



SALISBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL

BIRD FLU

RESPONSE PLAN

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ABBREVIATIONS

BCM	Business Continuity Management
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
CADMIP	County and District Major Incident Plan
CCDC	Consultant in Communicable Disease Control
CSU	Customer Services Unit
CO	Cabinet Office
DCS	Department of Community Services
DCE	Department for Children and Education
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DH	Department of Health
EPO	Emergency Planning Officer
EPU	Emergency Planning Unit
EPCD	Emergency Planning Contact Directory
SEMT	Special Emergency Management Team
ESU	Environmental Services Unit
GOSW	Government Office for the South West
HPA	Health Protection Agency
HPA SW	Health Protection Agency South West
LRF	Local Resilience Forum
MIJPG	Major Incident Joint Procedures Guide
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PW&I	Public Warning and Information
RCCC	Regional Civil Contingencies Committee
RRF	Regional Resilience Forum
RRT	Regional Resilience Team
SCG	Strategic Coordinating Group
SVS	State Veterinary Service
WCC	Wiltshire County Council
WCC ONE ⁰¹	Wiltshire County Council's Emergency Helpline

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

1. BACKGROUND

a. HUMAN HEALTH CONCERNS

Avian Influenza is primarily a disease of birds. Humans can only be infected by the disease through close contact with live infected birds. However, there is concern that the virus may change (reassort or mutate) to emerge as a new virus that is transmissible between people, and capable of causing disease in people, birds and other animals.

2. LOCAL AUTHORITY ROLE

a. OVERVIEW OF LOCAL AUTHORITY ROLE

- i. Bird Flue is a notifiable animal disease.
- ii. Further details of the duties placed upon local authorities by the Civil Contingencies Act, the Animal Health Act and European Communities Act are available within the LACORS Generic Notifiable Animal Disease Contingency Plan Template for Local Authorities in England.
- iii. Local authorities will perform a range of essential duties in the event of an Avian Influenza outbreak. The role played the local authority will be key to ensuring the effective control and eradication of a disease situation, and in ensuring that the needs of the local community are provided for.
- iv. Local authorities will also play an essential role in ensuring that their communities are made aware of the current situation and any restrictions upon activities, without causing any concern or panic.

3. NATIONAL PLANS/ORDERS/REGULATIONS

- a. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) will lead nationally during any outbreak of Avian Influenza and a number of documents are available which will be used to form the basis of the local response to deal with such an event:

- DEFRA Exotic Animal Diseases Generic Contingency Plan
- LACORS Generic Notifiable Animal Disease Contingency Plan Annex A
- DEFRA Disease of Poultry Order 2003
- Wiltshire County Council Avian Influenza Framework Plan

4. SDC RESPONSE

a. GENERAL

The way in which Salisbury District Council is alerted to an outbreak of Avian Influenza may vary, dependant upon whether the disease is discovered amongst poultry or the wild bird population.

- b. DEFRA have issued guidance for the public on Avian Influenza which is available on their website, and a helpline number for people who find dead wild birds. This information has been published on the WCC Emergency Planning WebPages.

5. THE PLAN

a. AIM

The aim of this plan is to set out a framework which will allow Salisbury District Council to ensure that its essential services are, as far as is possible, maintained. It will also endeavour to assist other local councils with the effective control and eradication of a disease situation, and to ensure that the needs of the local community are provided for if an outbreak occurs within the county. Also, it will ensure that the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is activated at an early enough stage of the incident if it is considered necessary to do so.

b. SCOPE

This plan is intended to meet the short term requirements of Salisbury District Council in the event that there is an outbreak of Avian Influenza. It may be updated or replaced at any time by a more detailed document which aligns itself more closely with wider multi agency plans.

c. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this plan are to:

- Ensure that critical services are maintained and disruption to other key services is kept to a minimum where possible
- Reduce the impact on daily life and business
- Anticipate and plan for other consequences
- Minimise economic loss
- Manage the return to 'normal activity'
- Set up a system for a flexible response to an outbreak of Avian Influenza
- Assist with the eradication and minimise the spread of the virus locally
- Provide timely, authoritative and up to date information for professionals, the public and the media throughout the period of a potential or actual outbreak of Avian Influenza
- Liaise with partner LRF agencies and other external organisations

d. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Responsibility for implementation of the plan rests with the Chief Executive of Salisbury District Council or his/her nominated deputy. The trigger mechanism for activation of this plan in response to an outbreak of Avian Influenza is as follows:

- i. In advance of Avian Influenza affecting the UK generally. The decision to do so will be based on the situation at the time with reference to information from international, national and/or regional sources in addition to information distributed by DEFRA.
- ii. When the county council are notified of an outbreak of Avian Influenza being discovered amongst the poultry or wild bird populations within the county. It may also be activated when outbreaks in neighbouring authority areas make it prudent to place the personnel/organisations mentioned within the plan on a high state of alert.
- iii. This plan is reliant on a number of other plans linked to business continuity in the event of an emergency and should be used in conjunction with those plans identified below:

- The SDC ICT Business Continuity (restoration of services) plan

- Emergency operation of the Crematorium Plan (round the clock operation, maintenance etc.)
- The SDC Emergency Plan
 - County and District Major Incident Plan (CADMIP)
 - Salisbury District Council Business Continuity Plan (BCP)
 - Other district council Business Continuity arrangements
 - LRF Major Incident Joint Procedures Guide (MIJPG)
 - LRF Joint Media Guide (JMG)
 - LRF Public Warning & Information Protocol (PW&I)

iv. Restoration of Services

In the event of large numbers of staff being incapacitated by a bird flu epidemic, services will be restored and/or maintained in accordance with the order identified in the **SDC ICT Business Continuity (restoration of services) plan.**

This plan will also be used to identify the particular skills that will be relied on in an emergency and consideration will be given to how the council can ensure that these skills are available to it when required.

6. PLANNING DETAIL

a. BASIS FOR PLANNING

- i. Salisbury and its surrounding area is a rural district which relies heavily upon its agricultural and tourist industries. Any incident which impacts upon these undertakings and has potential to disrupt the life or affect the wellbeing of the general population is taken very seriously.
- ii. An outbreak of Bird Flu could have serious consequences for the district. Because of this it is considered necessary to formalise the arrangements which the district will take to mitigate the effects of an outbreak of Bird Flu on its community in terms of the essential services it provides and the assistance that it can give to other local councils and national bodies working to minimise disruption.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

The threat posed by an outbreak of Bird Flu is assessed as follows:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---|
| • Health Impact | 3 | |
| • Economic Impact | 4 | |
| • Social Impact | 3 | |
| • Environmental Impact | | 4 |
| • Overall Impact Assessment | 4 - major | |
| • Likelihood | 3 - possible | |
| • Risk Assessment | High | |

SECTION 2: REPONSE

1. RESPONSE

a. ALERT AND CALL OUT

- i. The contact details for all staff that should be notified in the event of an increase in alert levels can be found in the Emergency Planning Contact Directory (EPCD).
- ii. It is the responsibility of all personnel with roles and responsibilities within this plan to ensure that they are fully conversant with the alert and call out procedures for their own units and/or organisations.
- iii. Once the Emergency Planning Unit have been given the alert, which in all probability will be from DEFRA or Trading Standards, the following personnel/organisations must be informed as soon as is practicably possible using the contact details in the SDC EPCD:
 - SDC Chief Executive
 - SDC Emergency Planning Officer
 - County and other District Council Chief Executives via the Emergency Planning Coordinator
 - Other Directors as considered appropriate at the time. (bearing in mind requirements for Emergency Management Team)
 - Communications Manager
 - Head of Legal and Property
 - Head of Financial Services
 - Web management Team Leader
 - Waste Management Team
 - Head of Customer Services Unit and personnel from that unit as s/he deems appropriate.
 - Emergency Planning Team members
 - Police (possibly already notified by DEFRA DVM but need to establish communications ASAP with emergency planning and response staff)
 - Environment Agency (possibly already notified by DEFRA DVM but need to establish communications ASAP with emergency planning and response staff)

b. SPECIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM

a. This will comprise:

- Chief Executive
- Policy Directors
- Emergency Planning Officer
- Head of Communications Team
- County or other District Council representative (if required - see below)
- Others (as appropriate)

c The Chief Executive of Salisbury District Council or his/her nominated Deputy will attend the LRF (or the SCG if a major incident is declared) at Police Headquarters, Devizes and establish the link between the multi agency strategic management procedures and the local authorities.

d Thought needs to be given to the coordination between district and county council efforts. How representation and information flow is established between the teams

should be agreed prior to the implementation of this plan.

e Section 3 to this Plan covers the roles and responsibilities of the SEMT in more detail.

f In the event of an emergency, the SEMT will be responsible for providing day to day direction and implementation of the response plan.

f. DEFINITION OF A MAJOR HEALTH INCIDENT

“Any occurrence which presents a serious threat to the health of the community, disruption to the service, or causes (or is likely to cause) such numbers or types of casualties as to require special arrangements to be implemented by hospitals, ambulance services or health authorities.”

NOTE: The activation of this plan does not in itself constitute the declaration of a Major Incident.

e. For the purposes of this plan, any member of Management Team who considers that the outbreak has reached or is likely to escalate to the extent that any of the criteria outlined above are met, is empowered to declare a Major Incident (if such a declaration has not previously been made by an authorised member of any of the other LRF partner agencies). Once the declaration has been made the fact should be recorded together with the reasons for declaration, and cascaded to all LRF partner agencies, Chief Officers of other district councils and the county council, managers and Incident Room staff.

f. Once a Major Incident has been declared, the LRF, which is the strategic emergency planning group for the county, becomes the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). This change in name denotes the group’s shift in emphasis from an emergency planning role to one of emergency response and recovery. The lead agency for this group may change in relation to the nature of the incident or the stage of response. For the purposes of responding to an outbreak of Bird Flu the lead will be taken by the local authority.

g. CROSS BORDER LIAISON

i. **Liaison with other neighbouring authorities will be achieved through the Regional Resilience Forum (RRF)/Regional Civil Contingencies Committee (RCCC) when/if it has been established, (transformation of the RRF into the RCCC follows similar criteria for the LRF/SCG evolution). For those neighbouring authorities which do not form part of the South West region, liaison will be established between the respective government offices in the Southeast and West Midlands regions.**

ii. **A flow chart setting out the emergency management structure and communication/information links between the local, regional and national responders can be found at Annex A to this Plan.**

H COMMUNICATIONS

i. GENERAL

a. The Communications Unit will lead on all media and public relations issues within the district. However, it will establish and maintain a close working relationship with the Communications Teams of other District and the County Councils.

b. They will also be required to work in close cooperation with the Media Relations Team from Wiltshire Police who will lead on behalf of the agencies

which make up the Local Resilience Forum in the event that a Major Incident is declared.

- c. The LRF Joint Media Guide, which has been agreed by all of the LRF agencies, will form the multi agency response to the media effort. The LRF Public Warning and Information Strategy will assist in deciding upon the course of action when releasing information directly to the public.

I SDC COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

To ensure consistency of message it is suggested that all of the communications activities listed below are co-ordinated through head of communications or the media relations manager together with relevant senior officers.

a. Key issues

- Capacity - we are likely to see a huge increase in press calls and it is anticipated that it may be necessary to bring in call handlers from the Customer Services Unit (CCU) or the One⁰¹ emergency helpline service coordinated through the EPU.
- Mixed messages – it will be important to liaise with relevant partner organisations at a very early stage to ensure co-ordination of communications
- If we have a prolonged and extensive outbreak then it is likely that other communications activity may have to be scaled down or even ceased.
- Clarity over which organisation leads on communications and what role other communications offices will play is set out within the LRF Joint Media Guide

b. Key Communications team staff can be contacted through the Media Relations contact as found in the SDC Emergency Planning Contact Directory (EPCD).

c. Likely initial communications within the first 24 hours will require:

- Formulation of key messages
- Placing a holding statement on the front and emergency planning pages of both intranet and internet
- Briefing CSU and developing a helpline script
- Responding to media queries and briefing media representatives
- Issue global email to staff
- Liaise with relevant press offices

d. The following table outlines the strategy for communicating with the various personnel and agencies who will need to be kept updated on the response to and issues surrounding an outbreak of Bird Flu within the district.

TABLE 1 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

	General public	Media	Staff	Relevant partners	Councillors
O B J E C T I V E S	<p>Provide access to appropriate advice on health and animal welfare (direct to external sources such as DEFRA & HPA)</p> <p>Provide up-to-date information on any movement restrictions</p>	<p>Provide up-to-date information on the current situation</p> <p>Provide access to people to interview where required</p>	<p>To ensure staff have information they need to do their day to day job</p> <p>To ensure relevant staff have the information they need to answer basic questions from the public</p> <p>To ensure staff know who to approach for further information should they require it.</p>	<p>To ensure partner organisations are aware of what other partners are doing and saying</p> <p>To ensure they know who to approach for further info.</p>	<p>Ensure they are aware of the steps we are taking</p> <p>Ensure they are aware of where to go for further information for themselves and local people who contact them</p>
C H A N N E L S	<p>Internet</p> <p>Customer Services Unit</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Other helplines and websites</p>	<p>Press releases</p> <p>Press briefings (where appropriate)</p> <p>Dealing with media inquiries</p>	<p>Intranet</p> <p>Global messages N&V (if ongoing)</p>	<p>Briefings</p> <p>Copy in on external communications (such as press releases)</p>	<p>Electronic Briefing note</p> <p>Press releases</p> <p>Verbal briefing for both leader and relevant cabinet members</p>
A C T I V I T Y	<p>Update website</p> <p>Scripts and FAQ for CSU</p>	<p>Write press releases</p> <p>Write FAQ</p> <p>Organise briefings</p> <p>Answer press inquiries</p> <p>Liaison with other partner comms teams (eg police, PCT and county and other district councils)</p>	<p>Write and update intranet copy</p> <p>Write and issue global messages</p> <p>Devise other internal comms as appropriate</p>	<p>Send press release to partners</p> <p>Arrange briefings for their relevant officers (if required)</p>	<p>Write briefing note</p> <p>Send press releases</p> <p>Brief relevant cabinet members and leader</p>
B Y W H O M	<p>Script for CSU to be drawn up by CSU in coordination with comms,</p> <p>FAQ to be drawn up by media team,</p> <p>Website to be updated by comms officers</p>	<p>Media team to write and deal with this issues</p>	<p>Internal comms team to deal with this</p>	<p>Media team to ensure partners receive press releases.</p> <p>Briefings to be written by relevant service officers</p>	<p>Relevant service officer to write</p> <p>Press releases to be sent by press office</p> <p>Briefing to be given to cabinet members by relevant service officer</p>

SECTION 3 SPECIAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM (SEMT)

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. SEMT

Location, timings and agenda

- b. The time of the Chief Executive and Management Teams of the county and district councils will be at a premium should there be an outbreak that affects the county. Whenever feasible the SEMT meetings should be held at regular intervals, to coincide with LRF/SCG meetings. The duration of the meetings should be set and strict control applied by the Chair. To assist the Chair in this task a standing agenda, covering all of the relevant areas, should be adopted. This will ensure that no detail is overlooked and outstanding issues are not missed. A suggested standing agenda can be found at Annex B to this Plan.
- c. The primary function of the team will be to consider policy matters affecting the local authorities, at a strategic level in relation to an outbreak of Bird Flu that affects the district either directly or indirectly.
- d. Its aim will be to ensure that the organisational and procedural measures are put in place to mitigate the effects of the incident and these are suitable, effective and sustainable for the duration of the incident. Furthermore, the measures should be flexible enough to deal with a fast changing scenario.
- e. The core objectives for the team are to:
- Work with the strategic major incident management effort of the county and district councils during a bird flu outbreak
 - Maintain an accurate official record of policy decisions made
 - Implement 'Best Practice' in relation to the major incident
 - Identify lessons learned and review procedures
- f. The enabling objectives below will assist the SEMT in meeting the core objectives set out previously:
- Establish and determine terms of reference and nominate members of working groups to deal with identified specific issues which may impact directly on the ability of the authority to operate
 - Identify serious issues as and when they arise. Categorise, prioritise and delegate them to an appropriate working group for attention
 - Liaise with partner LRF agencies
 - Determine the local authority public warning and information strategy and when to implement it in
 - Determine the policy with regard to the activation of the local authority's Business Continuity Plans to ensure the delivery of critical services

 - Authorise and record expenditure for goods and/or services to enable the authority to meet its responsibilities within the overall emergency management and business continuity frameworks in relation to the emergency
 - Ensure that systems are in place to enable the effective dissemination of minutes, situation reports and information to those people and/or agencies that need them
 - Establish a mechanism for re-establishing services which have been suspended or downgraded as a result of the outbreak
 - Establish the criteria for deciding when to return to normal operations

- Establish a system to escalate procedures and systems should there be subsequent outbreaks of Bird Flu.
- g. There will be times when the SEMT formulates a policy to enable tactical and operational teams to carry out their duties within a clearly defined framework. When policy decisions are reached and the policy is formally set, this must be recorded. Copies of the decision should then be distributed as 'Priority' to the appropriate service heads and team leaders to make sure that they are aware of the implications for their specific area of responsibility.

2. SDC CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Manage the district council response to an outbreak of Avian Influenza:

- Sit on the LRF/SCG when established
- Chair SEMT when established
- Establish impact on Business Continuity and initiate appropriate BC arrangements
- Give consideration to requests for support from other Wiltshire local authorities or Wiltshire County Council.

3. Policy Directors

Manage their areas of responsibility's response to Avian Influenza:

- Establish BCM arrangements where necessary
- Consider and implement welfare arrangements for response staff
- Trading Standards issues in partnership with WCC – Protection and Surveillance zones – animal welfare – registration of flocks 50+ birds – signing restricted areas – security and access controls to restricted areas
- Rights of Way issues in partnership with WCC – ensuring correct procedures followed to close footpaths etc – mapping closures – informing public of closures (including publishing maps on web)
- Emergency Planning issues – liaising with LRF agencies (particularly HPA and PCT in relation to possible human infection issues) – coordination of LA response – implementing public warning and information procedures – providing support to Service Unit Heads
- Waste Management issues – transport of carcasses/animal remains from infected premises to registered disposal site in appropriate vehicles
- Assist WCC with highways issues – where disinfection procedures encroach upon highways – assisting with signage
- Assist WCC with advice to schools if required.
- Assist other agencies/councils with welfare issues – particularly around families on infected premises
- Assist other agencies/councils with welfare issues involving children on infected premises – e.g. disinfection, attending school etc.
- Assist WCC if required in relation to schools with poultry
- Legal issues –local authority response in general
- Communications issues – media relations/briefings – provision of information to the public (WebPage, Customer Services Unit) – collation and dissemination of information to relevant department/section
- Occupational Health and Safety issues – ensuring that risk assessments for the council's involvement are carried out and correctly recorded (e.g. LA staff attending infected premises if required) – monitoring the wellbeing of staff involved in responding to the incident (provision of counselling services if required)
- SEMT/LRF meetings – taking minutes and recording decisions and circulating them to designated recipients

- Human resource issues – work time recording for response staff – overtime/time off in lieu arrangements
- Finance issues – establish emergency accounting code – monitor and record expenditure in relation to the response
- IT issues – ensure that IT support is available to support the council's response

APPENDIX 1 – EMERGENCY FLOW CHART

