

# Gateshead Community Resilience Strategy

Working together to build  
a resilient Gateshead

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# Executive Summary

This is Gateshead's first Community Resilience Strategy. This will be a live document which will be under constant review to ensure that our objectives are in line with local, regional and national resilience priorities.

The issue of resilience has become a huge undertaking for all local authorities over the last few years. This has been in no small part due to a large number of high profile incidents around the country, such as terrorism and flooding.

The Strategy sets out our vision for Community Resilience in Gateshead to ensure that we can provide a safe environment for our residents, visitors, organisations and businesses in the event of a natural or man made disaster.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mick Henry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

*Councillor Mick Henry  
Leader of Gateshead Council*

# 1. Introduction

This Strategy sets out the overall vision for Community Resilience within Gateshead to ensure that Gateshead remains a safe place to live, work and visit.

It is effective from December 2008 - December 2011 and focuses on the specific challenges to be addressed over the next 3 years. It identifies our key objectives and outcomes and examines the issues in relation to these.

The development of this strategy has been informed by national and local objectives and it will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that our objectives are in line with emerging local and national priorities.

This strategy sets out the Resilience objectives for Gateshead Council but it can only be achieved by working in partnership with a wide range of agencies at a local, regional and national level.

A Resilience Action Plan that sets out the specific actions we will be taking in relation to each of our objectives to help us to deliver our vision will compliment this strategy.

## 2. What is Community Resilience and why do we need a strategy?

Community Resilience is the ability to anticipate, prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover quickly from emergencies affecting organisations, businesses, individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities within Gateshead. An emergency can be any event that threatens human welfare, the environment or the security of the UK (as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004). This could range from minor emergencies such as the disruption of power supplies for a short period to major emergencies such as flooding or acts of terrorism that may affect a wide Community.

We live in an uncertain world and for a community to be resilient the Council and its partners must understand the risks that are faced within the Community and develop early and effective resilience arrangements such as Emergency Plans and Business Continuity plans so that the whole community can prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from an emergency in a timely, effective and coordinated manner.

This Community Resilience Strategy will establish the framework, which will help us to develop and deliver these arrangements within our own organisation, with partners, with businesses and with individuals and neighbourhoods within the Community.

### 3. What is Our Community?

Our Community is at the centre of this Strategy and it includes:

- Gateshead Council
- All Private, Public and Voluntary Organisations in Gateshead
- Businesses
- Individuals and Families
- Neighbourhoods
- All Communities including Faith, Minority Ethnic and other Cultural Communities
- Vulnerable people

### 4. Our Vision

*'To make Gateshead a safer place for all, by working together to empower our whole community to be better prepared for dealing with emergencies'*

### 5. What is a Resilient Gateshead?

Our 'Working Together to Build a Resilient Gateshead' Community Resilience Strategy is made up of eight main objectives. They are:

- **Objective One** Protecting the Community through Anticipation and Risk Based Planning
- **Objective Two** Preparing together and sharing information in a Multi Agency Environment
- **Objective Three** Developing Community Resilience for individuals, families and neighbourhoods
- **Objective Four** Communicating Effectively with our Communities
- **Objective Five** Building Resilience in the Business and Voluntary Sectors
- **Objective Six** Protecting Council Services and Partnerships
- **Objective Seven** Returning the Community to Normal Life
- **Objective Eight** Protecting Our Communities Through a Continuous Process of Learning, Evaluation and Review

These eight elements are all intrinsically linked and form a strategy designed to ensure that we have the capability to deal with and recover from any emergencies that may arise within Gateshead with the least amount of disruption to Council Services and the Community.

A summary of our Community Resilience Strategy can be found on the next page.



# 6. Strategic Context

## 6.1 Resilience in the National Context

This Strategy is strongly influenced by the priorities of Government at a national level. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 has placed statutory duties on local authorities and other agencies to work together to develop robust arrangements to plan, prepare, respond to and recovery from emergencies. This Act has replaced the previous legislation, which was mainly concerned with the threat of invasion from foreign countries to reflect the kinds of threats that the Country now faces from the environment, health and terrorism. It has also moved the emphasis away from relevant agencies simply planning to respond to an emergency to having plans and arrangements in place to make the whole Community more resilient before, during and after an emergency.

The Act places a series of duties on local authorities and these form the basis of our resilience planning. These are:

- **Co-operation and Information Sharing with other Agencies** to ensure that all agencies respond in an effective and coordinated manner before during and after an emergency
- **Risk Assessments** - carry out an assessment of the risks of an emergency occurring within the Community and use these to inform our emergency planning.
- **Emergency planning** - work with other agencies and the community to develop emergency plans to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies in accordance with the risks in the Community
- **Business Continuity Management** - to have plans in place within the Council so that essential services can continue to be provided in the event of an emergency or disruption occurring that might effect Council Services and also in the event of an emergency occurring within the Community so that the Council can respond to the emergency and continue to provide Council Services
- **Communicating with the Public** - to have robust arrangements in place to warn and inform the public, before during and after an emergency to minimise the impact of an emergency on the Community.
- **Advice and Assistance to Business and Voluntary Organisations** - to provide advice and assistance to business and voluntary organisations about having business continuity plans in place to provide stability to the economy and the community in the event of an emergency.

To help to implement these duties, the Government have also developed the **Key Capabilities Programme**, which is the core framework through which the government is seeking to build resilience across the UK. The aim is to ensure that a robust infrastructure of response is in place to deal rapidly, effectively and flexibly with the consequences of a major incident. The programme consists of 18 work streams:

- **Structural Work streams** - three work streams dealing respectively with the national, regional and local response capabilities;
- **Essential Services Work streams** - five work streams which are concerned with the maintenance of essential services: food and water; transport; health services; financial services; and utilities

- **Functional Work streams**, ten work streams dealing respectively with the assessment of risks and consequences:
  - CBRN ( chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear ) resilience;
  - site clearance;
  - infectious diseases (human);
  - infectious diseases (animal and plant);
  - mass casualties;
  - evacuation and shelter;
  - warning and informing the public;
  - mass fatalities;
  - humanitarian assistance;
  - flooding.

The Government have set also out the Resilience Priorities at a National Level as:

- Pandemic Influenza
- Severe Flooding ( Pitt Report)
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Community Resilience
- Telecomms Resilience

The Civil Contingencies Act, Key Capabilities Programme and Government Priorities are the key drivers of this Strategy. However, it is also influenced by a number of other National Priorities which are as follows:

- The National Security Strategy for the UK
- CONTEST - National Counter Terrorism Security Strategy
- The Newton Report in Buncefield
- Pitt Review into Severe Flooding 2007
- The National Risk Register
- Floods and Water Bill

## 6.2 The Regional Resilience Context

For some risks that affect more than one area or organisation within the North East Region, it is appropriate to plan at a regional level. The Regional Resilience Team, based within the Government Office North East act as a link between local organisations and Government and assist in the delivery of Government Resilience Policies on a regional basis. The Regional Resilience Forum helps the Council to plan at a regional level. It is chaired by the Regional Resilience Director of Government for the North East and consists of representatives from across the region. Planning at this level covers issues that might relate to events covering a wide area such as flooding, animal disease outbreaks, Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear attacks (CBRN) and the Council's response to events that might result in mass fatalities. During an actual emergency a Regional Civil Contingencies Committee (RCCC) will be established to take a strategic overview at a regional level. The chair of RCCC will depend upon the nature of the incident, and be determined at the time; it could be someone such as 'Regional Director of Government office', 'Regional Director of Public Health', or someone from Central Government.

## 6.3 Resilience at a Local Level

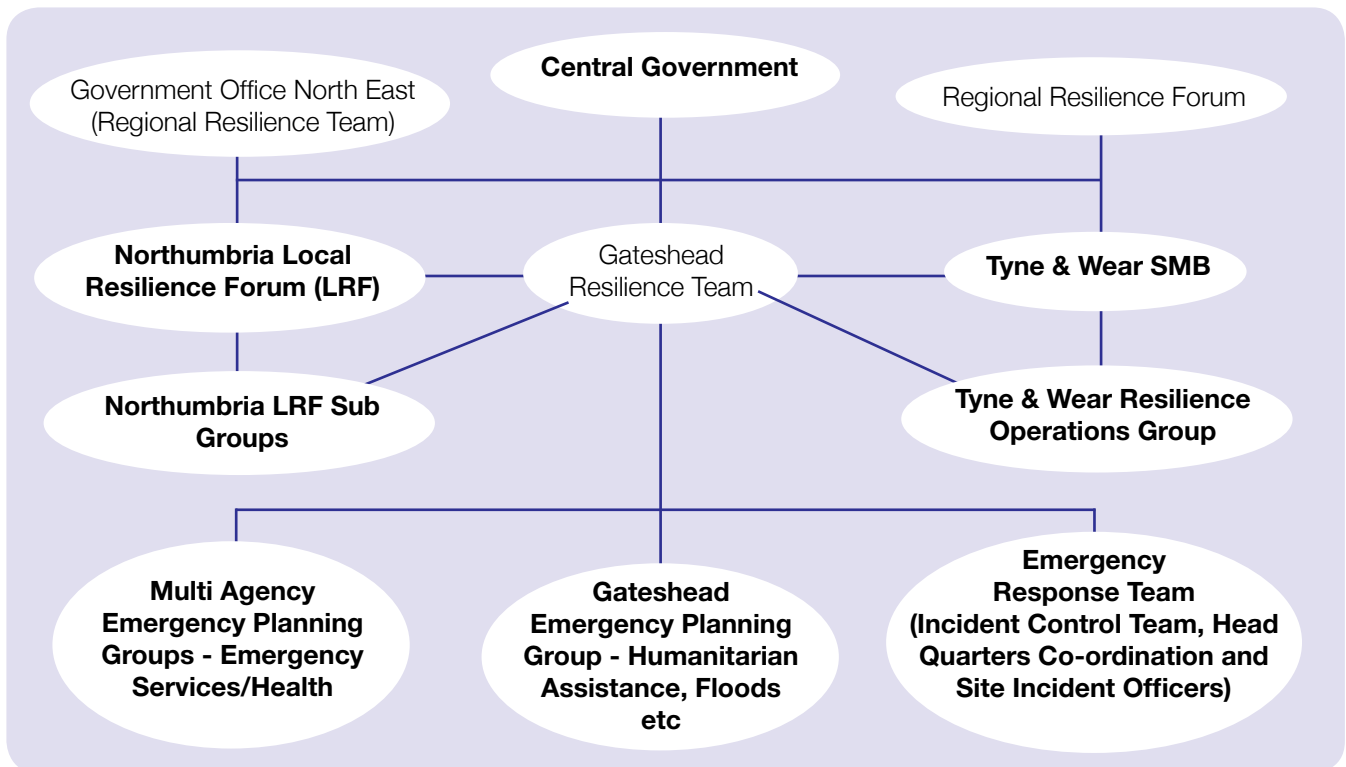
### Northumbria Local Resilience Forum (LRF)

This Strategy is also influenced by the Council’s statutory requirement to prepare, plan, respond and recover from emergencies within the structures of the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum (LRF) based on Northumbria Police Force Boundaries. The Council, represented by Gateshead’s Resilience Manager, is major player within this Forum together with partner agencies such as other Local Authorities in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland, Northumbria Police, the Fire and Rescue Services, Health, Utility Companies and Government Office for the North East. The LRF is a strategic coordinating group and works alongside other elements of the multi agency planning framework at the local, regional and central government levels. The main aim of the LRF is to ensure coordination and cooperation between the main organisations within Northumbria before during and after an emergency and to ensure that appropriate multi agency plans, procedures, training and exercising are developed to address identified or foreseeable local and wider area hazards. As the LRF is a strategic group a number of sub working groups have been formed to develop and deliver the work streams that have been identified at a strategic level. These work streams include Humanitarian Assistance, Training and Exercising, Voluntary Agencies, Business Continuity Promotion, Pandemic Influenza, Flooding and Communicating with the Public. The Council is represented on these working groups and these work streams have an impact on our planning at a local level.

### Resilience in Tyne and Wear

Through the leadership of a Strategic Management Board (SMB) the five local authorities in Tyne and Wear work collaboratively to identify and agree resilience priorities across Tyne and Wear. Through effective joint working between the Tyne and Wear Local Authorities and other agencies we aim to build capacity across Tyne and Wear to enable us to deliver these priorities at a local level. The objectives and outcomes of this strategy are strongly influenced by these priorities.

### A breakdown of the regional and local arrangements



# 7. The Gateshead Picture

## 7.1 Vision 2030

The Community Resilience Strategy - **Working Together to Build a Resilient Gateshead** - supports the shared vision that the Gateshead Strategic Partnership has set out for Gateshead - Vision 2030 - Sustainable Community Strategy which aspires to make Gateshead the best place to live, work and visit. This vision is:

**Local people realising their full potential, enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead.**

- The objectives of the Community Resilience Strategy supports all of the six big ideas within Vision 2030.

## 7.2 Local Area Agreement

These objectives contribute towards the priorities and improvement targets of the Local Area Agreement, which will drive the implementation of Vision 2030. Specifically these are:

- **Priority 27** - Creative Gateshead - Increase level of satisfaction with local area and engage residents with the development of neighbourhood plans - NI 5 - Overall /general satisfaction with local area.
- **Priority 28** - Gateshead Volunteers - Develop a coordinate programme for promoting volunteering and voluntary action both to support Gateshead's Year of the Volunteer and beyond - NI 6 - Participation in regular volunteering.
- **Priority 38** - Sustainable Gateshead - Reduce carbon emissions, develop robust plans to tackle climate change and ensure the environment is sustainable - NI 188 - Adapting to climate change.

## 7.3 Corporate Plan

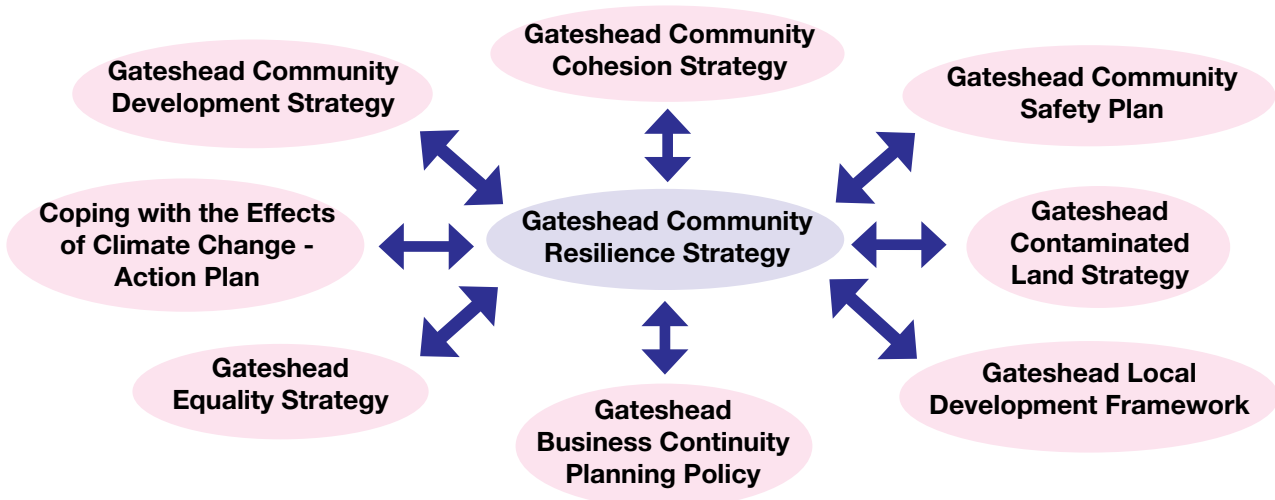
The Council's Corporate Plan sets out how the Council will work towards achieving the aspirations of Vision 2030. It sets out what the Council wants to achieve through working in partnership with other agencies, local people and groups so that together we can ensure a better future for all local people.

The objectives of the Community Resilience Strategy contribute towards the Council's six corporate priorities and directly supports:

- **Building Stronger Communities**
- **Ensuring a Sustainable Gateshead**

## 7.4 Plans and Strategies

The objectives contained within the Community Resilience Strategy are also linked to other Council Strategies, Plans and Policies as shown below:



It is also linked to a number of additional plans, strategies and policies that are set out in Appendix 1.

## 7.5 The Characteristics of Gateshead

We need to understand the characteristics of Gateshead to help us to develop our objectives and outcomes for our Community Resilience Strategy.

Gateshead is an area of contrasts. Over half of the borough is rural consisting of rolling countryside and farmland. This contrasts dramatically with the rest of the Borough where there are significant industrial, business and residential areas. There are also many cultural initiatives such as the Baltic and The Sage Gateshead that have a national and international profile. Europe’s largest out of town shopping centre, the MetroCentre is also based in Gateshead as well as Gateshead International Stadium which hosts major international athletic events. This makes Gateshead a popular tourist attraction.

Gateshead is also a borough of contrasts in socio economic terms with 18% of the population living in the 10 most deprived areas in the Country but with several areas in the borough in the 20% least deprived areas of the Country.

Gateshead has a diverse Community and is home to the principle centre for Jewish learning in this Country, with an international reputation. The borough has very low numbers of residents from diverse minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest ethnic groups in Gateshead are the Mixed and Asian or Asian British groups, which both currently stand at 0.9%. The next largest is the Chinese group, at 0.3%. The Black or Black British and “other” groups are the smallest, at around 0.2%. More recently these numbers have been augmented by around 1,000 asylum seekers, representing a range of distinct languages and cultures.

Three main rivers run through Gateshead, the Rivers Tyne, Derwent and Teams. Gateshead also has an important transport network located within its boundaries including the main East Coast Railway Line and the A1 motorway. Elements of the national critical infrastructure, which supplies power to large parts of the North East, are also located within our boundaries.

This picture of Gateshead helps us to understand our community and identify the specific risks faced within the Borough that might lead to major emergencies. This will have a significant impact on the development of our strategy.

## 8. Objectives and Outcomes

**Our Vision: 'To make Gateshead a safer place for all, by working together to empower our whole community to be better prepared for dealing with emergencies'**

This will be delivered through the following objectives.

Our 'Working Together to Build a Resilient Gateshead' Community Strategy is made up of six main objectives. They are:

<b>Objective One</b>	Protecting the Community through Anticipation and Risk Based Planning
<b>Objective Two</b>	Preparing and Responding together and sharing information in a Multi Agency Environment
<b>Objective Three</b>	Developing Community Resilience for individuals, families and neighbourhoods
<b>Objective Four</b>	Communicating Effectively with our Communities
<b>Objective Five</b>	Building Resilience in the Business and Voluntary Sector Community
<b>Objective Six</b>	Protecting Council Services and Partnerships
<b>Objective Seven</b>	Returning the Community to Normal Life
<b>Objective Eight</b>	Protecting our Communities Through a Continuous Process of Learning, Evaluation and Review

## 8.1 Objective One: Protecting the Community through Anticipation and Risk Based Planning

### Key Issues

To be able to protect our Community we need to be able to anticipate the types of risks that we face that might lead to emergencies and make an assessment of the level of risk and impact on the community. We also need to make sure that our communities are aware of the risks that exist within the neighbourhood in which they live, work or visit.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a legal responsibility on Local Authorities to work with partner agencies to carry out risk assessments within the Community, ensuring there is a shared understanding of the risks to enable plans to be developed which are relevant and proportionate to the actual risk. This is the basis on which our emergency plans and business continuity plans are developed. The Act also places a legal responsibility on Local Authorities to inform the public about the risks in their neighbourhood prior to an emergency occurring.

As part of the National Security Strategy the Government has produced a National Risk Register to help us to identify the types of risks that the Country as a whole might face. This information, previously held confidentially within Government is intended to help organisations, individuals, families and neighbourhoods to prepare for emergencies. The risks that have been identified nationally are likely to be as a result of natural events, major accidents and malicious attacks (terrorism).

Understanding the specific characteristics and taking into account the previous emergencies of Gateshead has enabled us to translate these risks into a local context, the risks within the Borough are likely to be as follows:

- **Climate Change.** Severe Weather / Flooding / Heat waves

- **Human Disease.** Pandemic Flu
- **Major Fires / Explosions.** High Risk Industrial Sites / Acetylene Cylinders
- **Major Traffic Accidents.** Rail, Motorway, Air
- **Malicious Attacks/Terrorism.** High profile international venues - MetroCentre, Baltic, The Sage Gateshead, Gateshead Stadium
- **Disruption to Infrastructure.** Power, Water, Telecommunication
- **Contamination of Land**

### Where are we now?

- Working with our partners we have developed a multi agency Community Risk Register for the Northumbria Area, which is published on the Web.
- We have developed a local generic Community Risk Register for Gateshead.

### Key Outcomes

- To understand and prioritise fully the risks faced within Gateshead at a neighbourhood level.
- To develop a Community Risk Register for each neighbourhood management area within Gateshead.
- To have a well informed community who have an understanding of the risks within the neighbourhood in which they live, work or visit.
- To have well developed, robust and effective emergency plans in place at a neighbourhood level, which are proportional to the risks identified.

## 8.2 Objective Two: Preparing and Responding Together and Planning and Sharing Information in a Multi Agency Environment

### Key Issues

The Council cannot develop robust and effective resilience plans in isolation. Cooperation and Coordination between agencies is essential during the actual response and recovery phase of an emergency. To ensure that this works effectively agencies need to work together and share information in the preparation and development of emergency and business continuity plans.

### Where Are We Now?

There are three main forums for multi agency cooperation at a local level.

- The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) based on Northumbria Police Force boundaries of which the Council is an active member (as described in section 6 above).
- The Tyne and Wear Strategic Management Board who are developing priorities at a Tyne and Wear Level on which the Council is an active member (as described in section 6).
- The multi agency working at a local level within the boundaries of Gateshead Council.
  - There is a Gateshead Health Multi Agency Planning Group, which is developing plans and arrangements in relation to human health issues such as pandemic influenza, small pox, heat wave planning and other emergencies.
  - A regular meeting takes place between the Council and Northumbria Police within Gateshead Area Command which is developing our joint arrangements to respond to emergencies in a coordinated manner. Joint training has been undertaken to ensure that agencies at a local level are aware of roles and responsibilities but this has been undertaken on an ad hoc basis. A multi agency planning group is developing an evacuation plan for Gateshead Metro Centre and a plan to respond to Flooding.
  - The Safer Gateshead Partnership provides a forum for cooperation and coordination for all agencies.

- Multi agency emergency plans have been developed by the Local Resilience Forum in relation to Humanitarian Assistance Centres, Flooding and Pandemic Influenza.
- Multi agency emergency plans are being developed at a local (Gateshead) level in relation to the MetroCentre Evacuation Plan, Flood Plans, Humanitarian Assistance Plans and Recovery Plans.
- Multi agency training and exercising takes place on a regular basis within the Local Resilience Forum, across Tyne and Wear and within Gateshead.

### Key Outcomes

- Well-developed and effective Multi Agency Emergency Plans which reflect the needs of the Gateshead locality and are proportionate to the risk. Such as:
  - Humanitarian Assistance Plans (including Rest centres, Reception Centres and Humanitarian Assistance Centres)
  - Evacuation Plans
  - Multi Agency Flood Plans
  - Neighbourhood Emergency Plans
  - Severe Weather Plans
  - Human Disease Plans
  - Animal Health Plans
- Robust local resilience arrangements developed through a Multi Agency Local Responder Group
- A well developed programme of multi agency training and exercising at a local (Gateshead) level
- A well developed programme of single agency training and exercising for Gateshead Council employees and elected members to compliment and strengthen multi agency working
- Development of a Communications Strategy to develop coordinated Plans for communicating with the public before, during and after an emergency.

## 8.3 Objective Three: Developing Community Resilience for Individuals, Families and Neighbourhoods

### Key Issues

The development of Community Resilience for individuals, families and neighbourhoods is a key aspect of our Community Resilience Strategy.

To develop resilience we need to help individuals, families and neighbourhoods to be able to support themselves before, during and after an emergency. Individuals, families and neighbourhoods that take meaningful, planned actions before and during an event can limit the impacts on themselves and the community and help it recover more quickly from the event.

The Benefits of Community Resilience are as follows:

- Better able to minimise the impact of an emergency and the potential damage to themselves and their property
- Quicker to recover, allowing reinstatement of services and community resources
- Structured communication networks
- Community members have a 'can do' attitude
- Opportunities for all the community to be involved
- Members of the community often know what actions need to be taken to help
- Builds strong cohesive communities
- Better able to understand the roles of outside agencies in an emergency and can better communicate their needs and priorities

We also need to recognise that tensions may also exist or emerge in and between communities and we need to develop plans so that we can anticipate and mitigate these tensions and respond when tensions escalate. Our plans need to reflect national priorities that are emerging from CONTEST the National Counter Terrorism Security Strategy.

### Where are we now?

- We have developed neighbourhood agreements in the Wrekenton area, which includes information on the possible risks in their area, the role of the Council in the event of an emergency and the role of the community.
- We have developed leaflets and information on the Council website providing advice and guidance regarding the role of the Council and how individuals and communities can help themselves.
- A pilot project is being developed in Blackhall Mill to develop a Neighbourhood Resilience Plan following the recent floods.

### Key Outcomes

- Neighbourhood Resilience Plans for each Neighbourhood Management Area . These will be based on an assessment of risk within each area. We will develop plans and work with communities in the areas of highest risk from for example flooding, industrial accidents etc
- Identification of vulnerable people and plans to support them
- Engagement with all sections of the Community - Individuals, Families, Neighbourhoods, schools, youth, neighbourhood groups, Faith groups, Ethnic Minority Groups etc)
- Development of Community Cohesion Contingency Plans
- Development of a multi agency CONTEST strategy
- Development and implementation of a multi agency action plan for the 'Protect' strand of CONTEST to reduce the vulnerability of crowded places to a terrorist attack .
- Contributing to the a multi agency action plan for the 'Prevent' strand of CONTEST to Build Resilience to Violent Extremism
- Development of Communication Strategy to provide advice and guidance to the Public on how they can support themselves in an emergency and what they can expect from the responding agencies

## 8.4 Objective Four: Communicating Effectively with our Communities

### Key Issues

Communications is at the heart of our resilience strategy. Good communications which provide consistent, coordinated, timely and targeted information are essential to an effective response to any emergency. It is important that reliable information is passed on correctly and without delay so that all responders share a common picture of the situation and can respond appropriately. Essentially, any communications strategy must aim to provide the right people with the right information, at the right time and in a form that they can understand, assimilate and act upon.

A resilient community is a well informed community that is aware of the assistance and advice available to them and how they can help themselves and others.

We need to be able to provide people with information and advice to help them to cope and manage in an emergency, including practical advice on how to care for themselves, family, friends and neighbours. We also need to be able to provide targeted support to the most vulnerable people within the community who are not able to help themselves and this support may come from the Council, other agencies or other parts of the community.

We want communities to have an involvement in the content of the plans that we put in place. It is therefore essential that consultations take place with community groups to ensure community members have an ownership and understanding of the final plans. We would also like communities to have an ongoing involvement in the process through the formation of community volunteer groups and multi agency working groups.

### Where are we now?

- The Council's website contains public information in relation to basic resilience guidance; this includes information relating to pandemic flu.
- A Flood Warden scheme has been established in the community of Blackhall Mill. The wardens are all volunteers from the community who use their local knowledge to assist the Council, the Environment Agency and the Emergency Services when the community faces flood risks.
- We are to undertake training for ward members and front line staff to communicate resilience messages to community residents.
- We are undertaking the implementation of Community Cohesion Strategy, which will involve the agreement of different communities in line with national guidance.

### Key Outcomes

- Development of a Communications Strategy to develop coordinated Plans for communicating with the public before, during and after an emergency
- Further development of a media strategy and plan to communicate with the media during an emergency.

## 8.5 Objective Five: Building Resilience in the Business and Voluntary Sectors

### Key Issues

It is important to ensure that the impact on the continuity of business and voluntary organisations is kept to a minimum. This will lessen the economic and social impact of emergencies and speed up the recovery process. Experience has shown that organisations who have business continuity plans in place to ensure that normal or essential services can be delivered during or in the aftermath of an emergency are more likely to stay in business or recover quickly in the event of an emergency than those who do not.

The Civil Contingencies Act places a duty on Local Authorities to provide advice and guidance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity planning. This is important because in building resilience in businesses and voluntary organisation it will reduce the reliance on the local authority and other agencies in an emergency enabling the Council to focus on resources for the most vulnerable. Also it will help to improve the links between the responders and businesses that are crucial to effective emergency management arrangements.

### Where are we now?

- A Business Continuity Management Promotion Strategy has been developed by Local Resilience Forum for the Northumbria locality.
- Advice leaflets for businesses and voluntary organisations have been developed and distributed to all businesses in Gateshead.
- Information and advice for businesses is incorporated within the National Non Domestic Rates leaflet that is issued each year to business ratepayers.

- Promotional materials such as posters, post it notes, pens etc have been developed and are distributed at promotional events to businesses and voluntary organisations in Gateshead.
- We have hosted and participated in two 'Project Argus' events in partnership with Northumbria Police Counter Terrorism Team targeted at Business at the Metro Centre and Team Valley.
- We have participated in a number of business events across the region to promote the principles of business continuity.
- We are developing a Procurement Strategy to ensure that businesses supplying goods and services to the Council have Business Continuity Plans in place.

### Key Outcomes

- A proactive programme of events, seminars and awareness campaigns providing advice for business and voluntary organisations is developed and maintained.
- The majority of businesses and voluntary organisations in Gateshead have well developed and tested Business Continuity Management Plans so they are resilient in the event of an emergency and can recover quickly.
- A procurement and Commissioning Strategy for businesses and voluntary organisations supplying goods and services to the Council is in place.

## 8.6 Objective Six: Protecting Council Services and Partnerships

### Key Issues

The Council provides a wide range of essential services to the community and has a duty to ensure that these services continue to function in the event of a crisis or emergency affecting the Council, the community or both. We must ensure that:

- We have in place a well developed and tested contingency plan (Business Continuity Plan) for the continuation of Council services in the event of any significant crisis or emergency including services delivered in partnership with other agencies.
- That employees have a clear framework of communication and delegation of powers to enable them to implement recovery of key services
- We provide a clear framework of internal procedures to enable employees to restart Council services and to return to operational status without delay
- Employees and elected members are aware of their roles and responsibilities within the contingency plans

The need for the Council to develop and maintain a formalised business continuity framework is both essential to the mitigation of risks to the delivery of the Council's key objectives and imperative to fulfil the Council's responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Audit Commission recommendations and new industry standard in business continuity management (BS25999).

### Where are we now?

- We have developed a Business Continuity Planning Policy, which supports the maintenance and development of a Business Continuity Planning Framework.
- We have developed a draft Corporate Business Continuity Plan, which provides the framework of internal procedures for the allocation and management of resources to enable the Council to continue to provide services during any type of emergency with the minimum of disruption.
- Each service has undertaken a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) to identify its most critical services and the resources that support them.
- Service Continuity Plans have been developed to ensure the delivery of the critical services identified.
- We have developed a draft Corporate Pandemic Influenza Continuity Plan and each service has undertaken a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) to identify its most critical services in relation to this.
- Service Continuity Plans have been developed in relation to the delivery of these critical services during an influenza pandemic.
- We have exercised the Continuity Plans and identified additional measures that require implementation to ensure that our arrangements are robust.
- We are developing a Procurement Strategy to ensure that suppliers, contractors and partners have Business Continuity arrangements in place.

## Key Outcomes

- Review and develop the Corporate Business Continuity Plan
- Review and develop existing Service Continuity plans in the context of BS25999.
- Robust arrangements in place to support the Service Continuity Plans for critical services
- Service Continuity Plans for non critical services in place
- Alternative accommodation/working arrangements/off site plan for all Council premises in place
- Procurement and Commissioning Strategy to ensure significant contractors, supplier and partners have well developed and tested Business Continuity Plans in place
- Structured well developed programme of training and exercising for employees and elected members in relation to continuity and emergency plans in place within each service and corporately
- Well developed programme of training for employees and elected members in relation to the principles of service continuity and emergency planning
- Establish programme of training relating to service continuity planning to be incorporated within the induction programme
- The role of employees within service continuity and emergency plans to be incorporated within the recruitment process and job profile of all employees
- The role of elected members within service continuity and emergency plans to be incorporated within the Member Induction Programme
- Achieve the BS25999 accreditation for business continuity

## 8.7 Objective Seven: Returning the Community to Normal Life

### Key Issues

The term used for the return to normality following an incident is 'recovery'. This is the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency.

Recovery following an incident is a coordinated directed process of supporting the community to restore emotional, social, economic and physical well-being. The recovery phase continues until the disruption has been rectified, services have returned to normal levels and the needs of those affected have been dealt with. Depending on the severity of an incident recovery management can involve a challenging programme of work, which could take a number of months or even years to complete.

- The Local Authority will lead the multi agency recovery operation, which should start as soon as possible following the onset of an incident.
- In order to do this successfully and as quickly as possible we must have plans in place a framework to deliver the requirements of the recovery process. This could include:
  - Clear the site of anything damaged by an incident such as roads or buildings
  - Return evacuated residents to their homes or find suitable medium or long term alternative accommodation for them
  - Help the community to return to normal life providing assistance with physical and mental health and welfare
  - Business and economic recovery
  - Finance and legal advice
  - Return buildings used as temporary shelters or work spaces to their normal purpose
  - Return the provision of all services to full capacity following the possible redirection of resources to cope with an emergency situation

### Where are we now?

- A draft generic recovery plan for Gateshead has been developed in accordance with Government guidelines

### Key Outcomes

- A robust multi agency recovery plan for Gateshead is in place.
- A robust Humanitarian Assistance Centre Plan is in place for Gateshead including the necessary arrangements to support the establishment of a Humanitarian Assistance Centre.
- Roles and responsibilities of individual employees within the recovery process are clearly identified and awareness and training has taken place.
- Structured well developed programme of training and exercising for employees and elected members in relation to The Recovery Plan is in place within each service and corporately.

## 8.8 Objective Eight: Protecting our Communities through a Continuous Process of Learning, Evaluation and Review

### Key Issues

We need to ensure that the requisite skills and competencies are in place to enable effective organisational preparedness, response and recovery. Everyone who has a role to play must receive the necessary training to carry out the required duties and all plans must be tested and reviewed. It is essential that we identify and apply experiential learning obtained both within Gateshead and elsewhere and apply the lessons learnt to our resilience arrangements.

To ensure that we can provide the most effective response in the event of an emergency it is vital that we are in possession of the most up to date information. It is critical that anyone who may be involved in responding is aware of the following:

- What action is required
- Their role and the roles of others
- The most up to date regulations or methods employed

Each time we have a requirement to put resilience plans in place we need to ensure that everyone who has a role to play is made aware of their role and receives the necessary training to carry out the required duties.

Once a plan has been established it is critical that we test it to ensure that it will work using the resources that we have available. This can be done via a number of methods such as 'table top' exercises or actual live exercises. The actions taken on these days will be scrutinised and any gaps in our response can then be addressed.

Each plan should then be reviewed periodically to ensure that our response is still appropriate and effective. This serves to keep required roles and responses of relevant personnel fresh and well practiced and also highlights any personnel changes that may have occurred, which is a regular occurrence in a large organisation.

Employee awareness can also be raised at regular team briefings and via Council emails and publications.

### Where are we now?

There are a number of trained employees who will control, coordinate and execute the required response during an incident.

### Key Outcomes

- A well developed programme of single agency training and exercising for Gateshead Council employees and elected members to compliment and strengthen multi agency working
- A well developed programme of multi agency training and exercising at an LRF level and at a local ( Gateshead ) level for employees and elected members.
- The number of employees trained to respond to an incident will increase and will be expanded to include volunteer agencies, multi agency groups and elected members.

## 9. Diversity, Equality and Community Cohesion

In December 2006, Gateshead launched its first Equality Strategy, which incorporates the Council's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes and also set out key priorities regarding age, faith and belief, sexual orientation and transgender. The Strategy outlines how the Council intends to make equality a reality in all areas of its activities to ensure that we make a difference to people in Gateshead who currently face disadvantage and discrimination.

**In the context of resilience planning this will ensure that everyone, regardless of race, disability, language, religion, wealth or sexual orientation will have equal access to the assistance and information they require to support them before, during and after an emergency.**

In addition, the Gateshead Strategic Partnership has developed a Community Cohesion Strategy for Gateshead focussing around the themes of citizenship, neighbourliness, accessibility to services and addressing inequalities. It sets out how we can break down barriers and enables people from a range of backgrounds to live together as equals in their local area. In the context of resilience planning it also describes how we will support people's strong sense of responsibility to others in their community. It states that we will help to build resilient communities by developing Community Resilience Plans which will provide residents with information and advice to help them to cope and manage in an emergency, including practical advice on how to care for themselves, friends, families and neighbours in the event of an emergency. It also recognises the tensions that can often exist or emerge between and within communities and describes how we will also develop a Community Cohesion Contingency Plan to respond to emergency situations where tensions escalate into conflicts within our communities.

## 10. Risk Management

The effective implementation of this strategy will mitigate the risk to the achievement of the Council's objectives and legal obligations in the event of an emergency.

The effective implementation of this strategy could be compromised by:

- Lack of Resources e.g. staffing, equipment, materials, buildings etc
- Inadequate training and exercising of employees and elected members
- Poor communication
- Lack of cooperation from partners organisations, businesses, individuals, families and neighbourhoods

This could result in a failure to respond appropriately and effectively in the event of a major emergency, which could lead to:

- Deaths
- Damage to the local infrastructure e.g. roads, buildings, utilities
- Damage to the local economy
- A Public Enquiry
- Litigation
- Loss of reputation

# 11. Resource Implications

A significant amount of resources are required to deliver our vision for Community Resilience within Gateshead.

There is a specific Resilience budget of £154,000 which currently contributes towards the delivery of the Resilience Strategy.

This funds the post of Resilience Manager who is responsible for ensuring that the Council's Community Resilience arrangements are robust and effective and are delivered in accordance with statutory, national, regional, sub regional and local objectives.

Each Service area within the Council has a responsibility to support the Resilience Manager to ensure that that Council can deliver the objectives and outcomes of this Strategy and there are structures in place to ensure that this is effective in the planning and preparation stage as well as the response and recovery phase.

The remaining budget funds Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit, which is a joint arrangement of the five Tyne and Wear Local Authorities. This unit provides some additional capacity to be able to deliver our responsibilities at a Tyne and Wear level.

By working effectively in a multi agency environment across the Local Resilience Forum we are able to utilise resources from other agencies to build additional capacity to assist us in delivering our objectives and outcomes.

To ensure that there is sufficient capacity available to deliver this strategy we will continue to make best use of the resources by:

- Building capacity by services working together effectively across the Council and recognising their corporate responsibilities
- Building capacity by working effectively in a multi agency environment, locally, regionally and a national level
- Undertaking a review of the current arrangements within Tyne and Wear to determine whether the current delivery model:
  - represents value for money
  - contributes effectively towards the delivery of this strategy
- Take advantage of any opportunities to bid for any additional funding streams that may arise

## 12. Performance and Review

The success of this strategy will be measured by how well we have delivered the outcomes outlined in this Strategy.

At present we have not developed any local indicators to measure these. However, Central Government do monitor local authority performance in relation to our ability to be resilient in the event of an emergency. This is measured via the 'National Indicator Set', contained within the National Performance Framework for Local Authorities. There are 198 indicators in total, which consider all areas of Council performance as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). Of these 198 indicators 35 are included within the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

The indicators which relate to this Strategy are as follows:

<b>National Indicator No.</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>5 (LAA)</b>	<b>Overall/general satisfaction with local area</b>
<b>6 (LAA)</b>	<b>Participation in regular volunteering</b>
<b>35</b>	<b>Building resilience to violent extremism.</b>
<b>36</b>	<b>Protection against terrorist attack.</b>
<b>37</b>	<b>Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area.</b>
<b>188 (LAA)</b>	<b>Adapting to climate change.</b>
<b>189</b>	<b>Flood and coastal erosion risk management.</b>

N.B. There are currently no targets in relation to NI 35, 36 and 37. The baseline for these targets will be developed during 2008/09.

A detailed action plan will accompany this Strategy to ensure that we deliver the objectives, outcomes and targets we have set ourselves. This will be reviewed and monitored on regular basis to ensure that we are delivering our vision within the prescribed timescales and emerging local and national priorities.

# Appendix 1

## Relevant Plans, Acts and Strategies

### Acts, Inspections, Reviews, Reports and Strategies (National)

- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004  
<http://www.ukresilience.gov.uk/preparedness/ccact.aspx#documents>
- The Key Capabilities Programme 2008  
<http://www.ukresilience.gov.uk/preparedness/ukgovernment/capabilities.aspx>
- The Pitt Review  
[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~/\\_media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/flooding\\_review/pitt\\_review\\_full%20pdf.ashx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~/_media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/flooding_review/pitt_review_full%20pdf.ashx)
- Comprehensive Area Assessment  
<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caa/>
- Buncefield Investigation Report  
<http://www.westmidlandsprepared.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/17-J/I/-buncefield-report-recommendations-170707.pdf>
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.pdf>
- Data Protection Act 1998  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/Acts1998/ukpga\\_19980029\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/Acts1998/ukpga_19980029_en_1)
- Planning Policy Statement 25  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/planningpolicystatement25.pdf>

## Strategies and Plans (Local)

- Vision 2030 - Gateshead's Sustainable Communities Strategy  
<http://council/PDFs/vision2030-1.pdf>
- Gateshead Councils Corporate Plan  
<http://council/PDFs/Corporate%20Plan.pdf>
- Gateshead Contaminated Land Strategy  
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/Environment/Strategies/contaminatedlandstrat.pdf>
- Gateshead Cultural Strategy  
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/council/strategy/culture/spreadingwings.pdf>
- Gateshead Community Safety Strategy  
[http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/People/Strategies/communitysafety/csdm\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/People/Strategies/communitysafety/csdm_strategy.pdf)
- Safer Gateshead Partnership Plan  
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/People/Strategies/communitysafety/PartnershipPlan.pdf>
- Business Continuity Guidance  
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/council/strategy/be%20prepared.pdf>
- Business Continuity Planning Policy  
<http://council/policies/Gateshead%20Council%20-%20Business%20Continuity%20Planning%20Policy.pdf>
- Gateshead Human Resources Strategy  
[http://council/humanresources/docs/HR\\_Strategy.pdf](http://council/humanresources/docs/HR_Strategy.pdf)
- Gateshead Travel Plan  
<http://council/develandent/travelplan/travelplan.pdf>
- Gateshead Risk Management Strategy  
<http://council/risk/Risk%20Management%20Policy.doc>



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