

Civil Contingencies Annual Report	
Executive Summary	The Civil Contingencies Team and the wider council has continued to discharge its responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004.
Options considered	This is a briefing report only.
Consultation(s)	N/A – briefing report.
Recommendations	To note the report and the council's contributions to the Norfolk Resilience Forum and the response to incidents. That the work of the flood warden teams is formally acknowledged.
Reasons for recommendations	A better understanding of the challenges in the past year and the role of the Norfolk Resilience Forum in emergency preparedness planning and incident response will help to discharge our obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004.
Background papers	NNDC Resilience Training Plan

Wards affected	All
Cabinet member(s)	Callum Ringer
Contact Officer	Alison Sayer, Resilience Manager, 01263 516269, alison.sayer@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Links to key documents:	
Corporate Plan:	N/A
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	N/A
Council Policies & Strategies	Corporate Risk Register

Corporate Governance:	
Is this a key decision	No
Has the public interest test been applied	No
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	N/A

1. Purpose of the report

To report on the activity of the Civil Contingencies Team specifically:

1.1 Activities related to the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004

- 1.2 North Norfolk Safety Advisory Group
- 1.3 Staffing Changes

2. Introduction & Background

The Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 ('the Act') sets out a number of duties around emergency preparedness and response. As a Category 1 Responder under the Act, North Norfolk District Council has a duty to assess risk, put emergency plans in place and to share information and cooperate with other local responders. In respect of emergency preparedness planning this is generally achieved through the Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) with an annual programme of multi-agency meetings, plan reviews and a training and exercising programme. There are weekly Risk and Information Group meetings which look at risks for the next 14 days and horizon scan for the upcoming couple of months. During multi-agency or cross-border incident response the Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) provides a duty officer and supports with the establishment of coordination arrangements.

- 2.1 **Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF)** - The council pays an annual contribution to the NRF to support the forum's day to day running which includes its preparedness planning and response functions. The council's contribution, £2,386 p.a., has stayed the same for the past 10 years but this is likely to change since the NRF Executive Board has asked for a review of the subscription model to ensure that the costs of running the partnership are met. This was to have been discussed on 21 November 2023 but the NRF Executive Board meeting has been postponed until 8 February 2024.
- 2.1 **Risk Assessments** – As noted above, risk assessment is a statutory duty for Category 1 responders under the Act. The NRF Risk Assessment group is the mechanism through which this duty is discharged in Norfolk, using the nationally agreed risk assessment methodology to produce the Community Risk Register. In 2022 the NRF introduced an accelerated programme of Risk Assessment reviews, held fortnightly with a pool of emergency planners from across Norfolk, to deal with the backlog due to the Covid-19 response. The review programme has continued this year and has also reflected changes to the National Risk Register, published in August 2023. Changes include several additional national risks, revised National Planning Risk Assumptions and changes to the assessment methodology. The changes have increased the time it takes to assess each risk.
- 2.2 **Mutual Aid Agreement** - In January 2023 a revised mutual aid agreement between Norfolk local authorities was signed. The document sets out the arrangements for the provision of mutual aid during an emergency.
- 2.3 **Exercises** – There have been four significant exercises in 2023: Exercise Merlin (flooding evacuation re coastal districts, 21 Feb), Exercise Acorn (NRF rehearsal for Mighty Oak, 9 March), Exercise Mighty Oak (national power outage exercise 29-31 March) plus a local flood warden exercise on 20 September at Eccles (flooding evacuation). These are noted in the NNDC Resilience Training Plan.
- 2.4 **Severe weather and flooding** – flooding accounts for the majority of incident response this past year, with multiple flood alerts and warnings received until March and then, unusually, from August onwards. Significant internal flooding

was experienced by properties in Sheringham and Bodham over the night of 2-3 October and NNDC has been liaising with Norfolk County Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority, and participating in Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA) meetings. North Norfolk was less affected by Storms Babet and Ciaran than other parts of the county but several of our Broads communities are feeling the cumulative after-effects of these named storms and the subsequent rainfall, Spring Tides, tidal locking events and neap tides that have minimised natural drainage. Work is ongoing with the NSFA and the Broadland Futures Initiative on long term solutions to chronic flooding.

- 2.5 Thirty-one separate incidents have been recorded and responded to in the past 12 months, including national response to the 999 system outage, unexploded ordinance and false fire alarm activation as well as flooding.
- 2.6 **Flood defences at Potter Heigham** – in October the Environment Agency (EA) delivered replacement flood boards which slot into place in the defensive wall between Herbert Woods boatyard and Lathams car park as needed. The boards replace ones damaged by a car. A new storage box was also delivered and resited. The volunteer flood warden team at Potter Heigham has been updating on the extent of the flooding in the area and managing the flood boards almost daily from the end of October through November. The team has balanced the need to protect the community with the needs of local businesses and their efforts are very much appreciated. Discussions are ongoing with the EA re supplementing the NNDC flood warden team with their contractor.
- 2.7 **Senior Flood Warden Liaison Group** - Two meetings of the Senior Flood Warden Liaison Group (SFWLG) have been held in the last 12 months and materials have been produced to support communities with high proportions of second homes, to recruit new flood wardens and to support new teams.
- 2.8 The Environment Agency (EA) acknowledges that the intelligence, pictures and videos from the council and coastal and river flood wardens has been very useful to them. At the October SFWLG meeting the EA gave a data collection training presentation to enhance the effectiveness of the data passed across. Coastal data will help to verify the EA's Triton wave over topping model.
- 2.9 The Flood Alert level threshold at Bacton and Walcott has been increased by the EA, which is a vindication of the effectiveness of the Sandscaping project.
- 2.10 **Community engagement** – a few communities have shown interest in developing Community Emergency Plans, this are supported on a one-to-one basis.
- 2.11 **Plans** - The Council's Operational Flood Plan and Rest Centre plans have been updated. Work is currently ongoing to review the NNDC Emergency Response Plan and the Corporate Business Continuity Plan. Progress on these has been affected by the number of incidents.
- 2.12 **North Norfolk Safety Advisory Group** – After a record year in 2022 there has been another small increase in the number of events coming to the Safety Advisory Group. Following changes to events planning at Norfolk Constabulary at the beginning of the year, work is ongoing with the other

Norfolk local authorities and the Police to streamline administrative processes.

3. Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial and resource implications directly arising from this report.

Comments from the S151 Officer:

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4. Legal Implications

None – report only

Comments from the Monitoring Officer

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5. Risks

N/A – report only

6. Net ZeroTarget

No impact – report only

7. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

No impact – report only

8. Community Safety issues

No impact– report only

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

That the report be noted and a recommendation that the work of the flood warden teams is formally acknowledged.