



SEVERE WEATHER PLAN

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Foreword

Severe weather is one of the most likely causes of a major incident or civil emergency. It is also one of the more difficult events in terms of determining when the event has moved from being a “major inconvenience” to being a major emergency. For this reason the plan is designed to operate on a tiered basis where necessary. Identification of trigger points is contained in section 3, as far as this is possible.

The recovery process is a key responsibility for the council. For it to be effective, appropriate arrangements must be put in place as quickly as possible. Consideration as to the extent of these arrangements should be made during the emergency phase. Section 6 gives guidance on this matter.

Failure to put recovery arrangements in place may spoil what has been an effective response during the emergency phase and have a negative impact on the public's perception of the council response.

Graham Hope

Chief Executive
West Lothian Council

June 2012

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this plan is to detail the alert procedures and actions, which will be used by West Lothian Council in the event of severe weather within the West Lothian area. The plan links with and should be read in conjunction with the Police Scotland 'Severe Weather Plan' and the 'West Lothian Major Incident Plan'.

The response to the event should be proportional to the circumstances and reflect the severity, nature and timing of the severe weather. Where early warnings of severe weather are being received a tiered response may be appropriate.

The plan is only likely to be implemented in full where there is a serious long-term disruption within the community involving loss of life/injury and/or damage to property as a result of severe weather. Elements of the plan may be implemented in less serious situations.

The aims of the plan are:

1. To provide a summary of the Met Office National Severe Weather Warning System.
2. To provide guidance on the initial action to be taken in response to the receipt of a National Severe Weather Warning.
3. To provide a framework for the management of a co-ordinated response by all emergency responders to an emergency caused by severe weather. Flexibility within the arrangements allows for an initial operational response to be escalated to a tactical response, which in turn can be escalated to a strategic level as required.
4. To protect life and key community facilities, the main priority for those agencies involved

Review Record

Review Date	Comments	Date of Next Review
October 2004	Reviewed following flooding in Aug 2004	Sep 05
January 2009	Reviewed following flooding in August 2008	Jan 2010
September 2010	Reviewed following structural changes within the council	September 2011
July -Sep 2011	Reviewed following severe winter weather, changes to the National Severe Weather Warning System and Flood Warnings and structural changes to the council	September 2012
June 2012	Reviewed in after gales in Jan 12 – No changes	June 2013
January 2014	Replace Strategic Coordinating Group with Regional Resilience Partnership	January 2015

Exercise Record

Exercise details are recorded below:

Date	Comments	Updated by
6 Mar 07	WLC Exercise as part of awareness day	
27 Nov 07	Exercise Peak Flow – Lothian and Borders SCG Severe Weather Exercise	
2 Dec 09	WLC Severe Weather workshop	
3 Nov 10	Exercise Mal Tempo – Lothian and Borders SCG Severe Weather Exercise	
22 Sep 11	Exercise True Grit – WLC/CHCP Exercise	
25 Oct 11	Exercise Polar Storm – National Severe Weather Exercise	
30 Oct 13	Regional Resilience Partnership Exercise	

Distribution List

An electronic copy has been made available to the undernoted staff and external agencies.

The document is available on the council's internet site.

INTERNAL

Chief Executive
Depute Chief Executives
Heads of Service
Corporate Communications and Information Manager
Emergency Planning Officer

Area Services

Customer Contact Centre Manager
Customer Information Service Office Managers

Education Services

Strategic Customer and Information Manager

Housing, Construction and Building Services

Operations Manager

Operational Services

Facilities Manager
Transport Manager
NETS and Land Services Manager
Public Transport Manager
Roads Manager
Roads Operations Manager
Senior Professional Officer (Flood Prevention)

Planning and Economic Development

Building Control Manager
Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager

Social Policy

Social Care Emergency Team

EXTERNAL

Emergency Planning
City of Edinburgh Council

Emergency Planning
East Lothian Council

Emergency Planning
Midlothian Council

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Emergency Planning
Scottish Borders Council

Emergency Planning Unit
Lothian and Borders Police
Force Headquarters
Fettes Avenue
EDINBURGH EH4 1RB

Operations Planning
Lothian and Borders Fire And Rescue Service
LBFRS Headquarters
Lauriston Place
EDINBURGH EH3 9DE

Resilience Advisor
Scottish Ambulance Service
National Risk & Resilience Department Headquarters
Units 7 & 8
Newbridge One Industrial Park
Cliftonhall Road
Newbridge
EH28 8PW

Emergency Planning Officer
NHS Lothian
Pentland House
Robbs Loan
Edinburgh
EH14 1TY

Section 1

Warnings

1.0 Risks and Warning System

- 1.1 West Lothian has a population of approximately 168,000 and covers an area of 164 square miles. It is predominately a rural area with over 50% of the population living in Livingston and the surrounding towns of Bathgate and Uphall/Broxburn.
- 1.2 The M8 and M9 motorways and the A71 and A89 principal roads traverse the area from east to west. The A706 and A801 are the principal roads going from north to south. Disruption to the motorway network can result in serious disruption to the West Lothian road network.
- 1.3 The rural nature of West Lothian means that in many areas electricity is still supplied by overhead lines. In addition there are large areas of woodland that can result in serious disruption to movement by road following severe gales
- 1.4 In recent years severe weather has tended to be associated with prolonged periods of heavy snow and/or severe frost. Heavy rainfall has also resulted in localised flooding incidents and this has not been confined to the winter months. Our changing climate has seen a move to milder weather with more frequent periods of severe gales and heavy rainfall. It is not possible to say for certain that this is the result of global climate change but current predictions are that this trend will continue.
- 1.5 There are currently no specific SEPA flood warning systems for any of West Lothian's river systems. The Mains Burn, Linlithgow and Brox Burn have both caused serious flooding in recent years.
- 1.6 Blocked culverts are the main cause of flooding across the council's area during periods of heavy rain

1.7 National Severe Weather Warning System

- 1.8 Details of the warnings are available on the Met Office website - http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/uk_forecast_warnings.html

1.9 Types of Warning

- 1.10 The Met Office issues National Severe Weather Warnings to the public, the police and other agencies to provide early warning of likely severe weather with the potential to cause disruption to particular areas of the country. There are two types of warning:

- 1. **Warnings** - Issued up to 24 hours in advance

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2. **Alerts** – issued more than 24 hours in advance

The **only** difference between Warnings and Alerts is the lead time with which they are issued. Warnings and Alerts can be issued for:

- Rain
- Snow
- Wind
- Fog
- Ice

1.11 Content of Warnings

1.12 Warnings and Alerts are based on a combination of how likely an event is to occur and the potential impact that the expected conditions may have. A combination of likelihood and impact is measured against a matrix to give each warning or alert a colour. An example is shown below where an event with a High Likelihood and Medium Impact would result in an Amber Warning or Alert.

Likelihood	High			✓	
	Med				
	Low				
	Very Low				
		Very Low	Low	Med	High
Impact					

	No Severe Weather
	Be Aware
	Be Prepared
	Take Action

1.13 The matrix showing how a Warning or Alert was assigned its colour is available for each one issued. The Chief Forecaster also includes an explanation as to why the Warning or Alert has been given the colour it has, as well as indicating where any uncertainties lie.

1.14 Notification of Warnings and Alerts are received via email to Emergency Planning and Roads and Transportation. An example is shown below.

The Met Office has issued a **Red Warning for Rain** affecting **Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian & West Lothian** from 0300 on Sunday morning until midday. The text of the warning is as follows;

Issued at - **06 Aug 2011, 23:04**
Valid from - **07 Aug 2011, 03:00**
Valid to - **07 Aug 2011, 12:00**

Persistent rain already across the area will turn very heavy at times through the

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remainder of Saturday night and Sunday morning and is expected to lead to flooding in places.

Chief Forecaster's Assessment

70-90 mm of rain is expected across the area in a 24 hour period from Saturday evening, with more than 100 mm quite likely locally. A significant proportion of this is expected to fall in a spell starting from the early hours of Sunday and lasting through the remainder of the morning, though rain will continue through much of the rest of Sunday at a lower rate

1.15 Public Impact Table

The following table provides examples of the level of disruption that may be experienced at each of the impact levels (low, medium, high) for each weather element (rain, snow etc.)

Impact Level	Very Low	Low	Medium	High
Impact and advice applying to ALL SEVERE WEATHER	<p>The weather is not expected to have any noticeable impacts but there may be some minor issues.</p> <p>e.g. when travelling some extra care may be needed on occasions and there may be some disruption to outdoor events</p>	<p>BE AWARE and ensure you access the latest weather forecast for up to date weather information.</p> <p>Expect some minor delays due to slower traffic.</p> <p>Outdoor events may be disrupted or cancelled</p>	<p>BE PREPARED. Take precautions where possible and ensure you access the latest weather forecast.</p> <p>BE PREPARED for some disruption to normal daily routines.</p> <p>Travel only if well prepared and BE PREPARED for longer journey times</p>	<p>TAKE precautionary ACTION and remain extra vigilant.</p> <p>Follow orders and any advice given by authorities under all circumstances.</p> <p>Ensure you access the latest weather forecast.</p> <p>EXPECT significant disruption to normal daily routines.</p> <p>Avoid all non-essential journeys.</p> <p>If you must make a journey carry emergency food/ clothing/ blanket etc.</p>
Impact and advice associated with WIND	<p>Debris dislodged and some branches removed</p> <p>Perhaps some very limited travel disruption.</p> <p>Difficulties on some prone routes e.g. cross winds on exposed or high level roads.</p>	<p>Some branches or trees brought down.</p> <p>Localised travel disruption.</p> <p>Localised problems for high-sided vehicles on prone routes.</p> <p>Drive with care, especially on exposed routes.</p> <p>BE AWARE of</p>	<p>More widespread tree damage and other debris, slates etc dislodged from roofs.</p> <p>Some minor structural damage possible.</p> <p>Risk of injury from flying debris.</p> <p>BE PREPARED for some travel</p>	<p>Widespread structural damage, e.g. roofs blown off, mobile homes overturned, power lines brought down.</p> <p>Risk to personal safety from flying debris.</p> <p>Potentially widespread and/ or prolonged interruptions to</p>

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Impact and advice associated with WIND (cont..d)		possible debris being blown around.	disruption e.g. closed bridges. Potential for some localised interruptions	power. Expect widespread transport disruption due to e.g. roads blocked by fallen trees.
Impact and advice associated with RAIN	Some flooding of low lying fields, recreational land and car parks but little or no disruption to travel. Wet road surfaces and possibility of ponding water leading to difficult driving conditions. Take extra care when driving in affected areas.	Localised flooding of low lying fields, recreational land and car parks. Flooding of a small number of homes and businesses. Wet road surfaces and possibility of ponding water, especially in known trouble spots. Local disruption to travel – longer journey times. Water on roads – drive according to the conditions encountered.	Some flooding of homes, businesses and transport links possible. Disruption to travel likely. Disruption to gas, electricity, water supplies and telecoms. Some evacuations may be required. BE PREPARED to protect yourself and your property.	Widespread flooding of property. Severe disruption to travel. Loss of gas, electricity, water supplies. Significant disruption to communities. Evacuation expected. Significant risk to life. TAKE ACTION to protect yourself and follow the advice of the emergency services.
Impact and advice associated with SNOW	Small amounts of snow lying on roads and pavements so some slippery road surfaces possible. Traffic may move generally slower than normal. Take extra care when walking, cycling or driving in affected areas.	More widespread snow lying on roads and pavements but road networks generally open. Care needed with only localised travel disruption. Problems mostly confined to usual prone areas. Take extra care when walking, cycling or driving in affected areas. Journeys through affected areas may take longer than usual.	Widespread snow with a number of road closures, others passable only with care. BE PREPARED for some disruption to road, rail and air transport with difficult driving conditions likely and longer journey times.	Widespread deep snow with many roads closed or impassable. Roads likely to become impassable with high risk of drivers becoming stranded. Significant disruption to road, rail and air transport. Risk to personal safety. Expect significant disruption to normal day to day life as a result of transport issues, school closures etc. Avoid making unnecessary journeys.
Impact and advice	Localised icy	More widespread	Widespread black	N/A

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associated with ICE	stretches on some untreated roads and pavements are possible. Take extra care when walking, cycling or driving in affected areas.	icy stretches on untreated roads and pavements but road networks generally open. Take extra care when walking, cycling or driving in affected areas. Journeys through affected areas may take longer than usual.	ice, some roads passable only with care. Possibility of road collisions and significant increase in slips and falls.	
Impact and advice associated with FOG	<p>Some localised non-persistent fog affecting limited geographical areas.</p> <p>Take extra care when driving in affected areas.</p> <p>There may be some very limited impact on road transport.</p>	<p>More widespread, locally dense fog affecting significant areas of the country but not persisting beyond 1 – 2 days.</p> <p>Some airports may close for short periods.</p> <p>Take extra care when driving in affected areas.</p> <p>Journeys through affected areas may take longer than usual.</p>	<p>Widespread and dense fog affecting large areas of the country including a number of major airports and/or ports.</p> <p>The fog is persistent and may last for many days in some areas.</p> <p>BE PREPARED for some travel disruption.</p> <p>Take great care if driving and BE PREPARED for increased journey times.</p> <p>BE PREPARED for delays at affected airports and/or ferry ports.</p>	N/A

1.16 Dissemination of Warnings

NSWWS warnings are emailed by the Met Office to the council's Road and Transportation Service and Emergency Planning. These emails are also automatically forwarded to an agreed distribution list

1.17 The Met Office 'OpenRoad' Internet Service

This service is provided by the Met Office on contract to the council's Road & Transportation Service and gives detailed weather forecasts and ice alerts during the winter. It is available to nominated users in West Lothian Council.

1.18 The Met Office Hazard Manager Internet Services

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Hazard Manager is an interactive web portal with maps which can be overlaid with weather and incident related information. It provides Category 1 and 2 responders with a one-stop information source for services from the Met Office. It is a **password-protected** and access is available to any user who works for a Category 1 or Category 2 organisation. Content is available **24/7** with not just during an event.

Access to the service is available from:

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/publicsector/hazardmanager/overview.html>

1.19 FLOOD WARNINGS

1.20 Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)

1.21 There are currently no specific SEPA flood warnings systems for any of West Lothian's river systems

1.22 However, SEPA also provides a Flood Alert service which includes areas not covered by specific Flood Warnings. A Flood Alert is for a wider geographical area than the Flood Warnings, typically following local authority boundaries. West Lothian is included in the Edinburgh and Lothians Flood Alert area.

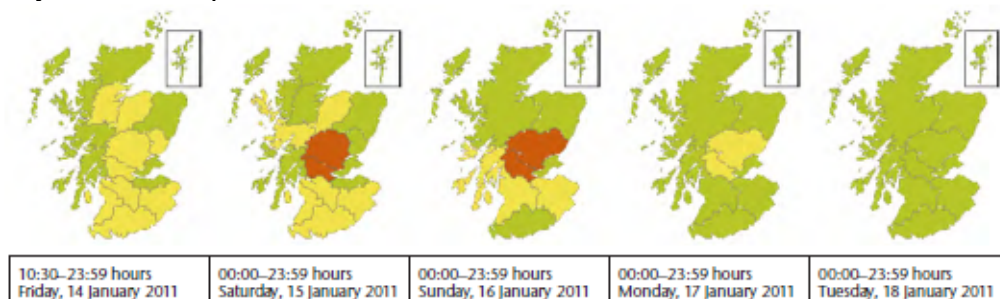
1.13 SEPA issues advice through the 'Floodline' service at **0845 988 1188**. The shortcut code for the Edinburgh and Lothian area is 23200. Flood Alerts are also available on the internet at :
www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/warnings/index.asp

1.24 Scottish Flood Forecasting Service

1.25 This is a joint initiative by SEPA and the Met Office which integrates hydrological and meteorological data and shares expertise to provide flood forecasts for the whole of Scotland.

1.26 A daily Flood Guidance Statement is issued by SEPA via email. Category 1 and 2 responders can register to receive this by emailing flooding@sepa.org.uk

1.27 The Flood Guidance Statement provides an assessment of the risk of flooding, from rivers, coastal and tidal areas and surface water, for the following five days. An example is shown below.



- 1.28 The colour (green, yellow, amber, red) is based on the same matrix used by the Met Office and shown in para 1.12 above

West Lothian Council

- 1.29 West Lothian Council has installed gauges on the Brox Burn and Mains Burn, Linlithgow, to give advance warnings of rising water levels and an imminent risk of flooding. Members of the public can register with the Council to receive advance warnings of flooding.
- 1.30 Operational Services operate an automated messaging system, which notifies residents when these levels rise above a certain level.
- 1.31 Although it cannot be predicted where the affects of severe weather will occur, West Lothian Council keeps a list of known flooding hotspots. This is held and maintained by Roads and Transportation within Operational Services.

Section 2

Care of Vulnerable Persons

- 2.1 During a severe weather emergency it may be necessary to check on the welfare of the more vulnerable members of affected communities. Social Policy will take the lead role in this task.
- 2.2 Housing, Construction and Building Services are responsible for re-housing residents whose homes become uninhabitable. If Housing Services make an assessment of individual circumstances and believe that a person requires residential care, then social work will make an assessment based on a combination of the incident and of need and respond accordingly.

Similarly the Health Service may decide that a person(s) should be admitted to hospital in an emergency for a short period due to their health needs not being able to be met elsewhere.

If the emergency affects a council residential home there are 'twinning' procedures. If it affects an independent residential or nursing home, the Care Commission expects the unit to have an emergency plan. Social Policy would assist where practicable.

2.3 Identification of Vulnerable People

During office hours - Details of affected areas should be passed to the Social Policy Information Team

Outside office hours – Details of affected areas should be passed to the Social Care Emergency Team

Utility companies also give customers the opportunity to register with them as vulnerable.

2.4 Offering Advice and Assistance

During a severe weather emergency, Social Policy will make a decision on what additional advice and/or assistance should be offered to vulnerable people based on an assessment of the situation. If appropriate this may include provision of a dedicated helpline for requesting assistance, and co-ordination of volunteers to provide this assistance.

Section 3

Activation of Plan

- 3.0 The response to the event should be proportional to the circumstances and reflect the severity, nature and timing of the severe weather.
- 3.1 Initial contact will be made between the Council, normally the emergency planning officer or duty EPO, and the "F" Division police duty inspector via the Force Communications Centre. A decision will be made as to the appropriate level of response i.e. operational, tactical or strategic. It may be appropriate to operate at more than one level.
- 3.2 **Operational level** will involve activating the emergency room at Guildiehaugh Depot, Bathgate with representatives from Operational Services and, if appropriate, the police.
- 3.3 **Tactical level** will involve activating the Council Emergency Centre at West Lothian Civic Centre, Livingston. This is located on the 2nd floor annex. Accommodation is also available within the Customer Service Centre in Lomond House if that is deemed to be more appropriate.
- 3.4 **Strategic level** will be activated by the Police and will normally operate from Police Headquarters. West Lothian Council would not normally be represented at this level but if requested and able to do so it must be by a senior officer with decision-making powers

RESPONSE AT OPERATIONAL LEVEL

- 3.5 This will be activated when there is disruption due to severe weather but it is not considered to be serious enough for a response at tactical level. i.e. responding services/agencies can cope with existing resources and without recourse to special arrangements being in place.
- 3.6 Operational Services will nominate a senior officer to manage the incident and agree priorities. Arrangements for providing information to the public will be agreed. The Head of Operational Services or his/her representative will be responsible for escalating the response to tactical level if a Severe Weather or Flood Group is convened at a tactical level.
- 3.7 Where heavy rain may give rise to flooding, the known flooding hot spots will be visited and cleared, where possible, by staff from the Council's Operational Services.

RESPONSE AT TACTICAL LEVEL

- 3.8 This will be activated if the severe weather conditions amount to or have the potential to develop into a Major Incident or Civil Emergency i.e. the event has entered the **emergency phase**. The triggers will include the need, **or** increasing likelihood of the need, to evacuate members of the community; or the need, or increasing likelihood of the need, for additional resources or special arrangements to be put in place. The police will be responsible for the co-ordination of the response at this stage. It is recognised that in a severe weather incident the Council will play a significant role in support of the police during this phase.
- 3.9 The Senior Divisional Police Officer will assume responsibility for the initial response and chair any meetings of the Severe Weather or Flood Group during the emergency phase. Representation will include the following as appropriate:
- a. Police Scotland
 - b. West Lothian Council
 - c. Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
 - d. Scottish Ambulance Service
 - e. NHS Lothian
- 3.10 The Council will be represented by officers from the following services: -
- a. Chief Executive Office
 - b. Area Services
 - c. Education Services
 - d. Housing, Construction and Building Services
 - e. Corporate Communications
 - f. Operational Services
 - g. Social Policy
 - h. Other services as required
- 3.11 In addition the following organisations should be represented when individual circumstances dictate: -
- a. British Telecom
 - b. Network Rail
 - c. Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
 - d. Scottish Power
 - e. Scottish Water
 - f. Scotia Gas Networks
 - g. British Waterways Scotland
 - h. Local Transport Providers

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3.12 The initial meeting will assess the extent of the emergency and the actions required by the Group members. Matters for consideration would include: -

- ☐ Weather reports
- ☐ River levels
- ☐ Resources
- ☐ Public information and media response
- ☐ Evacuation and emergency rest centres
- ☐ Identifying vulnerable groups
- ☐ Special needs sites / Vulnerable groups
- ☐ Road communications
- ☐ Severe Weather Group co-ordination and communications
- ☐ Utility failure and impact on the community
- ☐ Relief / changeover of staff
- ☐ Health issues
- ☐ Military Aid

The Chief Executive and senior Police Officers will be kept advised of any developments.

RESPONSE AT STRATEGIC LEVEL

3.13 This will be activated where the incident occurs anywhere in the East of Scotland RRP area which: -

- a. affects more than one Council area; or
- b. occurs in one area but is likely to have a serious impact on resources available to the emergency and support services.

3.14 In these circumstances the Strategic Police Commander will co-ordinate the emergency phase of the response. West Lothian Council would not normally physically attend meetings at this level if only because of the practical difficulties in travelling during severe weather. However if requested and able to do so, the Council will be represented by a senior officer who must have decision making powers. This could be done via video-conference facilities.

3.15 Communication between tactical and strategic level can be maintained through use of the police Command and Control system located in the Council Emergency Centre, telephone, email etc.

Section 4

Provision of Information

4.0 Providing information on what to do in the event of severe weather

- Households in areas at risk of flooding should be provided with SEPA flood packs
- Information on what to do in the event of a severe weather emergency should be available on the council website.
- Information on what to expect during and after a prolonged period of severe winter weather should be available on the council website and in council publications.

4.1 Providing information during a severe weather emergency

- In severe weather conditions it may be appropriate for the Council to set up a Helpline number. The decision to set up a Helpline number will normally be taken by the Severe Weather Group. The Helpline will usually be set up within the Customer Service Centre. The Duty Team Leader will determine the Helpline number.
- During the emergency phase the council's Facebook page will be an effective channel for disseminating accurate and up to date information to the public.
- During the emergency phase the most effective local media will also include local radio (Radio Forth, Real and Radio Clyde) and local television (BBC Scotland and STV). The Media Relations Officer should liaise with other responding agencies regarding communication with the media.
- The Council's Internet site can also be configured to give emergency public information in its front page. During the recovery phase use of local papers should also be considered.

4.2 Providing information during the recovery period

- During the recovery period information in relation to housing, financial assistance, insurance and environmental health should be available for affected areas. This should be collated in advance and made available on the council's intranet.
- Area Services should take a lead role in disseminating this information through Council Information Service offices and the Customer Contact

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Centre. Depending on the circumstances, a decision may be made to take a more proactive approach to information dissemination.

- If a helpline is set up during the emergency period then it should continue to be available in the recovery phase until deemed no longer necessary
- The Council's Internet site and Facebook page can also continue to be used to provide up to date information.
- The use of local newspapers should also be considered during the recovery phase

4.3 Elected Members

- The Protocol for Emergency Incident Notification of Elected Members should be followed. This protocol is available on the council intranet.
- During an emergency Corporate Communications will assist in ensuring this is followed.

Section 5

Roles and Responsibilities

5.0 For Integrated Emergency Management to be successful it is important that each agency responding to an emergency is aware of the roles and responsibilities of other agencies. This Section details the roles and responsibilities of agencies which will respond to a severe weather incident.

- West Lothian Council
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- NHS Lothian
- Utility Companies
- Voluntary Organisations

5.1 Although each agency will have specific roles and responsibilities, they share the same objectives, which are to:

- 1 Protect human life, property and the environment
- 2 Minimise the harmful effects
- 3 Manage an effective and co-ordinated joint response
- 4 Provide mutual support and co-operation between responders
- 5 Support the local community and its part in the recovery
- 6 Maintain normal services at an appropriate level
- 7 Head the longer-term recovery and regeneration of affected communities.

5.2 During a period of severe weather all agencies should give early consideration to implementing business continuity arrangements to ensure that levels of staffing and resources are sufficient to allow both the emergency response and the delivery of other essential services, especially if the severe weather is prolonged, expected over public holidays, or expected to disrupt travel arrangements or lead to school closures.

- 5.3 The West Lothian Council Major Incident Plan details the full roles and responsibilities of emergency responders. This section identifies the main responsibilities during a severe weather emergency.

5.4 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

- Representing the council on the Severe Weather Group
- Ensuring elected members and chief officers are kept up to date on the event.
- Providing information to the Scottish Government and Strategic Co-ordinating Group as required
- Co-ordinate requests for assistance made by the Scottish Government or Strategic Co-ordinating Group on behalf of e.g. critical parts of the infrastructure.

5.5 FINANCE AND ESTATES

- Implementing arrangements for recording expenditure incurred during the severe weather response.
- Providing advice and guidance on managing insurance claims
- Arranging for the attendance of loss adjusters in respect of Council property damaged by the severe weather
- Arranging for the supply of any additional equipment, material and other services as required during and after the emergency.
- Providing administrative and clerical support in the Council Emergency Centre.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place for West Lothian Civic Centre to be available for use 24/7 as the Council's Emergency Centre.
- Managing and operating council properties and other premises taken into use by the council during emergency operations.
- Assisting with the identification of alternative suitable accommodation in the event of a loss of council property during severe weather

5.6 CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

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- Providing the council's media response during the emergency phase and co-ordinating it during the recovery phase
- Liaise with the Police Scotland Media Relations Manager, or nominated Media Relations Officer.
- Lead in the provision of information to the public
- Produce an appropriate communications plan in the event of a prolonged period of severe weather

5.7 AREA SERVICES

- Liaising with community groups and voluntary groups in the affected area

Customer Service Centre

- Responding to calls from the public including the setting up of a Helpline.
- Providing feedback on the levels and type of calls being dealt with relating to the severe weather to allow emerging issues to be identified

Council Information Offices

- Provision of Helpdesk for dissemination of information to the public particularly during the recovery phase

5.8 HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING SERVICES

Housing Services

- Providing accommodation for persons made temporarily homeless or unable to return home.
- Managing the repair to any damaged property within the Council's housing stock
- Assisting at Emergency Rest Centres, including the provision of registration staff

Building Services

- Providing trades staff and sub-contractors from other building trades.
- Providing a range of light goods vehicles and labour squads.

- Providing specialist plant including temporary lighting
- Arranging access to the Building Services store and obtaining other materials.
- Assisting Social Policy with the provision of any facilities required at premises that have been identified suitable for use as Emergency Rest Centres

Construction Services

- Co-ordinating and controlling building works to maintain and repair council properties in liaison with building services.
- Assist Development Control and Building Services in assessing the safety of damaged property and structures and providing advice to ensure the well-being of search and recovery workers.

5.9 CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

The emergency role during a severe weather incident will primarily be the management and operation of the Council Emergency Centre. This will include the provision of support staff if required. However, staff from other services will provide support as required.

Administration

- Provide administrative and clerical support in the Council Emergency Centre

Human Resources

- Provide advice on human relations issues including operation of the guidelines for Managing Attendance at Work during Periods of Severe Weather

5.10 PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Planning Services

- Assessing the safety of damaged property and structures and providing advice to ensure the well-being of search and recovery workers (Construction Services will assist as necessary).
- Providing information on the construction of property.

Economic Development

- Providing information, assistance and advice to local businesses and liaising with them regarding recovery issues.

Environmental Health and Trading Standards

- Undertaking environmental monitoring where there is an imminent risk to public health.

5.11 OPERATIONAL SERVICES

- Providing labour, goods vehicles, equipment and materials.

Facilities Management

- Co-ordinating the provision of catering for members of the community affected by a major incident.
- Providing catering for the emergency services and other responders.
- Liaising with and co-ordinating catering assistance from voluntary agencies such as the WRVS as necessary.

Fleet and Community Transport Services

- Liaising with the Public Transport Unit regarding the provision of transport.
- Providing minibuses, including disabled vehicle accessible vehicles and personnel as available via the Community Transport service at Deans depot, Livingston.

In-print

- Preparing and printing leaflets etc. in particular with regard to provision of information to the public.
- Where necessary, liaising with Royal Mail or other suitable contractor for the distribution of these leaflets.

Neighbourhood Environment Teams

- Responding to flooding reports.
- Clearing debris from screens and culverts

Road & Transportation Services

- Assisting in traffic control by setting up diversions as requested by the police, as well as providing diversion signs, barriers, danger lights and traffic signals.
- Providing specialist plant and equipment and trained personnel utilising both Council and private contractor resources.
- Removing debris and reinstating roads and to this end liaise with the statutory undertakers when their installations are involved.
- Providing weather forecast and updates from the Meteorological Office
- Responding to flooding reports.
- Providing technical expertise at flood risk locations
- Providing and maintaining stocks of sandbags at agreed locations for flood control.
- Clearing debris from screens and culverts.
- Liaising with Police Scotland to identify the owners of vehicles parked in a manner which hampers efforts to deal with the effects of severe weather
- Liaising with Scottish Water, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the Emergency Services in respect of any real or potential water or drainage related hazard.
- Liaising with trunk road operators in respect of potential disruption which would have an effect on West Lothian's roads network.
- Rendering safe any lighting installations and electrical street furniture which is damaged, threatened or likely to contribute to additional hazards.
- Liaising with Education Services regarding the provision of buses for school children
- Arranging public transport if required.
- Co-ordinate and control the provision of general and specialist passenger transport from both Local Authority and private operators resources.

Waste Management

- Provide advice and assistance in waste management and disposal
- Provide collection points for household waste if the severe weather limits access to residential areas for an extended period of time.

5.12 SOCIAL POLICY

- Providing professional support to those in the community affected by the severe weather including the identification of vulnerable persons
- Identifying premises suitable for use as Emergency Rest Centres in consultation with the Police. A list of preferred locations is held by Social Policy, Emergency Planning and the Customer Contact Centre
- Managing and operating the Emergency Rest Centres
- Co-ordinating the voluntary services supporting the Emergency Rest Centres and any other care activities associated with the severe weather conditions within West Lothian.

Social Care Emergency Team (SCET)

Outwith normal hours SCET may be able to assist with:

- Contacting Rest Centre Managers to get an Emergency Rest Centre set up
- Identification of vulnerable persons
- Contacting local voluntary organisations to take assistance to vulnerable groups/persons
- Initiating action in response to disruption to service at a residential home etc.
- Contact housing services to re-house people temporarily made homeless.

5.13 EDUCATION SERVICES

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL SEVERE WEATHER PLAN

- Liaising with Operational Services and the Emergency Planning Officer to determine the extent of the disruption caused to the community by the severe weather
- Publicising school closures through the local media and Council out of hours services
- Providing, in conjunction with Social Policy, for the care of school children unable to return to their homes because of the weather situation
- Liaising with the emergency services, parents and other agencies as necessary in the event that school staff and pupils are in a group outwith the school when the weather conditions prevent a return to the school or to their destination
- The provision of suitable premises for emergency rest centres. These will be managed with Social Policy and Housing Services.
- Provide liaison with Alpha Schools (West Lothian) Ltd for PPP school provision.
- Provide specialist advice and information.

School Closures

Education Services has its own procedure for school openings/closure in the event of severe weather. This is co-ordinated through the Strategic Customer and Information Manager in liaison with head teachers. It should be noted that:-

- The decision to close a school rests with the head teacher;
- A decision to close will only be undertaken after consultation with the public transport unit to ensure the availability of buses; and
- Except in the most severe cases teaching staff will normally remain at school.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

5.14 POLICE SCOTLAND

During the emergency phase of the incident the police will co-ordinate the emergency response and implement measures to protect life and property. The role of the police includes:

- Co-ordinate the activities of other agencies
- Action Severe Weather Warnings received from the Met. Office
- Issue general warnings to the public via local radio and television stations
- Co-ordinate evacuations
- Enforce traffic control

5.15 SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have a duty to protect life and property, and achieve this through initiating fire fighting, rescue and damage limitation measures. During a severe weather incident the Fire and Rescue Service will

- Take a lead in relation to the rescue of those at risk
- Deploy trained water rescue personnel and equipment
- In appropriate circumstances deploy specialist equipment (Including high volume pumps)
- Share information with other agencies regarding the location of affected areas
- Store and issue sandbags supplied by West Lothian Council as required

UTILITY COMPANIES

5.16 SCOTTISH POWER

- In the event of severe weather causing widespread disruption to power supplies, Scottish Power will activate their emergency control centre. Contacts will then be made with the Council's out of hours service or the Council Emergency Centre if it is in operation.

- A two way flow of information will be established to ensure that Scottish Power are aware of all areas without power and for them to advise on likely restoration times.
- Scottish Power will wish assistance in identifying vulnerable persons or groups of persons e.g. a residential home.

5.17 SCOTTISH WATER

- Scottish Water requires to attend at floods caused by surface or foul water discharge.
- Scottish Water has a duty to respond to any to flooding caused by any failure of the mains water supply or failure of the sewage system
- Scottish Water's role will be to clear drainage systems contributing to a flood.
- Scottish Water has a duty to maintain the integrity of the public water supply during a flooding emergency
- Scottish Water may be able to assist with information to the public using vehicles with loudspeaker systems.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

5.18 WRVS

- Provide catering for Emergency Rest Centres
- Assist with the running of Emergency Rest Centres through the provision of a range of care services

5.19 BRITISH RED CROSS

- Assist with the provision of health and social care
- Provide first aid support
- Provide a transport and escort service
- Assist with the running of Emergency Rest Centres through the provision of a range of care services

5.20 LOTHIAN 4x4

- Assist with the provision of 4x4 vehicles and drivers

5.21 VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS DIRECTORY

The Strategic Co-ordinating Group maintains a Voluntary Organisations Directory which has the resources and contact details for voluntary organisations who would be able to provide assistance which may be appropriate during severe weather. The Severe Weather Group will determine whether the assistance on offer from these groups is required.

Section 6

Recovery

RECOVERY WORKING GROUP

6.1 Background

During the emergency response stage the Strategic Co-ordinating Group may commission the formation of a Recovery Working Group. If there are significant recovery issues, then it is good practice for the chair of the RWG to be part of the SCG.

6.2 Purpose

The RWG brings together the key agencies involved in the recovery and is usually led by a senior officer (Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive or Head of Service) of the local authority. The purpose of the group is to ensure that:

- The longer-term recovery priorities are reflected in the planning and execution of the response co-ordinated by the SCG.
- Full relevant participation by organisations from the public, commercial and voluntary sector is engaged from the outset.
- Continuity of management once the emergency phase is complete

6.3 HANDOVER TO RECOVERY PHASE

The handover from the emergency response phase to the recovery phase, where the council will take a strategic lead in co-ordinating a multi agency recovery process, takes place at a mutually agreed time. Consideration should be given to the following criteria:

- That the Council Emergency Centre is functioning effectively and has the necessary resources, communications and media co-ordination arrangements in place.
- That other organisations are functioning effectively in respect of resources, communication arrangements and management of outstanding issues.
- There is no known further risk to life specific to this incident

- The circumstances dictate it more appropriate for the Command and Control to rest with the Council now that the phase is clearly one of recovery
- There are no serious public order or crime prevention issues which impact on the overall strategic co-ordination of the recovery phase
- L&B Fire and Rescue Service and the Scottish Ambulance Service are now operating at a level that does not necessitate the Strategic Co-ordinating Group to co-ordinate and facilitate their activity
- There are no known scenarios that may give rise to a requirement to reinstate the SCG.
- The Police and the council are satisfied that the infrastructure, strategies and action plans are in place for the hand over of responsibility to proceed in a seamless manner.

6.4 PHASES OF RECOVERY

The recovery phase is likely to last for a significant period of time. In practical terms the phases of recovery can be broken down into:

- **Short Term Issues**
Those actions which can be completed with the first seven days
- **Medium Term Issues**
Those issues which are more protracted or widespread and could take between seven days and three months to address.
- **Long Term Issues**
Those issues which will take longer than three months to resolve.

It is important to recognise that the recovery process may never be able to restore the affected area and a community exactly to its previous state. After a consultation period, a point will be identified where a disproportionate level of resources cannot be justified to overcome the effects of the incident.

6.5 COUNCIL ARRANGEMENTS

As the emergency response to the incident draw to a close, and the recovery phase continues, the council is likely to be responsible for the co-ordination of the multi-agency recovery as well as the council's own recovery arrangements. The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive or head of Service, will lead a multi-agency Recovery Group and the Emergency Management Team will provide overall direction for the council's recovery arrangements.

One of the first tasks is to carry out a Community Impact Assessment to ensure that the affected area is known, who is affected, how many and any particularly vulnerable persons.

Additional single focus sub-groups may be established to deal with particular aspects of the recovery. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Business Continuity Sub Group
- Staff Welfare Sub Group
- Economic Impact Sub Group
- Finance Sub Group
- Media/Public Information Sub Group
- Humanitarian Assistance Sub Group
- Health Advisory Sub Group
- Community Recovery Sub Group

Each sub group will be led by an appropriate council officer, who will represent the sub group on the Recovery Group. The sub groups will have representatives from other agencies as appropriate.

6.6 ELECTED MEMBERS

Elected members can prove a valuable link to local communities and business and every effort should be made to ensure that they are kept informed and a clear channel established for receiving feedback. During the Recovery Phase it is expected that elected members will also continue to use the normal democratic processes to keep up to date with developments and exchange information.

Section 7

Debrief

DEBRIEF

- 7.1 The Council's emergency planning officer will arrange at the earliest opportunity as appropriate for : -
- a. The submission of post-operational reports.
 - b. A multi agency debrief
 - c. The preparation of a consolidated report
 - d. A review of this and other associated plans together with the issue of any amendments