



**Audit and Standards Advisory  
Committee**  
26 July 2021

**Report from the Strategic Director  
of Regeneration and Environment**

**Emergency Preparedness Update**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
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## **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

1.1 At the January 2018 Audit Advisory committee, it was resolved that an Emergency Preparedness item be added to the forward plan to be discussed annually going forward. This report briefly outlines the progress made since the 2020 report, details the type and number of incidents in Brent and provides some information around initiatives and programmes of work under way to enhance our resilience and response arrangements.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

2.1 To consider and note the information contained in this report

## **3.0 Detail**

### **3.1 New Assurance Mechanism – Resilience Standards for London (RSL)**

3.1.1 The new Resilience Standards for London (RSL) v1.0 were officially launched in 2019 and detail was provided at the January 2020 Audit & Standards Advisory Committee regarding this new assurance standard. Seven days after the report to committee, the Local Government Association peer challenge team spent three days at Brent examining our alignment with the new standards.

3.1.2 Due to the pandemic situation which occurred shortly after the team's visit, the team's findings were delayed in being finalised in a report. The report has now been received and is hugely positive and highlights a number of areas in which Brent is demonstrating leading practice. A few recommendations for consideration were received for consideration.

3.1.3 In summary, the recommendations were to enhance the already good relationship with Wembley Park, to ensure that risk registers across the organisation aligned/complemented one another and to explore ways to involve communities into resilience activities. A subsequent action plan to address these has been approved by the Council Management Team.

## **3.2 Emergency Shelter & Accommodation**

3.2.1 Since January 2020, Brent has stood by an emergency shelter (Rest Centre) for persons displaced from emergencies on 5 occasions; proceeding to full activation for 3 of these incidents. This is slightly fewer full activations than the typical annual average however, due to the pandemic and the risks of co-mingling households in a communal venue (although permissible by law in an emergency), the decision to avoid opening a rest centre where at all possible and instead place affected homeless residents directly from the scene into hotel accommodation was seen as prudent. This is a strategy that is likely to continue whilst COVID-19 and anxiety about social contact remains.

## **3.3 New Emergency Response Officers**

3.3.1 We have just recruited 6 new Emergency Response Officers. These staff volunteer to join the scheme and 2 are placed on call each week to provide the immediate 24/7 response to any incident in the borough under the supervision of the Emergency Duty Officer (also on call 24/7). This takes our total number of trained Emergency Response Officers to 32.

## **3.4 Incidents**

3.4.1 There have been 14 incidents since January 2020 (not including the pandemic) that have warranted a response by Emergency Planning. Of those, 11 caused the Silver (senior manager) level to be notified. This demonstrates that Brent's operational arrangements are adequate in dealing with the types of incidents faced to date and align with the UK's Response Doctrine principle of subsidiarity. Gold (Chief Executive/Strategic Director) level was informed in most cases for information and exercised their Gold Functions in 4 instances (for approval of expenditure, setting of strategy and direction of resource). Again, this aligns well with the subsidiarity principle.

A summary table of incidents is below:

04/04/2020	Fire	Brownlow Road, Harlesden	Building Surveyor to scene, Hotel accommodation of 4 households.
17/06/2020	Fire	Thirlmere Gardens	Attended scene. Liaison with Emergency Services and neighbours of affected property to offer assistance and provide advice (elderly couple).
20/06/2020	Fire (fatal)	Nightingale ave - NWPH	Suspected self-immolation. Attended scene, stood by staff, liaison with emergency services and NHS (incident is on NWP Hospital site). HA (Network Homes) provided all accomm
22/07/2020	Murder	Preston Road	Attended scene. Liaison with police (crime scene) – 5 households unable to return, placed into hotel accommodation. Acted as liaison between police and displaced residents with updates until they could return the following day
04/09/2020	Fire	Westfield Close	Attended scene. Liaison with Emergency Services, HA and residents. Temp accom provided in hotel for 3 families (2 families for 2 nights, 1 family for 2 weeks) until repairs made.
19/09/2020	Fire	Kilburn High Rd	Remote liaison with Emergency Services and residents. Temp accomm provided
19/09/2020	Electrical Outage - single property – vulnerable person	Llanover Rd	Phone call to elderly residents, Aranged attendance of UKPN as a priority. Offered alternate accom if needed but ultimately not required due to UKPN priority repair
01/10/2020	Gas leak	Griffin Close	Stood by RC for evacuees, liaison with Emergency Services. Stood down
02/10/2020	Schools bomb threat	Multiple schools	Liaison with schools team re info and updates
04/11/2020	Fire	Florence Court, NW10	Attended scene., Liaised with Emergency Services, HA and residents. RC operated approx 12 hrs and meals provided until residents could return

22/02/2021	Fire	Ivy Road, NW2	Accommodation of 11 people for the night in hotel. Passing on details of property to HMO licensing for investigation of breach of licence. Arranging for Housing Needs team to get in contact with the evacuees.
27/02/2021	Flood and electrical fire	Hereford Hse, NW6	Attended scene with RCM, LALO and BHM rep. Opened RC at SKAO for approx 30 evacs. Provided food and overnight accom for those who couldn't return. Liaison with LFB and utilities
02/06/2021	Suspect WW2 bomb - Barnet	Barnet - new station	Stood by activation team incl vol sector, mapped area and identified vulnerables, stood by hotel, activated RC in advance. Incident stood down after 12 hours, not a bomb
12/07/2021	Surface Water Flooding Kilburn	Cambridge Gardens, NW6	RC and Hotel stood by in case of influx of homeless households. Support to residents who made contact reporting homelessness. Liaison with HA (majority of properties affected) to offer support. Supporting 3 families with accommodation and spending money until HA can arrange to take over. Promotion of RSF to all. Inspection and clearance of Highway and damaged goods for disposal left out by any household in the area. Mental Health support package from CNWL

### **3.5 Initiatives**

- 3.5.1 Community Engagement is an area that progressed since the last report. An opportunity exists to capitalise on the experience and expertise of individuals who worked with Mutual Aid groups established in response to COVID, to involve these individuals into the council's response arrangements, where appropriate. A Community Response Volunteer programme is being explored with the assistance of the council's Volunteer Coordinator to invite residents to volunteer via the Do IT Brent volunteer platform and be trained, in advance, to be called upon to assist with any local emergencies, where appropriate.
- 3.5.2 A package of training for existing and potential venues who act as emergency shelters has been developed to complement the London Faith Networks "Every Place Ready" programme, which encourages local faith venues to make contact with their boroughs Emergency Planning Teams to offer up their facilities for use. Most venues are extremely willing to make their space available and simply require a briefing as to what being an emergency shelter entails in terms of expectations etc. Alongside detailing these expectations, the training also includes risk awareness and resilience preparedness activities to further bolster individual and community resilience.

### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None arising specifically from the report.

### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 None arising specifically from the report.

### **6.0 Equality Implications**

- 6.1 None arising specifically from the report.

### **7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

- 7.1 N/A

### **8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)**

- 8.1 N/A

**Report sign off:**

**Alan Lunt**

Strategic Director of Regeneration  
and Environment