Haydon Wick Parish Council
Thames Avenue
Haydon Wick
Swindon
SN25 1QQ

01793 722446
info@haydonwick.gov.uk
www.haydonwick.gov.uk

Meeting	Finance & Policy Committee
Date	19 September 2023
Report Title	Wiltshire & Swindon Prepared – Community Resilience
Agenda Reference	13
Author	Laura Cutter, Deputy Clerk & Services Manager

Officers Recommendations:

1. To note the report.

2. To note the Council's current Community Emergency Plan will be merged into the new template for the working party to review the document before bringing back to Finance & Policy Committee for adoption and recommendation to Full Council.

Background

The Deputy Clerk & Services Manager attended the Community Resilience Event hosted by Swindon & Wiltshire Prepared in Tidworth on Thursday 31st August 2023. The event was aimed at increasing the overall preparedness and resilience of communities during incident response and building upon existing relationships within the Resilience Forum. The event was well attended as it was the first event of its kind and there are plans to host future information events to continue with developing understanding and relationships.

Those in attendance:

- Wiltshire Council
- Swindon Borough Council
- Wiltshire Police
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire
- South Western Ambulance Service & St John Ambulance
- Environment Agency
- Met Office
- Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN)
- SGN (Scottish Gas & Electricity provider)
- Wessex Water
- Wessex 4x4 Response
- Wiltshire Search and Rescue
- RE:ACT
- Serve On
- British Red Cross
- Raynet UK
- Samaritans
- Victim Support
- EE
- Wales & West utilities
- Communities Prepared
- Parish and Town Councils from Wiltshire and Swindon

As you can see from the list above, there were plenty of people on hand from a range of different services to share live experiences and challenge thinking upon group tasks of scenarios and how to respond to these and how each group could complement each other for the benefit of the community.

Working Towards

Wiltshire & Swindon Prepared has acknowledged the local information and knowledge of the community that local parish and town councils have and would like to expand upon this knowledge and understanding of each area.

Wiltshire & Swindon Prepared will be circulating a template of a community plan for parish and town councils to adopt to provide a uniformed approach. Existing parish and town council plans will be kept on file for 12 months to enable the new plans to be submitted. Once received, the current Community Emergency Plan will be merged into the new template and a Community Emergency Plan working party will be formed to review the document prior to bringing back to Finance & Policy Committee for adoption and recommendation to Full Council.

The adopted plan should be reviewed at least 12 monthly and tested regularly to ensure that all the contact details listed within the report are kept up to date. Previously, it has been a challenge to keep the records up to date and more recently there has been no response or willingness to sign up to the Community Emergency Plan. Hopefully, having something on a wider scale with partnership working with multiple responder agencies will assist in showing the importance of the plan.

It was suggested that the plan details which is a small incident venue of up to 50 people and which could house larger numbers of people.

There should also be likelihood and impact risk assessments done within the Emergency Community Plan so you can identify and prepare for the ones that are most likely first. These should also include previous events and a post-event report detailing what went well and what could be done differently for next time.

Signing Up to Information Apps and Communications
It was suggested to sign up the Council up to several information apps such as

- MET Weather Warning
- Power Track
- Gov Flood Alert

Council should consider reviewing the weather channels and suggesting whether to implement the action plan ahead of severe snowstorms, heavy rain, extreme weather, etc. Early engagement means that the Council can put out messaging to the community offering help and assistance for the most vulnerable within the community and asking residents to check in on their neighbours. Or, as another example, in severe heat the Council should consider communicating with residents about not using BBQs within its public open spaces due to risk of fire and reminding that it is a refill station for cold water.

There was some communication leaflets and action card examples given out at the meeting, these are attached as appendices for Council to review.

Flood Wardens & Snow Wardens/ Weather Wardens
It was encouraged to try to obtain volunteers to be Flood Wardens and Snow Wardens. Training is provided by Swindon and Wiltshire Prepared. This could be done in line with the Community Led Plan.

Utilities
There was a useful update from BT / EE Telecommunication about the new landline and broadband packages that can be used in the event of a power outage and an informative session from SSEN about the processes of power outages of over 24 hours + including compensation for food and toiletries and overnight accommodation.