

Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

Stage 1

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing		
Relevant Group Head review	Yes	6.5.26
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)	Yes	24.6.26
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee		
	Reviewed by	
Finance comments (circulate to Finance)	AB	26.5.26
Risk comments (circulate to Lee O'Neil)	LO	02.06.26
Legal comments (circulate to Legal team)	JC	05.06.26
HR comments (if applicable)		

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

Stage 2

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date rec'd
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	L Heron	14/08/26
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	T. Collier	13/8/26
Commissioner engagement	J. Nguyen	13/8/26
	Delete as applicable:	No issues Comments in S. 7
Confirm report signed off for publishing for MAT by relevant member of Management Team	L.O'Neil	20/08/26
Confirm final report cleared by MAT	MAT	18/08/26

Environment and Sustainability Committee

10 September 2026

Title	Council Emergency Plan
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Sandy Muirhead Group Head Commissioning and Transformation
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	
Corporate Priority	Community Resilience Environment Services
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: Agree the updates to the Spelthorne Borough Council Emergency Plan.
Reason for Recommendation	It is best practice to regularly update the Council's Emergency Plan to take account of new and emerging emergency types, operational changes at a Surrey Local Resilience Forum and Government level, and any legislative changes.

1. Executive summary of the report *(expand detail in Key Issues section below)*

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
As required under the Civil Contingencies Act and as a Category 1 responder, Spelthorne Council needs to ensure it has up to date emergency plans in place	The Council has a legal obligation to maintain up-to-date emergency plans and ensure it can deliver its requirements especially as the nature of emergencies continues to evolve.
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
The Council therefore needs to ensure it reviews the plans including business	For Committee to agree the update to the Emergency Plan Version 9.0, as the

continuity plans on a regular basis. This report covers an update on the Emergency Plan.	Council's formal framework for emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. For officers to then ensure it is circulated and available to staff in case of emergencies. • Testing exercises will be scheduled and incorporate lessons learned into future revisions.
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2. Key issues

- 2.1 The Council has a legal duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to be prepared in terms of emergency planning and business continuity. Therefore, it needs to update its plans as required.
- 2.2 The Council's Emergency Plan ensures the Council can effectively respond to a wide range of emergencies identified in the Community Risk Register, including flooding, pandemics, infrastructure failure, and severe weather events. Plans also need to be up to date to meet the increasing frequency and complexity of emergencies (including climate change impacts or cyber-attack).
- 2.3 The Council has a duty to:-
 - Protect life, property, and the environment during emergencies.
 - Maintain critical services during disruption.
 - Coordinate effectively with multi-agency partners (e.g. Police, Fire, NHS, Surrey County Council).
- 2.4 Major emergencies are not dealt with by Spelthorne alone so there is a requirement to align with Surrey Local Resilience Forum structures.
- 2.5 The Emergency Plan ('the Plan') has been in place for many years and is updated every two years. The Council has updated its Emergency Plan to Version 9.0. This Version has been divided into separate policy document and operational response documents – this is the key change to version 8 of the plan.
- 2.6 The first part is a policy document (Appendix 1 Updated Emergency Plan (Policy)) which sets out the legislative framework, governance, roles, functions and responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and initial actions in an emergency.
- 2.7 Part 2 is a confidential operational document due to the sensitive information it contains. The document is designed to be picked up at the time of an incident and supports responding staff as it contains aide memoirs, considerations and key templates. It provides detailed procedures, action cards, and practical guidance for officers responding to incidents.
- 2.8 The Plan now includes an additional statement and acknowledgement of climate change and the impact this may have on the frequency and intensity of some of the emergencies we respond to. The statement is as follows:-
"This Emergency Response Plan acknowledges that climate change is an

increasingly significant factor influencing the scale, frequency and interaction of risks faced by the Council and its communities. National assessments identify a range of climate-related hazards, including flooding, extreme heat, severe storms, snow and ice, drought, wildfire, and indirect risks to infrastructure, food, water, and energy security. While the Council's core emergency response procedures covering preparation, operational response, and recovery remain consistent, climate change may intensify these hazards, create more complex and concurrent incidents, and place additional strain on Council services, infrastructure and vulnerable groups. By recognising these challenges, the Council commits to ensuring that its emergency management arrangements remain flexible, coordinated and resilient, supporting effective multi-agency working and the protection of communities in a changing risk environment."

- 2.9 In emergency planning there is a need to have clear command, control and coordination structures to deal with emergencies and the plan fulfils this function.
- 2.10 To ensure operational readiness appropriate staffing, training, and BECC activation are essential ongoing requirements as emergencies, particularly prolonged ones, have significant resource implications.
- 2.11 As experienced in Covid, community impact can be significant, and the Council and its partners need to ensure there is support for vulnerable residents and effective communication with the community.
- 2.12 The Plan also needs to be embedded through exercises, testing, and continuous improvement. Relevant training schedules will be put in place, but this is also likely to be influenced by West Surrey's emergency plan and procedures which will need to be in place by 1 April 2027.
- 2.13 At an April 2026 staff meeting a 15-minute presentation was given to all staff to ensure they are aware of emergency planning and business continuity requirements.
- 2.14 To date, the Council has not needed to invoke the Emergency Plan since Storm Henk which caused flooding in January 2024. Several smaller incidents, including a fire at the Charlton Lane recycling centre, an unexploded bomb at Heathrow and a fire near a COMAH site, were monitored but did not require action. However, this does not diminish the risk of a major incident occurring at any time. Applied Resilience act as the Council's first point of contact and liaise with us and assist in mobilising the authority in a major incident.

3. Options appraisal and proposal

- 3.1 **Option 1 Preferred option.** To agree the revised Emergency Plan (V9.0). This option ensures legal compliance, operational readiness and resilience. It represents best practice and aligns with national and local emergency planning frameworks.

Pros

- Meets statutory requirements
- Provides clear governance and operational clarity

- Strengthens multi-agency coordination
- Enhances preparedness and response capability
- Reflects current risks (including climate change)

Cons

- Requires ongoing training and resource commitment
- Implementation may require staff time and coordination

3.2 Option 2 Do nothing/retain existing plan

Pros

- No immediate resource requirement

Cons

- Plan becomes outdated
- Increased operational and legal risk
- Reduced effectiveness in emergencies
- Also requires ongoing training and resource commitment

3.3 Option 3 Partial update only

Pros

- Lower short-term effort

Cons

- Inconsistent framework
- Gaps between policy and operational response
- Reduced clarity for responders as plan may not cover latest SLRF developments.
- Also requires ongoing training and resource commitment

4. Risk implications

4.1 The key risks associated with not implementing a revised emergency plan are shown in the Table below.

Risk Type	Risk	Mitigation
Strategic	Failure to respond effectively to major incident would have major impacts on business continuity, impacts on residents and potential costs, including liabilities through lack of action.	Adoption of updated plan and governance structure to ensure plan delivery

Operational	Lack of coordination between teams/agencies	Clear Command, Control and Co-ordination (C3) structure and IMT/BECC processes are put in place.
Financial	Uncontrolled emergency expenditure	Financial tracking and Bellwin scheme processes.
Legal	Non-compliance with CCA 2004	Formal adoption and regular review every two years. Any learning points for the plan from a major incident would be incorporated.
Reputational	Poor public communication or response	Strong communications protocols and media management.
Governance Assurance	Emergency and business continuity planning from part of governance assurance within the Council and sets out measures as to how we are ensuring we deal with issues that may arise relating to an emergency or business continuity incidents	Ensure plans in place are up to date and monitored including appropriate training being undertaken.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1 There are no direct implications for finance in approving the Plan, but should there be an emergency a range of costs can be incurred depending on the nature of the emergency, and in some instance some of this expenditure can be reimbursed by Government under the Bellwin Scheme.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 sets out a framework for civil protection. It focuses on local arrangements and establishes roles and responsibilities for local responders.
- 6.2 Failure to have in place effective emergency planning and business continuity arrangements may result in the Council not meeting its statutory requirements.

Corporate implications

7. Commissioners' comments

- 7.1 No Comments from Commissioners.

8. S151 Officer comments

- 8.1 The S151 Officer confirms that financial implications have been considered and that there are no direct financial implications arising from the report's recommendations. Having an appropriate Emergency Plan helps to mitigate and manage the impacts, including financial, if and when emergencies arise.

9. Monitoring Officer comments

- 9.1 The Monitoring Officer confirms that the relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

10. Procurement comments

- 10.1 There are no procurement implications at this stage.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 In any emergency equality and diversity factors have to be considered particularly in relation to dealing with vulnerable residents.

12. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

- 12.1 The revised emergency plan acknowledges the potential impacts climate change could have in dealing with emergencies especially in relation to flooding, heatwaves and wildfires.

13. Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 13.1 Local Government Reorganisation will result in significant changes and at this stage there is little information available at this time as to how West Surrey will be dealing with emergencies etc in terms of structure after 31 March 2027. However, the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional arrangements) (No.2) Regulations 2008 as amended make provisions in relation to the various plans, reviews, schemes, statements, and strategies including those required by statute. Regulation 11 provides that the shadow authorities must prepare civil contingency plans under section 2(1)(c) and (d) of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 for the successor councils so that they are ready for 1 April 2027.
- 13.2 Under the LGR working group there is ongoing work to harmonise emergency plans to ensure West Surrey fulfils its statutory duties as required by the relevant Act. However, as yet there is a lack of clarification on the structure for any West Surrey emergency planning team. As a result, the Council still needs to ensure it has up to date plans until March 2027 and potentially beyond if transitioned services remain in Spelthorne. The Council's contract with Applied Resilience currently ends 31 May 2027. The plan can be further

updated once more information on the future of emergency planning in West Surrey is known and therefore the emergency plan staff will be working to.

14. Other considerations

14.1 There are none

15. Timetable for implementation

15.1 Revised plan in place

16. Contact

16.1 Sandy Muirhead Group Head Commissioning and Transformation.
Abdirashid Alasow Senior Incident Management & Resilience Specialist
Applied Resilience

***Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.***

Background papers: Emergency Plan Part 2 (Operational) Confidential

Appendices:- Appendix 1 Updated Emergency Plan Part 1 (Policy)