



Easingwold Town Council

General Emergency Provisions

March 2021



ETC General Emergency Provisions

1. Summary

Easingwold Town Council (ETC) is not an emergency service provider and does not have or keep specific resources to deal with emergencies. Rather it supports the various emergency service/adverse conditions providers in any practical way that it can whilst they are preparing for, delivering, or following up their support to Easingwold and its surrounding district.

However, instances can arise where Easingwold becomes subject to difficult conditions or emergencies that are either beyond the scope of the available service provisions the town receives, and/or so urgent or different that action by ETC is both warranted and necessary.

To this end, ETC has established these General Emergency Provisions (GEP) and its Emergency Action Group (EAG) arrangement, so that appropriate decisions and actions can be taken, and necessary resources provided as quickly and effectively as possible.

By their creation the Council has authorised its Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman, with advice from the Town Clerks, to agree together that a state of emergency necessitating action by ETC exists. They then activate the ETC General Emergency Provisions; and can also ask for an ETC Emergency Action Group (EAG) to be formed to take charge of ETC's response. This is to ensure that any necessary decisions, actions and expenditure to ameliorate or resolve the issues to hand are taken. When called, and in conjunction with the Town Clerks and any implicated volunteers, the EAG will manage the identified issue to its conclusion or until its control can be handed on to a competent authority.

Once an issue is resolved, either the Town Clerks, Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman or EAG (depending on who led the emergency response) reports back to the full Council to:

- *Validate the decisions and actions taken*
- *Approve any emergency expenditure incurred*
- *Thank any volunteers who have assisted in the resolution of the emergency*
- *Advise the Council any necessary changes needed to prevent the same or similar problems arising again.*

2. ETC General Emergency Provisions

Easingwold Town Council (ETC) is a largely voluntary organisation and lacks the resources to be an emergencies/adverse conditions service provider. In line with this, ETC does not have or keep specific resources to deal with emergencies. Rather it supports the various emergency service/adverse conditions providers in any practical way that it can whilst they are preparing for, delivering, or following up their support to Easingwold and its surrounding district.

When instances arise where Easingwold becomes subject to adverse conditions or emergencies that are beyond the scope of the available service provisions; then ETC will take such emergency actions as it can to help resolve or ameliorate the identified issue or support the town until a competent authority can take charge of the situation.

If a situation in Easingwold arises that might demand action, then the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman (or if they are not available then the Operations Committee Chairman) will consult with the Town Clerks and identify whether action by ETC is needed or appropriate. Should action be needed:

- If possible, together they will seek to identify executive actions that can already be taken by the Town Clerks under the auspices of their existing roles and authorise them to be completed
- The Town Clerks will appraise all the Town Councillors by email that the General Emergency Provisions have been activated and of the actions being taken, seeking any support and advice the Councillors can provide
- The Town Clerks will then be free to use up their emergency expenditure allowance without further authorisation; and should the needs be greater than this, then the emergency expenditure can be extended further (see *5. Emergency Expenditure & Finance* below)
- They can also activate any immediate volunteer support needed.

Where the situation demands even greater resources, then they will ask an **Emergency Action Group (EAG)** to form and coordinate and lead the Council's response. If needed, the EAG comes together to identify and execute a plan of action to resolve the prevailing issue. They will then manage the issue to its conclusion according to the arrangements in *3. Emergency Action Group* below.

During the course of the issue the Town Clerks will keep all the Town Councillors appraised of progress by email and any developments that might alter the course of the emergency response being made. Once concluded the issue will be closed by an Emergency Review as outlined in *6. Emergency Review* below.

3. Emergency Action Group

The EAG is led by the Chairman, or in their absence, the Vice-Chairman, or another Councillor who may have skills that will be effective in resolving the issue to hand. The EAG comprises:

- The Council Chairman & Vice-Chairman
- The Committee Chairmen (Operations; Recreation & Open Spaces; and Social & Events)
- Other Councillors with relevant skills to the incident involved
- The Town Clerks

When activated under the General Emergency Provisions, the EAG comes together to identify and execute a plan of action to resolve the prevailing issue referred to it. It manages the issue to its conclusion, authorising any necessary activities, coordination and expenditure required. The EAG will also activate and coordinate any Community Volunteer Support needed; such that the skills, expertise and resources of the whole community can be brought to bear and help to resolve the issue to hand.

To support its role the EAG will have access immediately to incremental emergency finance in addition to that mentioned above. Subject to an email consultation with all Councillors and/or an Emergency Council Meeting the leader of the EAG may further increase expenditure as necessary (see 5. *Emergency Expenditure & Finance* below).

During the course of the incident the Town Clerks will keep the rest of the Council apprised by email of progress by the EAG and how the issue is being resolved. Finally, at the conclusion of the issue, the EAG will review the causes, outcomes and costs of the emergency actions undertaken and report back to the full Council with any necessary recommendations for approval.

4. Community Volunteer Support

Easingwold has enormous skills and resources and a strong community voluntary ethic that can be brought to bear to help support the town in any emergency or issue. ETC itself is largely a voluntary organisation; so, implicitly in their emergency responses they are asking for the voluntary support and assistance from the townspeople as needed.

This volunteering will be driven under the coordination of the Town Clerks when the needs for any given issue have been assessed and agreed. In anticipation, the Clerks will keep a register of voluntary organisations in the town and townspeople who are happy to volunteer to provide supplementary urgent support.

At the same time digital media and personal contacts will be used to set up and direct working groups to carry out tasks identified by the EAG in response to any given need.

5. Emergency Expenditure & Finance

Easingwold Town Council approves the use of its funds for emergency expenditure as follows:

Level 1: Immediate actions taken by the Clerks and subject to their authorisation:
- *Up to £500 (or the agreed limit for routine emergency expenditure)*

Level 2: Enhanced actions taken by the Clerks and authorised jointly (where possible) by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman:
- *Up to an additional £1,000 above level 1*

Level 3: Actions resulting from an agreed course of action by the EAG and approved by its leader:
- *Up to an additional £2,000 above level 2*

Level 4: Incremental costs resulting from a persistent issue, to be agreed by an e-mail consultation with all Councillors and approved by the EAG leader:
- *Up to an incremental £2,000 above level 3*

Level 5: Thereafter further incremental resources, payments and costs can be agreed but will require an Emergency Meeting of the full Town Council to approve them:

- According to the identified incremental needs agreed

Clear records of all expenditure, invoices and receipts must be kept. Once the incident has been resolved then the Clerks, Chairmen or EAG must present the whole financial implications of their actions to the Council as part of their final review according to the level of authority used above.

6. Emergency Review

Easingwold Town Council have created their General Emergency Provisions to eliminate bureaucracy, enhance speed and flexibility in the light of severe adverse conditions or an emergency striking Easingwold and requiring an urgent response by the Council. However, they do not eliminate responsibility to the full Council, so these actions must then be accounted for by an Emergency Review. This is prepared by the Clerks, Chairmen or the EAG as appropriate and will be presented to the full Council at the earliest possible opportunity for its approval. It must:

- Clarify the decisions and actions taken and their basis
- Identify and justify any emergency expenditure made
- Thank any volunteers who have assisted in the resolution of the emergency
- Provide the Council with advice on any necessary changes needed to prevent the same or similar problems arising again.

7. Possible Interventions

Since ETC is not an emergency service, these General Emergency Provisions are intended to be as flexible and broad as possible so as to allow the Council to respond to urgent town needs in a timely and supportive manner whatever they may be, and whenever they may arise.

They will cover matters such as:

- Adverse weather events (prolonged freezes or icy or snowy conditions; excessive heatwaves; major storms; extensive flooding etc.)
- Plagues and Diseases (widespread infestations, pandemics or epidemics etc)
- Major accidents or incidents (airplane crashes, bus crashes, gas explosions, building collapses, sink holes, terrorist threats etc.)
- Anything else that presents a severe challenge to the well-being and safety of the people of Easingwold.