



## Coventry City Council

### Response to Police & Crime Commissioner

**20<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

Coventry City Council would like to provide the following update for the Police and Crime Commissioner in respect of a Major Incident being declared on the Strategic Road Network:

- 1) What is different from 6<sup>th</sup> February 2016 to now? (You may wish to address how your organisation is working better with other partners involved.)**

The February hearing raised a number of pertinent questions which helped all agencies review the policies, procedures and resources associated with, and available to help manage major incidents. Coventry City Council has supported and participated fully in this review process at both a regional and local level.

There have been improvements with respect to how major incidents are dealt with. The Highways England team have lead on a review of the Emergency Planning response process in the region; refreshed the communications plan to ensure communication systems operate and the right people are contacted in the event of a Major Incident being declared. Regular updates on incidents are now shared which helps local authorities better plan for the impact on the local road network. However, in respect of these and other incidents that will have a severe operational impact on the network, the recent appointment by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) of a Key Route Network Manager and the proposed Regional Integrated Command Centre will help to address this.

At a local level, Coventry City Council's Highway Services and Network Management teams now have a greater awareness of the potential impact major incidents can have on the region's economy and the importance of restoring capacity of the strategic highway network as quickly as possible.

Coventry works in partnership with both Warwickshire and Solihull to deliver a shared Resilience and Emergency Planning services. Officers from Coventry's highways, network management and Emergency Service Unit recently participated in an Emergency Planning Exercise. This has ensured greater awareness of the processes and additional support available to help manage both minor and major incidents affecting the highway network.

**2) How do we continue to build on this progress and improve our response to major incidents?**

Coventry City Council is committed to supporting Highways England in the event of a Major Incident being declared on the Strategic Highway network. The new West Midlands Resilience and Response Partnership's Tactical Working Group has recently been established and has further dates to meet during 2017. Although in its infancy, the added resources of the West Midlands Combined Authority and the development of a Regional Integrated Command Centre (RICC) will no doubt help to monitor progress and provide additional support and resource if a large scale incident should occur in the future. This group will also lead on co-ordination on planned improvements such as HS2 and major maintenance schemes to minimise impact both on the Strategic and WM Key Route Network.

We consider the HE's CLEAR (Clear, Lead, Evaluate, Act and Re-open) protocol is a step forward. This places greater awareness and responsibility to re-instate the strategic highway network back to capacity as quickly as possible, thereby minimising the impact on the local highway network and the region's economy.

**3) Do you perceive any impediments to progress on collaboration?**

Collaborative working will require all agencies to work together to ensure that future incidents are managed more effectively. The agencies involved have shown a willingness to work in this way with the set-up of the West Midlands Network Resilience - Tactical Working Group. It is imperative that the joined up working continues between HE, Local Authorities, Central Motorway Patrol Group (CMPG) and the WMCA to ensure that a cohesive and resilient network management strategy is in place to manage the pressures the network will face in the coming years.

At a local level, Coventry City Council recognises the need to work closely with the local police force to help with restoring the capacity on the local road network in the event of an incident that causes major delay on the local road network.

**4) Do you have a view as to where responsibility for traffic management during responses should lie in the future?**

In the future the responsibility should sit with the WMCA, HE and the police, supported by Local Highway Authorities. Coventry is strongly supportive of the creation of a Regional Integrated Command Centre (RICC) to manage incidents on the regions road networks. This RICC should involve representatives from Local Authorities, the CA, HE, Police and the Central Motorway Patrol Group.