

## Wales Partnership Council

### COVID-19: Moving from Response to Recovery Phase (Civil Contingencies)

#### Introduction

1. The unprecedented scale and complexity of the COVID-19 emergency continues to present considerable and somewhat unique challenges.
2. While the focus over recent weeks has inevitably turned to the easing of restrictions and to Recovery, there remains a very real possibility of a resurgence in infection rates and sadly to more deaths.
3. The ongoing nature and scale of the threat posed by COVID-19, means that the normal Cabinet Office approach, based on the civil contingency *concept of operations* on transitioning from the Response Phase to the Recovery phase of the emergency, is more challenging and less clear cut, potentially requiring both phases to continue side-by-side for a longer period than would normally be the case.
4. In the light of the above, this paper sets out a series of guiding principles for consideration and adoption. The aim is to provide continuing good governance, effective communication and engagement, and appropriate join-up on Civil Contingencies matters as we move forward.

#### Handover from SCG to RCG

5. Responsibility for deciding when the handover should take place rests with the Chair of the Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) (normally a senior Police officer) and the Chair of the Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) (normally a senior officer from one of the Local Authorities represented in the SCG/RCG area).
6. In recognition of the ongoing threat posed by Covid-19 and the possibility of a resurgence in the infection rate, requiring the SCG to be reactivated, the following criteria are being proposed for the SCG to handover to the RCG:
  - All risks/issues with a BRAG rating of RED will have been mitigated and reduced to AMBER, and member agencies are content that any residual AMBER risks can be taken forward/addressed on a single agency basis.
  - All actions/responsibilities of the SCG have either been completed or have been discussed with and transferred to the RCG.
  - Recovery Co-ordination Group (and any supporting Sub-Groups required) is firmly established.

- The Local Authority’s Emergency Control Group is functioning effectively and has the necessary:
  - Resources
  - Communications
- Individual organisations are functioning effectively with adequate:
  - Resources
  - Communications
- A Local Authority within the area accepts the Chair of the RCG, with agreement of all LAs in that area.

### **Terms of Reference, Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG)**

#### **Purpose:**

To take strategic overview, give direction & monitor progress of recovery work.

Similarly to SCGs, RCGs have the authority to operate as needed, enabling swift and effective action to be taken recognising local circumstances, challenges and opportunities.

#### **Role:**

- To feed in recovery issues whilst the multi-agency Strategic Co-ordination Group or Council’s Crisis Management Team is still in operation.
- To decide the overall detailed Recovery Strategy and Action Plan,
- Ensure all relevant stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of the strategy.
- To establish appropriate Sub-Groups, or draw on existing partnership structures (e.g. Public Services Board and Regional Partnership Boards), as required.
- Deal with other issues that fall outside the scope of the Sub Groups.
- To produce an impact assessment on the situation.
- To assess the need and arrange for public meetings in affected areas.
- To monitor financial matters and pursue funding and other assistance.
- Decide the final “state” of the infrastructure and natural environment affected
- To provide reassurance to the public and to minimise fear and alarm.
- In conjunction with the Welsh Government’s strategic approach to recovery, as set out in “Leading Wales out of the Coronavirus pandemic: A framework for recovery”, agree exit strategy criteria and timescale.

## Welsh Government support for the RCGs

7. The Welsh Government will support Wales' RCGs by:
- Ensuring that appropriate Welsh Government representation is made available to attend and contribute fully to RCG meetings and the work of the RCG.
  - Providing the most up to date evidence to support informed decision making.
  - Holding weekly (Strategic) meetings of RCG Chairs, chaired by Reg Kilpatrick, Director Local Government in the Welsh Government.
  - Establishing a forum for weekly (operational) meetings of RCG Chairs chaired by Welsh Government.
  - Convening the Wales Civil Contingencies Committee (WCCC).
  - Ensuring that assistance measures put in place to support Recovery are provided in a timely, fair and equitable manner and are sufficiently flexible to respond to a diversity of community needs.
  - Encourage a consistent approach to the Recovery work across Wales and consistent terminology to aid good communications with the public and all other stakeholders.
  - Recognising and reinforcing an approach based on the management of recovery being best approached from a community development perspective. It is most effective when conducted at the local level with the active participation of the affected community and a strong reliance on local capacities and expertise. Recovery is not just a matter for the statutory agencies - the private sector, the voluntary sector and the wider community will play a crucial role.
  - Recognising that, due to the unprecedented nature of this pandemic, a co-ordinated pan-Wales approach is the best way to address certain issues (to be defined).
  - Clearly setting out in a Recovery Concept of Operations document the recovery management arrangements.

### Chair and Secretariat:

8. Chaired by a Chief Executive, or nominated Director, from one of the Local Authorities represented in the SCG/RCG area who will appoint a Secretariat to record minutes of all RCG meetings, progress actions and co-ordinate a master record of all Sub-Group meetings.

### Membership:

The membership is flexible and likely to change at different stages of the process:

- Local Authority Chair, admin support and appropriate directorate representatives.
- Neighbouring Authorities.
- Police
- Fire and Rescue Service

- Natural Resources Wales.
- Food Standards Agency.
- Welsh Government Representative(s)
- Public Health Wales
- Local Health Boards
- LA & Private Sector Social Care Representative
- Animal and Plant Health Agency
- Utility Companies
- Transport Providers
- Military
- Health and Safety Executive
- Voluntary Organisation Representative

The papers and the support being offered have been developed taking account of:

- The Welsh Government's strategic approach as set out in the [Leading Wales out of the Coronavirus pandemic: A framework for recovery](#);
- The Recovery Principles provided in the Emergency, Response and Recovery guidance;
- The unprecedented nature of this Pandemic and the potential for a resurgence in infection rates requiring a return to Response phase;
- Welsh Government engagement to date with SCG and RCG Chairs.