

# *Worcestershire County Council*

# **Corporate Emergency Response Plan**

**Document Details:**

**Status:** Version 5

**Date:** January 2024



<b>Title:</b>	Worcestershire County Council Corporate Emergency Response Plan	
<b>Type:</b>	<b>WCC</b>	
<b>Government Security Classifications Policy</b>	Official - Sensitive ( <i>Government Security Classifications, 2014</i> )	
<b>Freedom of Information</b>	<i>As per the Government Security Classifications (2014), the whole document [including Annexes] may be released upon receipt of an FOI request.</i>	
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<b>Validated:</b>	Date: ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Incident <input type="checkbox"/> TT Exercise <input type="checkbox"/> LIVE Exercise	
<b>Publication Date:</b>	<i>January 2024</i>	<b>Expiry Date:</b> January 2027
<b>Superseded Docs:</b>	<i>WCC Corporate Emergency Plan V4</i>	
<b>Reference:</b>	<i>WCC Risk Register Ref 203 'Ineffective Corporate Emergency Response Risk Arrangements' utilised in response to ANY risk.</i>	
<b>Version:</b> 5.0 <b>Date:</b> January 2024	<b>GSCP:</b> OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE <b>Contact Point:</b> emergencyplanningstaff@worcestershire.gov.uk	

## Abbreviations

Civil Contingencies Act	CCA
<del>Strategic Director for People</del> <del>Director of Adult Social Care</del>	<del>SDP</del> <del>DAS</del>
Director of Public Health	DPH
Emergency Coordination of Scientific Advice	ECOSA
Emergency Planning Duty Officer	EPDO
Emergency Response Centre	ERC
Humanitarian Assistance Centre	HAC
Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles	JESIP
Strategic Commander	SC
Strategic Coordination Group	SCG
Single Point of Contact	SPOC
Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell	STAC
Tactical Commander	TC
Tactical Coordination Group	TCG
UK Health Security Agency	UKHSA
Worcestershire County Council	WCC
West Mercia Local Resilience Forum	WMLRF
Worcestershire Regulatory Services	WRS

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## **SECTION 1 ADMINISTRATION**

### **1.1 Purpose:**

The Corporate Emergency Response Plan has been designed as a bottom-up modular approach to emergency management utilising Functional Teams as its basic building block. Many emergencies may be managed by a single team with minimal support from others. The WCC Strategic and Tactical Commanders will ensure a proportionate response to the emergency.

### **1.2 Aim:**

The aim of this Corporate Emergency Response Plan is to provide detail of the emergency response process for Worcestershire County Council (referred to as the County Council). This plan has been developed to ensure that staff from Worcestershire County Council are able to carry out their retrospective functions when responding to emergency situations or major incidents. It is important that staff within WCC understand this plan and are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

### **1.3 Objectives:**

1. To provide detail of the activation and notification arrangements for the County Council.
2. Outline the roles and responsibilities of the Strategic (Gold) and Tactical (Silver) Commanders.
3. Outline the roles and responsibilities of the Functional Teams.
4. How the County Councils Command and Control Structure aligns with the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum Structure (WMLRF).

This Plan will not cover:

1. Duplicate details about multiagency command & control, which can be found in the WMLRF Command, Control and Coordination (C3) Activation Handbook (still in draft)
2. Will not cover Corporate Business Continuity or Recovery activities, which are managed through their own frameworks and plans.

### **1.4 Underpinning Legislation:**

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) provides a legislative framework for Category 1 and 2 responders to an emergency in the UK. The Act is divided into two parts: local arrangements for civil protection; and emergency powers.

As a Local Authority, WCC is a designated Category 1 responder meaning there are a set of duties to comply with:

1. Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning.
2. Put in place emergency plans.
3. Put in place business continuity management arrangements.
4. 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.
5. Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination.
6. Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency.
7. Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (local authorities only)

During emergency response, Category 1 and 2 organisations come together to form 'local resilience forums' (based on police areas) which will help co-ordination and co-operation between responders at the local level. WCC are a partner of the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (WMLRF).

Under the CCA 2004 an Emergency is defined as:

- a) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom,*
- (b) an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the United Kingdom, or*
- (c) war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom*

According to the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP):

*a Major Incident is defined as an event or situation requiring a response under one or more of the emergencies services' major incident plans*

It is important to remember that while an 'emergency' as specifically defined under the CCA and 'major incident' are not synonymous, they are both significant events with serious consequences. It does not automatically follow from the declaration of a major incident that it will meet the criteria for a CCA-defined emergency, but the definitions and criteria overlap and in many cases an emergency will be a major incident and vice versa.

## SECTION 2 INCIDENT RESPONSE

### 2.1 Notification of an Incident:

The EPDO telephone number is the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the emergency services to contact WCC, if an incident has occurred within Worcestershire County Boundaries, or a Cross-Boundary Incident. PLEASE NOTE: *This phone number is NOT publicly available and should only be provided to Category 1 and 2 Responders, and key other responders including the Military and identified voluntary agencies.*

### 2.2 Activation of Response:

Based on the initial information received, the EPDO will contact the WCC Tactical (Silver) Commander to determine the appropriate level of response. Where possible, the full activation of the plan will be agreed by the WCC Strategic (Gold) Commander but can be enacted without this if required.

In extremis, the Head of Safer Communities and/or the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Manager can enact the plan. Where this occurs, the WCC Tactical (Silver) and Strategic (Gold) Commanders should be informed as soon as is practicable.

### 2.3 Major Incident Response:

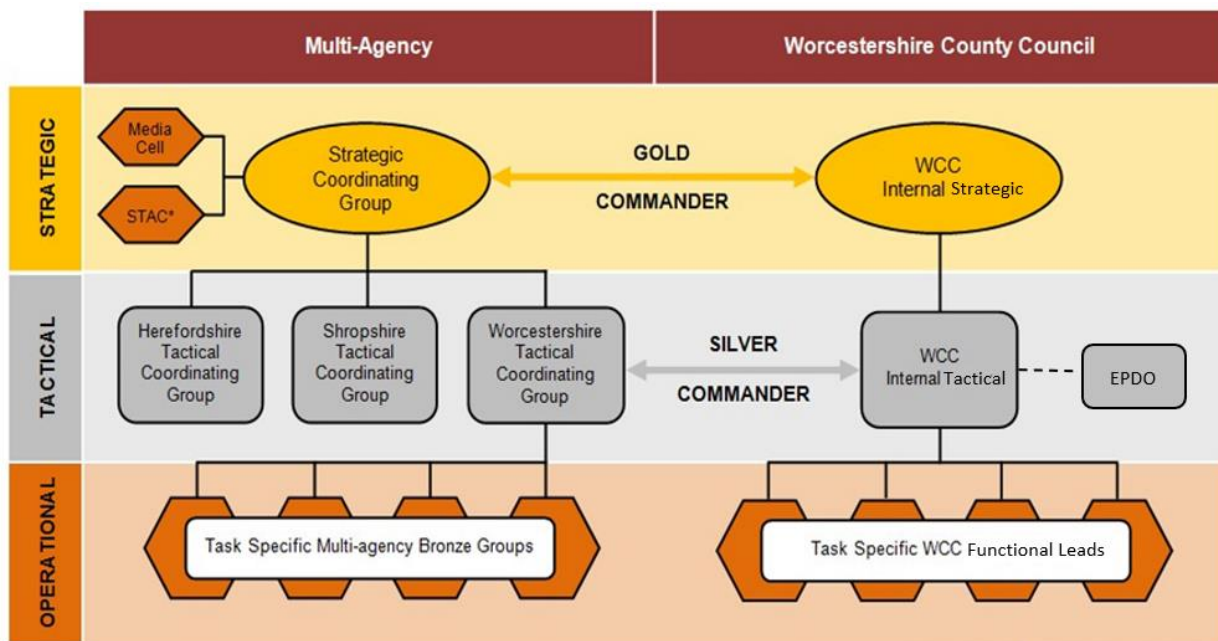
In some circumstances the frontline emergency services will have declared a major incident and will be contacting the EPDO with clear requests for assistance or activating a multi-agency TCG or SCG.

### 2.4 Standby Response:

Some incidents will not be declared as an emergency or Major Incident from the onset; known as a Rising Tide Event. An example of these events are severe weather warnings or disease outbreaks, where Advisory Notice may be issued by the Environment Agency, Met Office, NHS or Animal Health, these are often wide-spread area effect assessments of a gradual and developing hazard. Where there is potential for something to impact Worcestershire, responders may consider it beneficial to conduct a more detailed multi-agency assessment to determine local actions and response.

Should a Standby or Advisory Notice be issued by a responder organisation, the EPDO will liaise with the WCC Tactical (Silver) Commander to assess the WCC response and/or need for a WCC Internal Tactical (Silver) meeting.

### SECTION 3 COMMAND, CONTROL AND COORDINATION



\*Science & Technical Advice Cell

#### 3.1 Emergency Planning Duty Officer & Tactical Advisors

To support the WCC Duty Commanders, the Emergency Planning Team operates a 24/7 on-call rota, to provide the single point of contact (SPOC) to council. In the event of a full activation, as authorised by the WCC Duty Strategic (Gold) or Tactical (Silver) Commander, the EPDO (or EP/BC team colleagues) may be deployed as Tactical Advisors to support commanders if required. If multi-agency coordination is occurring online, the EPDO will dial into Tactical and Strategic Coordinating Groups to provide tactical advice. They may also have to dial in in their own right, if requested to coordinate Operational Cell responses. During Multi-Agency Incident Response, the EPDO acts as the SPOC for all agencies if they require support from the council. The EPDO may also, if required, deploy to the incident scene itself, but this will be in consultation with Duty Tactical (Silver) Commander and the EP/BC Manager.

#### 3.2 Internal Command & Control

Having attended the multiagency Strategic or Tactical Coordinating Group the WCC Duty Commander will also attend an Internal Tactical (Silver) or Internal Strategic (Gold) meeting, to share the most up-to-date intelligence and implement actions. These

meetings are designed to operate as short 30-minute meetings, the default location will be Microsoft Teams. If additional meetings are required, it is the responsibility of the chair to find a location, if is required. Following the meeting, Commanders should follow up and manage any actions acquired.

### **3.3 Internal Strategic (Gold)**

Where appropriate to support strategic decision making, the WCC Strategic (Gold) Commander will convene and chair an Internal Strategic (Gold) meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that key decision makers receive an information briefing and make strategic decisions pertinent to WCC service areas, the outcomes from which the WCC Strategic (Gold) Commander will feed into the multiagency Strategic Coordinating Group. An Action Card detailing Internal Strategic role (Annex A – Strategic Commander), membership and initial agenda is included in Annex B.

### **3.4 Internal Tactical (Silver)**

It is likely that an Internal Tactical (Silver) meeting will be required to manage the corporate response to any major emergency. Where appropriate the WCC Tactical (Silver) Commander will convene and chair an Internal Tactical (Silver) meeting, providing an information briefing and coordinating the implementation of actions across WCC service areas. An Action Card detailing the Internal Tactical role (Annex A – Tactical Commander), membership and initial agenda is included in Annex B.

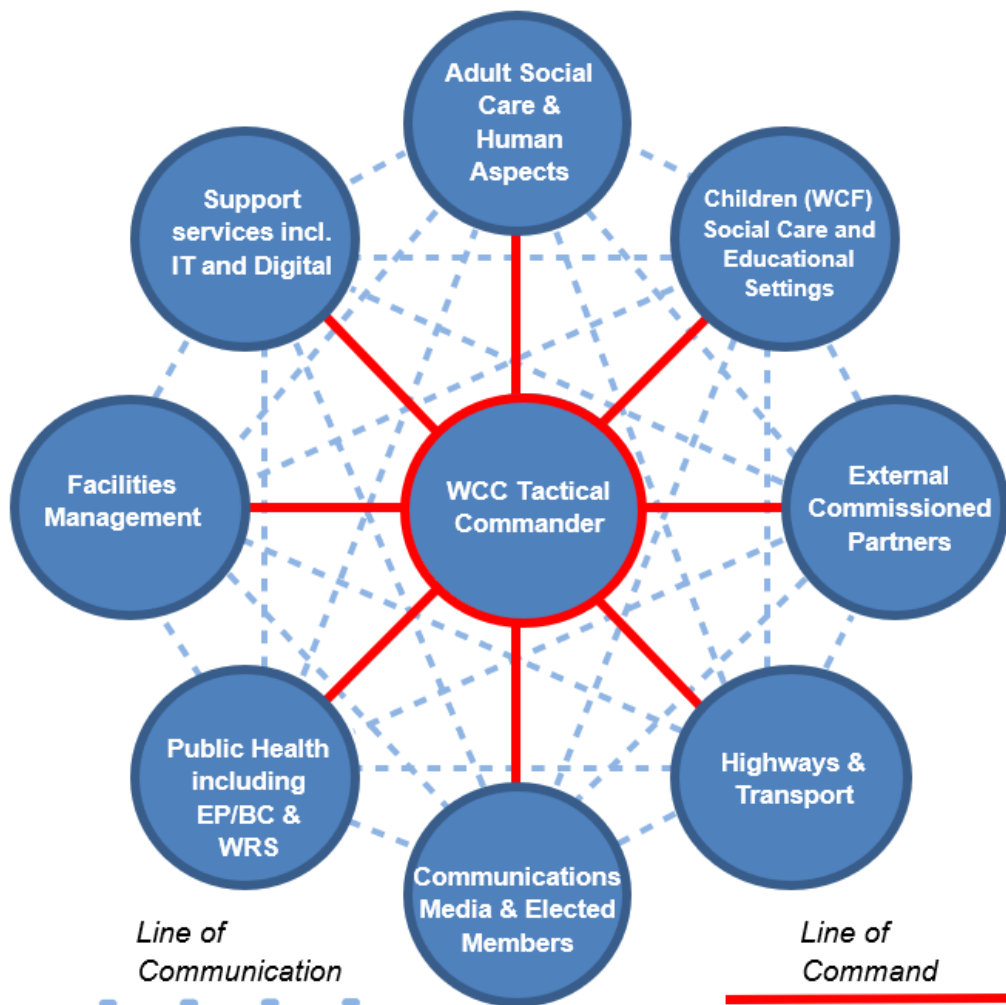
### **3.5 Functional Leads**

Functional Leads will act as their service's operational lead in responding to the incident/event. This will predominantly be within their own service area, though they may also need to attend Tactical (Silver) meetings as required. It is not expected that functional leads would attend the incident itself, unless their role includes this work; an example of this would be the Highways team. Functional leads may be selected dynamically at the time of the incident from the day-to-day service manager contacts, depending upon the subject matter and value added.

### SECTION 4 FUNCTIONAL TEAMS

To manage the operational implementation of actions across the Council, regardless of directorate or day-to-day line management arrangements, a matrix structure of functional teams has been defined. This structure ensures that frontline, first response teams of the Council can be mobilised and coordinated swiftly 24 hours a day and ensures a joined up cross council approach via functional as opposed to Directorate arrangements.

#### WCC Functional Team Matrix



#### 4.1 Adult social care & human aspects

The Council provides immediate and longer-term social support services as part of its day-to-day business. Key responsibilities include:

- Identify, via Sentinel, Vulnerable Persons & Premises at risk.
- Take appropriate action, utilising a range of cross-directorate and voluntary sector resources, to protect and support vulnerable people and/or those affected by a major emergency. Including the establishment of a Humanitarian Assistance Centre (HAC) and the staffing of a Family and Friends Reception Centre, as appropriate.
- Liaise with Care Homes and take appropriate action
- Attend the Recovery Co-ordinating Group to represent Adult Social Care and Public Health and contribute to the corporate and/or multi-agency recovery strategy;
- Mass Fatalities & ~~Excess Deaths~~Death Management, following instruction from the Coroner (or Deputy) a Mass Fatalities Coordinator will discuss the situation and the possible establishment of an Emergency Mortuary and/or the arrangements for managing an excess deaths situation.

#### 4.2 Children First social care & early help

The Children First Social Care and Early Help Team include senior officers from Children's Services who will provide advice and resources in the event of a major emergency affecting children's social care or early help establishments. The team will also provide support for a wider emergency in which school Social Care resources are required or affected. The Team will provide:

- Command & Control assistance in the event of an Emergency affecting social care establishments e.g. Access Centre, Residential Children's Homes etc;
- Support for continuation of care and safeguarding for Worcestershire's children and young people following an emergency (e.g. a fire, local community incident etc).

##### 4.2.1 Children First

The Educational Settings Team draws on senior officers from Children, Families and Communities who will provide advice and resources in the event of a major emergency affecting children's social care or educational establishments. The team will also provide support for a wider emergency in which school resources are required or affected.

The Team will provide:

- Command & Control assistance to support the School Emergency Management Team;
- Support for continuation of education following a major emergency (e.g. a fire, school transport crash etc);
- Provision and coordination of Educational Psychology and welfare support to children, families and staff.

### **4.3 External Commissioned Partners**

WCC and District Councils have commissioned many of their services recently. It is critical during a major emergency that local authority services in house or externally provided are as joined up as possible. Therefore, in addition to internal services, it may be advisable to invite Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Building Control and other external providers of local authority services to participate in the WCC Internal Tactical (Silver) meeting to contribute their knowledge and expertise. The main outsourced service areas are as follows:

#### **Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS)**

WRS is a shared service acting on behalf of the six District Councils and is responsible for the enforcement of a wide range of laws, regulations, orders and directives. During an emergency WRS will provide support and advice on:

- Environmental Health
- Monitoring food safety and contamination of food stocks.
- Monitoring pollution and restoration of the environment

(NB Trading Standards and Animal Health functions are activated through WCC Directorate of Environment and Infrastructure).

#### **Building Control Services**

- Provided on a North and South Worcestershire basis by separate agencies
- Building Control Regulations and Advisory services
- 24/7 Duty officer services

### **4.4 Highways and Transport**

The Worcestershire Highways and Transport team:

- Liaise with Highways England
- Manage the Highways network, including signage, road closures, diversions and repair through Ringway Infrastructure Services;
- Provide an overview of public transport provision
- Manage countryside Rights-of-Way;
- Provide emergency transport to support evacuation

### **4.5 Media and Elected Members**

The media and elected members functional team is drawn from the Communications team and Member Services team. The Communications team operates a Duty Officer arrangement for out of hour's media business.

The Communications Team and Member Services teams will:

- Work internally and with multiagency partners to ensure a consistent warning, informing and media message;
- Coordinate internal messages to council staff;
- Ensure, via Duty Tactical (Silver) Commander, that the Council Leader and other elected members are suitably briefed and engaged where appropriate.

#### 4.6 Public Health

The Director of Public Health (DPH) provides strategic oversight of a public health response to a public health incident by liaising with UKHSA, the Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB and NHS England to establish & support the response. Duties include:

- Providing public health advice to responders;
- Convening, in conjunction with UKHSA, Outbreak Control Teams and Incident Management Teams;
- Deploying appropriate public health staff to support outbreak response;
- Attending a Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC) if established;
- Providing key advice regarding chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incidents in conjunction with the Emergency Coordination of Scientific Advice (ECOSA) if requested and STAC;
- Ensure Public Health is represented on health and welfare cells within recovery.

#### 4.7 Other Local Authority Support Services

The Support Services provide specific advice from a range of Council services as and when necessary to support a response and deal with any service issues:

- **IT and Digital**
  - Provide IT and Digital support to resolve any system outages or additional provision.
- **Legal advice**
  - If required on a case-by-case basis to support legal interpretation should a dispute arise
- **Financial support**
  - In case of financial issues, guidance or support required out of hours; as may be the case on a weekend
- **Flood Risk Management**
  - As the Flood Risk Management Authority, the Council has specific responsibilities to provide and coordinate assistance from the District Councils
- **Economic Development**
  - Provision of economic advice and business assistance
- **Trading Standards**
  - Monitoring and legal intervention to control rogue traders
  - Provide Animal Health Disease Coordination including the monitoring and enforcement of animal health and welfare measures.
  - Provision of personal protective equipment for WCC staff required to provide field monitoring during animal health outbreaks.
- **Gypsy and Traveller services**
  - Professional interaction and negotiation with traveller communities.
- **Facilities Management**

- Provides support and coordination to any incident involving WCC owned facilities.
- **HR**
  - Provide guidance to the WCC response regarding HR related issues, including Health and Safety.

#### **4.8 Emergency Response Centre**

At present, WCC does not have a pre-identified ERC, but can utilise meeting rooms across the WCC estate and equipment within the rooms, in addition to EP/BC Team's laptops and other IT equipment.

## **SECTION 5 RECORD KEEPING, AUDIT & ACCOUNTABILITY**

Any organisation involved in managing an emergency is required to keep comprehensive records. One of the many issues to be considered is the possibility of litigation. Even if there are no financial claims made against the council, there may be an enquiry and/ or scrutiny committee into the emergency, possibly up to and including a full public enquiry. It will be necessary to substantiate and justify any actions taken during the incident and the information received on which decisions and actions were based.

To enable the council to ensure a joined-up approach and provide records, the following incident logs will be used:

- Personal Workbook;
- Officers Logbook; and
- WCC Corporate Log

### **5.1 Personal Workbook**

It is recommended that Duty Commander and Officers which respond to incidents have a Personal Workbook. This is nothing more than a hardbound pad to be used by the officer to take notes, jot actions etc, negating the need for numerous scraps of paper. It is a personal workbook, to record what the individual chooses to note at their discretion. However, it should include notes of relevance. Post incident a copy will be taken and retained securely by WCC.

### **5.2 Officers Logbook**

The Officers Logbook is a pre-printed proforma pack produced for each key officer designed to record key issues or decisions above & beyond the notes detailed in the Personal Workbook. Both Strategic and Tactical Commanders also have access to an online version of the Logbook, this should be sent to the EPDO post incident. It allows key issues to be recorded, enables easy reference, and ensures a legal record and a structured approach to handovers. Unlike the Personal Workbook, the Logbook is transferred to whoever is currently in a role. Roles will include:

- WCC Strategic (Gold) Commander;
- WCC Tactical (Silver) Commander;
- Emergency Planning Duty Officer.

**IF THE LOG ENTRY HAS CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS, IT SHOULD BE RAISED AT THE INTERNAL STRATEGIC/TACTICAL MEETING AND RECORDED ON THE CORPORATE ACTIONS LOG**

### ***5.3 Corporate Actions and Decisions Log***

Where possible Internal Strategic/Tactical meetings will be voice recorded for future audit, and where available a Loggist will administer the Actions and Decisions Log. It is important to note that full verbatim minutes **will not be practical** in a fast-moving situation, thus only decisions & actions will be recorded.

Due to the ability to use Microsoft Teams, if a loggist is not available at the time of the meeting, the meeting may be recorded dependant on the preference of the Chair.

## **SECTION 6 RECOVERY FROM EMERGENCY CONSIDERATIONS**

Under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), Recovery co-ordination is a lead responsibility for the Worcestershire local authorities (the County Council and six District Councils) to co-ordinate the multi-agency response arrangements. As the emphasis moves from emergency response to recovery, the relevant local authority (County Council or District Council) will take the lead on behalf of the SCG and /or the Worcestershire TCG in facilitating the rehabilitation of the community and the restoration of the environment. The issues faced in leading this return to a new normality will cover six specific strategic areas:

- a) Rebuilding the community
- b) Managing the financial implications, including appeal Fund arrangement
- c) Managing resource
- d) Responding to community welfare needs
- e) Developing strategic issue
- f) Environmental considerations.

WMLRF have created a [Recovery Framework](#) which should be utilised throughout the recovery process.

