

Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee

10am, Tuesday, 2 August 2016

Edinburgh Community Resilience Project (Pilot)

Item number	8.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	All

Executive summary

This report provides an overview of the Edinburgh Community Resilience Project (Pilot).

Communities and Neighbourhoods Committee

Edinburgh Community Resilience Project (Pilot)

Recommendations

- 1.1 To note the project objectives and funding arrangements; and the funding arrangements; and
- 1.2 To provide an update on the project at the 6 month stage.

Background

- 2.1 This report provides an overview of the project aims and funding for the Edinburgh Community Resilience Project, a pilot initiative and provides an update on how the project has progressed.

Main report

- 3.1 In the United Kingdom, there is a statutory duty on Category 1 Responders to carry out contingency planning as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The term Category 1 Responders includes Local Authorities, the Emergency and Health Services and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). The Act, together with the supporting regulations and guidance, sets out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in emergency preparedness and response at the local level.
- 3.2 *Preparing Scotland: Scotland's Guidance on Resilience* states "...all Responders should support the development of community resilience and associated activity, applying and encouraging an innovative approach throughout". To support this work, the Scottish Government has published its guidance *Building Community Resilience: Scottish Guidance on Community Resilience*.
- 3.3 Community resilience refers to the elements of resilience that are present in communities, households and individuals, and the extent to which they are integrated with public policy and service provision.
- 3.4 The Council's Resilience Unit in the Strategy and Insight Division currently works with a number of communities within Edinburgh to enhance community resilience, mostly as part of planning for specific risks or to comply with legislation.

- 3.5 A number of community resilience initiatives have been undertaken across Scotland, most notably in rural areas, such as the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway, where communities have developed local resilience plans, but it is understood that there are further opportunities to adopt this approach within an urban context.
- 3.6 The City of Edinburgh's Community Resilience Project was formulated in response to Scottish resilience guidance and developed based on Edinburgh's urban resilience needs and challenges.
- 3.7 The purpose of the Edinburgh Community Resilience Project, an 18-month pilot, is to offer support to help Neighbourhood areas increase their own capacity to cope with resilience incidents. On a wider basis this project seeks to support the Scottish Government's Community Resilience Campaign.
- 3.8 The project aims for the community in which citizens live, work or operate to be resilient, in practical terms, against emergencies such as severe weather, pandemics, flooding and loss of utilities, or other civil or business continuity incidents that can impact on day-to-day life and business. The main principle behind the Project is that community resilience begins with the individual and their household and extends to the workplace and neighbourhood.
- 3.9 The specific aims of the project are to:
- help community groups to develop a stronger facilitating role for mitigating resilience risks;
 - provide advice on the risk of resilience incidents occurring in or affecting their locality or constituency;
 - suggest mitigating actions to enhance preparedness; and
 - provide support to develop appropriate resilience arrangements to enable response and recovery.
- 3.10 The project scope does not include economic resilience which will be considered as the Council develops a new Economic Strategy.
- 3.11 This Project encourages a collaborative approach between the Council's resilience specialists, Localities and Community Councils to access skills, build capacity and tap into resources within a given community. In addition the project has involved multi-agency working with Category 1 Responders and other relevant agencies.
- 3.12 The Council has taken a key role and the Project has been well supported by the Council's Localities Teams. Two Community Council's areas have been selected to take part in the pilot Project, these are Juniper Green and Ratho and District. It was recognised that the selection of the pilot areas had to be made on

the basis of intent shown by each Community Council, as although the project is lead by the Council, ultimately the community takes ownership of themselves.

- 3.13 Ratho and District is a large area encompassing much of the rural West of the city while also including Edinburgh Airport, the M8 and two major rail links into the city. Juniper Green lies just to the edge of the City Bypass however is wholly developed and has much more of urban feel. These two distinct areas will be evaluated on their differences in demographic and geography as part of the process.
- 3.14 The Project has used existing channels, such as Localities, Community Councils and established community groups, to engage on resilience issues. A variety of methods and channels have been used to appropriately engage with local community groups who have been asked to scope resilience risks that may affect them. Initial launch of the project took place in November 2015, at the City Chambers, with an open engagement evening and presentation night to 15 Community Councils who had shown interest in the project.
- 3.15 This promotion and engagement campaign has outlined the project aims, answered questions and generally detailed the opportunities for involvement and asked for buy-in. Those who chose to do so were given the opportunity to, using templates developed as part of the project, develop local resilience plans. The aim of these plans is to enable a community to respond to and more quickly recover from a resilience incident.
- 3.16 The Scottish Government has awarded the project £12k, which has part-funded a Resilience Officer post.
- 3.17 Both Community Councils signed up to the project are currently on Phase 2 of the project, where the community is engaging with Localities, Emergency Services and the Resilience Unit to scope the specific risks their community faces; map the resources currently provided or available to them and priorities areas where work may need to be done to improve the resilience of their community.
- 3.18 The evaluation of the Project will take a process approach. The Project will therefore be assessed against its aims and objectives at the end of the project. Feedback is continually received and assessed on a continuous basis throughout the project.
- 3.19 The resulting data will be used to determine whether the principles of the project should be recommended to be rolled out to remaining localities and Neighbourhood Partnerships in Edinburgh. A further report will be made at the conclusion of the pilot project.

- 3.20 Conclusions and recommendations will also be made as to whether this Project may serve as a wider pilot for other areas in Scotland. If appropriate, good practice can be shared with other local authorities / partners.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The City of Edinburgh Council continues to be viewed as a progressive Authority in the development of the Scottish and UK resilience agenda.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The Scottish Government has awarded £12k for this project.
- 5.2 The project is being delivered by the Resilience Unit in the Strategy and Insight Division, including a Resilience Officer and the Resilience Manager.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The actions and outputs described in this report adhere to the risk compliance policy and governance arrangements. In addition the recommendations in the report do not impact on any existing policies of the Council.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The development of resilience initiatives contributes to the delivery of the Equality Act 2010 public sector duties, in advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good community relations. In addition, resilience activities contribute towards the preservation of life, a key human rights article.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The project will help to make Edinburgh more resilient to the effects of serious incidents and major disruptions which impact on social cohesion and community wellbeing.

The activities set out in this report contribute to the city's resilience to climate change by promoting greater awareness and preparedness of impacts caused by severe weather and other adverse incidents and putting in place plans and procedures to reduce or ameliorate the effects.

The initiatives described in this report contribute to making Edinburgh more sustainable by promoting inter-agency working with partner organisations to minimise or mitigate the effects of serious emergencies on the environment.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 Resilience is a statutory, cross-council activity involving internal and external consultation and engagement with a range of partner organisations and stakeholder interests. There is an emergency preparedness structure in place across the UK. Within Scotland, three strategic, multi-agency Regional Resilience Partnerships (North, West and East) coordinate resilience planning, training and exercise initiatives. Each of the three Regional Resilience Partnerships (RRPs) is chaired by an Assistant Chief Constable, Police Scotland. The City of Edinburgh Council is a partner organisation in the East of Scotland RRP.

Background reading/external references

- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004;
- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2013);
- Preparing Scotland: Scottish Guidance on Preparing for Emergencies;
- Building Community Resilience: Scottish Guidance on Community Resilience

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Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes

CO15 – The public is protected

CO21 - Safe – Residents, visitors and businesses feel that Edinburgh is a safe city.

Single Outcome Agreement

SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric

Appendices

none