

SEVERE WEATHER ARRANGEMENTS

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DISTRIBUTION

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CONTENTS

Distribution	2
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Aim	4
1.2 Objectives	4
1.3 Scope	4
1.4 Planning Assumptions	5
1.5 Supporting Contingency Plans and Arrangements	5
1.6 Risk	5
1.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review	6
1.8 Responsibility	6
2. GENERAL INFORMATION	7
2.1 Background	7
2.2 Issues for Local Authorities	8
3. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS	9
3.1 Activation	9
3.2 Incident Management Team	9
3.3 Key Roles and Responsibilities	9
3.4 Resources	11
APPENDIX A: IMPACT MATRIX	12

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim

These arrangements detail Fife Council's response to severe weather events impacting on Fife's communities, in line with the aim of the Incident Management Plan, to ensure Fife Council effectively responds to and recovers from any weather-related event.

1.2 Objectives

In addition to the objectives detailed in the Incident Management Plan, in case of actual or potential severe weather impacting on the communities in Fife, Fife Council will ensure that it will effectively:

- Activate a proportionate response on receipt of weather warnings/flood warnings;
- Co-ordinate the response to actual or potential severe weather.
- Allocate resources as required to support communities;
- Support and care for people where property/belongings are damaged/lost as a result of the severe weather;
- Monitor the ongoing impact of the weather event on people, environment, infrastructure and economy as the response moves into the recovery phase.

1.3 Scope

This document forms part of Fife Council's Resilience Arrangements (see Fife Council's Resilience Policy and Framework for details) and should be read in conjunction with, and activated alongside, the Incident Management Plan.

This document also dovetails with the Severe Weather and Other Critical Incidents HR guidance and the Directorates BC Plans and arrangements.

Severe weather events vary in scale and impact, many can be dealt with as part of business-as-usual arrangements. However, where a large-scale impact on Fife's communities is forecasted or occurring, this plan will be activated in conjunction with the Incident Management Plan to support the response.

This document details the specific arrangements to respond to and recover from a severe weather event, including:

- Challenges/issues for Fife Council when responding to severe weather
- Fife Council's resources in place to mitigate the impact of weather
- Details of the roles and responsibilities of Fife Council's services in responding to a severe weather event

This plan does not include details of:

- The operational response arrangements that will be activated by Fife Council services and external agencies in response to a severe weather event. These are held by the individual services and agencies.
- The multi-agency working arrangements that can be activated in preparation for, responding to and recovering from a severe weather event (i.e. Resilience Partnerships). These details can be found in the Fife LRP Severe Weather Plan and the Fife LRP Recovery Plan. Information regarding Resilience Partnerships can be found in the Scottish Government guidance: 'Preparing Scotland: Philosophy, Principles, Structure and Regulatory Duties'.

1.4 Planning Assumptions

This document makes planning assumptions as outlined in the Incident Management Plan.

The following assumptions and limitations are also acknowledged:

- It is expected that the Met Office and SEPA will be the key partners in warning and informing the Council of forecasted severe weather.
- Services will take appropriate action on receipt of weather warnings.
- Weather can be unpredictable, and forecasting is not an exact science. Ultimately, it is the services' responsibility to continue to monitor the situation. Services may need to adapt quickly to effectively respond to any impacts.

1.5 Supporting Contingency Plans and Arrangements

These severe weather arrangements are supported by the following:

- Those plans that comprise Fife Council's Resilience Arrangements (see Fife Council's Resilience Policy and Framework for details). Including: Housing Winter Readiness Plan, Fife Council Flooding emergency procedures and Winter Gritting and Snow Clearing Policy
- Fife Council Severe Weather and Other Critical Incidents Guidance managers and employees.
- Multi-agency response plans developed by the Fife Local Resilience Partnership and the East of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership

1.6 Risk

As part of the Risk and Preparedness Assessment process, the East of Scotland Local Resilience Partnership (LRP) has risk assessed the following types of weather for the region:

Type of weather	Overall risk assessment
Cold and Snow	Very High
Storms and Gales	High
Coastal flooding	Medium
Fluvial flooding	Medium
Surface water flooding	High
Heatwave	Medium
Drought	Medium

These types of severe weather have the potential to have significant impacts on the Fife community.

The Council's Resilience Policy and Framework details the key areas that are carried out to mitigate the impact and consequences of these risks to Fife's communities.

1.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

As per the Incident Management Plan, this plan will be reviewed by the Emergency Resilience Team as part of a formal three-year review schedule.

Amendments may also be made as required to incorporate lessons identified from incidents, training and exercising.

1.8 Responsibility

Fife Council's Chief Executive is responsible for these severe weather arrangements.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Background

Severe weather can cause significant impacts on people, infrastructure, environment and the economy. The UK climate means that we can have periods of severe weather at any time of the year.

Types of severe weather can include snow, rain, winds and heat which can result in the following:

- Disruption to day-to-day routines and activities.
- Travel disruption - transport routes and travel services affected, and some journeys require longer travel times.
- Communities inaccessible
- Health impacts, injuries and danger to life.
- Damage to buildings and property.
- Disruption to utilities and services.
- Strain on resources of responding organisations.

Both the Met Office and SEPA responsibilities include monitoring weather patterns and providing forecasted information giving public organisations, such as local authorities, prior notice to prepare for any potential severe weather. However, it should be noted that weather forecasting is not an exact science and warning can change at short notice.

Continued Met Office research on climate change predicts that the UK will experience the following changes in climate and weather patterns:

- Warmer and wetter winters
- Hotter and drier summers
- More frequent and intense weather extremes

The Met Office is the national meteorological service for the UK and is therefore responsible for providing weather forecasts and warnings. SEPA is Scotland's national flood forecasting, flood warning and strategic flood risk management authority.

Fife Council Services are signed up to receive Met Office weather warnings and SEPA flood alerts/warnings. These warnings include an impact matrix based on likelihood and impact of the forecasted weather. Regardless of the colour of these warnings, actions taken should be based on the potential impact level to trigger actions to be taken by Council Services to mitigate the impact of weather on Fife's people, infrastructure and the environment. For example, pre-checks of flood pods, grit boxes and flood defences, and road gritting. Actions are outlined in more detail in Section 3.

2.2 Challenges for Local Authorities

A severe weather event could result in the following challenges for Fife Council to manage the impact on:

- Widespread incidents across several areas in Fife with different scales and impacts;
- delivery of critical services;
- services operating with reduced staff levels;
- increase in demand for information and timely release of regular public communications;
- increased demand for support from communities and other care for people issues; and
- environmental pollution.

3. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Activation

Arrangements outlined in this document will be activated by the relevant Services upon receipt of a weather or flood warning. Depending on how the event is forecasted to escalate, the appropriate response level will be activated, as outlined in the Impact Matrix (Appendix A).

3.2 Incident Management Team (IMT)

The Fife Council Incident Management Plan may also be activated upon receipt of a weather or flood warning or as the event begins to escalate. Establishment of an Incident Management Team (IMT) will ensure enhanced co-ordination of a Council response.

3.3 Key Roles and Responsibilities

The key membership and generic roles and responsibilities of the IMT are detailed in the Incident Management Plan.

In addition to these, the specific roles and responsibilities of the IMT to effectively manage a severe weather event are as follows:

- support Fife's communities:
 - Support residents, businesses and tourists that have had property and/or belongings damaged by the event
 - Support residents/tourists that are unable to return home/return to accommodation
 - Ensure provision of adequate resources to impacted areas e.g., sandbags, grit, flood pods
 - Ensure areas affected by the event are closely monitored as the event continues/the recovery phase begins i.e., there should be consistent dialogue between Council and local community support teams, if stood up

- ensure that HR advice on alternative working arrangements, including facilitating people to get to work, is issued and made available to all managers and staff

In order to manage a severe weather event, the IMT membership may also include the following. Each of these key roles may be delegated to more than one member of staff.

Title	IMT Role
Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment	In many severe weather events, will be the Incident Manager. Provide weather mitigation resources such as sandbags, flood pods, gritting, 4x4 fleet Liaison with Transport Scotland on impacts on roads and bridges Provide advice on flood alleviation during longer-term recovery
Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods	Lead for local community support team(s) Support for communities, including residents and tourists, advisor
Head of Housing	Advisor on accommodation and support for residents/tourists
Health and Social Care General Manager	Social care advisor
Head of Business and Employability	Support to and liaison with businesses
Head of Customer and Online Services	Customer queries/issues advisor
Head of Protective Services	Provide advice and response on any environmental concerns such as sewage, air and water quality, liaising with SEPA and Scottish Water. Provide advice and response on any dangerous structures
Head of Human Resources	HR and employee health and safety advisor

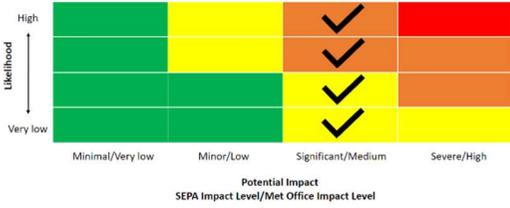
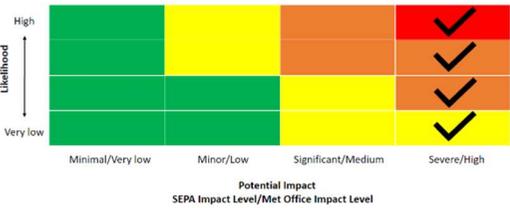
3.4 Resources

- Weather mitigation resources such as sandbags, flood pods, grit/salt boxes
- Fleet of gritters
- Fleet of 4x4 vehicles, the co-ordination and deployment of such will be managed by each 'owning' service with escalation to IMT where service demand has exceeded available resource.
- If all Council resources have been exhausted, additional 4x4 resource is available via the Fife Local Resilience Partnership and/or the third sector. Such requests should be via the IMT. However, it should be noted that this additional resource may not always be readily available.

IMPACT MATRIX

This Matrix should be used by Council Services as a guideline to trigger actions to be taken based on the forecasted weather warning/flood alert received from the Met Office/SEPA and is dependent on situational awareness at the time of the forecast.

Impact Level (Met Office/SEPA)	Met Office/Scottish Flood Forecasting Service Risk Level Matrix	Fife Council Service-specific actions
<p>Very Low Impact/Minimal Overall, day to day activities not affected but a few places may see small scale impacts occur</p>		<p>Normal business arrangements</p> <p>Testing and exercising</p>
<p>Low Impact/Minor Some short-lived disruption to day-to-day routines in affected areas. Incidents dealt with under 'business as usual response'. Some transport routes and travel services affected. Some journeys require longer travel times.</p>		<p>ERT to monitor weather warnings. Where warning becomes medium/high likelihood carry out the following, as all services.</p> <p>All Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standby and monitor Met Office and/or Scottish Flood Forecasting Service guidance/alert/warning Consider business continuity arrangements and ensure appropriate resources are in place to effectively respond if required

<p>Medium Impact/Significant</p> <p>Impact/Significant Injuries or danger to life. Disruption to day-to-day routines and activities. Short-term strain on emergency responder organisations. Transport routes and travel services affected. Longer journey times than expected. Some vehicles and passengers stranded. Disruption to some utilities and services. Damage to buildings and property.</p>		<p>All of above plus:</p> <p>ERT to liaise with key services and partners as appropriate and consider activation of IMT</p> <p>All Services activate business continuity plans as necessary</p> <p>Consider activation of IMT If IMT formed, it will co-ordinate and respond to impacts on communities, infrastructure, environment and service provision.</p> <p>ERT to discuss with partners escalation to LRP, as appropriate</p>
<p>High Impact/Severe</p> <p>Danger to life. Prolonged disruption to day-to-day routines and activities. Prolonged strain on emergency responder organisations. Transport routes and travel services affected for a prolonged period. Long travel delays. Vehicles and passengers stranded for long periods. Disruption to utilities and services for a long period. Extensive damage to buildings and property.</p>		<p>All of above plus:</p> <p>Where formed, IMT to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the impact on communities and service delivery for the next hours/days (horizon scanning) including staffing arrangements and cover for the response prioritisation of critical services declaring a major incident and petition for mutual aid where required Link with LRP and partners, as required.