

Meeting	Finance & Policy Committee
Date	15 th September 2026
Report Title	Community Emergency Plan
Agenda Reference	11
Author	Julie McMorrow – Meetings & HR Administrator

Recommendations to Committee:

1. **Notes the progress made to date in developing the Community Emergency Plan and acknowledges the importance of maintaining a clear, current and practical plan to support the Parish in the event of an emergency.**
2. **Supports the continued development of the Community Emergency Plan, including volunteer coordination, role allocation, staff awareness and the preparation of supporting documentation and procedures.**
3. **Recognises the Community Emergency Plan as a key component of the Council's wider responsibility to promote community resilience, safeguard residents and provide an organised local response during an emergency.**

Background

The Community Emergency Plan is an essential element of Haydon Wick Parish Council's commitment to supporting residents during periods of disruption, emergency or civil contingency. Its purpose is to ensure that the Parish Council can respond in a structured, timely and proportionate manner by providing a safe space, known as an emergency hub, when required. The hub would be available on receipt of an emergency notification, with arrangements intended to support provision 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This would include opening the Parish offices outside normal working hours where necessary, and offering a place of rest, reassurance and practical support during working hours.

The Parish Council's main meeting room can safely accommodate up to fifty (50) residents within the downstairs facility and would provide guidance, welfare advice, first aid, blankets, refreshments and, importantly, reassurance. Should an incident continue for an extended period, residents would be safely escorted to the adjacent sports centre – the 'Haydon Centre', where overnight accommodation may be made available. The importance of this plan cannot be overstated: having clear arrangements, trained volunteers and defined responsibilities in place strengthens the community's ability to respond effectively, reduces confusion during an incident and helps ensure that vulnerable residents receive appropriate support as quickly as possible.

To support delivery of this service, the Council has engaged with the local community to seek volunteers. It is encouraging that four members of the public have already come forward to support the programme, demonstrating a positive community commitment to emergency preparedness and resilience.

Welcome to Our Volunteers

On Wednesday 2nd September 2026, the Council was joined by volunteers and Working Party members for the first meeting. This provided an opportunity for introductions, for volunteers to share relevant experience from previous roles, and for the group to consider how that experience could strengthen the service provided in the event of an emergency. An explanation of the emergency hub was presented to the volunteer team, and it was encouraging that this prompted constructive discussion, ideas and suggestions.



To ensure clarity from the outset, volunteers were advised that they would be expected to do:

1. They would be only asked to carry out tasks that they are comfortable with.
2. They would follow the direction of the Hub Supervisor.
3. They would help identify those most vulnerable.
4. They would assist in liaising with the emergency services.
5. They would ensure they look after their own wellbeing.
6. They would record all decisions and actions using the paperwork held on site.
7. They would, in liaison with Swindon Borough Council and the Hub Supervisor, coordinate any requests for extra resources.

Councillors serving on the Working Party were able to share examples of previous incidents and explain how the Council has responded effectively and in a timely manner. These examples reinforced the value of maintaining an up-to-date Community Emergency Plan and demonstrated how a coordinated local response can provide reassurance and practical assistance when residents need it most.

Roles

To ensure that the Community Emergency Plan can operate effectively, a number of clearly defined roles are required. These roles provide structure, accountability and clarity during an emergency, supporting an organised response and helping to avoid duplication or uncertainty. The roles identified are:

1. Information Officer
2. Welfare Officer
3. Supervisor
4. Facility Manager
5. Receptionist
6. Public Information Officer
7. Needs and Offers Officer

Volunteers have indicated their preferred roles, and these will be recorded accordingly. It is also pleasing to report that two volunteers identified two further individuals who are keen to join the programme, which is both encouraging and welcomed. This growing interest demonstrates the strength of community support for the plan and further underlines the importance of continuing to develop a robust and sustainable volunteer base.

Next Steps

Following a positive first meeting, there is now a clear programme of work to be completed before the next meeting. This work is necessary to ensure that the Community Emergency Plan remains active, practical and ready to be implemented should an emergency arise.

The Meetings and HR Administrator will prepare a central spreadsheet to hold volunteer information, as discussed and agreed. This will be supported by a clear flow chart showing how the out-of-hours contact number would trigger notification of an emergency to officers and volunteers, thereby establishing a clear chain of notification.

In addition to volunteers, all staff will need to be familiar with the emergency process. Staff will therefore be invited to a future meeting (likely to be January), where representatives from Wiltshire Prepared and Swindon Borough Council will be present to explain in detail how an emergency scenario may unfold and what would be expected of those involved.

An internal Working Party meeting will also be held before January to ensure the Community Emergency Plan continues to progress and remains under regular review. Maintaining momentum is important, as an effective plan must be current, clearly understood and capable of being activated without delay. Continued development of the plan will support the Council's wider



commitment to safeguarding residents, strengthening community resilience and providing reassurance that arrangements are in place should an emergency occur.

Conclusion

The development of the Community Emergency Plan represents an important and proactive step in strengthening Haydon Wick Parish Council's ability to support residents during an emergency or period of significant disruption. The plan provides a clear framework for local coordination, identifies the practical arrangements required to operate an emergency hub, and ensures that staff, councillors and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities. Continued progress with the plan is therefore essential to ensure that the Council is prepared, resilient and able to provide timely assistance, reassurance and welfare support to the community when it is most needed.

Recommendations to Committee

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