



Birmingham Resilience Team

Consultation and Engagement Strategy

2011-12

Introduction

Birmingham Resilience Team (BRT) is a corporate service established to enable Council-wide compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. BRT works within the Council's governance framework and contributes to the strategic outcome "Stay Safe in a Clean Green City". BRT works closely in partnership with other agencies.

Aim

BRT aim is to ensure Birmingham is a resilient city where responding partners work together effectively and our communities and businesses are both informed and able to access information and assistance before, during and after emergencies.

BRT will achieve this aim by:

- Working with statutory, non-statutory organisations and multi agency partnerships that are involved in the planning, training, response and recovery from emergencies;
- Working with colleagues from across the Council that either undertake emergency response functions as a usual aspect of their role or are included within the Corporate Major Emergency Plan by virtue of their position or as a volunteer for specific roles;
- Ensuring a broad range of communication methods are in place to warn and inform partners and the public;
- Engaging communities and businesses through training and events to raise their awareness of emergencies and actions they can take to better prepare themselves.

Stakeholders / customers and activities

BRT undertakes a range of activities with partners on an ongoing basis or as one off activities. It is important to note that BRT's responsibility for emergency planning is at a citywide level, predominantly to inform strategic decisions and/or senior officer activities that co-ordinate resources and take tactical decisions.

BRT's generic planning is supported by specific plans that are produced to reflect the characteristics of specific risks. In terms of how different communities are affected by emergencies, BRT maintains extensive links with Council services, private and voluntary organisations whose skill and expertise is working with communities at the individual ward / neighbourhood level. BRT's access to a broad range of capabilities through partners ensures that an appropriate level and type of response can be activated. This approach is necessary as the very nature of emergencies is that they are unpredictable in nature and scale and it would be unrealistic and an ineffective use of resources to micro-plan for every eventuality across a city of a million people who live, work and visit the city.

Table 1 below summarises joint working where consultation and /or engagement with stakeholders is a fundamental aspect contributing to the success of these areas of work.

Evaluation and monitoring

BRT work programme is evaluated and monitored through a range of internal and external mechanisms. These mechanisms include:

- Internal directorate performance monitoring of the BRT service plan;
- Individual BRT officer's PDR monitoring;
- BRT provides senior officers and Members with ongoing work programme updates and information on specific incidents;
- Reports to responder partners at various resilience forum levels (regional, conurbation, Birmingham based);
- BRT completes the Cabinet Office bi-annual National Capabilities Survey;
- BRT completes the Cabinet Office Civil Protection Self Assessment Tool;
- www.birminghamprepared.gov.uk provides real time incident updates as they occur in addition to news articles, blogs, and emergency preparedness information and resources. The website has mechanisms via social media, email and contact details for users to provide feedback or their own experience of real incidents.
- BRT training, exercising and real time emergencies are evaluated as part of feedback forms, formal and informal debriefs. Lessons learned from real events and exercises are incorporated into plans and arrangements.

Review of strategy

This strategy is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the activities and methods utilised are effective. In addition, exercise and real event debriefs and public feedback via the BRT website, emails or other methods will also be used to assess the effectiveness of BRT consultation and engagement.

Table 1	BRT stakeholders and activities that include consultation and/or engagement
Stakeholder Group	Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Category 1 responders in West Midlands Conurbation • Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Category 2 responders in West Midlands Conurbation • Directorate Management Teams and Constituency Management Teams • BCC Major Emergency Plan Named Officers and Volunteers 	<p>BRT provides a 24/7 Emergency Duty Officer function which provides emergency services a single point of contact within BCC during emergencies. This function ensures the Council response to emergencies is integrated and co-ordinated with other responders. BRT will escalate the Council response if required and in accordance with the Council Major Emergency Plan and procedures. The Council Major Emergency Plan and procedures sets out the corporate response structure for managing emergencies. A wide range of Council services are consulted as part of ongoing resilience plan developments. During emergencies BRT is responsible for: the activation of a number of council emergency response functions (rest centre teams, crisis support teams, housing officers, neighbourhood advice and information officers, etc); generic warning and informing to the public, council staff and businesses via Birmingham Community Alert, website, newsletter, etc.; briefings / updates to Council Strategic Officers and Members; attend the incident scene and undertake Forward Emergency Control officer role; attend multi agency briefings at bronze (operational), silver (tactical) and gold (strategic) levels depending on the circumstances of the emergency; and attend multi agency Silver and/or Gold Command during the incident to represent the Council.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Category 1 responders in West Midlands Conurbation • Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Category 2 responders in West Midlands Conurbation • Central Resilience Team (Department of Communities and Local Government) • Birmingham Resilience Group • Core Cities 	<p>BRT maintains partnership working to fulfil statutory requirements in relation to co-operation, information sharing, joint emergency planning, training and exercising, etc.</p> <p>These partnerships include those at Birmingham (BRG), WM conurbation (GWG), regional (LRF, RRF), national (Core Cities and consequent engagement with key Government departments). In addition to these standing groups there are also “task and finish” groups to progress specific projects or training / exercises.</p> <p>The Birmingham Resilience Group is the multi agency forum that BRT utilises to develop and approve joint response and recovery plans.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Resilience • Directorate Management Teams 	<p>BRT maintains information sharing and reporting to Team Resilience (representatives from services across the Council), Directorate Management Teams, Thematic Response Cell</p>

<p>and Constituency Management Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCC Major Emergency Plan Named Officers and Volunteers 	<p>Members (e.g. Communications reps from directorates), and senior officers / Members. Team Resilience provides the internal consultation group for BRT plans.</p> <p>BRT maintains a comprehensive training and exercising programme to ensure officers have the skills and knowledge required for Council emergency response activities. Training and exercising can be for internal officers and/or as part of multi agency sessions.</p> <p>BRT provides advice and information to support directorate colleagues to train and exercise within their own specialism.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham Communities and Neighbourhood Resilience Group • Birmingham Resilience Champions • Birmingham based business support organisations 	<p>BRT engages with these groups utilising a range of methods to increase pre emergency preparedness, communication during emergencies and post emergency to support recovery. There are numerous work streams associated with this duty, e.g., website advice and information, leaflets, Council Emergency Information Line (activated as part of a BCC emergency response), Birmingham Community Alert messaging system, retail radio network, resilient telecommunications back up facilities, advice, guidance, leaflets, etc.</p> <p>BRT also undertakes awareness campaigns, e.g. ICE campaign, emergency preparedness questionnaire, Preparing for Emergencies DVD, attendance at various community events / festivals, workshops and seminars, etc.</p> <p>Where appropriate BRT targets specific business sectors or communities in specific locations for training and exercises. BRT promotional activities to businesses include both general and specific initiatives to ensure maximum exposure across the City in a format that reaches individual businesses in a way that suits their information needs and priorities. BRT's seeks to have a general and specific approach as it is recognised that many businesses do not wish to release staff to attend events purely for networking. Furthermore, Birmingham has 42,000 businesses and the costs of hosting large scale networking events and the cost of promoting them to a wide audience is also a prohibiting factor.</p> <p>Similarly BRT's approach for Birmingham communities is to ensure general city-wide activities are ongoing and specific events target groups based on the characteristics of the risk. E.g. locations known to be at risk of flooding.</p>

