



Severe Weather Plan

Prepared by and issued by: Fife Council Resilience and Events Team

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Prepare • Respond • Recover
READY FIFE

Distribution

Role

- Council Leadership Team
- Resilience and Events Team
- Communications Team
- Resilience Co-ordinators
- Incident Managers
- Police Scotland - Emergency, Events and Resilience Planning

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1. Introduction

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.

1.1 Aim

This plan outlines the arrangements Fife Council will activate to respond to, and recover from, a severe weather event impacting the Fife area both during and outwith office hours.

1.2 Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the Incident Management Plan, the objectives of this plan include, to:

- Identify the triggers for activation of this plan.
- Outline Fife Council's roles and responsibilities in response to a severe weather event impacting Fife.
- Provide an overview of the resources available to support the Council's response to a severe weather event.
- Outline the procedure for standing down the response to a severe weather event, and the transition to the recovery phase.

1.3 Scope

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.

Out of scope of this plan:

- 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.

- Fife Council Services are signed up to receive Met Office weather warnings, Flood Guidance Statements, and SEPA flood and water scarcity alerts/warnings and will take appropriate action on receipt of these warnings.
- Council Services have operational arrangements in place to support the arrangements outlined in this document, both during and out of office hours. This includes accessible and secure versions of Business Continuity Plans and staff contact details should IT be unavailable.
- 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 respond effectively to any impacts.
- Identified council employees will attend training and exercises to ensure that they understand their role in response to, and recovery from, a severe weather event.

1.5 Risk

- The [National Security Risk Assessment \(NSRA\)](#) identifies a range of severe weather events, and their associated hazards, as risks that threaten serious damage to human welfare and the environment in the UK.
- The likelihood and impact of a severe weather event, and associated hazards, varies depending on the type of weather.
- It should be highlighted that its inclusion in the NSRA highlights the potential severity of impacts of a severe weather event on Fife.
- The East of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (EoS RRP) and Fife Local Resilience Partnerships (LRP) undertake a Risk Preparedness Assessment process every two years. A range of common consequences associated with the risks outlined in the NSRA are considered, including those arising from severe weather. Gaps in response capabilities are identified and form the basis for mitigation activity, delivered through the Regional and Local Resilience Partnerships work and training programmes.
- Fife Council's generic, flexible and adaptable arrangements will mitigate the impact and consequences of this risk to Fife's communities.

1.6 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

As per the Incident Management Plan, this plan will be reviewed by the Resilience and Events 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.

1.7 Responsibility

Fife Council's Chief Executive is responsible for this severe weather plan.

2. General Information

2.1 Background

Ongoing 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

Both the Met Office and SEPA responsibilities include providing forecasts and warnings to the public. This provides responder 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 warnings can change at short notice.

These warnings include a risk matrix based on likelihood and impact of the forecasted weather. Regardless of the colour of these warnings, **Services should take actions based on the potential impact level.**

This will enable Services to activate a proportionate response to a severe weather event, mitigating the impacts on Fife's people, infrastructure and the environment.

2.2 Issues for Local Authorities

A severe weather event could result in the following challenges for Fife Council:

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

2.3 Associated Plans and Arrangements

This severe weather plan is supported by the following:

- Service Operational arrangements, including but not limited to: Housing Winter Readiness Plan, Fife Council Flooding emergency procedures and the Winter Gritting and Snow Clearing Policy
- Fife Council Severe Weather and Other Critical Incidents Guidance
- Fife LRP Severe Weather Response Guide

3. Incident Management Arrangements

3.1 Activation

Weather forecasting is not an exact science, and warnings can change at short notice. Arrangements outlined in this document will be activated by the Resilience & Events Team in discussion with relevant Services depending on the forecasted or occurring weather impacts.

The risk matrix (Appendix A) provides a guide for Services in response to forecasted or occurring weather impacts.

3.2 Incident Management Team

The Fife Council Incident Management Plan may 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.

3.2.1 Fife Council 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 Fife's communities (residents, businesses and tourists) to stay safe, this may include the set-up of emergency centres.
 - Support residents/tourists that have had property and/or belongings damaged by the event and are unable to return home or 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.
- Ensure situational awareness is shared with local community resilience groups, who will support the Council's response where possible.
- Ensure information sharing with key external partners.

In addition to the roles outlined in the Incident Management Plan, the specific roles and responsibilities of Council Services that are key to the effective management of a severe weather event are outlined below.

Roads and Transportation Services

- In many severe weather events, the Incident Manager will be from this Service (e.g., Head of Roads and Transportation).
- Provide weather mitigation resources such as sandbags, flood pods, and gritting.
- Liaise with Transport Scotland on impacts on roads and bridges.
- Provide advice on flood alleviation during longer-term recovery.

Environment and Building Services

- Provide weather mitigation resources such as 4x4 fleet.

Communities and Neighbourhoods

- Lead local community support team(s).
- Support communities, including residents and tourists.

Housing

- Advise on accommodation and support for residents and tourists.

Health & Social Care Partnership

- Advise on social care response.

Business and Employability Services

- Provide support to and liaise with businesses.

Customer and Online Services

- Advise on customer queries/issues.

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.
- Provide advice and support to customers regarding impact of water scarcity on private water supplies.

Human Resources

- HR and employee health and safety advisor.

3.2.2 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 made via the IMT or the Duty Resilience Officer. However, it should be noted that this additional resource may not always be readily available.

Appendices

Appendix A. Risk Matrix

This matrix should be used by Council Services as a guideline to trigger actions to be taken based on the forecasted weather warning or Flood Guidance Statement received from the Met Office/SEPA. Response actions required are dependent on situational awareness at the time of the forecast.

Table 1: Risk Matrix levels and associated key actions.

Met Office/Scottish Flood Forecasting Service Risk Level Matrix						Impact Level	Fife Council Service-specific actions																										
<table><tr><td rowspan="5">Likelihood</td><td>Very High (>75%)</td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>High (50-75%)</td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Medium (25-50%)</td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Low (10-25%)</td><td>✓</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Minor</td><td>Moderate</td><td>Significant</td><td>Extreme</td></tr></table> Impact						Likelihood	Very High (>75%)	✓				High (50-75%)	✓				Medium (25-50%)	✓				Low (10-25%)	✓					Minor	Moderate	Significant	Extreme	Minor Overall, day to day activities not affected but a few places may see small scale impacts occur.	- Normal business arrangements. - Testing and exercising.
Likelihood	Very High (>75%)	✓																															
	High (50-75%)	✓																															
	Medium (25-50%)	✓																															
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Likelihood	Very High (>75%)		✓																														
	High (50-75%)		✓																														
	Medium (25-50%)		✓																														
	Low (10-25%)		✓																														
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Likelihood	Very High (>75%)			✓	
	High (50-75%)			✓	
	Medium (25-50%)			✓	
	Low (10-25%)			✓	
		Minor	Moderate	Significant	Extreme
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.

All above plus:

- Resilience & Events Team to liaise with key services and partners as appropriate and consider activation of IMT.
- All Services activate business continuity plans as necessary.
- If an IMT is formed, it will co-ordinate and respond to impacts on communities, infrastructure, environment and service provision.
- Resilience & Events Team to discuss with partners escalation to LRP, as appropriate.

Likelihood	Very High (>75%)				✓
High (50-75%)				✓	
Medium (25-50%)				✓	
Low (10-25%)				✓	
	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Extreme	
Impact					

Extreme

- 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.

All above plus:
Where formed, IMT to consider:

- 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.