The Highland Council

General Emergency Plan

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Section 1: Alerting and Immediate Actions Guide

General

1.1 The aim of this Section is to ensure that key personnel of The Highland Council are alerted swiftly to any **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT** which has occurred, or is likely to (see Section 4 for incident definitions and Appendix B for a **MAJOR INCIDENT Determination Chart**). The act of alerting is the initial process in the activation of this General Emergency Plan.

The **Immediate Actions Guide** which follows provides a basic checklist of initial actions for key individuals/services that have been notified of an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**.

Alerting Procedure

1.2 Notification that an emergency has occurred may be received from a variety of sources. The information could come from 'official' sources, such as Police Scotland, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency or Highland Council's Resilience Team. It is also possible for the first notification to come from local or national media, social media, a member of staff or a member of the public. If the information has come from an informal source, confirmation should be sought from the Police.

1.3 It is also possible for the Chief Executive of The Highland Council to be alerted directly to a serious incident, for example, if the UK Terror Threat Level is raised.

1.4 Once an initial alert is received, the **Alerting Cascade** on page 6 should normally be followed. During office hours, notification of an emergency (or potential emergency) will – in most instances – be received via the Resilience Team, who will then pass the information to the relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s) to initiate the 1st and 2nd Tier of notifications, as appropriate.

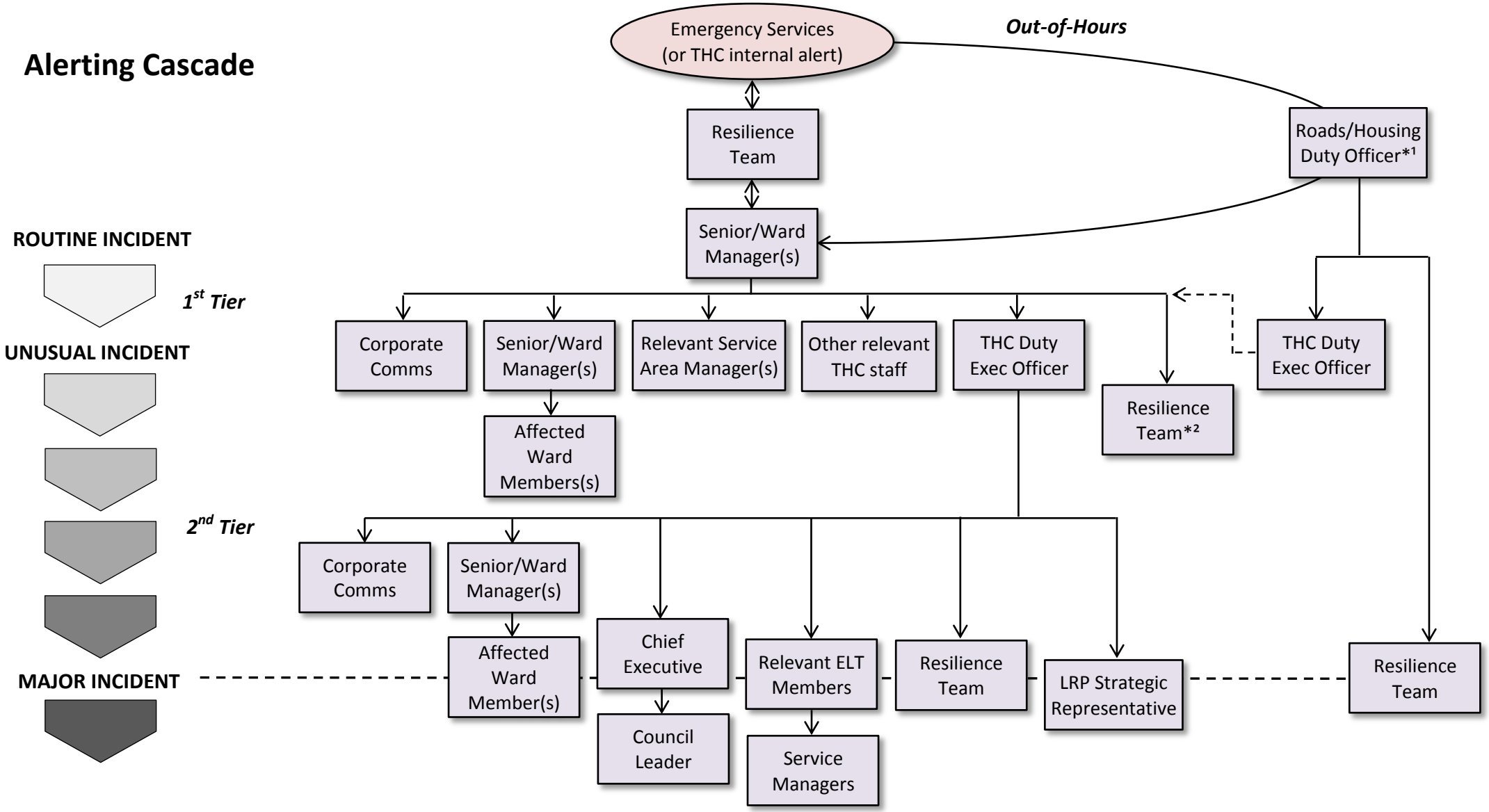
Outside of office hours, the primary route for Category 1 Responders to alert the Council to an incident is via the Roads/Housing Duty Officer on 01349 886690. The Roads/Housing Duty Officer will then attempt to notify the relevant Ward Manager(s). If unable to establish contact, the Roads/Housing Duty Officer will notify the Senior Ward Manager (if different to the relevant Ward Manager), and if this person is unobtainable, a neighbouring Senior Ward Manager or Ward Manager. Should the Roads/Housing Duty Officer still be unable to pass on the alert, they will contact the on-call Duty Executive Officer who will initiate the **Alerting Cascade** on page 6. If the Roads/Housing Duty Officer is informed of a **MAJOR INCIDENT**, they will always alert the Duty Executive Officer and Resilience Team.

1.5 The Highland Council maintains a multi-agency 'Emergency Communications Directory' (ECD) which includes internal and external contact details. If you wish to obtain a copy of the ECD, please contact the Resilience Team by email, epu@highland.gov.uk

1.6 Council staff, upon being alerted to an incident, may either be asked to 'activate', or to place staff and resources on 'standby' (see Section 9).

1.7 The HILRP Response Guidance describes multi-agency activation and response in detail.

Alerting Cascade



*1 If R/H Duty Officer is unable to contact the relevant Ward Manager out-of-hours, they should contact the Senior Ward Manager or neighbouring Ward Manager, or if these are unobtainable, THC Duty Executive Officer. If R/H Duty Officer if alerted to a **MAJOR INCIDENT**, they must always alert THC Duty Executive Officer and Resilience Team.
*2 When not already notified.

Immediate Actions Guide

1.7 For abbreviations used in this Section, see **Abbreviations and Acronyms** at the rear of this Plan.

1.8 **Not all actions listed below will be required immediately, but do need to be considered from the outset.**

Emergency Out of Hours Contact
Roads/Housing Duty Officer: 01349 886690

R/H Duty Officer Immediate Actions:

1. Refer to Duty Officers' Procedures Guidance
2. Open a personal log to record events
3. Ascertain who and which agency is calling and obtain contact/ring-back details (validate incident with Police if necessary)
4. Ask if you are being alerted to a **MAJOR INCIDENT** or not
5. Ascertain impacts relevant to THC
6. Ascertain what support is being requested
7. Alert relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s)
8. Alert THC Duty Executive Officer if appropriate
9. Maintain contact with the Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s) and/or Duty Executive Officer
10. If a **MAJOR INCIDENT** has been declared, always alert THC Duty Executive Officer and Resilience Team

Resilience Team

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Ascertain who and which agency is calling and obtain contact/ring-back details (validate incident with Police if necessary)
3. Confirm if incident has been designated a **MAJOR INCIDENT** or not
4. Ascertain impacts relevant to THC
5. Ascertain what support is required or being requested
6. Alert relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s)
7. Alert THC Duty Executive Officer. Discuss if a **MAJOR INCIDENT** should be declared
8. Ensure Corporate Communications and other relevant THC staff have been informed
9. Ensure relevant Category 1 and Category 2 Responders, and other agencies, have been informed. Maintain contact, as appropriate.
10. Provide expert civil contingencies advice to Chief Executive, Duty Executive Officer and other THC staff responding to the incident
11. Maintain contact with the Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s) and/or Duty Executive Officer
12. Attend (in person or via telephone) multi-agency response groups (e.g. ELG(s), TOG, LRP Strategic) and THC response groups (e.g. HQ Tactical, CEMT), as required/requested
13. Consider implications if incident escalates

Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Ascertain who and which agency is calling and obtain contact/ring-back details (validate incident with Police if necessary)
3. Ask if you are being alerted to a **MAJOR INCIDENT** or not
4. Ascertain impacts relevant to THC
5. Ascertain what support is required or being requested
6. Advise relevant Area THC staff to activate or standby with a response
7. In liaison with Police Scotland, consider if a multi-agency ELG and CfP Team should be established (if not already activated)
8. Alert relevant THC Area Managers and other staff to support the ELG and CfP Team.
9. Alert THC Duty Executive Officer. Discuss if a **MAJOR INCIDENT** should be declared
10. Inform Corporate Communications and the Resilience Team of the incident (if not already aware)
11. Attend the ELG (in person or by telephone) to co-ordinate THC's local Tactical response
12. Consider implications if the incident escalates
13. Inform affected Ward Member(s)
14. Participate in meetings (by telephone) of the multi-agency TOG and THC HQ Tactical Group, if established

Duty Executive Officer

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Ascertain who and which agency is calling and obtain contact/ring-back details (validate incident with Police if necessary)
3. Ask if you are being alerted to a **MAJOR INCIDENT** or not
4. Ascertain impacts relevant to THC
5. Ascertain what support is required or being requested
6. Make contact with relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s) and other Area THC staff as appropriate. Give advice to activate or standby with a response.
7. Discuss with relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s) if a multi-agency ELG and CfP Team have been, or should be, established
8. Consider declaration of a **MAJOR INCIDENT** (see Appendix B)
9. Alert the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team (ELT)
10. Ensure Corporate Communications and the Resilience Team is aware of the incident
11. Activate additional THC Plans if required. Take advice from Resilience Team as necessary
12. Activate HQ Tactical Group if required. Take advice from Resilience Team as necessary
13. Activate CEMT if required. Take advice from Resilience Team as necessary
14. Appoint an Executive Officer or member of the ELT as THC Emergency Co-ordinator
15. Be prepared to act as THC Emergency Co-ordinator if necessary
16. Appoint an Executive Officer as LRP Strategic Representative at the SCC (usually Divisional Police HQ, Inverness)
17. Be prepared to act as the LRP Strategic Representative
18. Ensure relevant Service Managers are alerted, if not already aware of the incident
19. Maintain contact with relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s) and other Area/HQ THC staff as appropriate
20. Maintain contact with the Chief Executive
21. Consider implications if incident escalates

Chief Executive

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Obtain all relevant information about the incident (incl. impacts and response) from Duty Executive Officer or Police Scotland
3. Confirm **Alerting Cascade** has been followed, that all relevant THC staff are aware and an appropriate level of response has been activated
4. Consider declaration of a **MAJOR INCIDENT** (see Appendix B)
5. Liaise with Police Scotland Divisional Commander and consider activation of the LRP
6. Alert Leader of the Council
7. Consider formation of the Recovery Working Group
8. Consider formation of the HQ Tactical Group, if not already activated
9. Consider formation of CEMT, if not already activated
10. Act as LRP Strategic Representative, if required
11. Consider invoking all or part of THC's BCP
12. Consider implications and resource requirements if incident escalates

Corporate Communications

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Obtain all relevant information about the incident from THC Officer(s) and/or Police Scotland, etc.
3. Alert staff from the Council's Corporate Communications Team as required
4. Establish contact with other members of the NoSRRP Public Communications Group (PCG)
5. Consider deployment of support staff (see BCP)
6. Consider communicating any initial essential public warning and information about the incident (e.g. closures, interruptions to service, evacuations, etc.) on THC social media
7. Consider need for corporate message to inform all staff
8. Consider use of staff alert message system
9. Attend (in person or via telephone) multi-agency response groups (e.g. ELG(s), TOG, LRP Strategic) and THC response groups (e.g. HQ Tactical, CEMT), as required
10. Consider implications if incident escalates
11. Help maintain information flow

Education and Learning / Health and Social Care

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Obtain all relevant information about the incident from THC Officer(s) and/or Police Scotland, NHS Highland, etc.
3. Ascertain support required or requested. If an Emergency Support Centre(s) is required liaise with NHS Highland; deploy staff and resources
4. Liaise with any schools affected/likely to be affected. Provide immediate assistance
5. In conjunction with NHS Highland and BRC, assist with any other immediate welfare provision
6. Attend the ELG CfP Team(s) (in person or via telephone)
7. Attend (in person or via telephone) multi-agency response groups (e.g. ELG(s), TOG, LRP Strategic) and THC response groups (e.g. HQ Tactical, CEMT), as required
8. Consider implications if incident escalates
9. Consider extended hours operation and staffing

Property and Housing

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Obtain all relevant information about the incident from THC Officer(s), etc.
3. Ascertain support required or requested. If an Emergency Support Centre(s) is required liaise with NHS Highland; deploy staff and resources
4. Attend the ELG CfP Team(s) (in person or via telephone)
5. Attend (in person or via telephone) multi-agency response groups (e.g. ELG(s), TOG, LRP Strategic) and THC response groups (e.g. HQ Tactical, CEMT), as required
6. Consider implications if the incident escalates
7. Consider extended hours operation and staffing

Infrastructure and Environment

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Obtain all relevant information about the incident from THC Officer(s) and/or Police Scotland, etc.
3. Ascertain support required or requested.
4. Deploy staff and resources to provide immediate assistance, e.g. erecting diversion signs, flood alleviation measures, pollution control, etc.
5. Consider deployment of LO to site
6. Activate THC Oil Pollution Contingency Plan, if appropriate
7. Attend the ELG (in person or via telephone) to provide expert advice
8. Attend (in person or via telephone) multi-agency response groups (e.g. ELG(s), TOG, LRP Strategic) and THC response groups (e.g. HQ Tactical, CEMT), as required
9. Consider implications if the incident escalates

Environmental Health

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Obtain all relevant information about the incident from THC Officer(s), etc.
3. Ascertain support required or requested
4. Consider deployment of LO to site
5. EHO to attend the ELG (in person or telephone) to provide expert advice
6. Attend (in person or via telephone) multi-agency response groups (e.g. ELG(s), TOG, LRP Strategic) and THC response groups (e.g. HQ Tactical, CEMT), as required
7. Consider implications if the incident escalates
8. Activate and chair Recovery Working Group, if needed

Service Centre Manager

Immediate Actions:

1. Open a personal log to record events
2. Obtain all relevant information about the incident from THC Officer(s), etc.
3. Liaise with Council's Corporate Communications Team
4. Ascertain additional support required to maintain service delivery
5. Consider implications if the incident escalates
6. Consider extended hours operation and staffing

Section 2: Introduction

General

2.1 Every Local Authority is faced with the possibility of having to cope with the effects of a major civil emergency. However, no hard and fast rules to meet all emergencies can be drawn up because the nature, scale and location of each incident will determine the type of response required. Response arrangements must be generic; flexible and adaptable to meet a wide range of circumstances.

2.2 No single organisation is entirely responsible for dealing with major civil emergencies or natural disasters in the United Kingdom. Existing arrangements rely on immediate assistance being given by the uniformed emergency services - Police, Fire, Ambulance and Coastguard - supplemented where necessary by local and other public authorities. A wide range of other organisations are also equipped and practiced to assist with incidents on land and sea.

2.3 The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and its associated Regulations and Guidance recognise the fact that many agencies are involved and have created two categories of responder. These are described as Category 1 and Category 2 Responders.

- Category 1 Responders are the '**core**' responders, those public sector organisations providing vital services in an emergency.
    - They include the emergency services (Police Scotland, British Transport Police, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Ambulance Service, Maritime and Coastguard Agency), Local Authorities, Port Health Authorities, NHS Highland, Health Protection Scotland and Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

- Category 2 Responders are '**co-operating**' responders, those public and private sector bodies that provide key infrastructure services that are regulated by other legislation related to preparing for emergencies.
    - They include utilities (gas, electricity, water and sewerage, telephone service providers), transport operators (rail, airports, harbours and highways) and bodies such as strategic Health Authorities and the Health and Safety Executive.

2.4 Whilst the Act places specific duties on these two categories of responders, it also states that other organisations, such as the voluntary and private sectors, can have an important role to play in consolidating our overall resilience and contributing to effective preparation for, response to and recovery from an emergency incident.

Purpose of the General Emergency Plan

2.5 The purpose of the General Emergency Plan is to map out the organisation and management structure of The Highland Council's response to an **UNUSUAL** (Level 2) or **MAJOR** (Level 3) **INCIDENT**, as defined in Section 4 below. It describes how the need for an emergency response is recognised and identifies the alerting and activation procedures. It also aims to show how the Council's response will be co-ordinated with that of other Category 1 and 2 Responders.

2.6 This plan is intended for the guidance of The Highland Council staff who might be involved in dealing with an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**. It is designed to provide a flexible framework for the co-ordination of action regardless of cause.

2.7 Where specific identifiable hazards exist within Highland, separate detailed plans have been prepared which are consistent with this generic plan. These and other interlinking documents are listed in Section 16.

2.8 This plan is not designed to meet the needs of day-to-day emergencies which could affect the normal functions and resources of a Service, i.e. those defined as **ROUTINE** (Level 1) **INCIDENTS** in Section 4. This type of emergency should be covered by the Service's own Business Continuity Plan and other contingency arrangements.

Terms of Reference

2.9 Section 84(i) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973, states, "*Where an emergency or disaster involving destruction of or danger to life or property occurs or is imminent or there is reasonable grounds for apprehending such an emergency or disaster, and a local authority are of opinion that it is likely to affect the whole or part of their area or all or some of its inhabitants, the Authority may – incur such expenditure as they consider necessary… to avert, alleviate or eradicate… the effects or potential effects of the event*".

2.10 Power conferred by Section 84(i) is in addition to any other enactment. Powers under specific legislation relating to individual services should be used where appropriate.

2.11 The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and its accompanying Regulations and Guidance place statutory responsibilities on Category 1 Responders to prepare for emergencies. It delivers a single framework for civil protection in the United Kingdom and is separated into two substantive parts:

Part 1 of the Act sets out the range of possible incidents for which local responders must prepare when fulfilling their civil protection duties.

Part 2 sets out the situations in which it may be possible for Central Government to use emergency powers.

Under the terms of the Act, The Highland Council is legally required to:

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; and
7) Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

Guidance on Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act can be viewed at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-preparedness

2.12 The appropriate emergency service will direct Operational activities at the scene. In general, appropriate Officers of The Highland Council will have the task of obtaining additional staffing, equipment, accommodation, meals and other forms of relief to people in urgent need.

Planning Philosophy

2.13 When a **MAJOR INCIDENT** occurs, the rules governing normal decision-making change. Consequently, it is essential that Senior Officers have a planned response to such an incident. In a crisis situation, faster decision-making processes are required. Routine channels of information and communication may be inadequate or non-existent, necessitating the need for a predetermined and exercised response.

2.14 Managers and other staff are expected to operate in their normal roles during an emergency as an extension of their day-to-day activities, albeit with a strong focus on the incident itself. Personnel may be required to take on additional roles or duties as identified within emergency or Business Continuity Plans.

2.15 Whilst the management of the consequences of a **MAJOR INCIDENT** may place great demands upon the Council, sufficient attention must also be given to the maintenance of core services which must be delivered to those parts of the community which are unaffected by the incident.

The Planning Process

2.16 The Highlands and Islands Local Resilience Partnership (HILRP) comprises representatives from all Category 1 and Category 2 Responder organisations operating within the Highlands and Islands and is responsible for formulating and implementing, through its members, Strategic policy.

2.17 In the planning phase, the Chair of the HILRP will be a representative from one of the non-emergency service Category 1 agencies, usually the Chief Executive of The Highland Council. The deputy Chair will be drawn from one of the emergency service Category 1 agencies. Meetings of the full HILRP will be to assist in the formation of, and to deliver against outcomes agreed in the HILRP Business Plan.

2.18 The actual delivery of multi-agency work of the HILRP will be delivered and co-ordinated by members of the HILRP Working Group, and also via the various locally based Emergency Liaison Groups (ELGs). For further information on ELGs see Section 6 and Appendix C.

Section 3: Aims and Objectives of The Highland Council

Aims

3.1 In responding to an emergency, the principal aims of The Highland Council are to:

a) Provide assistance to the full-time emergency services;
b) Ensure the speedy restoration of any normal services which may have been disrupted or destroyed;
c) Provide professional and technical advice, personnel, transport, equipment, use of premises and any other material or resources which might be required during an emergency;
d) Co-ordinate the situation when the full-time emergency services have completed their phase of the emergency response;
e) Enable the Council to continue to deliver appropriate services during any emergency response;
f) To comply with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and it's accompanying Regulations.

Objectives

3.2 In responding to an emergency, the objectives of The Highland Council are:

a) Preservation of life;
b) Preservation of property;
c) Mitigation of damage to, or contamination of the environment;
d) Mitigation of disruption to services and industrial production;
e) Mitigation of the effects and the re-establishment of normality for victims, families, friends, staff and the community.

Section 4: Types of Incident

Definition of an Emergency

4.1 An emergency is a situation that poses an immediate risk to health, life, property, or environment. Most emergencies require urgent intervention to prevent a worsening of the situation, although in some situations, mitigation may not be possible and agencies may only be able to offer palliative care for the aftermath.

Preparing Scotland's definition of an emergency is "***An event or situation that threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK or to the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK. To constitute an emergency this event or situation must require the implementation of special arrangements by one or more Category 1 responders.***" This is the definition partner agencies work to in terms of Integrated Emergency Management (IEM).

Emergencies often have the potential to affect an organisation's ability to provide a specific service, or services. Where normal operations are affected, and there is a requirement to implement Business Continuity measures, such events may manifest as a 'disruptive incident' or a 'crisis' for that organisation. The British Standards Institution publication PAS 200, 'Crisis Management: Guidance and Good Practice', defines a crisis as: "***An inherently abnormal, unstable and complex situation that represents a threat to the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organisation***".

Levels of Emergency in the General Emergency Plan

4.2 For the purpose of this Plan, emergency incidents dealt with by The Highland Council and its partners may be generally categorised on the following three levels:

- **ROUTINE** – Level 1
- **UNUSUAL** – Level 2
- **MAJOR** – Level 3

These categories should help you to decide what kind of incident it is and what actions you should take.

4.3 Each emergency is unique and circumstances can change very rapidly. For this reason, the emergency level may require reassessment and escalation to a higher level of response. Similarly, the information initially available may be insufficient for a determination to be made and it will be necessary to seek more information before the incident can be assessed for categorisation.

4.4 Only the Council's Chief Executive or Duty Executive Officer can declare a **MAJOR INCIDENT** for The Highland Council. A **MAJOR INCIDENT Determination Chart** is included in Appendix B.

4.5 The terms '**ROUTINE INCIDENT'**, '**UNUSUAL INCIDENT**' and '**MAJOR INCIDENT**' used throughout this Plan are explicitly aligned to the three levels described in this Section.

ROUTINE

ROUTINE INCIDENTS are regularly dealt with on a day-to-day basis by Category 1 Responders, and can be resolved with limited outside assistance

Level of Impact

- Possible examples include: risk of severe weather/minor weather related incidents; fire alarm activation; contained floods; small-scale utility outages; minor building damage; temporary closure of transport routes caused by RTCs/infrastructure failure
- Such incidents will generally be handled at the site level with Area Officers, Duty Officers, facilities management, possibly local Police, and local fire resources or public health
- Quickly or easily resolved
- Localised and contained impact on department/building/infrastructure/environment
- No casualties, no threat to life, no panic
- Minor impact on staff and minimal impact on service users/the public/other agencies (more inconvenience than risk to welfare)
- Minor reputational risk
- Local media interest

Actions

- Open a personal log to record actions you take and times
- Activate Business Continuity Plan, if necessary
- Consider activation of local ELG and Care for People Team

Communications

- Contact other agencies as required e.g. Police, Fire & Rescue Service, SEPA
- Contact relevant Council staff, e.g.:
  - Area Managers/Officers, school staff, facilities management, etc.
  - Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager (to inform Ward Members and to provide local THC Tactical co-ordination, if required)
  - Roads/Housing Duty Officer
  - Duty Executive Officer for information
  - Corporate Communications (for out-of-hours see ECD)
- Communicate with stakeholders/public
  - Use available corporate social media as relevant, e.g. school channels; @corranferry; @hchighlandroads; @invernessfestivals; @trafficscotland

Plans and Procedures

- School closure procedures
- Business Continuity Plans
- Site specific plans, e.g. School Major Incident Plan, building security and evacuation plans, etc.

UNUSUAL

UNUSUAL INCIDENTS will require a number of Category 1 and 2 Responders to work together to effect a satisfactory outcome

Level of Impact

- Possible examples include: severe weather resulting in overnight power outages/road closures; building fire/gas leak/unexploded ordnance requiring evacuation of people to an Emergency Support Centre; cargo vessel aground; major wildfires; minor pollution/ contamination incidents
- Such incidents are likely to require the formation of an ELG and Care for People Team to co-ordinate local multi-agency Tactical response
- An **UNUSUAL INCIDENT** will typically involve human welfare issues, and/or some risk or damage to property and the environment
- Moderate impact on staff and on service users/the public/other agencies
- Reputational risk
- Local and regional media interest, with potential for some national coverage
- Has potential to escalate to a **MAJOR INCIDENT** (see below)

Actions

- Open a personal log to record actions you take and times
- Ask for an ELG to be established via the Senior Ward Manager/ Ward Manager, who will liaise with their local Police Scotland chair
- Activate Business Continuity Plan and/or other relevant plans, if necessary

Communications

- Contact other agencies as required e.g. Police, Fire & Rescue Service, SEPA
- Contact relevant Council staff, e.g.:
  - Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager (to provide local THC Tactical co-ordination and to inform Ward Members)
  - Area Managers/Officers, school staff, facilities management, etc.
  - Duty Executive Officer for information
  - Roads/Housing Duty Officer
  - Corporate Communications (for out-of-hours see ECD)
- Communicate with stakeholders/public
  - Use available corporate social media as relevant, e.g. school channels; @corranferry; @hchighlandroads; @invernessfestivals; @trafficscotland
  - Public alert systems, e.g. Highland Resilience

Plans and Procedures

- Relevant Council plans, e.g. General Emergency Plan (this plan); Business Continuity Plan; School Major Incident Plan; Oil Pollution Contingency Plan
- Relevant LRP plans, e.g. HILRP Response Guidance; HILRP Care for People Guidance

MAJOR

MAJOR INCIDENTS, because of their nature and/or effects, will almost certainly require a full multi-agency response

A MAJOR INCIDENT is a formally recognized term and can be declared by any Category 1 Responder who should then inform all other relevant agencies

Level of Impact

- Possible examples include: severe weather giving rise to large-scale impacts; major fire/explosion; civil unrest; terrorism; widespread and prolonged power outage; hazardous material spill; major flooding; major oil spill; major shipping incident; prolonged closure of a major lifeline route; large-scale public health incident/outbreak, large-scale communications outage, CBRN incidents; any incident involving mass casualties

A **MAJOR INCIDENT** for The Highland Council is one which threatens or causes one or more of the following:

- serious damage to human welfare
- serious damage to the environment
- serious damage to the security of all or part of the UK

on a scale beyond the normal operation and response of The Highland Council to control and deal with. **See Appendix B – MAJOR INCIDENT Determination Chart.**

- Likely to be a major impact on staff and service delivery
- Reputational risk – corporate response, and that of individuals, may be scrutinised by the media and in subsequent public enquiry
- Intense local, regional and national media interest, with potential for international coverage
- Demand for information, but facts will be difficult to obtain in the early stages of the incident
- Ministerial involvement from Scottish and UK Governments

Actions

- Open a personal log to record actions you take and times
- Contact relevant Council staff
- Chief Executive to:
  - Consider declaration of a **MAJOR INCIDENT**
  - Confirm with Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s) that relevant ELG(s) and associated Care for People Team(s) are established
  - Consider activation of the HQ Tactical Group and Corporate Emergency Management Team (CEMT)
  - Liaise with Police Scotland Divisional Commander and consider activation of the LRP
- Activate Business Continuity Plan and/or other relevant plans, if necessary

Communications

- Contact other agencies as required e.g. Police, Fire & Rescue Service, SEPA
- Contact relevant Council staff, e.g.:
  - Chief Executive briefed
  - Duty Executive Officer
  - Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager(s)
  - Corporate Communications (for out-of-hours see ECD)
  - Area Managers/Officers, school staff, facilities management, etc.
  - Roads/Housing Duty Officer
- Contact relevant Elected Members
  - Leader and Administration Members briefed
  - Ward Members briefed (via Senior Ward Managers/Ward Managers)
- Participate in PCG (part of NoSRRP) to discuss and co-ordinate multi-agency communication needs
- Communicate with stakeholders/public
  - Use available corporate social media as relevant, e.g. school channels; @corranferry; @hchighlandroads; @invernessfestivals; @trafficscotland
  - Public alert systems, e.g. Highland Resilience

Plans and Procedures

- Relevant Council plans, e.g. General Emergency Plan (this plan); Business Continuity Plans; School Major Incident Plan; Oil Pollution Contingency Plan
- Relevant LRP/RRP plans, e.g. HILRP Response Guidance; HILRP Care for People Guidance; NoSRRP Public Communications Plan
- Community Emergency Plans
- COMAH or REPPIR Plans
- Other relevant multi-agency response plans, e.g.
  - Inverness Airport Multi-agency Initial Response Plan
  - Cairngorm Mountain and Funicular Railway Multi-agency Initial Response Plan
  - Harbour Major Incident Plans
  - Public Event Major Incident Plans
  - Inverness City Centre Emergency Plan
- Relevant National Plans, e.g.
  - National Contingency Plan for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations (NCP)
  - National Emergency Plan for Fuel (NEP-F)
  - Network Rail – National Contingency Plan
  - Exotic diseases of animals: contingency framework plan
  - Resilient Telecommunications Plan for Scotland
  - NHS Scotland: Mass Casualties Incident Plan

Section 5: Command, Control & Co-ordination

For further information, this Section should be read in conjunction with:
HILRP Response Guidance

General

5.1 Understanding command, control and co-ordination arrangements is important because it forms the basis upon which all responder agency services are linked to ensure effective co-ordination, direction and communication throughout the various stages of an emergency. Further information can be found within Part 3 of *"Preparing Scotland"*, published by the Scottish Government.

Integrated Emergency Management (IEM)

5.2 Any response will adhere to the principles of Integrated Emergency Management (IEM) which describes an integrated approach involving assessment, prevention, preparation, response and recovery, with the focus on the effects of incidents rather than their causes.

Three Levels of Command

5.3 The management of the emergency response and recovery effort is undertaken at one, or more, of three ascending management levels – **Operational**, **Tactical** and **Strategic**. These levels of command are similar to those described as '**Bronze**', '**Silver**' and '**Gold**' in other guidance about emergency procedures. (*Note that the UK military uses the ascending management levels 'Tactical', 'Operational' and 'Strategic').*

5.4 In rapid onset emergencies, the emergency command structure is usually constructed from the bottom-up with the Operational level being activated first. Escalation of the event (in scale or geographical extent) or emerging information about the situation and resulting impacts or risks may require the activation of a Tactical and potentially a Strategic level. There may also be situations in which all three levels are activated simultaneously and others when the response may be initiated from the top-down by Scottish or UK Governments. Decisions on the activation of these levels will be guided on the basis of the need for additional or external assistance and the extent of the impact across agencies.

Operational Level

5.5 The Operational level is from which services are delivered, where the 'at- scene', hands-on work takes place at the site(s) of an emergency. The response to normal day-to-day, small-scale incidents may be managed entirely at the Operation level.

Tactical Level

5.6 The role of the Tactical level of command is to ensure actions taken at the Operational level are supported and co-ordinated to achieve maximum effectiveness and efficiency. The Tactical level will also implement strategies set by the Strategic level, if set up.

Strategic Level

5.7 Emergencies can place considerable demands on responding organisations requiring the Strategic oversight of Senior Managers and the consideration of wider issues, such as reputation management, recovery issues, political scrutiny and the possibility of future legal matters or public inquiries, as well as the consideration of allocation of or identification of additional resources or mutual aid. The requirement for Strategic management may be confined to a single agency. However, the scale and nature of an emergency may require a multi-agency response at the Strategic level. In such emergencies, the Local Resilience Partnership Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) will be activated.

Lead Responders

5.8 In the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase** of an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**, Police Scotland will usually co-ordinate the response, including management of the scene. NHS Highland will lead the response to public health matters such as pandemic flu, and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency will lead the response to emergencies off-shore. Where there is a major oil spill incident the shoreline clean-up operations will be led by The Highland Council (see THC Oil Pollution Contingency Plan).

5.9 The Council will support the emergency services by providing additional staffing, specialised equipment, road and traffic management and environmental health services, as well as providing welfare support in the form of temporary accommodation and Emergency Support Centre facilities/staff through its role within the Care for People Teams.

5.10 Highland Council can activate voluntary services and will co-ordinate their response, taking into account the contribution which can be made by the emergency services, the NHS, armed forces, British Red Cross and other voluntary organisations.

Recovery

5.11 Recovery is the process of restoring and rebuilding the community in the aftermath of a disaster. This process should always start as soon as possible, and will gain prominence once the immediate response has been completed. What is known as the '**Recovery Phase'**, however, does not begin until the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase** is complete, which will be marked by a formal handover from Police Scotland.

5.12 Although recovery is a multi-agency activity, **Local Authorities will normally lead recovery co-ordination**. Many aspects of recovery have to be considered from the physical rebuilding of the affected area to the welfare needs of its residents and the financial implications for affected businesses and the Council itself. For further information on Recovery, see Section 11 and HILRP Recovery: A Guidance Document for the Highlands & Islands Councils.

Section 6: Response Framework

For further information, this Section should be read in conjunction with:
HILRP Response Guidance and ***HILRP Highland Care for People Guidance***

General

6.1 The overall management and co-ordination of The Highland Council's response, to minimise and mitigate the effects of a major civil emergency, is the responsibility of the Council's Chief Executive. During the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase** of any **MAJOR INCIDENT**, this responsibility is exercised within the overall co-ordination of the Police Scotland Divisional Commander, with each partner of the Local Resilience Partnership (LRP) contributing to the management of the response.

Resilience Partnerships

6.2 A 'Resilience Partnership' is a collective of Category 1 and 2 Responders and other organisations, including voluntary agencies, which comes together to co-ordinate emergency response. These multi-agency groups may be activated at either a Tactical or a Strategic level. In Highland, there are three layers of Resilience Partnership, as shown in the diagram on page 26. In exceptional circumstances, when there is need for regional Strategic co-ordination, a fourth layer – the North of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (NoSRRP) – which would operate between the Highlands & Islands Local Resilience Partnership (HILRP) and the Scottish Government, may also be established. Resilience Partnerships can be activated by any Category 1 Responder.

6.3 One of the key principles of Integrated Emergency Management (IEM) relates to 'subsidiarity'. Local response arrangements are the foundation for dealing with any emergency, with the control of operations being exercised at the lowest practical level. The co-ordination and support of local activity should be at the highest level required and both principles should be mutually reinforcing. The actual nature and impact of each emergency will determine which Resilience Partnerships are activated, but a bottom-up approach should be adopted as the guiding principle.

Emergency Liaison Groups (ELGs)

6.4 Resilient Partnership Emergency Liaison Groups (also known as Emergency Co-ordinating Groups (ECGs)) will usually be the initial multi-agency group to form in response to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**. There are 5 ELGs in Highland (see **ELG Map** in Appendix C):

- Caithness & Sutherland ELG
- Ross & Cromarty ELG
- Inverness ELG
- Badenoch, Strathspey & Nairn ELG
- Lochaber & Skye ELG

6.5 ELGs meet regularly to plan for emergencies and are well practiced in co-ordinating operational and local response arrangements. The default Chair of these groups would be the Police Area Commander and the location will usually, but not exclusively, be the local police station. In responding to an **UNUSUAL INCIDENT** the ELG may meet via teleconference only. Those attending will comprise Tactical Commanders/Managers from the emergency services and other appropriate organisations. The Highland Council will be represented by the relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager, who will co-ordinate the Authority's response at this level, together with other Area Managers/Officers such as the Area Road Operations Manager, Area Education & Learning Manager, and Area Environmental Health Officer, as appropriate.

Care for People Teams (CfP Teams)

6.6 Local Care for People Teams are established within each ELG. Due to geography, some ELGs have opted to develop more than one CfP Team for their area. There are 8 CfP Teams in Highland:

- Lochaber CfP Team
- Skye & Lochaber CfP Team
- Badenoch CfP Team
- Nairn CfP Team
- Caithness CfP Team
- Sutherland CfP Team
- Ross & Cromarty CfP Team
- Inverness CfP Team

6.7 The function of the multi-agency CfP Teams is to deal with all issues related to the care for people affected by an emergency within their local area.

6.8 The decision to activate a CfP Team will be taken by the Chair of the respective ELG, in consultation with the relevant representatives from NHS Highland and The Highland Council. CfP Teams will be chaired by a Senior Social Worker/District Manager of NHS Highland. The composition of the CfP Team will be determined by the scale of the response, the individual circumstances and specific requirements of the incident(s), but will usually include The Highland Council (Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager, Housing, and Children's Services), the British Red Cross, other voluntary organisations and faith groups.

6.9 **It is important to be aware that NHS Highland has lead role in terms of care for people, including activation of Emergency Support Centres (normally managed through the local CfP Team).** This is uncommon in Scotland and the rest of the UK, where the responsibility is usually that of the Local Authority. It follows the integration of local Health and Social Care Services in 2012, with NHS Highland now delivering Adult Social Work and Social Care Services on behalf of The Highland Council. The Council continues to have an important role in providing immediate welfare support during an emergency, for example, through provision of staff and resources to assist in the running of Emergency Support Centres, and retains responsibility for delivering Children's Services.

6.10 Further information about CfP Teams and the provision of care for people in an emergency is available in the HILRP Highland Care for People Guidance document.

Tactical Oversight Group (TOG)

6.11 To support the Tactical response within one or more ELGs, a Resilient Partnership Tactical Oversight Group (TOG) may be established at Divisional Police Headquarters, Inverness. Circumstances requiring a TOG include wide-scale emergencies, such as severe weather, fuel supply disruption or pandemic flu, when several ELGs are activated and there is a need to co-ordinate their work, or in the response to intensive **MAJOR INCIDENTS** when additional resources and Tactical advice/governance is required.

6.12 It will normally be a Police Scotland responsibility to establish and chair the TOG. Those Highland Council staff attending the TOG will include relevant Service Managers and Resilience Officers.

6.13 The TOG will be supported on media and public communications by the NoSRRP Public Communications Group (PCG), which will also provide advice to the Strategic Co-ordinating Group.

LRP Strategic Co-ordinating Group

6.14 In the event of a **MAJOR INCIDENT** or where an emergency has severe impacts, either locally or widespread across a number of ELG areas, there may be a requirement for the response to be co-ordinated at a Strategic level. Similarly, should there is a tangible threat of severe impacts, e.g. if the UK Terror Threat Level is raised to Critical, a Strategic response will usually be required. In which case, the HILRP Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) at Divisional Police Headquarters, Inverness, will be activated.

6.15 The multi-agency LRP SCG will normally be chaired by Police Scotland's Divisional Commander. The Highland Council's LRP SCG Representative will be the Chief Executive or an Executive Officer, as appointed by the Chief Executive or Duty Executive Officer.

6.16 The LRP SCG will be supported by the NoSRRP PCG.

6.17 Once the **Recovery Phase** has formally commenced, the LRP SCG becomes the LRP Recovery Strategic Co-ordinating Group (RSCG) and will be chaired by The Highland Council (see Section 11).

The Highland Council's Emergency Co-ordinator

6.18 The Highland Council's Emergency Co-ordinator will be the Chief Executive, an Executive Officer or other member of the Executive Leadership Team as nominated by the Chief Executive or Duty Executive Officer. The Emergency Co-ordinator will have overall responsibility for co-ordinating The Highland Council major emergency response, including chairing the Corporate Emergency Management Team (CEMT).

Corporate Emergency Management Team (CEMT)

6.19 The CEMT would normally only be activated in the event of a **MAJOR INCIDENT** for the Council and/or partner agencies, when a **MAJOR INCIDENT** is likely to occur, or following a Move to Critical.

6.20 The CEMT is the Council's Strategic group consisting of relevant members of the Executive Leadership Team, with other Senior Officers and representatives as determined by the Emergency Co-ordinator. Administrative support will be provided by Business Support. If activated, a representative from the Recovery Working Group will also attend the CEMT (see Section 11).

6.21 The CEMT will be chaired by the Emergency Co-ordinator. Meetings will be convened within The Highland Council Headquarters building, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX, unless there are practical reasons to use an alternative location.

6.22 A **Draft Agenda for the first CEMT Meeting** is provided in Appendix A.

6.23 The CEMT will co-operate and communicate with other responders, primarily through the LRP Strategic Co-ordinating Group (see Response Framework diagram on page 26). The CEMT will maintain a Strategic overview of all Council operations during a major emergency affecting its functions. It will be responsible for:

a) Assessing the effectiveness of the Council's response to the incident;
b) Mitigating the impact of the incident on the day-to-day functions of the Council;
c) Providing the policy-making and corporate management function Council for the duration of the operational phase;
d) Provide direction for the Tactical and Operational response;
e) Prioritisation and allocation of resources, including identification of mutual aid;
f) Developing communication strategy to keep staff, public, partners and Elected Members informed;
g) Identifying spokespersons to respond to media interviews;
h) Making arrangements to deal with the longer term consequences of the emergency;
i) Financial control of all expenditure incurred by The Highland Council;
j) Plan for recovery; and
k) Continuous assessment of priorities across all Council operations.

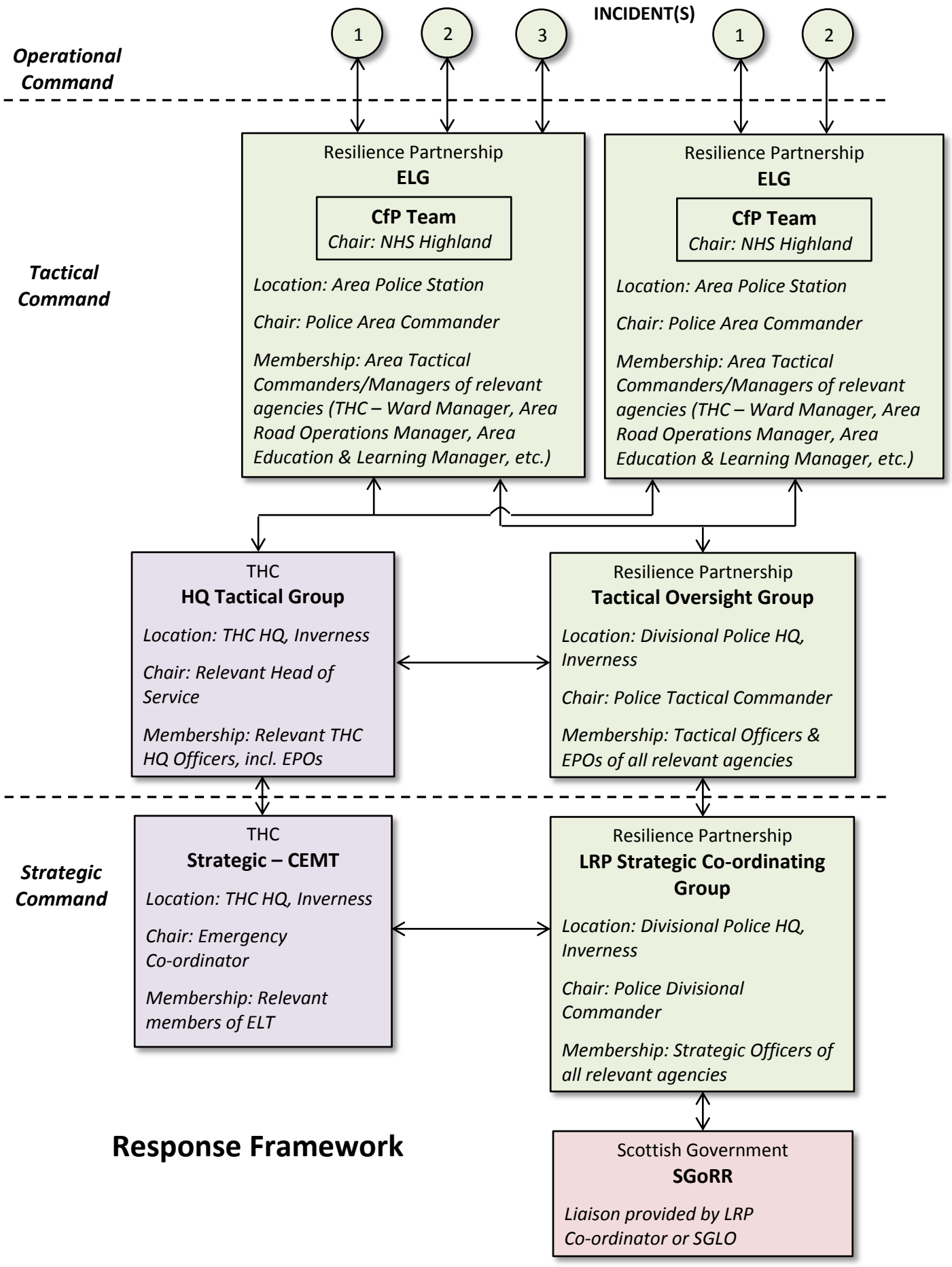
6.24 Despite the occurrence of a **MAJOR INCIDENT**, the Council will still be expected to provide those services for which it is responsible to a level, as far as is practicable, it would be under normal conditions. After the initial callout, members of the CEMT will meet at regular intervals to assess the overall situation, and at irregular intervals if significant changes in the situation warrant it.

HQ Tactical Group (HQ Tactical)

6.25 In most cases the Council's Tactical response to an **UNUSUAL INCIDENT** can be managed through the Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager and other Council Officers participating in the multi-agency ELG(s) or TOG. However, when the Council is substantially involved in the emergency response, or in the event of a **MAJOR INCIDENT**, it is likely that a Highland Council HQ Tactical Group will be required to manage Council staff and resources involved in the front-line response, and the on-going delivery of Council services/support to the community.

6.26 The HQ Tactical Group will comprise Officers from various services who will be responsible for the actual procurement, supply and distribution of resources, liaising with other localities, Local Authorities, the Utilities, Armed Forces and Scottish Government. Officers from other Council services will join the Group as the situation demands.

6.27 Officers from individual services who will make up the HQ Tactical Group will be co-located in The Highland Council Headquarters building, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX.



Response Framework

Section 7: Highland Council Roles and Responsibilities

General

7.1 This Section summarises the broad roles and responsibilities of the various parts of The Highland Council, in terms of emergency response at corporate and service level, thus:

- Duty Executive Officer

- Chief Executive
- Resilience Team
- Corporate Communications
- Senior Ward Managers/Ward Managers
- Legal
- Equal Opportunities
- Trading Standards
- Roads and Transport
- Environmental Health
- Waste Management
- Amenity Operations
- Housing
- Education
- Children's Services
- Finance
- ICT
- Customer Services
- Business Support
- HR
- Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing
- Development and Infrastructure
- Property and Facilities Management
- Infrastructure

- Elected Members

The following key tasks are not intended to be prescriptive or definitive. The degree of service and staff involvement will vary according to the nature of the emergency. Some roles may be shared or rely on close liaison and co-operation with other services or agencies.

Executive Officers have a dual function; they have a key part to play in the corporate response whilst at the same time they are responsible for managing their overall service response. Additionally they have an alerting and advisory role, if participating as the THC Duty Executive Officer.

Duty Executive Officer

7.2 The Duty Executive Officer (EO) has two key functions:

1) Out-of-hours, the Duty EO may be required to initiate the full **Alerting Cascade** as described on page 6. Normally this would be the responsibility of the Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager, or neighbouring Ward Manager, but if the Roads/Housing Duty Officer has been unable to contact these staff, he/she will notify the on-call Duty Executive Officer and the responsibility will defer to them. Likewise, if the Duty EO has been alerted independently to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**, either during office hours or out-of-hours, they have a responsibility to initiate the full **Alerting Cascade** (with assistance from the Resilience Team and Senior Ward Managers/Ward Managers).

2) Out-of-hours and/or in the absence of the Chief Executive, the Duty EO is responsible for **initiating** the Council's Strategic response to a **MAJOR INCIDENT**. This may include, if appropriate:

- Initiating the 2nd Tier of the **Alerting Cascade** as described on page 6;
- Declaring a **MAJOR INCIDENT**;
- Ensuring any additional Local Authority Emergency and/or Business Continuity Plans have been activated;
- Ensuring the HQ Tactical Group is established;
- Ensuring the CEMT is established;
- Appointing an EO as LRP Strategic Representative at the SCC (usually Divisional Police HQ, Inverness), or personally fulfilling this role;
- Appointing a member of the ELT as Highland Council's Emergency Co-ordinator, or personally fulfilling this role.

In addition to these two key roles, the Duty EO may be contacted in respect of circumstances which involve a different response, where a more modest level of assistance is requested or required. For example, the Duty EO may be asked for advice in regard to a **ROUTINE INCIDENT**, or simply find they are being notified of such.

Chief Executive

7.3 **The Chief Executive (and Duty EO) must be advised of any MAJOR INCIDENT occurring within The Highland Council area**. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of Highland Council's response to an emergency, in particular with longer term restoration considerations.

Key tasks include:

- Leading The Highland Council's response to a **MAJOR INCIDENT** and ensuring all obligations are met;
- Liaising with Police Scotland Divisional Commander to consider activation of the LRP SCG, if required;
- Establishing the HQ Tactical Group and CEMT (see Section 6);
- Representing The Highland Council on the LRP SCG (or appointing an Executive Officer to deputise);
- In liaison with Senior Officers of the emergency services and other relevant organisations, determining short and longer-term response strategy;
- Authorising commitment of resources and expenditure;
- Considering aspect of recovery (see Section 11);

- Briefing and consulting with Elected Members;
- Ensuring that effective business continuity arrangements are in place for critical services.

Resilience Team

7.4 Key tasks include:

- In liaison with the Chief Executive, help to co-ordinate the initial Highland Council response to an incident;
- Activation of supporting voluntary services;
- Advising and assisting the Council during the incident;
- Advising and assisting the Council in leading the recovery and return to normality;
- Working closely with all agencies in the Highland area concerned with the protection of people, property and the environment;
- Liaising with Resilience/Emergency Planning counterparts in adjacent Local Authorities if the incident is cross-boundary or if mutual aid is being sought;
- Gathering, collating and distributing Operational information;
- Locating external resources.

Corporate Communications

7.5 Key tasks include:

- Ensuring co-ordinated Council response to media requests (local, national and international);
- Liaison with other agencies involved in the emergency response via the PCG to ensure media statements are accurate and consistent, and warning and informing is carried out;
- Providing PR advice and expertise to Council Services and staff;
- Co-ordination of information to the public and staff;
- Providing information service to Elected Members;
- Monitoring and maintaining information on Council social media platforms;
- Ensuring that significant reporting inaccuracies are rectified;
- Providing, possibly at short notice, printed materials required in connection with a major emergency, e.g. public information leaflets, posters, forms, etc.;
- Representation at Media Briefing Centre, as required;
- Co-ordination of all VIP visits in connection with a **MAJOR INCIDENT**.

Senior Ward Managers/Ward Managers

7.6 Key tasks include:

- Implement the **Alerting Cascade** as set out on page 6 of this Plan;
- Attend ELG meetings and co-ordinate the Council's Tactical response at the local level;
- Ensure services are delivered efficiently in each Ward and work with local agencies and community groups;
- Supporting and assisting longer-term rehabilitation of the community;
- Keeping Ward Members informed.

Legal

7.7 Key tasks include:

- Providing legal advice on all aspects of any emergency, particularly with a view to ensuring the Council response can withstand scrutiny in any subsequent inquiry or liability claims;
- Co-ordination of the pursuit/defence of damages/compensation, as appropriate;
- In conjunction with Finance, establishment and co-ordination of any Disaster Appeals Fund which the Council deems appropriate;
- Extension of the Registrar function which will be put under strain in the event of an emergency resulting in large numbers of deaths.

Equal Opportunities

7.8 Key tasks include:

- Advising on equal opportunities issues, including accessing translation services, etc.

Trading Standards

7.9 Key tasks include:

- Providing public advice regarding the potential problems involved in hiring contactors after a flooding incident, etc.

Roads and Transport

7.10 Key tasks include:

- Providing the immediate out-of-hours Local Authority contact with the Emergency Services via the Roads/Housing Duty Officer who, upon being alerted, will inform the relevant Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager and Duty Executive Officer if required;
- Maintenance of the integrity of the non-trunk road network;
- Providing engineering and technical services in connection with street lighting;
- Providing labour, plant, transport and materials;
- Assisting Police Scotland with traffic and crowd control measures by erecting diversion signs and temporary barriers;
- Facilitating communication with external agencies via Airwave radio (in the event of conventional communication methods failing);
- Leading the Council's response to any flooding incident, including deployment and closure of flood gates within the River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme;
- Leading the response to any shoreline pollution incident;
- Using the @HChighlandroads twitter feed to communicate road closures.

Environmental Health

7.11 Key tasks include:

- Providing advice if any incident has implications for the safety of food, fish or agriculture commodities and the enforcement of any control measures;
- Safeguarding the public against environmental conditions which are prejudicial to public health, including chemical spillage, pollution monitoring and contaminated land;

- In conjunction with Waste Management, identification of site(s) for temporary or permanent disposal of contaminated food and other materials, diseased livestock, oil, chemicals, etc.;
- Liaison with Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Water;
- Providing advice on the handling, storage and transportation of petroleum products and industrial explosives;
- Advice and assistance on the setting up and running of temporary mortuaries;
- Leading the Council's response to animal disease outbreak incidents;
- Carrying out duties under the terms of the Food and Environment Protection Act, 1985, as Investigating and Enforcement Officers;
- Assemble the Recovery Group under the chairpersonship of the Environmental Health Manager or nominated depute.

Waste Management

7.12 Key tasks include:

- In conjunction with Environmental Health, identification of site(s) for temporary or permanent disposal of contaminated food and other materials, diseased livestock, oil, chemicals, etc.;
- Providing advice and resources to assist with the disposal of waste materials generated by an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**.

Amenity Operations

7.13 Key tasks include:

- Providing services relating to cemeteries and crematoria.

Housing

7.14 Key tasks include:

- Working within Care for People Teams to provide humanitarian assistance (including staffing and resourcing of Emergency Support Centres) for all those affected by an incident/emergency;
- Providing temporary or longer-stay accommodation for those made temporarily homeless or otherwise in urgent need of shelter;
- Providing information, advice and assistance to people made temporarily homeless;
- Co-ordination of emergency repairs, cleansing and restoration of Local Authority housing affected by an emergency;
- Ensuring the safety of tenants and property in Local Authority housing stock;
- In conjunction with Corporate Communications, provision of advice to Council tenants when there is a need to evacuate, or when a decision has been taking to fit 'floodguards' to protect properties, etc.

Education

7.15 Key tasks include:

- Make available at short notice schools which may be required as Emergency Support Centres or for other purposes in connection with an emergency;
- Evacuation of certain schools which may be affected by an emergency and the temporary care of any pupils/students and staff evacuated;

- Temporary suspension of pupils' attendance at certain schools for reasons connected with the emergency;
- In conjunction with Corporate Communications, provision of information to parents of pupils/students affected by the emergency;
- Providing, where practicable, alternative arrangements for pupils whose normal school may not be available for reasons connected with an emergency.

Children's Services

7.16 Key tasks include:

- Working within Care for People Teams to provide humanitarian assistance (including staffing and resourcing of Emergency Support Centres) for all those affected by an incident/emergency;
- In conjunction with Care for People Team partners, the provision of welfare response to children and families in the event of an incident/emergency;
- Support and counselling in the short, medium and long term to children and families;
- Advice and assistance, in such matters as welfare rights and benefits, financial and legal assistance, housing, clothing, general practical and emotional welfare, to meet the particular needs of children and families.

Finance

7.17 Key tasks include:

- Providing procurement expertise, utilising existing suppliers and identifying specialist suppliers where necessary;
- Providing financial systems – expenditure recording and control;
- Advising on the financial implications to The Highland Council of the emergency/disaster;
- Collation of details of expenditure incurred by the Council;
- Liaison with the Scottish Government and agencies such as the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd (ITOPF) and the Services with a view to maximising claims under The Bellwin Scheme and ITOPF Insurance schemes;
- Management of any Disaster Appeals Fund in conjunction with the BRC (see Section 15).

ICT

7.18 Key task include:

- Providing and maintaining effective voice and data communication systems including Service Centre operation;
- Arranging temporary redistribution of communication facilities and/or providing additional facilities, as required;
- Co-ordination of the restoration of Council systems which may have been directly affected by an emergency;
- Advising on and developing internal and external communications options utilising e-mail, social media, intranet, internet and other appropriate systems.

Customer Services

7.19 Key tasks include:

- In conjunction with Corporate Communications, the provision of information and advice to the public through Council Service Points and the Service Centre, extending capacity/hours of operation if appropriate.

Business Support

7.20 Key tasks include:

- Providing and co-ordination of administrative support to CEMT, HQ Tactical and Resilience Partnerships;
- Providing administrative systems – logging and record keeping.

HR

7.21 Key tasks include:

- Establishment and maintenance, where necessary, of a shift system of working covering all those directly involved in the emergency;
- Providing staff briefing sessions to those volunteering or required to become part of the emergency response.

Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing

7.22 Key tasks include:

- In conjunction with HR, ensuring appropriate staff welfare and support systems are in place;
- Ensuring staff welfare is not compromised as a result of the emergency response by monitoring those involved through discussion and formal debriefing sessions;
- Monitoring Health, Safety and Wellbeing procedures at all levels of the emergency response;
- Providing guidance to all parts of the Authority on staff welfare and support.

Development and Infrastructure

7.23 Key tasks include:

- In conjunction with Business Gateway Highland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), providing support to businesses affected by an emergency;
- Assistance in regeneration and/or restoration in the event of a major disaster affecting the business community;
- Taking the lead role in the regeneration and/or restoration of any areas physically damaged by an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**;
- In conjunction with Roads and Transport, assessing and organising the repair of structural damage to Local Authority owned infrastructure;
- Providing engineering expertise and advice;
- Providing engineering and technical services in connection with drainage and flood relief.

Property and Facilities Management

7.24 Key tasks include:

- Managing, supporting and maintaining council premises (excluding housing);
- Providing advice on condition and safety of buildings;
- Identifying, where necessary, appropriate premises which may be required during an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT** and arranging any works required to allow such premises to be used.

Elected Members

7.26 An **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT** will not require Elected Members to take on new roles, however it will impact on their routine roles. Firstly, as they represent a key contact point between the public and the Authority, the level of interaction, particularly media pressure, is likely to intensify. Secondly, the rapid onset of a crisis and the potential extent, severity and urgency of issues to be dealt with, may mean that normal decision making processes are delayed, or, in the worst scenario, impossible.

Key tasks include:

- Supporting the Chief Executive and CEMT in provision of emergency relief as quickly as possible, in line with the agreed policy;
- In the case of a prolonged incident, supporting emergency decision making processes to sanction actions/expenditure, as required;
- Representing the interests of the public and providing a public contact point;
- Providing information to Council Officers on the effects of the emergency, public requirements and concerns;
- Acting as spokespersons for The Highland Council in liaison with briefings provided by the Chief Executive, Corporate Communications or Duty Executive Officer;
- Providing representatives to visit the scene or other areas of operation, as appropriate;
- Providing public reassurance.

The community leadership role of Elected Members (see Section 14) will be an important element of the Council's response, especially during an extended **Recovery Phase**.

Section 8: Other Agencies' Roles and Responsibilities

Police Scotland

8.1 Responding to emergencies is a normal feature of the work of Police Scotland. The normal role and responsibilities of the police encompass the protection of life and property. In responding to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**, Police Scotland's responsibilities may be summarised as follows:

- The saving of life in conjunction with other emergency services;
- Co-ordination of the emergency services and assisting other organisations during the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase** of the incident. This applies to all three levels of response: Operational, Tactical and Strategic. If required, the SCC would be opened at Divisional Police Headquarters Inverness to allow all Strategic decision makers for the agencies involved to assemble and make arrangements for the effective management of the emergency response via the LRP SCG;
- The protection and preservation of the scene;
- The investigation of the incident in conjunction with other investigative bodies, where applicable;
- The collation and dissemination of casualty information;
- Co-ordination of the response to the media in the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase**;
- Identification of the dead on behalf of the Procurator Fiscal who is the principal investigator when fatalities are involved;
- Assist The Highland Council during the **Recovery Phase** of the incident.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

8.2 Responding to emergencies is a normal feature of the work of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The normal roles and responsibilities of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service are derived from its long experience in firefighting and rescue operations and encompass the saving of life and protection of property. In responding to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's responsibilities may be summarised as follows:

- Rescue people from fire, flood, transport incidents, machinery and collapsed structures;
- Fight fires and prevent the spread of fire in open and enclosed spaces on or next to land;
- Render humanitarian assistance;
- Protect and mitigate damage to property and the environment from the effects of fire and dealing with hazmat incidents;
- Management of the inner cordon;
- Manage incidents involving hazardous materials;
- Provide qualified scientific advice in relation to hazmat incidents and damage control;
- Assist in mass decontamination of casualties following a CBRN/HAZMAT incident at the request of the Scottish Ambulance Service;
- Investigate the causes of fire.

Scottish Ambulance Service

8.3 The role of the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) is to provide immediate care to patients at the scene of an incident and care during transportation to, from and between healthcare facilities. To supplement road transport, the Service operates and controls an integrated air ambulance service using fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. In the case of an incident requiring decontamination of people exposed to hazardous substances in the community, the Service would assume responsibility for the triage and decontamination of those affected, as an extension of normal operational or major incident procedures. The Scottish Ambulance Service's responsibilities in responding to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT** may be summarised as follows:

- The saving of life and the provision of immediate care to patients at the scene of the incident and in transit to hospital;
- The alerting of hospital services, immediate care GPs and other relevant NHS agencies;
- The management of decontamination for people affected by hazardous substances, prior to evacuation from the scene;
- The evacuation of the injured from the scene in order of medical priority;
- Arranging and ensuring the most appropriate means of transport for the injured to the receiving hospital;
- The supply of patient care equipment to the scene of an incident;
- The transport of appropriate medical staff and their equipment to the scene of an incident;
- Alerting and co-ordinating the work of the Voluntary Aid Societies acting in support of the ambulance service at the incident site;
- The provision and maintenance of communications equipment for medical staff and appropriate Voluntary Aid Society personnel at the scene of an incident;
- The restoration of normality.

NHS Highland

8.4 Highland NHS Board is accountable to the Scottish Government Health Department for the overall assessment of health care needs within Highland area, including a planned response to deal with the consequences of a major emergency. NHS Highland's responsibilities in responding to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT** may be summarised as follows:

- Participation in all Tactical and Strategic multi-agency groups that may be required as part of the overall response;
- Co-ordinate and chair a Scientific and Technical Advice (STAC) cell if required;
- Provide a Medical Incident Officer and appropriate medical services at the incident site;
- Provide a Site Medical Team if required at the incident site;
- Provide medical treatment and health care to casualties;
- Provide health care advice to participating agencies, and the public;
- Chair Care for People Team(s) and co-ordinate Care for People arrangements;
- Provide decontamination facilities at Belford Hospital, Fort William, and Raigmore Hospital, Inverness;
- Liaise with other Health Boards to enlist appropriate support;
- Assess the risk to the public health from contaminated water supplies in conjunction with Scottish Water and Highland Council Environmental Health;
- Provide appropriate support for joint agency media cell and media management;
- Advise the Scottish Government Health Department of health related issues and maintain communication.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

8.5 The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) is the executive agency responsible for implementation of the UK Government's maritime safety policy. In responding to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's responsibilities include:

- The lead agency for action at sea with primary responsibility for providing help to any vessel in need of assistance;
- Co-ordination of maritime Search & Rescue;
- Broadcasting of Marine Safety Information, including Navigation Warnings;
- For non-coastal incidents (such as flooding or severe weather), Coastguard rescue teams will carry out duties delegated to them in support of other emergency services;
- Statutory duty for responding to pollution at sea in accordance with the National Contingency Plan for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations (NCP). The NCP also defines the role of the Secretary of State's Representative (SOSREP) who is able to exercise "*ultimate command and control*" and has the authority to make all decisions relating to maritime intervention and/or the salvage process. In the event of a major oil spill, the MCA will:
    - Lead the at sea response;
    - Act as primary point of contact;
    - Provide advice and technical/scientific expertise, including predictive modelling;
    - Classify, categorise and monitor marine pollution;
    - Co-ordinate the response in accordance with the NCP;
    - Provide access to the UK Government stockpile of oil spill clean-up equipment/resources.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

8.6 The responsibility of activating mutual arrangements between neighbouring Authorities lies with the Council's Chief Executive and their opposite number in any adjoining Authority.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency

8.7 The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) is Scotland's environmental regulator. SEPA's responsibilities include:

- Water quality issues from land based sources in river and estuarine areas up to 3 nautical miles offshore (controlled waters), including monitoring discharges, taking enforcement action where illegal pollution occurs and overseeing remedial work;
- Regulation, and provision of advice on, the treatment, storage, movement and disposal of waste (including radioactive waste);
- As Scotland's flood forecasting and flood warning authority, the provision of:
    - 24/7 live flooding information and advice to the public via Floodline;
    - Flood Guidance Statements (via the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service) issued to Category 1 and 2 Responders to indicate flood risk over the next 5 days;
    - Advice and information to Category 1 and 2 Responders on the risk of flooding from rivers, coastal and tidal areas and also surface water via the Duty Flood Advisor;
- Operating the Airborne Hazards Emergency Response (AHER) service on behalf of the Scottish Government, which provides air quality information to Category 1 and 2 Responders in the event of a serious fire, chemical release, etc.;
- Managing Scottish interests in the Radioactive Incident Monitoring Network (RIMNET);

- Administering jointly with the Health and Safety Executive the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) legislation.

Scottish Water

8.8 Scottish Water has the following responsibilities to:

- Render safe, damaged or threatened plant or supply pipes or sewerage systems;
- Ensure the continuing availability of a safe, drinkable water supply;
- Ensure an adequate supply of water for fire-fighting;
- Liaise with The Highland Council in any flooding incident;
- Shut off damaged water supply to prevent flooding;
- Take a lead role, in support of SEPA, in any inland water pollution incident.

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks

8.9 Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) is responsible for maintaining the electricity transmission and distribution networks in Highland. In the event of a significant power cut, SSEN will provide information to multi-agency resilience partnerships, and engage with Care for People Team(s) to identify vulnerable persons and provide co-ordinated help and support to customers left without power. Live updates on power cuts are available via Power Track.

Food Standards Scotland

8.10 Food Standards Scotland (FSS) is responsible for all aspects of food safety. In the event of a major emergency anywhere in Scotland, FSS will lead on all food safety issues, assessing any implications on the food chain and implementing countermeasures as necessary. It will maintain a capability to:

- Give advice about the impact of contamination on food and on areas of ground used for food production purposes;
- Give advice on the development of decontamination plans;
- Assist in planning the post-incident survey and monitoring programme in liaison with The Highland Council;
- Provide information to consumers and protect their interests through open and effective food enforcement and monitoring.

Health Protection Scotland

8.11 Health Protection Scotland (HPS) plans and delivers effective and specialist national services which co-ordinate, strengthen and support activities aimed at protecting all the people of Scotland from infectious and environmental hazards. This is done by providing advice, support and information to health professionals, national and local government, the general public and a number of other bodies that play a part in protecting health. HPS's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring a consistent, efficient and effective approach in the delivery of health protection services by NHS related agencies;
- Co-ordinating the efforts of public health agencies in Scotland in health protection, especially when a rapid response is required to a major threat;
- Be the source in Scotland of expert advice and support to government, NHS, other organisations and the public on health protection issues.

Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division

8.12 The Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division (SGRPID) has responsibilities for food supply, animal welfare, farming and fishing. It provides expert scientific and technical advice and service on agricultural, horticultural and environmental matters, and has a role in supporting the FSS within any affected area(s).

Animal & Plant Health Agency

8.13 The Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) provides laboratory-based scientific and on-farm services, and is responsible for advising policy-making departments on the delivery aspects for animal health and welfare policy decisions. Key roles include:

- Disease surveillance and provision of advice to livestock keepers;
- Management of disease controls;
- Responding to cases of notifiable disease.

Marine Scotland

8.14 Marine Scotland manages Scotland's waters and is responsible for marine science, planning, policy development, and monitoring compliance. Marine Scotland provides an emergency response for marine environmental incidents and in the event of an oil spill or other pollution incident will:

- Establish and chair the Scottish Environment Group (see Section 7.2.7 of THC Oil Pollution Contingency Plan and MCA STOp Note 2/16);
- Monitor and provide advice on the status and trends of contaminants and their effects in coastal, inshore and offshore waters;
- Act as the authority for the approval of dispersant use.

Scottish Natural Heritage

8.15 Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) is the Scottish Government's principal statutory adviser on issues affecting the natural heritage of Scotland and will provide advice on the likely impact of pollution or any proposed clean-up and its effects.

Health and Safety Executive

8.16 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will maintain a capability to:

- Contribute relevant expertise regarding industrial/major hazard sites, e.g. nuclear or COMAH sites;
- Provide specialist advice on the risks to workers and others at the incident site from chemical, biological or radiological contamination;
- Give advice on decontamination plans and safe systems of work associated with carrying out decontamination activities;
- Assess the adequacy of site owner's proposals in protecting health and safety of workers and members of the public who may be exposed to risk;
- Give advice on site clearance plans and safe systems of work associated with carrying out site clearance activities;
- Ensure enforcement of health and safety regulations at the incident site;
- Give advice about safe systems of work for testing whether decontamination is successful.

Met Office

8.17 The Met Office provides a range of meteorological services to help the authorities prepare for, and respond to, emergencies. Legislation supporting the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) states that Category 1 Responders must have regard to the Met Office's duty to warn the public, and provide information and advice, if an emergency is likely to occur or has taken place. This duty includes issuing Severe Weather Warnings and plume predictions, tidal alerts (provided by the Scottish Flood Forecasting Service), together with dedicated forecasts and warnings to Category 1 Responders.

The Met Office has a team of Civil Contingencies Advisors who will engage directly with Category 1 Responders and multi-agency resilience groups to provide advice, particularly when severe weather is expected to have a major impact on the public. During an incident, Met Office Civil Contingencies Advisors will:

- Ensure that responders have consistent information and fully understand the information that has been provided by the Met Office such as Severe Weather Warnings, CHEMETS, etc.;
- Act as a point of contact for the Met Office and sourcing specialist advice from Met Office HQ when needed;
- Help with interpretation of information on Hazard Manager.

British Red Cross

8.18 The British Red Cross (BRC) is a voluntary agency and a core member of the Care for People Team(s) (see Highland Care for People Guidance). In Highland, the BRC has undertaken to manage any Emergency Support Centre that may be established and will register attendees as necessary. As well as having access to a fleet of 4x4 vehicles, the BRC is custodian of the Scottish Government's emergency communications vehicle (SARCOM) which can be called on to act as a Local Authority Forward Control point if required.

Highland 4x4 Response

8.19 Highland 4x4 Response is a group made up of volunteers who can be asked to deploy their 4x4 vehicles to transport people such as home carers, NHS staff and other essential responders, or to transport essential equipment, when roads are not suitable for normal vehicles.

Victim Support

8.20 Victim Support is an independent charity which provides counselling and support to people affected by crime or a traumatic event. The service is free, confidential and is provided through a network of community based victim and youth justice services and court based witness services.

Scottish Flood Forum

8.21 The Scottish Flood Forum (SFF) is an independent organisation which aims to reduce the impacts of flooding on individuals and communities, through providing immediate support and by establishing a network of community resilience groups in flood risk areas. The SFF works with Local Authorities and their partners in raising community awareness, promoting self-help and developing community groups. It also works with Local Authorities to establish a recovery

support programme after a flood to ensure support is in place for the affected communities for the long term.

Armed Forces

8.22 All three military services represent a wide range of professions, trades and skills and together possess a variety of specialised equipment not normally held by Local Authorities. Generally the aid of the armed forces is not sought except in cases of natural disaster, terrorist incident or some other catastrophic event.

The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) places no statutory responsibility on the MOD to plan and prepare for civil crises; however the armed forces may provide support at the request of a Category 1 Responder through Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA). The level of response would depend on the nature of the emergency and the commitment of the forces elsewhere.

A request for military assistance has considerable financial implications. No request for military assistance will be made without the prior approval of the Chief Executive (or in her absence, the Duty Executive Officer) and if it is decided that such assistance is necessary the request must be channelled through the Resilience Team. Where lives are at risk, the request must be channelled through Police Scotland.

Further information, including examples of assistance, financial aspects and how to request aid, can be found in the Joint Doctrine Publication 02: UK operations: the defence contribution to resilience and security (third edition).

Section 9: Activation

General

9.1 Experience has shown that an apparently minor emergency can quickly and unpredictably escalate into a **MAJOR INCIDENT**. It is far easier to stand down after a 'false alarm' than it is to rush belatedly with rapidly moving events. Individuals need to be given the earliest possible warning of a potential need for assistance giving them time to:

- Activate, or place on standby, other staff members;
- Gain a growing understanding of the incident as information becomes available;
- Think and plan ahead;
- Relay warnings or briefings of a potential risk through their management structures; and
- Prepare for deployment of resources.

9.2 The Highland Council General Emergency Plan will be activated as soon as formal or informal information indicates that an emergency has occurred or is likely to occur within the administrative area of the Council, and which has the potential to exceed the capacity to deal with effectively using normal day-to-day response arrangements.

9.3 The diagram on page 43 below shows the initial activation arrangements for the implementation of this Plan. Section 1 above includes the **Alerting Cascade** and **Immediate Actions Guide** for key individuals/services.

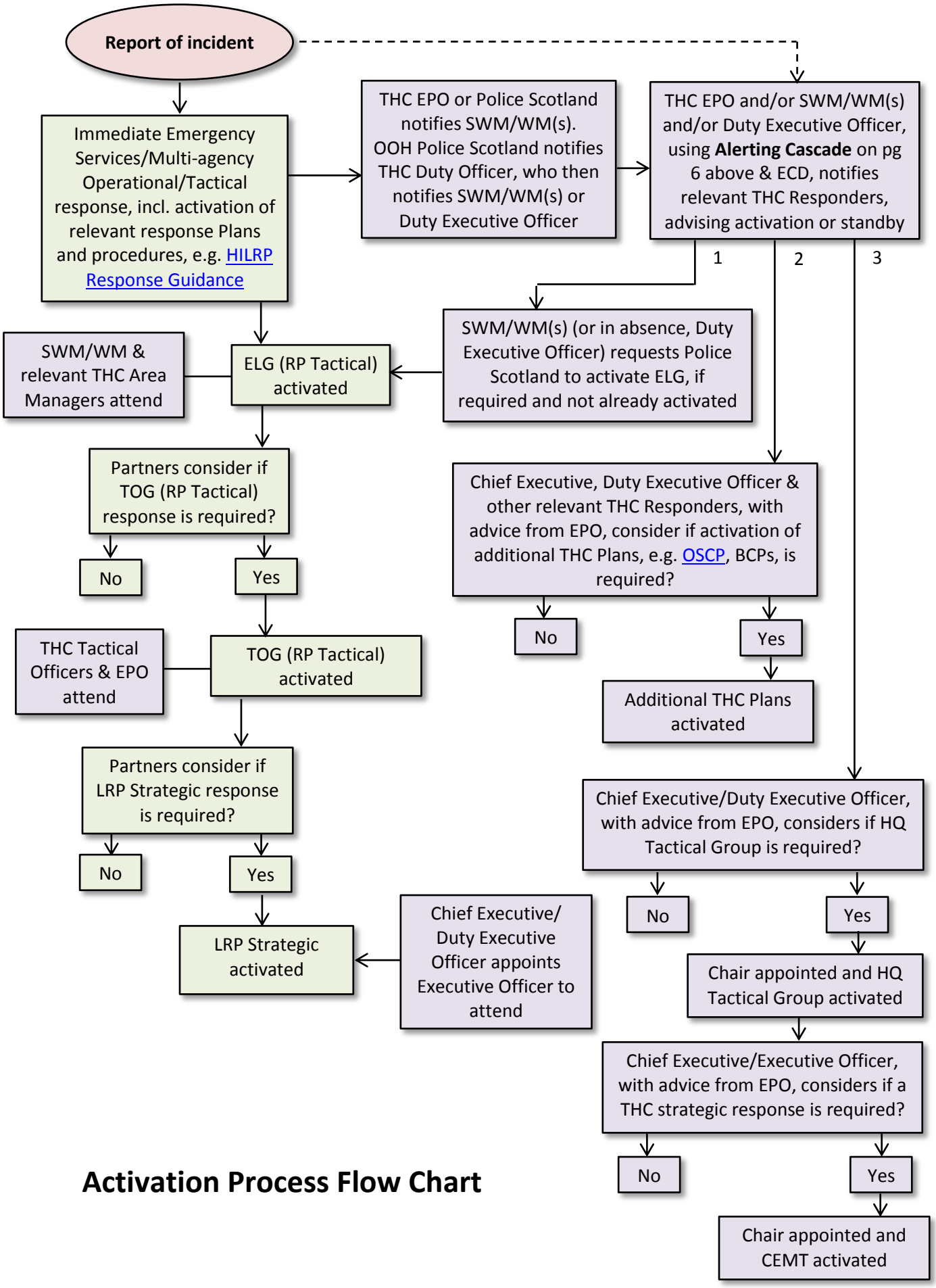
Stand Down

9.4 There may be a phased stand down of individual services when their involvement in the incident is complete. A full stand down will be achieved when the long-term measures to alleviate hardship and repair damage can be dealt with by normal management.

9.5 Should **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENTS** be resolved during the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase**, notice to stand down will be issued by the lead responding organisation, usually Police Scotland. If the response was limited to Tactical level, this notice will be communicated to the Senior Ward Manager/Ward Manager and/or the Resilience Team for dissemination to other Council responders. If Strategic level was activated, notice to stand down will be issued to the Chief Executive or Duty Executive Officer (or THC's Emergency Co-ordinator, if a different person).

9.6 In the event of a **MAJOR INCIDENT**, reports on activities from all services should be forwarded to the Chief Executive, the Council's Emergency Co-ordinator and the Resilience Team as soon as possible.

9.7 A debrief will be held for all agencies involved. A hot and cold debrief is essential to capture learning from all incidents. This will be organised by the Resilience Team or the NoSRRP Learning and Development Co-ordinator.



Activation Process Flow Chart

Section 10: Warning and Informing

For further information, this Section should be read in conjunction with:
NoSRRP Public Communications Plan

Information to Elected Members

10.1 It will be the responsibility of the Chief Executive to regularly keep Elected Members fully informed of actions being taken by The Highland Council. Senior Ward Managers/Ward Managers will liaise with Ward Members to ensure they are kept informed of any local impacts.

Information to Staff

10.2 Information to staff will be co-ordinated by Corporate Communications using the most appropriate means available.

10.3 The Executive Leadership Team will use an "emergencies" WhatsApp group to relay urgent information out-of-hours.

Information to the Public

10.4 Police Scotland or the lead responding agency is normally responsible for warning the public or present or anticipated danger. Such warning may be given by:

- Social media, e.g. @policescotland;
- Local broadcast media, e.g. BBC Scotland, STV, Moray Firth Radio, Two Lochs Radio;
- Door-to-door visits;
- Public address system, by foot patrol or by mobile unit.

10.5 The provision of accurate information to the public following an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT** is essential to reassure the local population and other who could be affected, and to give practical advice relating to the consequences of the incident (such as safety of food and water supplies, housing, welfare and financial assistance). This action will help to reduce the number of unnecessary enquiries.

10.6 The Council's Communications and Resilience Manager, as a member of the NoSRRP Public Communications Group (PCG), will ensure that liaison is established across the Emergency Services, other statutory agencies such as government departments and all responding agencies, to co-ordinate any release of information.

10.7 Any information and advice should be channelled through the Corporate Communications and Resilience Manager who will arrange for it to be broadcast or published as necessary through social media or other means.

10.8 If necessary, the Highland Resilience alert system will be activated to send SMS alerts to public subscribers.

10.9 Local Information Centres can be established at designated locations using Council facilities, such as Council Service Points and schools, or in conjunction with High Life Highland at libraries and community centres. Where possible, SFRS will make available local Fire Stations as communication hubs in order to assist communities in the event of a power outage or communications failure.

10.10 The Council's Service Centre may also be used to provide advice and receive requests from members of the public affected by an emergency.

10.11 The collection, collation and provision of information about casualties is the responsibility of the Police Casualty Bureau.

Information to the Media

10.12 A **MAJOR INCIDENT** will attract extensive media attention with representatives of the local, national and possibly the international press attending. The media response will focus initially on the scene of the incident. The issue of regular bulletins is important to demonstrate reassurance in the emergency services.

10.13 Social media will be a significant source of information and often misinformation, speculation and rumour. It is especially powerful as a tool of citizen journalism, with direct access to witnesses at the scene. It is therefore imperative that the communication from the PCG gives an accurate, timely and reassuring account of the incident and is used for warning and informing. Rapid clearance and approval of information is vital.

10.14 Very soon the media will expect comprehensive details of the incident. Police Scotland, in conjunction with other Category 1 Responders, may decide to open a Media Briefing Centre (MBC) to provide a single source of information, away from the incident scene. Media interest in casualties, survivors and evacuees will be centred in hospitals, Emergency Support Centres and possibly temporary mortuaries. Every effort should be made to protect the interests of those affected by the incident against intrusion. Media visits to such locations should only take place with approval and under supervision.

10.15 All statements to be issued to the Press on behalf of the Council must first be approved by the Chief Executive or, if this is not practicable for whatever reason, by the Duty Executive Officer or Corporate Communications and Resilience Manager. Statements issued must be factual and Officers must resist attempts by the media to elicit opinions of the Authority's activities and should refer all media enquiries to the Corporate Communications Department or Media Centre is set up.

Section 11: Recovery

For further information, this Section should be read in conjunction with:
HILRP Recovery: A Guidance Document for the Highland & Islands Councils

General

11.1 The response to most **MAJOR INCIDENTS** usually comprises two distinct phases: the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase** and the **Recovery Phase**. However, the transition from one to the other can sometimes be blurred. Planning for recovery must start as early as possible in the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase** to ensure that response strategies do not, unwittingly, prejudice future recovery activities.

Emergency Response/Acute Phase

11.2 The **Emergency Response/Acute Phase** covers the actions taken immediately to minimise the damage caused by the incident to the local populace and the environment. This phase will normally be controlled and directed by the Police Scotland Divisional Commander.

Recovery Phase

11.3 The **Recovery Phase** is harder to define due to the extensive variety of potential circumstances resulting from an incident. It is normally defined as the extended period, beyond the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase**, when actions are taken to protect the public and the environment from longer term risks and promote an early return to normal life. In certain circumstances this may not necessarily equate to a restoration of pre-incident conditions.

Recovery Working Group

11.4 If required, a Recovery Working Group will be set up at the very start of an emergency, i.e. during the **Emergency Response/Acute Phase**. The Recovery Working Group will usually be chaired by the Council's Environmental Health Manager and will consider the longer term measures to begin to alleviate hardship, repair damage and aid the restoration of normality for affected communities and the environment. The Recovery Working Group will work in tandem with the LRP Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) and the Council's Corporate Emergency Management Team (CEMT)

Recovery Strategic Co-ordinating Group

11.5 At a suitable and agreed point, the Strategic co-ordination of the response will be formally handed over from Police Scotland to The Highland Council. The Recovery Working Group will then be incorporated into a Recovery Strategic Co-ordinating Group (RSCG). The Council's Chief Executive will assume responsibility for direction of the RSCG, with the group chaired by an Executive Officer or nominated depute.

11.6 The RSCG will meet at a suitable location, as determined by the circumstances at the time, within The Highland Council Headquarters building, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX.

11.7 The core membership of the RSCG is shown in the table below. Depending on the nature of the incident, additional representatives from other relevant organisations will be invited to join the group. Membership of the RSCG will be kept under review by the Chair as the number of organisations needing to be involved will inevitably change as work progresses.

RSCG Core Members	The Highland Council (*Chair*)
	Police Scotland
	NHS Highland
	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
RSCG Optional Members (list not exhaustive)	Food Standards Scotland (FSS)
	Forestry Commision
	Health Protection Scotland (HPS)
	Environmental Health, The Highland Council
	Health and Social Care, The Highland Council
	Property and Housing, The Highland Council
	Waste Management, The Highland Council
	Trading Standards, The Highland Council
	Marine Scotland
	Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)
	Ministry of Defence (MoD)
	National Farmers Union (NFU)
	Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR)
	Scottish Water
	Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division
	Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)
	Historic Environment Scotland (HES)
	Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA)
	Site Operators
	Transport Providers (rail, road, air, etc.)
	Utilities (gas, electricity, telephone, etc.)
	Visit Scotland
	Voluntary Organisations (VOs)

Further Reading

11.8 Some additional sources of information on Recovery are listed below:

Recovering from Emergencies in Scotland (interim guidance). Scottish Government

National Recovery Guidance – Detailed Guidance. Cabinet Office

National Recovery Guidance – Economic Issues. Cabinet Office

National Recovery Guidance – Environmental Issues. Cabinet Office

UK Recovery Handbooks for Radiation Incidents 2015. Public Health England

UK Recovery Handbook for Chemical Incidents. Public Health England

Government Decontamination Service 2014: CBRN and HazMat incidents: specialist suppliers that deal with decontamination.

Buncefield Multi-Agency Recovery Plan.

Flooding Recovery

Section 12: Staff

Staff Rotas

12.1 Any **MAJOR INCIDENT** is likely to extend beyond the period of a working day, therefore each Service must identify an Officer who will be responsible for preparing rotas and establishing an appropriate shift system in conjunction with HR.

Staff Health and Safety

12.2 Existing standards and requirements for health and safety at work will apply to major emergency responses by the Council. This includes risk assessments. However, due to urgency and the rapidly changing nature of major emergencies, it is likely that more reliance will be placed on dynamic risk assessment. Dynamic risk assessment is only acceptable where the potential for harm was not foreseeable. Awareness of hazards and their potential to cause harm will need to be addressed by all levels of response. It must be remembered that this is a continuous process.

12.3 It is important that Managers and other staff recognise when their limit of knowledge and understanding of the potential hazards has been reached and they will need to seek competent advice before proceeding with an activity. In a multi-agency response environment the assessment and management of risk will need to be carried out on a multi-agency basis.

Staff Welfare

12.4 Staff engaged in major emergency response can find the experience emotionally challenging. Exposure to traumatic sights or close contact with people who have just experienced or witnessed a traumatic event can be distressing.

12.5 Crisis management involving long working hours combined with intense activity that demands quick decision making is potentially stressful. Careful selection of staff for such roles can help to minimise any risk. Management awareness of those staff with personal links to individuals directly involved in the disaster or direct links to similar events in the past should also form part of the criteria for responding to personnel selection.

12.6 Staff on duty are likely to feel themselves indispensable and are likely to be unwilling to stand down while there is still much work to be done. Managing shift lengths and rotation of staff, structured breaks with adequate refreshments and opportunities to engage in informal discussion with colleagues away from the ‘front line’ can help to minimise potentially damaging stress or fatigue. Regular team briefings and situation reports can engender confidence and help staff to feel they are part of a team that is in control.

12.7 Staff should be made aware, via Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing, of professional counselling services and how they can access them.

Section 13: Financial & Legal Aspects – Record Keeping

General

13.1 With a policy of disaster co-ordination at a local level in the UK, there are funding challenges when such events occur. The Bellwin Scheme theoretically makes provision for financial assistance to Local Authorities which have incurred substantial expenditure in dealing with the effects of a disaster. A Council will not qualify for assistance until it has expended a prescribed amount, usually related to a percentage of the Council Tax proceeds, after which Councils may be able to claim a percentage of expenditure, to be determined at the time, above this threshold.

13.2 The costs incurred in responding to a disaster **must** be recorded appropriately from the outset. The Council should clarification from the Scottish Government and any relevant insurer about what specific details are required, but as a guide the following information should be recorded:

- Delineation of the area affected, describing the extent of pollution/damage. This should include, for example, maps, photographs and video.
- Summary of events, including description and justification of the work carried out, including:
    - An explanation of why the various working methods were selected;
    - Dates on which work was carried out at each site;
    - Labour costs at each site (number and category of response personnel, regular or overtime rates of pay, hours or days worked, other costs);
    - Travel, accommodation and living costs for response personnel;
    - Equipment costs at each site (types of equipment used, rate of hire or cost of purchase, quantity used, period of use);
    - Consumable materials (description, quantity, unit cost and where used);
    - Any remaining value at the end of the operations of equipment and materials purchased;
    - Age of equipment not purchased but used in the incident; and
    - Transport costs (number and types of vehicles, number of hours or days operated, rate of hire or operating cost).

13.3 Similarly, records must be kept of key decisions and actions taken during the response to an incident. This will take the form of: minutes of meetings (explaining why a particular course of action has been agreed); a recording system showing key messages, together with subsequent actions and personal logs kept by responding Officers. It should be assumed from the outset that some form of post-incident inquiry will take place.

13.4 All documents relating to the incident must be collated and retained securely in accordance with the Council's Corporate Retention Schedules. All documentation relating to the incident is legally disclosable.

13.5 By maintaining such records, the Council will be in a good position to present compensation claims to appropriate bodies and to answer any subsequent claims against themselves.

Section 14: Community Leadership

During the Emergency Response/Acute Phase

14.1 In any major civil emergency where the community has been adversely affected there will be a need for community leadership.

14.2 It is important that Senior Officers and Elected Members adopt a leadership role during a **MAJOR INCIDENT** affecting their local community. The Leader of the Council, Chief Executive and/or members of the CEMT will be made available to the media and public to act in this capacity. Those undertaking this role will need to be fully briefed by the Emergency Co-ordinator and Corporate Communications and be prepared to respond to questions at press conferences and interviews. Policy on public information will, if active, be available from the NoSRRP Public Communications Group (PCG) and disseminated to all responding agency media teams. It is important that a multi-agency agreement is adopted for the response thus providing a cohesive approach to community information messages.

14.3 It is recommended that condolence messages and support for the work of the emergency services and reassurances that all possible is being done are included where applicable. Policy decisions and speculation on cause or outcome should be avoided.

During the Recovery Phase

14.4 Following a **MAJOR INCIDENT**, The Highland Council will lead on multi-agency recovery working (see Section 11). It is possible that a community liaison group will be formed to enable local views to be taken into account when decisions and priorities are determined. To ensure that any place-shaping activity is fully inclusive, it will be essential for Ward Members whose area was affected by the emergency to be engaged in this process as community leaders.

Section 15: Disaster Appeals and Trust Funds

General

15.1 In the aftermath of major disasters it is usual for there to be a significant and generous response from the public, both nationally and internationally.

15.2 Arrangements and procedures should be established in advance for the immediate disbursement of funds to those who require such assistance. The British Red Cross has established the Disaster Appeal Scheme which is designed to provide a set of procedures and mechanisms which any Local Authority faced with a major disaster can use promptly to establish a Disaster Appeal Fund.

Section 16: Associated Plans and Guidance Documents

General

17.1 Plans and pre-identified responses are listed below. Many of these documents can be accessed via the Resilience and Emergency Planning page on the Council's Intranet

Plan Owner	Plans and Pre-identified Response Documents
The Highland Council	General Emergency Plan (this plan)
	Emergency Communications Directory (ECD)
	Duty Officers' Procedures Guidance
	Service Business Continuity Plans
	School Major Incident Plans (incl. Lockdown Procedures)
	Building Security and Evacuation Plans
	Oil Pollution Contingency Plan
	Oil Spill Contingency Plan for Highland Council Harbours
	Port Health Plan - Ships
	Port Health Plan - Aircraft
	Inverness Flood Alleviation Scheme Operation Manual
COMAH Installations *(Plans written, maintained and tested by The Highland Council)*	Invergordon Distillery External Emergency Plan
	Kyleakin Fish Feed Plant External Emergency Plan
	Lochaber Smelter External Emergency Plan
	Loch Ewe Oil Fuel Depot External Emergency Plan
REPPIR Installations *(Plans written, maintained and tested by The Highland Council)*	Nigg Oil Terminal External Emergency Plan
	DSRL Dounreay Off-site Emergency Plan
	NRTE Vulcan, Dounreay Off-site Emergency Plan
	Highsafe – Loch Ewe Nuclear Submarine Berth Emergency Plan
Inverness ELG	Inverness City Centre Emergency Plan
Highlands and Islands Local Resilience Partnership (HILRP)	Response Guidance
	Highland Care for People Guidance
	Recovery: A Guidance Document for the Highland & Islands Councils
	Fuel Arrangements
	Information Sharing Document for Major Emergencies
North of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (NoSRRP)	Public Communications Plan
	Mass Fatalities Framework
	CBRN Plan
	Coastal Pollution Arrangements
	A9 Trunk Road Community Emergency Plan
Scottish Regional Resilience Partnerships (SRRPs)	Resilient Telecommunications Plan for Scotland
	Framework for Exotic Notifiable Animal Diseases Contingency Plan
Scottish Government	Management of Public Health Incidents Guidance

UK Government	National Emergency Plan for Fuel (NEP-F)
	National Contingency Plan for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations (NCP)
	Scientific, Technical and Operational Advice Notes (STOp Notes)
Airports	Inverness Airport Multi-agency Initial Response Plan
	Wick Airport Multi-agency Initial Response Plan
Ports and Harbours	Beatrice Oil Pollution Emergency Plan
	Caledonian MacBrayne Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Gills Harbour Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Glensanda Harbour Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Inverness Harbour Trust Port Emergency Plan
	Inverness Harbour Trust Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Kishorn Quarry Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Kyleakin Fish Feed Plant Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Loch Ewe Oil Fuel Depot Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Mallaig Harbour Port Emergency Plan
	Mallaig Harbour Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Nigg Oil Terminal Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Port of Corpach Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Port of Cromarty Firth Port Emergency Plan
	Port of Cromarty Firth Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	QinetiQ BUK [Kyle of Lochalsh] Emergency Preparedness Plan
	QinetiQ BUTEC [Kyle of Lochalsh] Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Scrabster Harbour Port Emergency Plan
	Scrabster Harbour Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Shell North Sea Operations Onshore Oil Pollution Emergency Plan
	Ullapool Harbour Port Emergency Plan
	Ullapool Harbour Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	Wick Harbour Trust Oil Spill Contingency Plan
Other Site-specific	Cairngorm Mountain and Funicular Railway Multi-agency Initial Emergency Response Plan
Community-based	Community Resilience Plans
Scottish Water	Major Water Services Incidents – Generic Guidance For Scotland (MWSI)
	Scottish Waterborne Hazard Plan (SWHP)
	Wastewater Pollution Incidents Risk Management Guidance (WPI-RMG)
SEPA	National Water Scarcity Plan
Forestry Commission	Scottish Windblow Contingency Plan

Appendix A: Draft Agenda for the first CEMT Meeting

(Note-taker required)

1. Introduction by THC Emergency Co-ordinator/Chairperson of the CEMT, to include a security briefing (action to be taken in the event of an alarm, etc.).

2. Reason for meeting – SitRep, to include:
    a. Nature of the incident
    b. If terrorism-related incident, revised Threat Level – Police Scotland briefing
    c. Resilient Partnerships activated (e.g. ELG(s), CfP Team(s), TOG, LRP Strategic, PCG), with THC representation; HQ Tactical Group activated

3. Establish Strategic Objectives (in line with the 7 statutory duties under the Civil Contingency Act – see page 12 of GEP):
    a. Assess risk
    b. Take actions to protect people, physical assets, information and processes
    c. Advise/alert staff – Activate Business Continuity Plans
    d. Promote Business Continuity
    e. Communicate with the public and Elected Members
    f. Share information and co-operate with other Partners/Responders

4. Assess risk, to include:
    a. If terrorism-related incident, review GraSP in light of Police Scotland briefing (areas of highest threat/likelihood)
    b. Constraints which may affect delivery of the Council's emergency response functions in terms of welfare, the environment, infrastructure, information and processes, e.g. support to the emergency services, provision of humanitarian assistance to people in distress (via CfP Team(s)), accommodation for those rendered homeless, clean-up of shoreline contamination, re-opening of road network, etc.
    c. Impact on the day-to-day functions of the Council

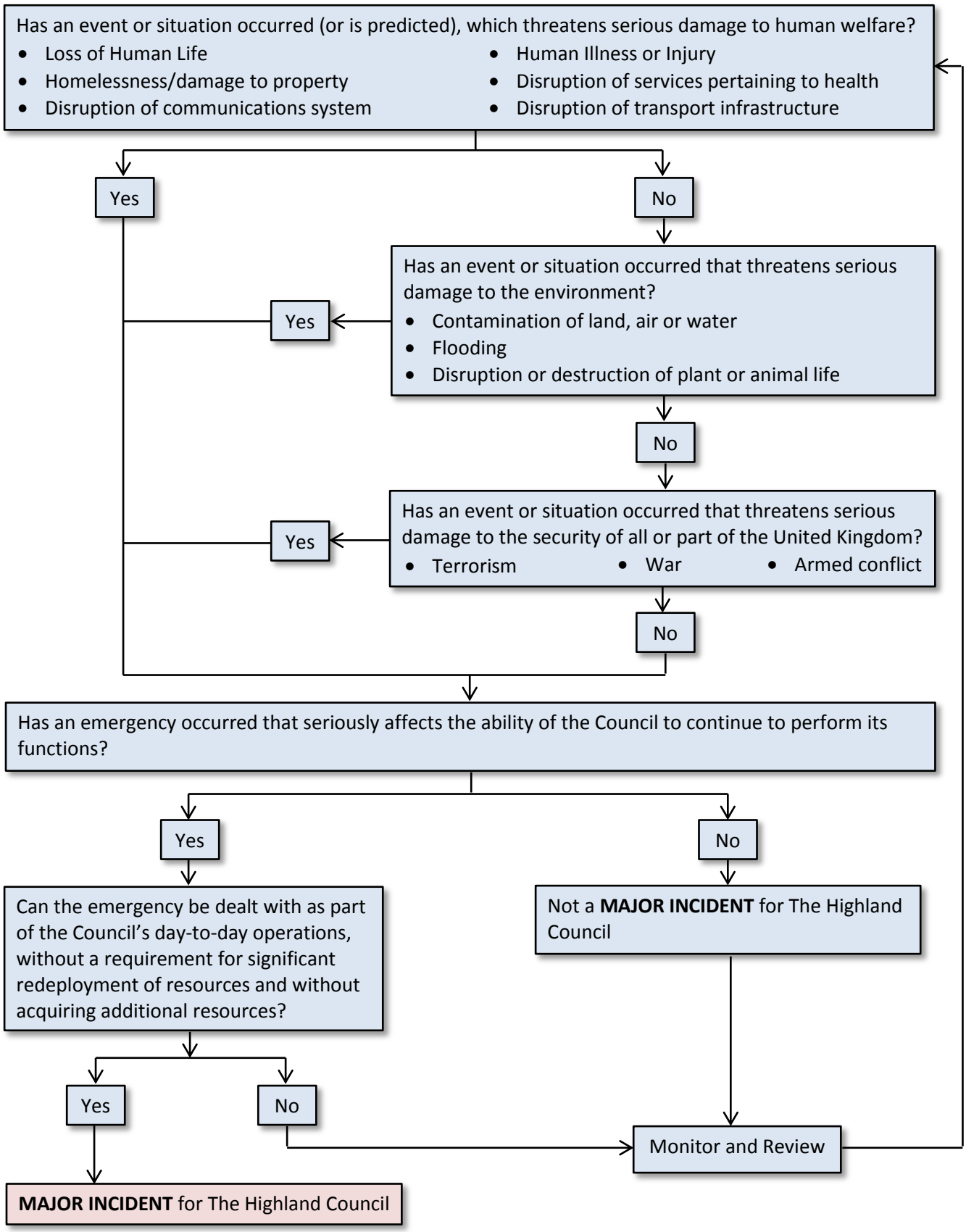
5. Immediate actions, to include:
    a. Protection of the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and the public
    b. Redirection or sourcing external staff/resources to satisfy the level of demand necessary for the Council to provide its functions
    c. Implementation of other Corporate Business Continuity options

6. Communications Plan, to include:
    a. Protocol for disseminating information to staff, media and public
    b. Time and venue for the first Press Conference or media briefing
    c. Links with Elected Members, Scottish Government, Resilience Partnerships, including procedure for regular SitReps

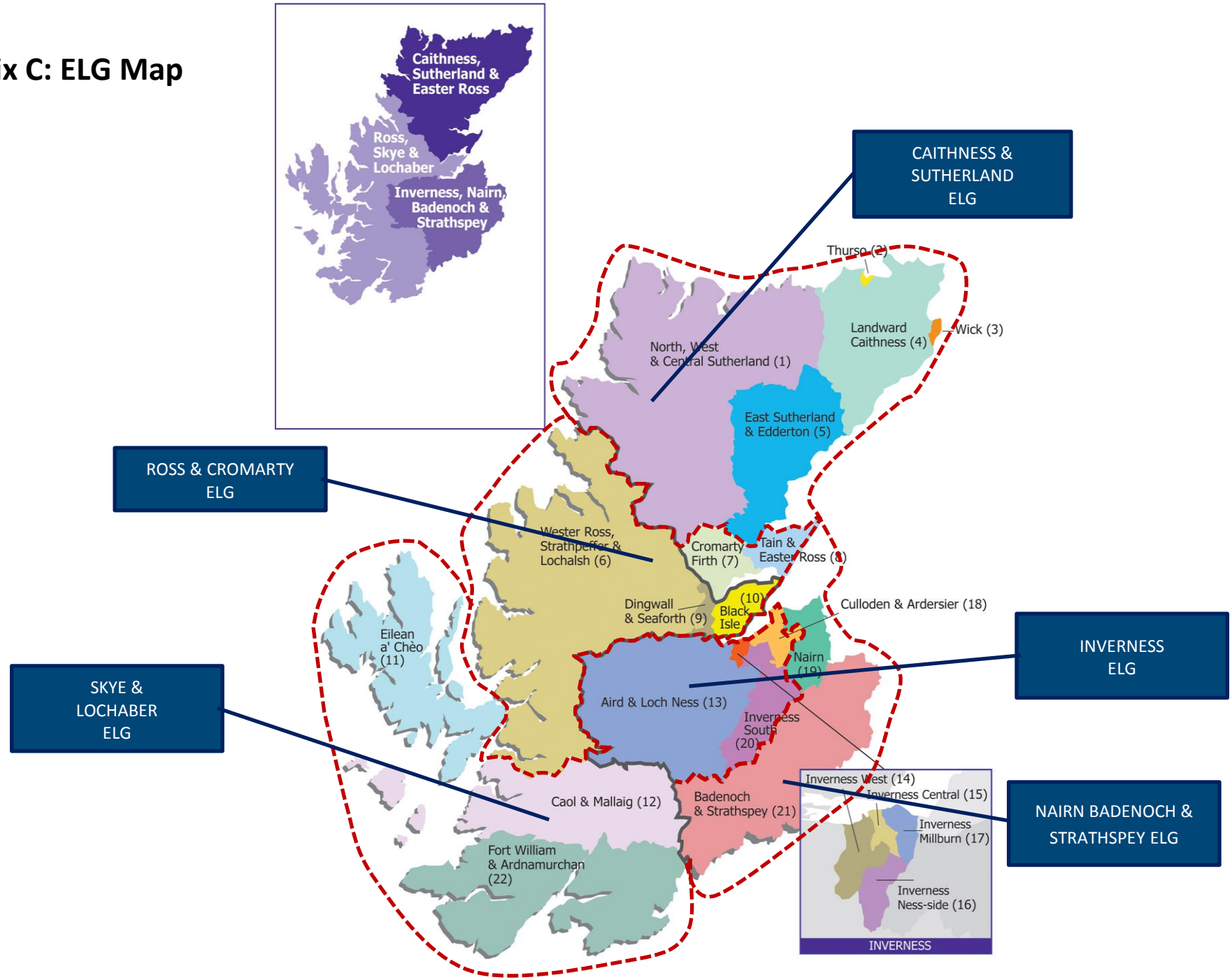
7. Times and dates for future meetings. This may be up to twice daily in the early stages of a **MAJOR INCIDENT**

8. AOCB

Appendix B: MAJOR INCIDENT Determination Chart



Appendix C: ELG Map



Abbreviations and Acronyms

The following abbreviations and acronyms are used in this Plan and are likely to be encountered during the response to an **UNUSUAL** or **MAJOR INCIDENT**. An additional resource is the Cabinet Office National Lexicon of UK Civil Protection Terminology.

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
AHAC	Airborne Hazard Advisory Cell
AHER	Airborne Hazards Emergency Response
AIO	Ambulance Incident Officer
APHA	Animal & Plant Health Agency
ARCC	Air Rescue Co-ordination Centre
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
BRC	British Red Cross
CA	Competent Authority
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear
CCA	Civil Contingencies Act
CCO	Casualty Clearing Officer
CEMT	Corporate Emergency Management Team
CfP	Care for People
CHEMET	CHEmical METeorology Report
CGOC	Coastguard Operations Centre
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
CNC	Civil Nuclear Constabulary
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Room
COMAH	Control of Major Accident Hazards
COPFS	Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service
CPHM	Consultant in Public Health Medicine
CPSO	Counter Pollution and Salvage Officer
CRIP	Common Recognised Information Picture
CT	Counter Terrorism
CTSA	Counter Terrorism Security Adviser
DBEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
DPH	Director of Public Health
ECC	Emergency Control Centre
ECD	Emergency Communications Directory
ECG	Emergency Co-ordination Group
EHO	Environment Health Officer
ELG	Emergency Liaison Group
ELT	Executive Leadership Team
EMARC	Environment Monitoring and Response Centre
EO	Executive Officer
EPO	Emergency Planning Officer (aka Resilience Officer)
ERL	Emergency Reference Level
FAIO	Forward Ambulance Incident Officer
FCC	Forward Control Centre
FCP	Forward Control Point
FMIP	Forward Media Information Point
FSS	Food Standards Scotland
GEP	General Emergency Plan
GraSP	Graduated Security Plan

HAZMAT	HAZardous MATerial
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HIE	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
HILRP	Highlands and Islands Local Resilience Partnership
HMCG	Her Majesty's Coastguard
HPS	Health Protection Scotland
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
HSEQ	Health, Safety, Environment and Quality
IEM	Integrated Emergency Management
ICP	Incident Control Post
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ITOPF	International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LEMA	Local Emergency Mortuary Arrangements
LO	Liaison Officer
LRP	Local Resilience Partnership
MACA	Military Aid to the Civil Authorities
MACC	Multi-agency Co-ordination Centre
MAH	Major Accident Hazard
MAIB	Marine Accident Investigation Branch
MAIRP	Multi-agency Initial Response Plan
MATTE	Major Accident to the Environment
MBC	Media Briefing Centre
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MIO	Medical Incident Officer
MIP	Major Incident Plan
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRC	Marine Response Centre
MWSI	Major Water Services Incidents – Generic Guidance For Scotland
NCP	National Contingency Plan (for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations)
NEMA	National Emergency Mortuary Arrangements
NEP-F	National Emergency Plan for Fuel
NFU	National Farmers Union
NHS	National Health Service
NMOC	National Maritime Operations Centre
NPIS	National Poisons Information Service
NoSRRP	North of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership
NSC	National Security Council
ONR	Office of Nuclear Regulation
OOH	Out of Hours
OPEP	Oil Pollution Emergency Plan
OSCP	Oil Spill Contingency Plan
PCG	Public Communications Group
PIO	Police Incident Officer
PIZ	Public Information Zone
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PoCF	Port of Cromarty Firth
POLREP	POLlution REPort
PS	Police Scotland

RAYNET	Radio Amateurs Emergency Network
RD	Resilience Direct
REPPIR	Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations
RG	Recovery Group
R/H	Roads/Housing
RIMNET	Radiation Incident Monitoring Network
RN	Royal Navy
RNLI	Royal National Lifeboat Institution
RP	Resilience Partnership
RPTOG	Resilience Partnership Tactical Oversight Group
RRP	Regional Resilience Partnership
RSCG	Recovery Strategic Co-ordinating Group
RTC	Road Traffic Collision
RVP	Rendezvous Point
RVS	Royal Voluntary Service
RWG	Recovery Working Group
SAGE	Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies
SAR	Search and Rescue
SAS	Scottish Ambulance Service
SCC	Strategic Co-ordinating Centre
SCG	Strategic Co-ordinating Group
SEG	Standing Environment Group
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SFRS	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
SGLO	Scottish Government Liaison Officer
SGoRR	Scottish Government Resilience Room
SGRPID	Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division
SITREP	SITuation REPort
SMT	Senior Management Team
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SOSREP	Secretary of State's Representative
SPOC	Single Point of Contact
SRC	Shoreline Response Centre
SRP	Scottish Resilience Partnership
SRRPs	Scottish Regional Resilience Partnerships
SSEN	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks
SSPCA	Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
STAC	Scientific, Technical Advice Cell
STOp	Scientific, Technical and Operational Guidance Notes
SW	Scottish Water
SWHP	Scottish Waterbourne Hazard Plan
SWM	Senior Ward Manager
TDA	Temporary Danger Area
TEZ	Temporary Exclusion Zone
THC	The Highland Council
TOG	Tactical Oversight Group
VO	Voluntary Organisation
WM	Ward Manager
WPI-RHG	Wastewater Pollution Incidents Risk Management Guidance