

South Ayrshire Council

Report by the Chief Governance Officer to Ayrshire Shared Services Joint Committee of 7 June 2024

Subject: Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Joint Committee on progress made against the current Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team (ACCT) Service Plan for 2024/2025 (Appendix 1) and to provide an overview of their work to date.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Joint Committee:

2.1 Approve the progress made against the work plan for 2024/2025. Highlights are summarised in the following paragraphs and outlined in greater detail at Appendix 1.

3. Background

3.1 The ACCT has provided civil contingencies services on behalf of the three Ayrshire Councils since it was established in 2008.

3.2 The Team has a responsibility to ensure the provision of the following key requirements on behalf of the North, South and East Ayrshire Councils;

- Operation of an on-call service to provide 24/7 response for Civil Emergencies as the Duty Officer(s) on behalf of any of the affected Councils.
- Preparation of a consistent Civil Contingencies Response and Recovery Plan for approval and implementation by each of the 3 Councils.
- Maintenance of an accurate and up to date Emergency Contact Directory for each of the 3 Councils.
- Development and delivery of training programmes to ensure key staff within each Council know and understand their emergency roles and are prepared to respond to major incidents and civil emergencies.
- Preparation and maintenance of Contingency Plans for specific sites, which are also tested on a multi-agency basis at 3 yearly intervals.
- Maintenance of a range of plans to cover the response to emergencies of non-site specific risk.

3.3 This work is routinely monitored and evaluated by a Steering Group comprising the Head of Service from each Council with the responsibility for Civil Contingencies.

4. Progress against our Service Plan.

4.1 We were delighted to appoint Lesley Jeffery as the new ACCT Coordinator in April 2024. Recruitment is underway to fill two vacancies within the Civil Contingencies team and the gaps have inevitably had an impact on Service delivery. The remaining team members have made every effort to prioritise essential tasks and ensure an appropriate level of cover.

4.2 There has been continued focus in the first part of 2024 on internal training for those who will be required to assume the roles of Council Incident Officers and Council Incident Coordinators in the event of a major incident within any of the 3 Council areas.

4.3 The 'lunchtime learning' initiative continues, which includes short, focused sessions for relevant Officers covering an overview of a recent incident by the multi-agency officers involved; the issues which arose and how these were resolved through the incident debrief.

4.4 The Emergency Contact Directories for the 3 Councils were updated and issued in December 2023. These documents contain the contact details for all personnel who may need to be contacted to respond to a major emergency. These are updated on a 6 monthly basis with the review currently ongoing and these will be reissued again prior to the summer recess.

4.5 Following the successful implementation of a Fail to Sail plan for Isle of Arran, arrangements for disruption and cancellations for the Isle of Cumbrae are currently being progressed as this ferry and the wider community is being impacted by an increasing number of these events.

4.6 The Hunterston B Flask Removal Plan was completed in 2023 and work continues on the Hunterston B training and exercising programme. Familiarisation visits for interested Category 1 responders took place in December and these were intended to promote understanding of the site and contingency planning arrangements. Further dates can be arranged and if any Shared Service Panel Members wish to be included for a site visit.

4.7 The work to prepare for a Power Resilience emergency continues within the 3 Local Authorities and all Council services are required to consider and plan for alternative models of service delivery during this type of incident.

4.8 The 3 yearly review of a number of External Plans continues. The team is currently leading on the multi agency exercise and plan review for three COMAH sites, namely, Chivas Balgray, Chivas Willowyard and Wm Grants and will be leading an exercise at Kilmarnock Football Club in the autumn.

4.9 The team have significant involvement in the Council and multi agency preparation for the Open Golf taking place at Troon in July and the Ayrshow in September as well as supporting larger events like the Marymass in Irvine which takes place in August.

4.10 The ACCT has assisted in coordinating the response to 9 incidents across the Ayrshire area since December 2024. These included 5 utility failures, 2 weather

related incidents, a major fire and a light aircraft crash. The team has also been providing support on developing issues throughout 2024 including the multi-agency response to incidents at Battery Energy Storage Sites (BESS) and Electric Vehicle fires.

- 4.11 ACCT have taken cognisance of the concerns which have been raised about the increasing number of Battery Energy Storage Sites (BESS) across Ayrshire. The local multi-agency partners have requested that a plan is developed as to how we would respond to this. There is already a plan on how to deal with Electric Vehicle fires which was developed by a regional subgroup and will be used in Ayrshire.
- 4.12 As stated above, there was a fire at a battery recycling centre in Kilwinning in early April. This necessitated a multi-agency response over four days and recovery meetings are ongoing. Due to the severity of the fire, local residents were advised to stay in their homes and close all windows. A Care for People group was established and contact was made regularly with the residents for welfare checks and the housing association ensured that food supplies got through. There will be a debrief from this incident and the learning may be included in the plans for the BESS sites.
- 4.13 It is proposed that the Joint Committee notes and approves the work to date which is also reflected in the ACCT Service Plan at Appendix 1.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are consistent with legal requirements.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. Human Resources Implications

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8. Risk

8.1 Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations

- 8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

8.2 Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations

- 8.2.1 Rejecting the recommendations may give rise to external criticism, breach of statute or legal challenge.

9. Equalities

- 9.1 The proposals in this report allow scrutiny of performance. The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required. Any specific island issues are considered in the report.

10. Sustainable Development Implications

- 10.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

11. Options Appraisal

- 11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12. Link to Council Plan

- 12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to the delivery of all Council strategic objectives.

13. Results of Consultation

- 13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

Person to Contact

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AYRSHIRE CIVIL CONTINGENCIES TEAM



Introduction

- 1.1 The Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Service Plan covers the period 2024/2025 and sets out what we intend to achieve over the next year based on the resources available to us.
- 1.2 Effective Contingency Planning is crucial to the achievement of the combined objectives of North, South and East Ayrshire Councils and the success of the strategic operation and delivery of all Council Services. The Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team (ACCT) is responsible for developing and delivering a work plan that ensures compliance in respect of statutory obligations and endeavours to support all Council services embed robust contingency planning arrangements. The team will support the 3 Councils and relevant multi-agency partners to ensure that response and recovery in the event of adverse incidents is efficient and carefully planned.
- 1.3 Actions have been formulated and form the basis of the ACCT Work Plan. This is reported on and scrutinised quarterly by the Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Steering Group comprising of the Head of Service from each Council with the responsibility for Civil Contingencies. The 3 Ayrshire Council Shared Service Joint Committee has a remit to approve the plan and/or progress made on a 6 monthly basis. We have agreed challenging targets for the team in order to continuously improve the way we work and to take account of the statutory obligations imposed on all 3 Councils as Category 1 responders in line with Civil Contingencies legislation.
- 1.4 By planning and monitoring our progress for 2024-2025 we aim not only to contribute to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the 3 Ayrshire Councils but also support our colleagues within Health and Social Care, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, the Emergency Services and a wide range of multi- agency responders. These partners form the core membership of the Ayrshire Local Resilience Partnership (ALRP).

2 Profile

- 2.1 The Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team has a responsibility to ensure the provision of the following key requirements on behalf of the 3 Councils;
 - Operation of an on-call service to provide 24/7 response for Civil Emergencies as the Duty Officer(s) on behalf of any of the affected Councils.
 - Preparation of a consistent Civil Contingencies Response and Recovery Plan for approval and implementation by each of the 3 Councils.
 - Maintenance of an accurate and up to date Emergency Contact Directory for each of the 3 Councils.
 - Development and delivery of training programmes to ensure key staff within each Council know and understand their emergency roles and are prepared to respond to major incidents and civil emergencies.
 - Preparation and maintenance of Contingency Plans for specific sites, which are also tested on a multi-agency basis at 3 yearly intervals.
 - Maintenance of a range of plans to cover the response to emergencies of non-site specific risk.
- 2.2 To date the service is working within an overall net revenue budget for the team of £170,682 (2023-2024). It is delivered utilising a workforce of 3.5 FTE, however long-term absence has been impacting staffing provision since August 2022.

3 How are we doing?

- 3.1 Demanding performance targets are set through the Performance Development and Review (PDR) process. This helps us embed a culture of improvement within the team and aims to ensure the achievement of outcomes within the Service Plan. These are further articulated through team meetings where assigned activities are monitored and assessed. Prioritising workloads and establishing clear deadlines are key features on the allocation of tasks.
- 3.2 The Team's performance is tracked and measured using the South Ayrshire Council Performance Management System approach, and new initiatives progressed as the contingencies planning landscape evolves. The team is actively supported and encouraged to consider opportunities to introduce new and innovative ways of working.
- 3.3 There has been an investment in training for the team and officers have the opportunity to attend external events and participate in a range of external or multi-agency forums which help ensure knowledge of best practice in Civil Contingencies.
- 3.4 Areas identified for improvement are being taken forward and these include more regular refresher training opportunities for key Council managers and the further development of online e-Learning training in Civil Contingencies to extend the reach and breadth of core skills across a wider range of participants within North, South and East Ayrshire Councils.

4. The challenges we face

- 4.1 These are outlined as follows: -

- External

An increase in adverse and concurrent incidents, emergency or weather events stretch existing resources in terms of ensuring that Civil Contingencies responses are well planned and tested. Additional high-profile events, which rely on Council support also place considerable pressure on available time and expertise. Legislative change or amendment to government policy will also impact workloads.

- Internal

Conflicting priorities and resourcing pressures across a number of service areas can expose gaps in terms of demonstrating a fully corporate approach to the implementation of well embedded Contingency Planning. There can often be challenges in terms of persuading services of the business benefits in preparing and testing contingency plans.

5. Detailed Service Plan

- 5.1 The strategic outcomes for all 3 Councils are underpinned by having robust processes for risk management and resilience. How we intend to contribute to the successful achievement of the 3 Ayrshires' objectives is set out in the detail in the ACCT Service Plan on the following pages.

6. Governance

- 6.1 The progress made by the ACCT is analysed on a quarterly basis by the 3 Council Civil Contingencies Steering Group. The Service Plan will be developed on an annual basis and subject to approval and scrutiny by the Shared Service Joint Committee.

Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team - Work Plan

The following tables outline key contingencies plans, training and exercises for the Civil Contingencies Team. It includes work activity ongoing or completed within 2023 and further actions for 2024-2025. The ACCT is either leading on these or providing support to other agencies on their development. It also includes reference to Civil Contingencies sub-groups which may be contributed to by ACCT.

Internal Plans / Training and Exercises led by ACCT	Target Date for next review
Civil Contingencies Response & Recovery - SAC (Review) S	December 2024
Civil Contingencies Response & Recovery – NAC (Review) N	December 2024
Civil Contingencies Response & Recovery – EAC (Review) E	December 2024
Local Incident Room Guidelines – SAC (Exercise) S	September 2024
Major Accident Hazard Gas Pipelines - Ayrshire Plan (Review and Exercise) N S E	December 2023 (D)
Care for People – Emergency Support Centres Guidelines (Review & Exercise) N S E	September 2024
Black Start and Power Resilience Recovery (Councils) N S E	ongoing
Emergency Contact Directories (biannual updates June and December) N S E	June 2024
Pandemic Influenza Plan N S E	December 2024

Internal Plans / Training and Exercises led by ACCT – completed for 23/24	
Mobile Telephone Privileged Access System (MTPAS) N S E	Complete
eLearning package for Community Support Centres / Care for People Awareness N S E	Complete
eLearning package for Civil Contingencies Awareness N S E	Complete
eLearning Civil Contingencies package for Elected Members (Develop) N S E	Complete
Former Station Hotel, Ayr - Major Incident Response Guide (MAIRG) S	Complete
Fuel Disruption Plan - Fleet Management N S E	Complete
Local Incident Room Guidelines - NAC (Exercise) N	Complete
Shoreline Response Plan (Develop) N S	Complete
The above Plans / Training will be reviewed again prior to financial year end 2023/24. Target dates will be provided in December 2023 via the Ayrshire Shared Service Panel report. Any additional work activity identified will also be included within the report.	

External Plans / Training and Exercises led by ACCT	Target Date for completion
Defence Munitions Beith External Contingency Plan (Review & Exercise) N	Completed
Hunterston B Offsite Contingency Plan (Review and Exercise) N (revised plan requested by Office for Nuclear Regulation)	Completed January 2024
Hunterston B Offsite Contingency Plan (Redacted Version) N (revised plan requested by Office for Nuclear Regulation)	Completed February 2024
DSM (Dutch State Mining) Nutritional Products Contingency Plan (Review & Exercise) N	Complete August 2023
Chivas Brothers – Balgray and Willowyard (Review & Exercise) N	2024
Chemring, Stevenston External Contingency Plan (Review & Exercise) N	Complete
Spaceport COMAH Plan (prepared in conjunction with identified partner) S	On hold
Wm Grants External Contingency Plan (Review & Exercise) S	November 2024
Avian Flu Carcass Disposal Plan	Completed
Arran Fail to Sail Plan (N)	Complete 2023
Arran Care for People Response (N)	Complete 2023
Hunterston B Flask Removal Plan (N)	Complete
Multi Agency Response Guide for Grissan, Girvan (S)	Complete April 2024
Care for People Review (All)	2024
Learning from Incidents Training sessions (new initiative for 2023) (All)	Ongoing

External Plans / Training and Exercises - Working with Multi Agency Partners	Lead	Target Date for completion
Hunterston B – Training and Exercising Programme N	EDF	Ongoing
Black Start and Power Resilience Recovery (Multi Agency) MA	ALRP	Ongoing
Radiation Monitoring Unit Arrangements N (delayed – awaiting SG decisions)	ALRP	TBC
WoSRRP Mass Fatalities Arrangements - (Review and Exercise) MA	WoSRRP	TBC by WoSRRP
Marine Pollution Response Plan - Girvan Harbour (Biannual Notification Exercise, Review Plan & Table Top Ex Carrick) S MA	ARA	Complete
Animal Health MAIRGs (Review) MA	EH&TS	Complete
Glasgow Prestwick Airport Multi Agency Contingency Plan S MA	GPA	Complete
Ayrshire Safer Shores Initiative Response Arrangements N S MA	Police	Complete
ALRP Disruptive Weather Response Arrangements MA	ALRP	Complete
Kilmarnock Football Club E MA	KFC	October 2024

Kilmarnock Prison E MA	Scottish Prison Service	TBC
Develop ALRP Generic Response Guide (for Initial Response)	ACCT	December 2024
Develop ALRP Response Guide / Plan to Battery Energy Storage Site (BESS) Facilities	ACCT / SFRS	December 2024
Participate in development of ALRP Response Guide to Foxgrove facility	NHS	December 2024

Supported Tasks - Participation at Sub Groups	Lead Agency	Update
Community and Business Resilience Sub Group (developing and sharing best practice) MA	WoSRRP	Ongoing
Training, Exercising and Learning Sub Group (developing and sharing best practice) MA	WoSRRP	Ongoing
Warning and Informing the Public – Media Plans, Websites MA	Councils	Ongoing
Ukraine Tactical ALRP Sub Group MA	Councils	Ongoing
ALRP Power Resilience MA	Councils	Ongoing
Provide Secretariat to Ayrshire Local Resilience Partnership (ALRP) MA	ACCT	Ongoing
Community Resilience (provide advice and support to local community councils and resilience groups – ad hoc) MA	ACCT	Ongoing

Colour coded abbreviations	
Work undertaken on behalf of North Ayrshire	N
Work undertaken on behalf of South Ayrshire	S
Work undertaken on behalf of East Ayrshire	E
Work undertaken on behalf of ALRP or other agencies	MA (Multi Agency)

Plans, Procedures and Guidelines

It is important to note that by its very nature Civil Contingencies work activity is often reactive and the team endeavour to respond to events and circumstances as they arise. The Councils' Civil Contingencies Response and Recovery Plans are deliberately generic and provide a framework which allows for speedy response to emergencies as they arise. The Service Plan will therefore be regularly updated as and when required.

Copies of the ACCT and other resilience documents are hosted on each Council's Resilience Direct page and on their shared drive system - access is limited to those who have a key role responding to an emergency - the links are noted below.

South Ayrshire - [ACCT on Sharepoint](#)
North Ayrshire - on Resilience Direct

East Ayrshire - [ACCT on Shared Drive](#)

Update Prepared – 16 May 2024