

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: HSC Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 12 January 2023

Subject: Emergency Planning – Response to 2022 Heatwaves

Report authors: Neil Thurlow, Assistant Director Community Safety, Resilience
Denise Prieto, Emergency Planning Manager

Responsible Director: Bram Kainth, Strategic Director of Environment

1. SUMMARY

2. This report provides Members with the opportunity to understand and review our Emergency Planning processes and responsibilities following the summer heatwave and as an action requested at the previous HSC PAC. The report focuses on the response to the following action:
3. **Action:** *That the Emergency Planning Team be invited to provide a report to help the PAC understand what resilience measures are in place to respond to heatwaves.*
4. The report seeks to advise PAC members regarding the processes which are in place, how our resources are deployed, and provide detail on the work undertaken within the command-and-control structures which were operational when the heatwave response was triggered.
5. There are no decisions required from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

For the Committee to note and comment on the report

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Creating a compassionate council	<i>The care and welfare of our residents especially in emergencies is at the top of our agenda.</i>
Rising to the challenge of the climate	<i>Heatwave preparedness activities span</i>

and ecological emergency	<i>across the year. Adult Social Care, Children’s Services, Housing and Planning departments are committed to guarding, where possible against the increasing impacts of climate change, and preparing for the summer heatwave season.</i>
--------------------------	--

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

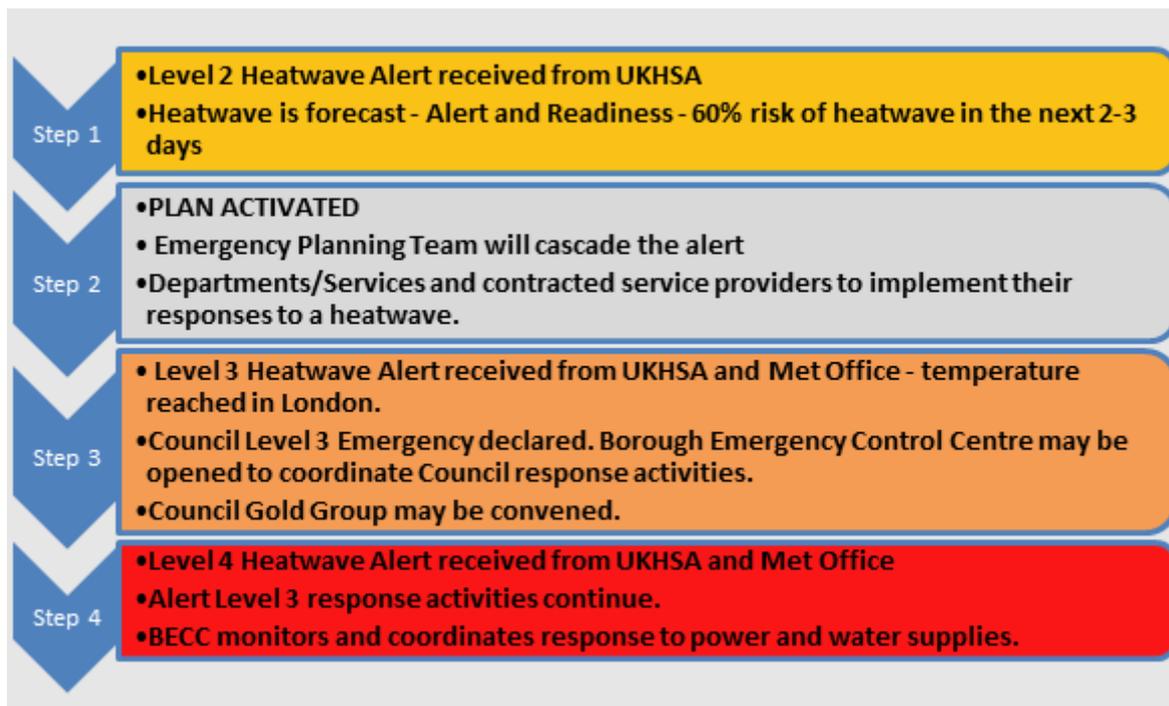
DETAILED ANALYSIS

6. The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham have a robust suite of emergency plans and procedures in place which are shaped and tested to respond to different types of emergencies. The council works under the Civil Contingencies Act to deliver this work and plans are shaped by both national and regional frameworks which provide the governance on how local plans are produced.
7. H&F have a Heatwave plan in place (**Appendix 1**) which details the arrangements required for responding to Heat-Health Alerts.
8. It is the Met Office and UKHSA that issue these alerts at increasing levels of severity between 2-4 (level 2 and upward are activated when weather conditions become abnormal – these are explained on page 3 of this report).
9. The alerts issued outline the appropriate response and actions that need to be taken at each level and contains links to supporting information provided by other agencies, for example, the UKSHSA Heatwave Plan for England.
10. All Council departments and services are required to consider the actions contained within the plan identifying which are most appropriate to their operation(s). Where there are actions identified the relevant service managers are responsible for the implementation of these actions to ensure we can protect residents, businesses, borough visitors, and/or council staff against the impact of a heatwave.

Activation of the Plan:

11. The activation notice is received by the Emergency Planning Team. It is this team who are responsible in ensuring that all Council departments are notified of the relevant Heat-Health alerts being received and it is this team who trigger the response from services. It is the responsibility of each department to cascade the warning and mitigation measures to all relevant staff, contracted service providers and other key partners as relevant to protect their staff, clients etc.

Activation Levels & Triggers



Heatwaves - July & August 2022 – Command & Control Arrangements

12. Heatwave alerts were received from the Met Office and UKHSA by the H&F Emergency Planning Team in both July and August 2022 due to unprecedented heat levels.
13. The Heatwave Plan, once received, required us to activate our response plans and, via the Emergency Planning team, activation requests were cascaded to leads from across the council.
14. These alerts were also cascaded to the Council's Senior Leadership Team, and on-call Duty Silver (tactical response) and on-call Duty Gold (strategic response)
15. The virtual Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) was opened to coordinate and disseminate information and updates to services. The BECC was monitored by the Emergency Planning Team and acted as a conduit for information with information, service updates and status provision received, cascaded and tracked both internally and externally.
16. Service leads were asked to report back to Emergency Planning via the BECC detailing the proactive measures being taken to mitigate the effect on residents and staff before and during a heatwave with services asked to report any issues on service delivery to the Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) during a defined period of time.
17. The Heatwave alerts required the council to activate its response, assess the risk and take appropriate actions to minimise impact on our most vulnerable communities.

18. As part of the emergency response, we held command and control meetings, chaired by the on-call Gold officers to provide council wide oversight and response.
19. These Gold meetings lead to several actions being initiated and tracked. Whilst these actions varied by department, the broader, council wide ones, included the following:

Communications response

20. Educational help and advice/ guidance was published on the H&F website and social media channels to maximise reach quickly and efficiently.
21. The communications advice provided included information regarding the location of cool spaces where residents could seek respite from high temperatures, there was also signposting to H&F Community Connect Team – this is a team of volunteers who residents could call if worried about a friend, relative or neighbour
22. Appendix 2 contains examples of key information, posted on the website and social media channels by the Councils Communications Team.

Sheltered Housing/Housing

23. In person and telephone welfare checks were completed by Officers to all residents residing in H&F sheltered housing schemes where residents were provided with help and advice relating to personal health and welfare matters due to the high temperatures. Officers worked to ensure that our residents understood the risk of the heat and were understanding of the need(s) to take extra self-care and also how to seek additional assistance when needed.
24. There were also localised communications approaches put into place to re-iterate the education and awareness raising:
25. 'Beat the Heat Posters' were put on all estate notice boards prior to heatwave with practical advice
26. Useful Information uploaded to lift screens in lobbies
27. Housing colleagues also had additional lift/electrical engineers on standby as the heat presented higher risk of lifts overheating. Pallets of water bottles, were readied for delivery and 200+ vulnerable residents were contacted by the call centre to undertake welfare checks and make an offer of free fans being delivered.
28. Housing Officers were advised to be extra vigilant and check on their most vulnerable residents.
29. Due to increased risks of issues due to the heat our Call Centre and Out Of Hours call centre were briefed and emergency mechanisms put in place for raising higher risk calls (e.g., lift entrapments)

Adult Social Care

30. Adult Social Care Reablement staff contacted vulnerable residents and when visiting checked on hydration, their environment etc.
31. All care providers were regularly contacted by Adult Social Care staff and advice given to these providers to ensure they undertook welfare checks on residents – both for those in independent accommodation and for those living in supported accommodation. Care agencies were told to check that residents were hydrated and well. All providers working on behalf of H&F are required to have a Business Continuity Plan to ensure they can continue to deliver their vital services in adverse circumstances.
32. In addition, over 2,000 proactive welfare texts were sent out to residents by H&F Community Connect Team to raise awareness. Residents were advised of the following:
33. *“If you, or somebody you know, find your home to be uncomfortably hot and you have concerns about it affecting yours or someone else's health, please contact H&F community connect team on 0800 145 6095 Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. If you live in a council block, please make sure you have water and your mobile phone with you if you are using a lift. If the lift does break down, please follow the instructions in the lift car.”*

Careline

34. Additional staffing was put in place, with staff prepared to assist in the event of an increase in Careline emergency call outs between 09:00 – 16:00.
35. With the plans from Careline managers ensured staff had access to the latest health guidance and briefings were cascaded to all staff. One site management cover was activated and careline staff made proactive calls to all residents in receipt of the careline service. In addition, Careline officers carried out checks on known residents without care packages, to see that they were keeping hydrated and cool.
36. During these engagements residents were reminded to use their alert devices if they have any support issues/queries.
37. The service did not see any increase in calls from residents, however.

Highways - Hammersmith Bridge:

38. Hammersmith Bridge saw significant work undertaken as the highways team worked around the clock to ensure that the bridge was kept at a stable temperature, so it remained open and available for residents' use (bicycles and on foot).
39. This work saw media interest as cooling technology was used to prevent overheating.

Children's Services

40. Children's Services ensured that families had access to public health advice to keep cool and hydrated
41. Information and advice were shared with providers running Summer in the City events and others providing services to children and families

Travel Care:

42. Travel Care Assistance includes home to school transport, adult day centre transport and ad hoc journeys for children's and adult social care arrangements. Transport is generally provided by minibus or taxi. The type of transport is determined based on the needs of the individual service user and location of the destination.
43. Guidance was issued to all contracted providers to ensure the continued high quality, safe delivery of services. Guidance included:
 - All drivers are to maintain a cool vehicle ensuring good ventilation.
 - All crews are to have a fully charged phone in case of any difficulties.
 - Bottled water is available in the vehicles in the event of breakdowns or significant traffic delays giving due consideration to the individual health and care needs of children and young people, for example safe swallowing.
 - Crews maintain good communication with families and carers in the event of traffic delays to ensure residents are not having to wait for the arrival of the vehicle outside during extreme temperatures.
 - All vehicle crew are first aid trained in the event a passenger or colleague experienced symptoms of heat exhaustion.
44. The Travel Care Service operate a single 'golden number' for families and providers in the event of queries or concerns which is available from 07.30-17.00 Monday-Friday whilst services are operating.

Rough Sleeping (Homelessness)

45. Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) was activated for rough sleepers on both occasions (July & August) during the extreme heat. SWEP was activated based on the Met Office weather forecast and remained in place until the heatwaves had expired.
46. The Street Outreach Team carried out welfare checks on people sleeping rough, giving out sun cream and water and advised where people can seek respite from the heat during the day.
47. Emergency beds were opened, and arrangements were made for the provision of temporary accommodation for rough sleepers. During the second

SWEP activation (11-16th August 2022), four rough sleepers were supported away from the streets.

LET (Law Enforcement Team)

48. During patrols, LET officers signposted rough sleepers to accommodation opened for their specific use and triaging them to the right team if they indicated that they would like support. They conducted extensive work with the Outreach Team, especially the Outreach Night Team
49. Any reports of street parties or similar disturbances were responded to in the usual way and LET service provision remained 24hrs a day.

LOOKING FORWARD – ENSURING WE LEARN AND DEVELOP

50. The council is concentrating on preparation and mitigation measures that should be considered for future years where we may expect to see longer periods of extreme heat due to climate change.
51. Our preparedness is being undertaken with our climate change team as it is essential that we learn and seek to “future proof” the borough, initially for roads, schools and care homes and then, in the longer term, expanding this preparedness to other areas of business.
52. The Council currently holds monthly Climate Change Strategy Group meetings, it also holds regular Flood and Extreme Heat Mitigation Group meetings chaired by the Strategic Director of Environment
53. Following every incident where emergency planning protocols are triggered, an evaluation is undertaken. This evaluation, led by the Emergency Planning team, seeks to identify what worked, what could have been better and what the key learning points were from all involved.
54. Where there are multi-agency responses to an incident, these are discussed with the Borough Resilience Forum (BRF). The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory requirement (since 01 April 2012) on each of the 33 London Boroughs to have a Borough Resilience Forum. The Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Resilience Forum (BRF) brings together Category 1 Responders and Category 2 Responders, for example, Fire brigade, MPS, NHS and others as and when required. It seeks to ensure that multi-agency emergency planning, emergency response and consequence management are undertaken in a coordinated manner, based upon locally agreed priorities.
55. At the BRF meeting held on the 6th of December 2022, it was agreed by the forum to hold a Heatwave multi-agency exercise to further test our plans and identify where more work may be required on a partnership level.
56. This exercise will take place at the end of March 23 to prepare for any heatwaves and identify any learning and best practice going forward.
57. The council is also working to identify and secure “Cool Spaces” for residents to access so that they may find respite from the high temperatures. At this

time there are five cool spaces: Westfield (x2 areas), Livat (Hammersmith), Fulham Library and Shepherds Bush Library.

58. The GLA are also working with us, and other Emergency Planning teams to provide maps of cool spaces, free water fountains and larger, air-conditioned sites that are readily available to all. The GLA list five water fountains in Hammersmith and Fulham - Hammersmith Park, on/near Shepherds Bush Green, Lyric Square, opposite Fulham Broadway centre and in Hurlingham Park alongside cooler spaces of the West 12 shopping centre (near Shepherds Bush Green) and Fulham Broadway Centre.

59. The designated cool spaces above are on the London GLA map, please find the link here: [London's Cool Spaces](#)

60. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - H&F Severe Weather - Heatwave Plan

Appendix 2 - Examples of Key Information Posted on the Website & Social Media Channels by the Council's Communications Team