdly, provide community leadership by promoting community resilience and supporting communities through the phases of emergency response and recovery.
- *Emergency Duty Officer (Gold/Strategic)*: Responsible for leading the Council's strategic response to incidents and emergencies whilst operating under an on-call emergency duty rotation system. Assumes the role of incident manager and decides the appropriate level of response according to the council's command, control, and coordination framework. In line with JESIP, Gold officers are responsible for setting the policy, strategy, and overall response framework for the incident, for the tactical and operational command levels to act on and implement.
- *Emergency Duty Officer (Silver/Tactical)*: Responsible for coordinating the Council's tactical response to incidents and emergencies whilst operating under an on-call emergency duty rotation system or as directed by the incident manager. Assumes the role of incident coordinator, ensuring the implementation of tactical response actions rapidly and effectively. In line with JESIP, Silver officers are responsible for interpreting strategic direction, where strategic level command is in use, and developing and coordinating the tactical plan.
- *Employees*: All employees are responsible for ensuring they are aware of the critical services within their service areas and of their own roles and responsibilities before, during, and after a disruptive incident. All employees should consult with managers to assess areas of risk and observe good control practices and are expected to play a positive role in embedding a culture of effective business continuity management and resilience in all activities and decisions.
- *Senior Leadership Team (Executive Directors and Directors)*: Accountable for the statutory duties of St Helens Borough Council under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Team understands the role of Local Authorities in civil resilience and promotes the development and implementation of effective resilience arrangements and receives assurance reports from Service Leads and Audit

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<sup>2</sup> Local Government Association: A Councillor's guide to civil emergencies (2018).



and Risk. Oversees the implementation of the Integrated Resilience Framework and agrees the allocation of resources to enable the framework. The Executive Leadership Team provides leadership and monitoring roles.

- *Senior Leadership Team:* Executive directors and directors comprise the Council's Incident Management Team. They are responsible for identifying critical services and contracts and undertaking business impact analyses of those services. They must ensure that their respective business continuity plans are kept up to date and reviewed annually. Furthermore, they are responsible for embedding a culture of resilience into the ethos of operational management. They should also ensure that service level plans are tested annually in a manner that is most appropriate for the service. Cooperation with the senior resilience officer.
- *Heads of Service (Business Continuity Leads):* All Heads of Service must take ownership for their individual plans and ensure that the content is accurate, up to date, and in conformity with the Council's Corporate Business Continuity Management Plan. Heads of Service must ensure that all staff and contractors named in their Business Continuity Plans are familiar with business continuity arrangements within their area; that they engage with testing and exercising, and that they notify the Team Manager Health, Safety, and Resilience of any significant changes in service provision so that appropriate business continuity arrangements can be revised as necessary and remain viable.
- *Occupational Health and Safety:* Provide specialist advice regarding the establishment of a safe working environment for employees, contractors, and members of the public on council premises.
- *Procurement:* STAR Procurement Shared Service will, in collaboration with the Senior Resilience Officer, ensure that service provider/contractors' business continuity arrangements are considered in the tender due diligence process for the delivery of critical services on behalf of the Council, or for services on which the Council critically relies.

## **1.9 Administration of Emergency Preparedness, Response, Business Continuity, and Recovery**

The development, implementation, and review of this policy and associated plans shall meet the following criteria:

- Use consistent and unambiguous language.
- Implement processes for change control, version control, and review.
- Consider changes in business objectives and processes.
- Accommodate changes in the functions of the organisation, governance, structures, and staff.
- Factor in any changes in suppliers, third party service providers, and pertinent contractual agreements.

- Take account of changes in the national security Risk assessment, community risk register, and internal risk assessments and registers.
- Adopt a holistic approach to resilience and risk management based on a shared understanding of local risks, ensuring the harmonisation of arrangements across the Council.
- Assign competent personnel the responsibility to update, disseminate, and regularly test plans, arrangements, and procedures.
- Provide adequate training and advice to all staff who have roles in the Integrated Resilience Framework.
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement and implement arrangements for organisational learning and identification of lessons post drills, exercises, and live incidents.
- Clearly refer to any relevant sources of information, guidance, and legislation.

## **1.10 Assurance Standards**

### **1.10.1 Plans and Procedures**

All plans, arrangements, and procedures under the Integrated Resilience Framework shall be aligned to best national practice including but not limited to:

- Cabinet Office guidance on part one of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and its associated regulations and nationally accepted standards.
- NHS England Core Standards for Emergency Preparedness, Resilience, and Response.
- Cabinet Office - The National Resilience Standards for Local Resilience Forums.
- Solace - Local authorities' preparedness for civil emergencies: A good practice guide for Chief Executives.
- Local Government Association - A Councillor's Guide to Civil Emergencies.
- The Business Continuity Institute - Good Practice Guidelines.
- Business Continuity Management Systems ISO 22301:2019.

### **1.10.2 Resilience Arrangements**

In addition to the Integrated Resilience Framework, other arrangements shall be maintained to support the enactment of civil resilience duties and promote preparedness within St Helens Borough Council:

- **On-call emergency duty rotation system:** The Council shall maintain a 24/7 on-call system of emergency duty staffed by the Senior Leadership Team, comprising of Executive Directors, Directors, and Assistant Directors of St Helens Borough Council. The system makes available at least two officers on standby at gold and silver levels, with clear callout, alert, and declaration protocols. Additionally, duty officers shall be committed to continuing professional development and shall be supported by the resilience team with

relevant briefings, training, drills, and exercises. Moreover, the on-call emergency duty system shall be complemented by similar arrangements for communications and media; and shall utilise existing on-call duty arrangements of other council services.

- **Local Resilience Forum:** St Helens Borough Council shall maintain commitment to active participation in the Merseyside Resilience Forum (MRF). The Council shall make available appropriate personnel from relevant services to attend MRF working groups and engage with MRF partners in multiagency planning, training, and exercising. In addition, the Council shall continue to meet its financial and service provision obligations to the MRF and engage with its secretariate at the appropriate level.
- **Business Continuity Management:** Heads of Service shall review their ability to meet Business Continuity requirements on a semi-annual basis and provide assurances on the validity of plans to Gold Duty Officers and the Team Manager Health, Safety, and Resilience. In addition, Heads of Service shall test their service level Business Continuity Management Plans at least once a year and review those plans after activation.
- **Training and Exercising:** Suitable in-house and external training shall be provided to all emergency duty officers according to a training action plan informed by an appropriate training needs analysis. Refresher training will also be provided annually covering inductions, tactical, and strategic emergency management, the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles, and Resilience Direct. Emergency exercises to test each plan within the Integrated Resilience Framework will be conducted at least once a year, and personnel shall participate in multi-agency exercises as they are conducted by the Merseyside Resilience Forum.

### **1.11 Planning Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004**

Part two of this framework sets out St Helens Borough Council's major incident response arrangements, part three outlines Business Continuity Management arrangements, while part four states the Council's Recovery arrangements.

#### **1.11.1 Key Definitions<sup>3</sup>**

- Em**
1. An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom,
  2. An event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the United Kingdom, or
  3. War, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom.

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<sup>3</sup> Based on UK doctrine and disaster research literature.

An event or situation threatens damage to human welfare only if it involves, causes, or may cause:

- 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.

An event or situation threatens damage to the environment only if it involves, causes, or may cause:

- Contamination of land, water, or air with biological, chemical, or radio-active matter, or
- Disruption or destruction of plant life or animal life.

### **Major Incident:**

An event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency<sup>4</sup>.

A major incident is a type of emergency characterised by the following:

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

### **Business Continuity:**

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<sup>4</sup> "Emergency responder agency" describes all category one and two responders as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and associated guidance.

Strategic and tactical capability of an organisation to plan for and respond to incidents and business disruptions to continue business operations at an acceptable predefined level.

**Resilience:**

The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform, and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.

**1.12 Record Keeping**

A comprehensive record shall be kept of all events, decisions, reasoning behind key decisions, and actions taken by the Council when dealing with all incidents and emergencies. To this end, the Council shall make available trained personnel who can fulfil the role of loggists competently. Record keeping must commence as soon as possible and all material must be stored safely and protected from corruption and destruction. Meticulous record keeping is crucial to inform debriefings, identify and learn lessons, facilitate investigations, and provide evidence for inquiries.



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