

# Islington Council

# Crisis Response Plan

Produced by:

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Unit

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## **Foreword**

The Council is required by law to have a Crisis Response Plan. Recent events have shown how important it is for the plan to be well understood and easy to implement.

This plan will set the management structure and procedures the Council will follow when responding to any crisis that is over and above our normal day to day business.

Our plan allows the Council to respond proportionately to a wide range of incidents from those affecting the community such as a road or building collapse, a serious fire and indeed beyond that to the declaration of 'An Emergency' as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act. It will also enable us to respond to an internal crisis such as a power failure to a main building.

The Council will continue to work with partners and will support the Emergency Services, Utility Companies, Voluntary Agencies and Faith Community in accordance with existing guidelines in the London Emergency Services Liaison Panel (LESLP) Major Incident Procedures Manual and other London Regional plans.

All Council Departments have their own Crisis Plans. These cover issues relating to our response to any incident whether internal or external to the Council.

Through preparation coupled with an effective response we will be able to not only discharge our obligations to an incident but will lead to a faster recovery from the incident and it's effects. This will make the borough safer place to live, work and visit.

The Council continues to demonstrate its vitality and commitment in working with our partners and this theme will be carried on in our handling to any incident.

Kevin O'Leary  
Corporate Director

## Introduction

This plan sets out the arrangements for Islington council's response to a crisis irrespective of its cause. It describes how the response will be organised and defines communication processes within the council and to external organisations.

The plan will allow the Council to deal efficiently and effectively with incidents, be they internal or external that are:

- Small and local.
- Larger but still fairly local.
- A Borough based Major Incident.
- A 'Cross Borough' Major Incident.
- Regional\National emergency

**Definition:** A crisis as an unplanned event or situation which needs a faster and broader level of response than normal. Crises may be the result of impacts on:

- **Business Continuity** disruptions to the normal business of the Council.
- **The Community** Incidents affecting the borough or a partner organisation to which the Council must respond.
- **Combination of both**

The foundations of the Council's response matches the principles laid down by Central Government:

- **Being Prepared:** Staff and services should be prepared and know their roles and responsibilities
- **Continuity of Response:** our emergency response is grounded in existing functions and familiar ways of working even if delivered at a greater tempo. (Normal services in abnormal circumstances)
- **Devolution of Responsibility:** Decisions need to be made at the lowest appropriate level with co-ordination at the highest necessary level.
- **Direction:** Clarity of purpose delivered through a strategic aim set at the most appropriate level.
- **Integration:** Effective co-ordination between functions of the council and external organisations
- **Communication:** Reliable information must be passed correctly and without delay amongst those who need to know including the public.
- **Co-operation:** Mutual trust and understanding will facilitate information sharing and deliver solutions to issues that arise.
- **Anticipation:** Risk identification and analysis is needed to anticipate and manage the consequences of any emergency.

**Framework:** The Council will respond to any crisis using:

### **Timing**

A crisis moves through a period of initial response to recovery and resumption of normality. This plan will be activated at the start of the crisis and, as necessary as the crisis develops. It will embrace a recovery phase as the situation moves towards normality. A post crisis review will take place after which the incident will close.

### **Crisis Management Structure**

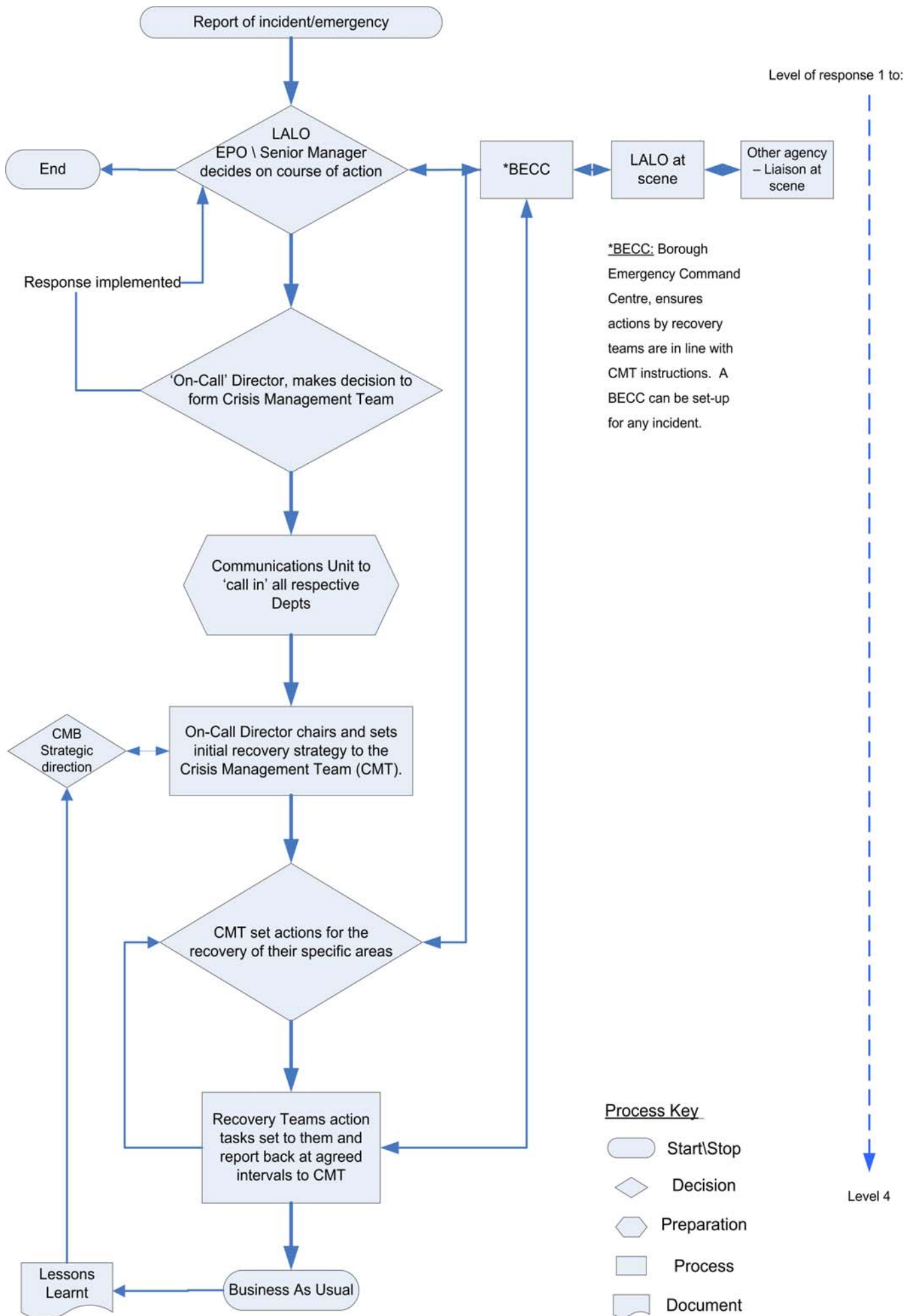
Islington Council has a standard crisis management structure, which is activated incrementally according to the crisis. This will facilitate timely decision-making based on the best information possible.

### **Communication**

Islington residents and businesses will be informed of and updated on incidents via the Islington Council website. Safeguards are in place to ensure that information posted is agreed with other agencies so not to compromise any investigation. Once information is approved for publication it can also be released via other Borough groups and forums to a wider audience.

Islington Council has an internal staff 'Information Line' which is operated by the Corporate Communications Department. Messages authorised by the 'on call' Director can be placed on this line advising staff of what to do in the event of any incident as far as it effects their working practices.

Our Communications Department also operate an internal SMS text alert system to all Council owned mobile phones and this would be used, possibly in tandem with the Information Line, to alert staff to an incident and/or to give work directives.



## Response Levels:

Graduated levels of response allows managers, staff and partners determine how they should respond to a crisis.

RESPONSE LEVEL	Examples of IMPACTS on:	Council RESPONSE for:
<p><b>Level One</b> Minor impact</p> <p>Greater frequency</p>	<p><b>Community:</b> Incidents e.g. minor gas/water leaks or building wall collapse.</p> <p><b>The Council:</b> Failure of an IT system/application (single) with short-term (4-8 hours) disruption on a non-strategic service.</p>	<p><b>Co-ordination:</b> Response by more than one service needing 2-3 hours of low-level co-ordination of council activities at service manager level.</p> <p><b>Crisis Manager:</b> Low level co-ordination by LALO.</p> <p><b>The Council:</b> Co-ordination by manager of disrupted service in consultation with Directorate.</p>
<p><b>Level Two</b> Limited impact</p> <p>Occasional</p>	<p><b>Community:</b> Incident resulting in short term evacuation of residents with no/few special needs for 3-6 hours. Unlikely to need overnight Rest Centre for evacuees.</p> <p><b>The Council</b> Disruption to critical service(s) expected to last no more than 2 hours (eg closure of MO due to power failure). Disruption to non-critical service expected to last for more than one day.</p>	<p><b>Co-ordination:</b> Response by more than one service, needing co-ordination for several hours. Co-ordination by service managers with reference to on-call Director</p> <p><b>Crisis Manager:</b> Duty EPO to co-ordinate council response with reference to on-call director. BECC opened. Deployment of LALO to scene to meet needs of residents and emergency services.</p> <p><b>The Council:</b> Co-ordination by Directorate of disrupted service with reference to on-call director.</p>
<p><b>Level Three</b> Severe Disruption</p> <p>Rare</p>	<p><b>Community:</b> Localised disruption to business and community. Frequent requests for support from Emergency Services and evacuation of residents overnight</p> <p><b>The Council</b> Disruption to critical services expected to last for more than 4 hours (e.g. failure of critical system such as e-mail or telephones council wide). Failure of non-strategic service expected to last for some days.</p>	<p><b>Co-ordination</b> Response across many services. Co-ordination through on-call director chairing Crisis Management Team.</p> <p><b>Crisis Manager:</b> On Call Director calls CMT. Deployment of several resources over many hours. BECC opened.</p> <p><b>The Council:</b> Some routine activities may be reduced, by Directors and/or Crisis Management Team.</p>
<p><b>Level Four</b> Widespread disruption to Islington or London region</p> <p>Very Rare</p>	<p><b>Community:</b> Major disruption to community with potential for widespread loss of life. Event leading to pan-London response with London Local Authority Gold procedures invoked.</p> <p><b>The Council:</b> Major disruption across Council Services eg closure of MO for more than 24 hours.</p>	<p><b>Co-ordination</b> Council effort fully directed to recovery from incident, possibly outside of LBI. Non-critical activities suspended across council. Co-ordinated across directorates by Crisis Management Team in consultation with the Corporate Management Board.</p> <p><b>Crisis Manager:</b> On call director.</p> <p><b>The Council:</b> Critical services only.</p>

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Islington Corporate Management Board (CMB)

- **Role:**
  - During\after the crisis:
  - revises the strategy as required
  - give direction for longer term recovery
- **Composition:**
  - Normal CMB supported by specialists who are able to advise on the crisis response and recovery.

## Crisis Management Team

- **Role:**
  - Directs operations within the framework set by CMB
- **Composition:**
  - On-call Director
    - Chairs CMT
    - Responsible to CMB for delivery of response
    - Nominate members of CMT to advise on the crisis.
    - Represents the Council at Multi-agency meetings at a senior level if appropriate.
  - On Call Communications Officer – advises on delivery of internal communications and Information to the public
  - Director/Manager or specialist of services affected as decided by the Director.
  - Secretarial support to document actions and complete a Decision Log
  - Specialists from the council or partner organisations who may be affected, can contribute to the response or can give technical advice: Duty Emergency Planning Officer; Finance Adviser; Legal Adviser; GIS Adviser; HR Adviser; Housing Aid adviser; Community Safety Adviser; Equality and Diversity Adviser

## Business Recovery Team

Directorate(s) and Partner Organisation(s) are to:

- **Role:**
  - Before the crisis, agree a Directorate Emergency and Business Continuity Plan within the framework set by CMB
  - During and after the crisis:
    - Implement the directives of CMT to recover to normal activity
    - The theme to be - 'Normal services in abnormal circumstances'
- **Composition:**
  - Such staff as necessary to manage the recovery process

## Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC)

The BECC will be activated by Crisis Manager when necessary. The role of the BECC is to ensure that the directions of the Crisis Manager are implemented by:

- Monitoring the progress of Directorates and Services against response and recovery activities set by the Crisis Manager.
- Being the link between the scene of an incident and the Crisis Manager.
- Being the link between responders who are not at the scene of an incident but who need to communicate with the Council. This includes the Emergency Services, other Local Authorities and the London Local Authority Co-ordination Centre (LLACC) which will be in operation for the larger or pan London crisis.
- Managing information to ensure that Crisis Manager, the council and other agencies have an up to date understanding on the situation through:
- Promoting the co-ordination of the council's response to a crisis by facilitating communication between all Council directorates, outsourced providers of Council services and all other external agencies.

A range of options available to the Council in responding and recovering to a crisis these include:

- Opening of Rest Centre – to provided temporary safety shelter
- Deployment of a member of Council staff (LALO) to a crisis scene
- Call upon the support of the Faith Community and Voluntary Sector

## **Contacting the Council in an Emergency**

**At any time of any day throughout the year -Telephone 020 7527 2000.**

The call will be answered by 'Contact Islington' the Council's call handling centre.

The following information is required:

- What - has happened
- Where – is the incident
- Who – has been affected including casualties or people evacuated from their houses
- When – did it happen

You should also give your name and contact phone number.

'Contact Islington' will then call out the appropriate person/department to deal with the incident.

### **Role of Council Members**

At the discretion of the Chief Executive the Leader of the Council may be invited to sit on the CMB which has been convened to develop the strategy for the crisis.

It is recognised and acknowledged that many elected members are involved in community organisations, school governing bodies and local charities. As such they will be able to contribute a great deal in providing support to their community and providing the vital 'link' between the Council and those affected by the incident.

The roles of Council members can include,

- Advising Council Officers on local issues
- Identifying vulnerable residents
- Relaying information between the Council and the Community (and back again)
- Attending and 'chairing' local residents forums
- Being the focus for community consultation procedures