

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services
Barbara Cooper – Corporate Director Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 12 January 2017

Subject: Kent Resilience Team – Review of the business case for the permanent establishment of KRT

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet member Decision

Electoral Division: Countywide

Summary:

The Kent Resilience Team (KRT) is a three-year collaborative pilot between Kent County Council, Kent Police and the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority which was set up to improve the county's resilience, emergency planning capabilities, and effectiveness in April 2014. It has provided the secretariat and delivery mechanism to the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) and seen real and tangible improvements in the county's ability to plan and respond to incidents and events working alongside local authorities and other agencies.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is requested to consider and endorse the proposal to establish the Kent Resilience Team on a permanent basis from April 2017, through a shared Service Level Agreement between Kent County Council, Kent Police and the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides an overview of the Kent Resilience Team (KRT) and the proposal to make the KRT, which is coming to the end of a three year pilot period, a permanent team.

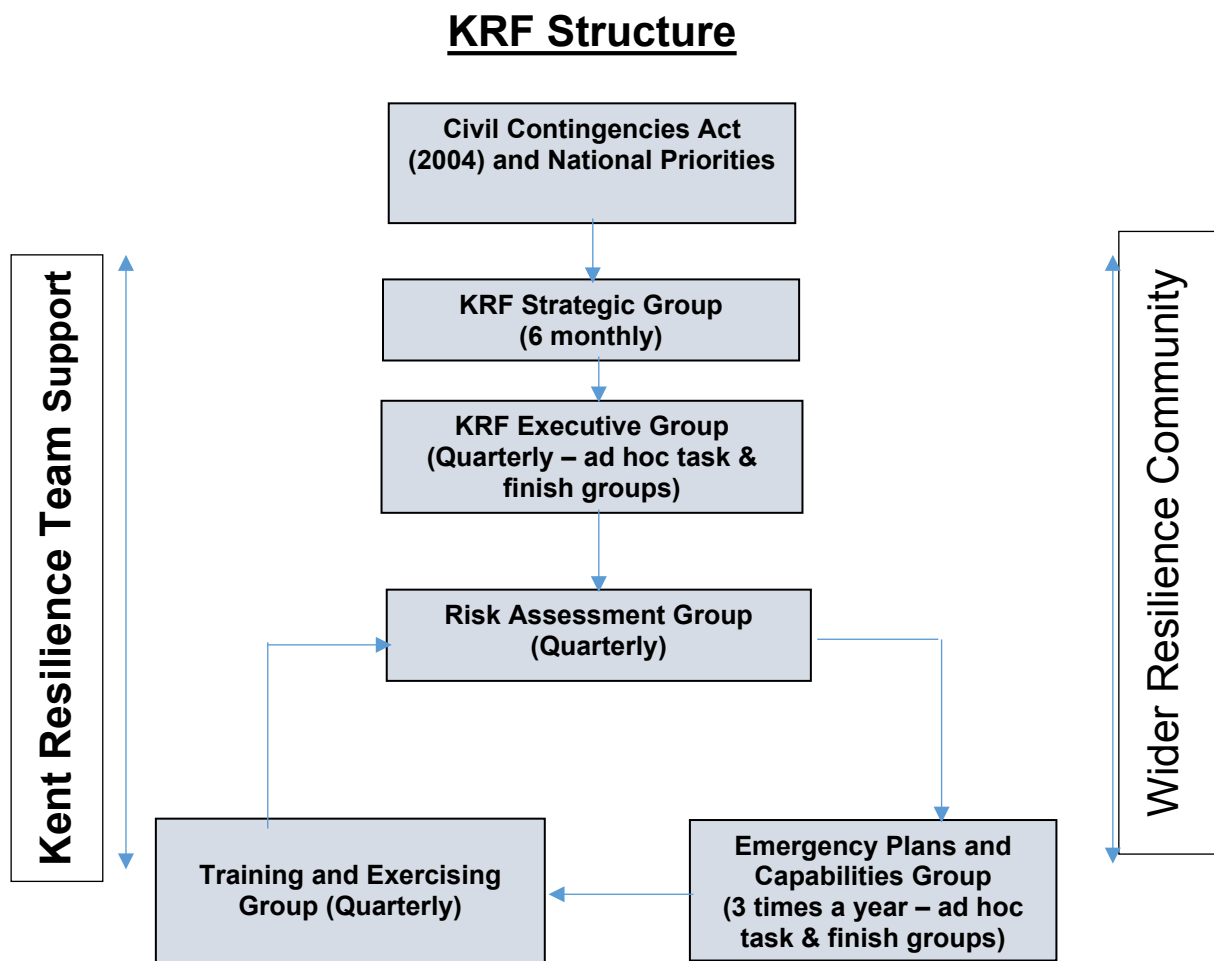
2. Background

2.1 The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) (2004) defines Category 1 responders as those who are likely to be directly involved in the response to an emergency. According to the Act, upper tier local authorities are Category 1 responders, along with police, fire and rescue, and other local services. As such, Kent County Council (KCC) is subject to a number of duties under the Act: cooperation and information sharing with other responders, risk assessment, emergency planning, business continuity, and communicating with the public. In

the case of local authorities, there is an additional duty to provide business continuity advice and assistance to businesses and the voluntary sector. To support Category 1 responders in Kent in fulfilling their responsibilities under the CCA, the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) was established.

- 2.2 The Kent Resilience Team (KRT) acts as the ‘delivery arm’ of the Kent Resilience Forum. As such, the KRT supports closer multi-agency working, with partners able to access the full array of knowledge and expertise available within the Forum through a single source. Figure 1 shows the Kent Resilience Forum structure, which the KRT functions to support.

Figure 1: The Kent Resilience Forum Structure (2016-17)



- 2.3 The KRT was originally established as a three- year pilot in April 2014 and became fully operational in April 2015, with 8 staff seconded from Kent County Council (KCC), 4 from Kent Police and 2 from the Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS). In that time, the Kent Resilience Team has successfully delivered a number of key projects on behalf of partners, including nationally-driven exercises, annual seminars, strategic command and control documentation, an expansive training programme, and many other key work streams. The KRT has also played a key role in operational support for major events such as Operation Stack and flooding.

- 2.4 Based on the success of the pilot to date, the three agencies involved are proposing to make the KRT a permanent team, thus consolidating and extending the efficiencies and savings made to date.

3. The KRT pilot to date

- 3.1 Over its three year pilot period, the KRT has delivered a number of benefits to KCC and partners. An overview of the KRT to date this pilot period and the experience to date is set out below.

3.2 Governance

- 3.2.1 A strategic Steering Group, comprising representatives from KCC, KFRS and Kent Police, provides the necessary governance for the KRT and oversees its planning, performance, effectiveness and quality on behalf of the constituent partners.
- 3.2.2 A Service Level Agreement (SLA) across the three partners sets out the financial and staffing resourcing arrangements for and functions that the KRT will deliver each year. In broad terms KFRS provides the accommodation for the team, Kent Police provides the resources for the management of the KRF administrative function and Kent County Council provides the majority of the Resilience Officers who work with partners to deliver the outcomes described in the Partnership Agreements and associated work plans.
- 3.2.3 To provide democratic oversight and transparency to the KRT, the KCC Cabinet Member for Community Services has a standing invitation to attend the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority's Planning and Performance Committee when it receives the annual report on the KRT's progress.

3.3 Management

- 3.3.1 The KRT is managed by an officer from KFRS, although KCC and Kent Police provide team supervisors to line manage their respective seconded officers. This approach has allowed effective decision-making to take place whilst maintaining individual organisational interests. The Chair of the KRT Steering Group is held by KCC.

3.4 Achievements

- 3.4.1 The KRT has made significant progress in the first two years of the project:
- 3.4.2 **Exercises** - The KRT has significantly enhanced the planning and delivery of the KRF exercising programme. Each year a county-wide KRF exercise has been delivered, with KRT staff being essential to its delivery. In addition, at least two KRF table-top exercises have been delivered annually and these have included area-wide flooding, Operation Stack, chemical/biological/radiological/nuclear (CBRNe), and Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA). Bringing expertise together within the KRT has allowed the planning and delivery of exercises to be more efficient and effective. The outcome has been a greater ability to share learning, and to import that learning into practice more effectively.

- 3.4.3 Training** - The KRF now has a mature and wide-ranging training programme that is believed to be one of the best in the UK. The KRT completed a capability review of the 18 KRF funding partners in 2014, which has informed the training needs of the partnership. KRT ensures that the right training is available to prepare partners for their roles in exercises, response and recovery. The training programme is open to all KRF partners, including the voluntary sector, and includes command and control, frontline communications and situation reporting, decision logging, welfare centre management and business continuity management. Training is integral to the duty for responders to co-operate with each other. For example, the Multi-Agency Gold Incident Command course has enhanced the capabilities of the organisations to co-operate at a strategic command level, which has built valuable relationships.
- 3.4.4 Seminars** - The KRT organises and facilitates the annual KRF seminar, a requirement of the CCA 2004, which takes place in October/November each year and which helps raise awareness of key topical issues and sharing of best practice. In 2013, the seminar attracted around 80 people and included speakers on a range of resilience subjects. The KRT has enhanced and improved this seminar and, in October 2016, it attracted over 250 people. It included expert speakers on specific subjects, such as the Shoreham air crash, in addition to a range of information stands and vehicle and equipment displays. A broad range of stakeholders, including Members, also attended.
- 3.4.5 Incident response** – Staff from the KRT have been central to the co-ordination of response to and recovery from incidents including flooding, major fires, Operation Stack, coastline pollution, and road traffic collisions. In summer 2015, the KRT, together with partners, delivered 70,000 litres of water and 4,000 food parcels to lorry drivers stuck in Operation Stack. During the last two years, the KRT has been represented at all tactical and strategic coordinating groups to respond to incidents, and has offered advice and guidance to all partners that were involved, which improved the response and recovery process. Through the KCC/KRT Duty Emergency Planning Officer role, KRT also provides a 24 hour point of contact for receiving emergency alerts, determining whether an emergency has occurred, what the initial response should be (including escalation to a strategic level) and then activating that response.
- 3.4.6 Kent Resilience Forum documentation** - The KRT has reviewed and published all the relevant strategic documentation on behalf of the KRF, including the KRF Strategic Business Plan, KRF Constitution and KRF Community Risk Register, together with meeting and administration protocols. This work has streamlined plans, process and procedures and ensured that they are consistently applied across the KRF. All of this documentation is published on Resilience Direct which is accessible by all partners.
- 3.4.7 Partnership Agreements** - As detailed in paragraph 6, the KRT has implemented partnership agreements with the 18 key partners in the KRF. For the first time robust agreements are in place to manage resources and financial arrangements for the KRF. These agreements now mean that officers from Medway Council, NHS England, Swale Borough Council, Sevenoaks District

Council and the Environment Agency all work regularly from the KRT office. Interest from Essex, Oxfordshire and Bedfordshire demonstrate that this approach is starting to be considered national best practice.

3.4.8 Resilience Direct - The KRT has established secure electronic systems to enhance the transfer of information between responders, including the use of Resilience Direct, which is a national government online private 'network' enabling civil protection practitioners to work together across geographical and organisational boundaries during the preparation, response and recovery phases of an event or emergency. All KRF partners now have access to Resilience Direct and have had the opportunity to attend a number of formal and informal training events hosted by the KRT.

3.4.9 Command, Control and Communications - A significant amount of work has been completed by testing these arrangements in exercises and training. Exercise Fort Invicta, a national counter-terrorism exercise, took place in November 2015 and represented a full test of the command and control arrangements for the KRF. In addition, the lessons learned from the extensive use of Operation Stack in the summer of 2015 have allowed the KRT to make changes and improve the command and control of large incidents.

3.4.10 Resilient Communities - The KRT continues to work with communities to improve their local resilience. There are now more than 200 local flood wardens in place across Kent and Medway, one of the highest numbers in the country. Plans are in place to ensure this momentum is maintained to assist local communities as and when required.

3.4.11 Business Continuity and Recovery - The KRT has made major improvements to support communities and businesses after emergencies, such as a significant flooding event. Following the flooding in the winter of 2013/14 and a number of significant fires in 2015/16 (Week Street, Maidstone, Week Street and Tannery Lane, Canterbury), steps have been taken to improve the services provided to communities and businesses from KRF partners.

3.4.12 Collaboration - Collaborative working through the KRT has enabled the three partners to improve performance and efficiency, and to make financial savings. Collaboration through the implementation of Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) partnership agreements for emergency planning and resilience support has been a significant benefit. These partnership agreements would not have been possible without the KRT coordinating and managing the resource requirements. In addition, this approach delivered a total saving across all 18 Category One responders of £47,942 per annum. This amounts to a minimum 10% saving for all partners.

3.5 Internal Audit Report

3.5.1 As part of the Kent County Council and Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority's 2015/16 Audit Plans, it was agreed that Internal Audit would undertake a review of the KRT to provide assurance that objectives and planned efficiencies/effectiveness were being achieved through co-ordinated emergency planning across the county. The audit concluded that the direction

of travel was good and that the system of control is sufficiently sound, with some recommendations for development that have now been acted upon and delivered.

4. The proposal

- 4.1 On the basis of the benefits delivered to date and KCC's continued statutory responsibilities under the CCA 2004, the proposal is to establish KRT on a permanent basis as a fully integrated stand-alone team with permanent staff. From April 2017, it is proposed that the KRT should become a permanent service constituted through a three-year Shared Service Agreement. The staff will continue to be seconded to the Team, but on a more formal basis which offers greater security to the staff as well as their parent organisations. The project has shown that the co-location of staff in a single team delivers defined benefits to public service organisations and the public they serve.
- 4.2 The aim is for the KRT to continue to provide emergency planning and resilience preparedness for the core partners in addition to ensuring the collective delivery of relevant duties under the CCA 2004 and other relevant legislation on behalf of the KRF. In addition, it will continue to provide services through partnership agreements to those local authorities and other agencies that require them.
- 4.3 Each participating organisation (i.e. KCC, Kent Police and KFRS) will retain its individual statutory accountability under the CCA 2004. To this end, KCC will retain its Resilience and Emergencies Unit to focus on internal planning and preparedness, although the KRT will also be available to be commissioned to deliver work on behalf of KCC as required.
- 4.4 A KRT Strategic Governance Steering Group has been established to provide strategic oversight once the team transitions to a permanent establishment. Membership includes the CEO of the KFRS, the Chief Constable, the corporate director of GET, the KCC Cabinet Member for Communities and the chair of the Fire Authority.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There is no impact on the Council's capital and revenue budgets and spending plans through the establishment of the permanent team. KCC will continue to bear the costs associated with the existing staff resource as set out in the shared KRT Service Level Agreement.

6. Policy Framework

- 6.1 The establishment of the permanent team aligns with KCC's Strategic Outcomes Framework, "Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes" and "Facing the Challenge".
- 6.2 The work of the KRT supports all three Strategic Outcomes and a number of cross-cutting supporting outcomes but is specifically relevant to: "Kent's

communities are resilient and provide strong and safe environments to raise children and young people”

7. Legal Implication

- 7.1 The Cabinet Member with the portfolio for Community Services will make the decision on whether to permanently establish the Kent Resilience Team on behalf of Kent County Council and the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport will have delegated authority to sign the shared Service Level Agreement.
- 7.2 The permanent establishment of the Kent Resilience Team will continue to contribute to the County Council’s ability to meet its duties as a Category 1 Responder as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.1 KRT will continue to have a positive overall impact on those living, working and travelling through Kent. The successes of the KRT in the first three years will be developed further and the quality of service to the public will be improved.
- 8.2 Staff from the partners have been on secondment to KRT since April 2014. Transferring them to permanent positions within the KRT while they remain part of their organisations will increase their job security, satisfaction and confidence.

9. Recommendation(s)

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse the proposal to establish the Kent Resilience Team on a permanent basis from April 2017, through a Shared Partnership Agreement between Kent County Council, Kent Police and the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority.

10. Contact details

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