

Northwich Town Centre Multi-Agency Flood Emergency Plan



Plan Administration

Access

Cheshire West and Chester Council, the Environment Agency, United Utilities, The Canal and River Trust (the Trust), and other key agencies will have complete access to the live plan and will be notified of any amendments accordingly.

This plan is a condensed public facing version and it will be available through the Council's website. This version will not include any information relating to names, personal contact numbers and email addresses of all agencies that are included in this plan and any other information that is exempt from the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The intention of this plan is that it will be frequently reviewed and amended as appropriate based on ongoing development, learning and continuous communication between the RMA's (Risk Management Authority).

Section 1: Introduction

The plan specifically relates to flooding in Northwich Town Centre. Flooding may occur at various locations in the town centre that may result in closing certain roads and deploying traffic management and temporary operations. The existing gyratory system within the town centre prevents the use of certain roads when other roads are temporarily closed, and the direction of travel does not allow for access to the alternative routes.

Historically and prior to the construction of the flood defences, flooding in Northwich Town Centre occurs from overtopping of the Rivers Dane and Weaver around the confluence where there are several road bridge constrictions. The River Weaver is navigable from Winsford to the Manchester Ship Canal. Water levels on the Weaver are controlled by the Canal and Rivers Trust and maintained using a series of sluice gates and weirs for statutory navigational purposes.

Consultation has taken place with the Environment Agency, United Utilities, the Trust, Cheshire Constabulary, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services and other relevant partners with regards to the production of this plan.

The Environment Agency's Northwich Flood Defence Scheme and operation was installed in 2016 in the town centre. When river levels reach certain triggers, this activates the required procedures through a series of phases to be undertaken. Permanent flood defences have been installed in parts of Northwich but where this is not possible; a demountable defence solution has been put in place that requires the closure of Dane Street.

Section 2: Aims and Objectives

The plan covers the requirement for a multi-agency response to a major flood incident within Northwich Town Centre and is included within the Council's wider Multi-Agency Flood Response Plan for the whole borough of West Cheshire. The plan does not have regard for actions to be taken during any other type of emergency. This plan is supported by emergency contact details, trigger and activation procedures.

The primary purpose of the plan to provide a co-ordinated multi-agency response framework to help mitigate and reduce the impact of a large-scale flood event within Northwich Town Centre.

The scope of this plan outlines the response to a flooding incident within Northwich Town Centre. Whilst the primary focus is aimed at a response to river (fluvial) and surface water (pluvial) flood events, many of the actions, roles and responsibilities outlined are transferable to responses for other sources of flooding such as groundwater and foul water (sewer).

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities for a co-ordinated multi-agency response in the event of a major flood within Northwich Town Centre include the following:

Northwich Town Centre Multi-Agency Flood Emergency Plan	
Cheshire West and Chester Council as LLFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead the multi-agency response pre-flooding• Support the emergency services and agencies engaged in the response to the emergency• Use Council resources to mitigate and relieve the effects on people, property and infrastructure• Identify vulnerable people, sites and locations and consider evacuation strategy• Open rest centres (Memorial Court) for the temporary accommodation of survivors/evacuees• Designate staff and resource to the rest centres• Activate and co-ordinate the voluntary sector, where appropriate• Put in place a Traffic Management Plan and manage road closures• Co-ordinate the response to flooded highways, drains and gullies• Maintain business continuity to provide essential services at an appropriate level• Assess and ensure clean-up and clearance operations• Put in place measures to investigate the cause of the flooding incident and, where appropriate, instigate a S19 flood investigation• Attend, manage and co-ordinate multi-agency meetings• Once flooding has receded take the lead role in the recovery process
Environment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issue flood alerts and warnings• Act as lead public body for protecting and improving the environment• Monitor catchments (Site controllers on the ground and Flood Incident Management Officers• Operate and maintain flood defences within Northwich Town Centre• Clear obstructions to flow from main rivers, providing it is safe to do so• Support the LLFA and the emergency services with staff and materials, where resources allow

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect flood data for historical records and to ensure future mapping • Once flooding has receded, repair any damaged flood defences • Attend multi-agency meetings as and when required
United Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the wastewater and clean water networks • Prevention of internal foul flooding • Protect the community • Understand the impact of the waste and clean water networks • Activate and monitor pumping arrangements, including any temporary operations in place at both Dock Road and Barons Quay pumping stations • Attend multi-agency meetings as and when required

Cheshire Constabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save life and prevent further loss of life in conjunction with the other emergency services • Secure, protect and preserve the scene • Collection and distribution of casualty information • Assistance with warning and informing • Provide traffic management and identify evacuation routes in consultation with the local Highway Authority • Investigate any criminal offences, obtaining and securing evidence in conjunction with other investigative bodies where applicable • Provide public information relating to the flooding incident in conjunction with other agencies • Liaise with other agencies to prioritise response
Cheshire Fire and Rescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out search and rescue operations as necessary • Assist in the evacuation of members of the public to a place of safety • Consider environmental issues, e.g., chemical sites • Undertake mitigation operations, which may include removing electricity substations • Salvage and damage control • Liaise with other agencies to prioritise response
Cheshire Ambulance Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save life in conjunction with other emergency services • Provide treatment, stabilisations and care of those injured at the scene • Provide sufficient ambulances, medical staff, equipment and resources • Provide a focal point at the incident for the NHS resources at the scene • Provide direct communication links to hospitals, control facilities and other agencies, as required • Activate NHS provision at rest centres, for medical needs of evacuated persons
Canal & River Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting its own structures and ensure the operation and maintenance procedures are in place for sluice gates on the River Weaver • On its own navigation system and along with other bodies, help to warn the public using the navigation system • Attend multi-agency meetings as and when required • Work with local authority and partners with road closures necessary during flood events to protect the Trust's road bridges.

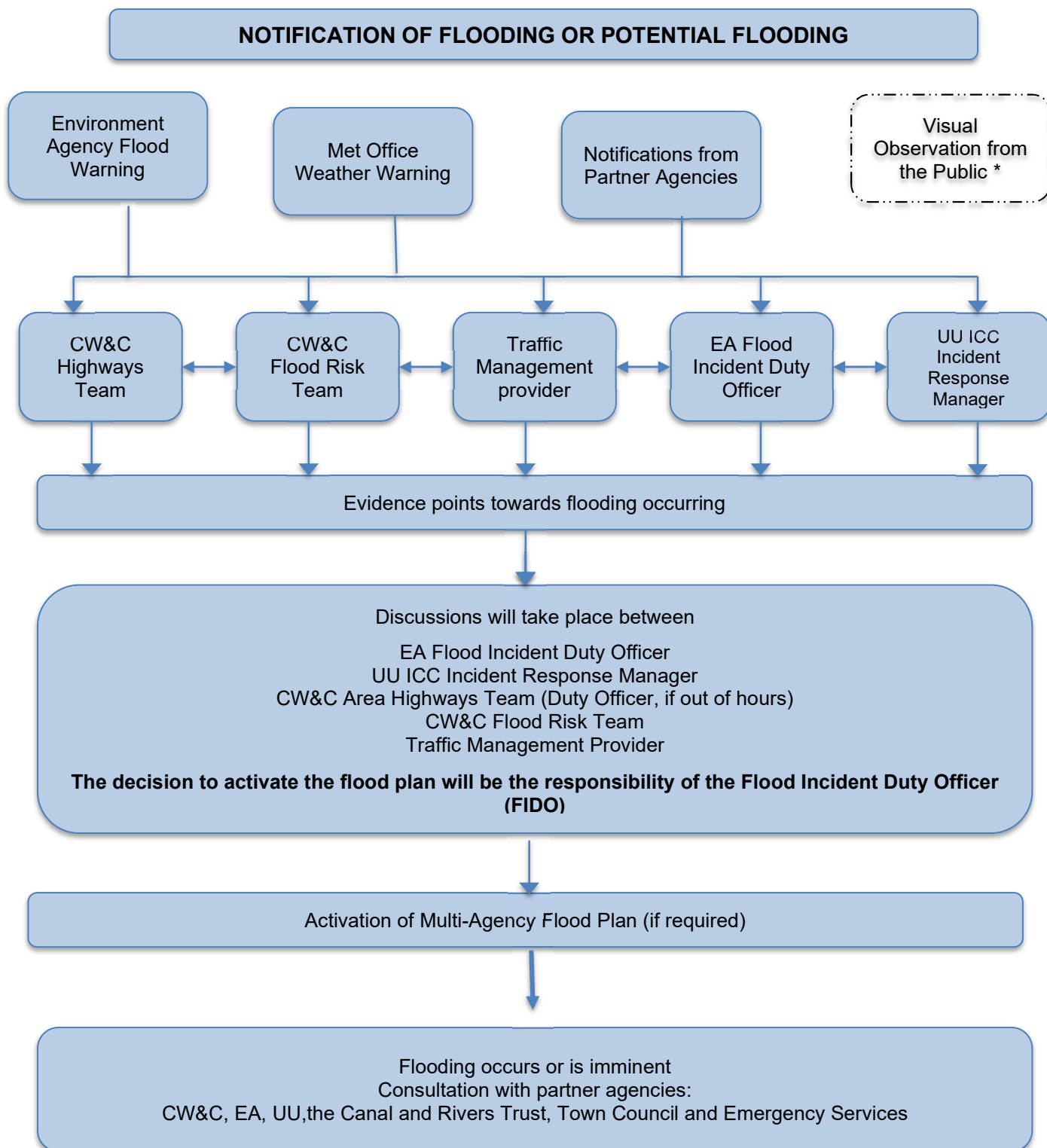
Northwich Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When requested, provide additional local support and knowledge to all partners before, during and after a major flooding incident in the town centre • As in previous flooding events, work closely with all partners and continue to provide excellent support and collaborative working when resources are available to assist
Traffic Management Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake the required Traffic Management and Operational procedures for road closures within the town centre as a result of a major flooding incident including bridge failure and/or a road traffic collision that also occurred during the flood event • Undertake the required Traffic Management and Operational procedures including any stand-by arrangements in accordance with the designated flood warning and trigger levels
Met Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying partner agencies both ahead of and during severe weather outbreaks to highlight the predicted weather sequence and potential impacts for the area along with the discussion of relevant severe weather warnings and the Flood Guidance Statement

Section 4: Notification Activation Procedure and Trigger Levels

There are several thresholds and triggers that can be used to assess the need to activate this plan. Activating the plan will instigate a co-ordinated multi-agency response.

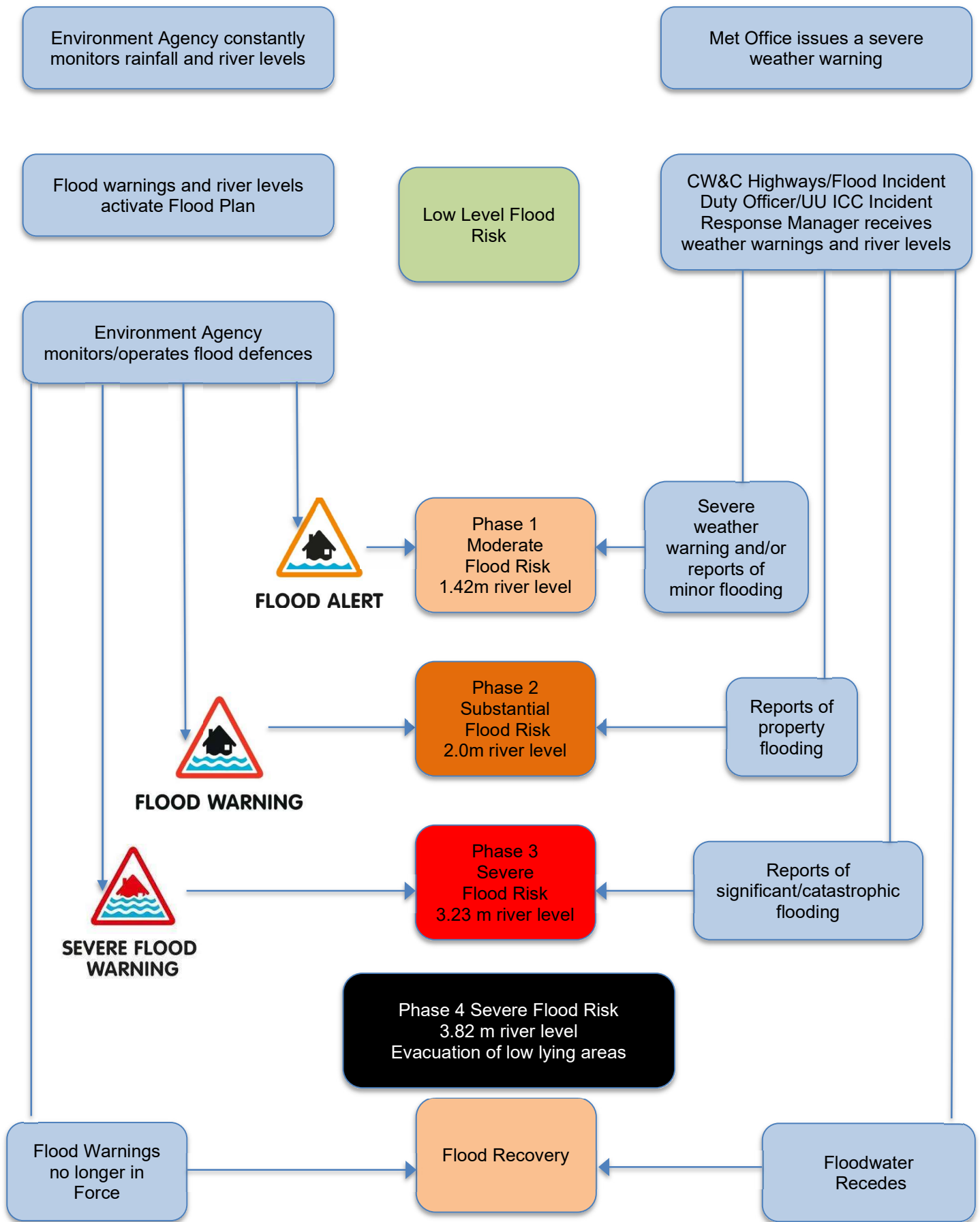
Consideration for activating this plan should occur in the event of the following:

- The North West area including Cheshire West and Chester are coloured amber or red (medium or high-risk) on the Flood Guidance Statement
- The Environment Agency issues a Flood Warning Alert for the rivers in the borough
- The Met Office issues a Severe Weather Warning (Yellow) for Cheshire West and Chester and the North West area
- Weather forecast and/or media reports that recorded rainfall that is predicted to cause flooding



* Visual inspection may include roads and gardens flooding not just property

Northwich Town Centre Flood Plan Triggers



Northwich Town Centre Response Level Definition

Local Response Level	River Level	Trigger	Actual or forecast impact	Response
Phase 0	0 – 1m	Flood Alert: River levels at 1m and yellow flood guidance statement issued by the Met Office.	No flooding occurring	Emergency Plan activated. EA to monitor and other agencies to place resources on standby.
Phase 1 (Moderate Flood Risk)	1 - 1.42m	Flood Alert: River levels have reached 1.0m and are forecast to rise to 1.42m	Low impact flooding of open space, gardens and minor roads, forecasted higher river levels that may cause localised flooding and disruption to traffic	EA will start to deploy flood defences. Other agencies will mobilise for temporary pumping and start pumping if required. Traffic management (lane closures) will be installed. Staff will be on site from a number of agencies.
Phase 2 (Substantial Flood Risk)	1.42 – 2.0m	Flood Warning: River levels have reached 1.42 and are forecast to reach 2.0m	Flooding to property, damage to structures and/or buildings, flooding that may result in risk to life, homes and businesses	EA will deploy flood defences. If water levels continue to rise, London Road closure will be deployed. Wider road closures from the town centre will be deployed.
Phase 3 (Severe Flood Risk)	2.0 - 3.23m	Severe flood warnings in force and/or warnings of severe weather in force that is likely to result in flooding and/or reports of significant catastrophic flooding. This may include the breaching of the Northwich Flood Defence.	Widespread flooding to properties and businesses, large scale evacuation occurring/may be required, collapse of structures, danger to life, widespread loss of/disruption to key services, e.g. public transport, travel and utilities	EA will close all flood defences. Conditions monitored by other agencies.
Phase 4 (Severe Flood Risk)	3.5 – 3.82	As above	Flood defences will be overtopped	Evacuation of low lying areas.
Flood Recovery	N/A	Flood warnings/severe flood warning downgraded and/or all clear issued and/or no warnings of severe weather in force that may result in flooding	Flooding water receding	Removal of flood defence barriers, open closed roads to resume normal traffic flow, Cheshire Highways to engage with all partners and facilitate clean up and recovery process

Section 5: Traffic Management and Operations

Cheshire West and Chester Council have appointed a Traffic Management Provider. They will be responsible for implementing the required traffic management in the event of a major flood in the Town Centre that required certain roads to be closed on the Northwich Gyratory.

There is 6 separate emergency traffic management plans that have been agreed for the following roads:

- **Town Bridge (Watling Street)**
- **Hayhurst Bridge (Chester Way)**
- **Dane Street Closure**
- **London Road**
- **Weaver Way**
- **Full gyratory closure**

In the event of a major flooding incident within Northwich Town Centre, the traffic management provider will:

- be contacted by Cheshire West and Chester Council when there is likely to be a major flood incident within the Town Centre in accordance with the agreed trigger levels and activation procedure
- will be advised that Dane Street will need to be closed for the EA to install their demountable flood defences. Cheshire West and Chester Council will advise Amberon when they need to be deployed to Northwich Town Centre
- have all the required traffic management equipment and plans for all incident types, major flooding, bridge failure and the occurrence of a road traffic collision on the gyratory
- implement the required traffic management plan and will manage and monitor the traffic accordingly. They will assist the CW&C contractor when installing the pump arrangements and other times when requested.
- will be advised by the EA and/or the Council when the traffic management can be removed, and the road(s) can be re-opened

Section 6: Sandbag Deployment

Residents and businesses at risk of flooding are advised to take proactive steps to protect their property. This could include installing your own flood protection measures or retaining a stock of sand/sandbags.

In emergencies, we may be able to provide a limited number of sandbags to properties in immediate danger. During severe weather the demand for this will be high and we highly recommend that residents make their own arrangements in advance if possible. Sandbags and sand can be purchase from most good builders' merchants and large DIY stores.

Any sandbags issued will not be collected by the Council afterwards. If they come into contact with flood water, they may be contaminated by sewage.

Section 7: Pumping Arrangements

For the winter period of 2021/22, additional over pumping measures at Barons Quay and Dock Road Pumping Stations were installed to pump water to be removed per day in the event of a storm similar to that of Christoph. This contingency over pumping operation was a temporary solution whilst the RMA's are considering longer-term solutions to address the issue of flood risk in Northwich.

The sustainable, interim solution is to combine and co-ordinate each organisations responsibility and organisational risk remit, into a co-ordinated plan.

The plan consists of enhanced monitoring on the Surface water network, enabling rapid deployment of pump resources to specific-pre-defined locations.

United Utilities have now installed enhanced monitoring in the sewer network in the town centre and the Council is installing additional water level monitoring sensors, which can provide an early indication of any surface water issues that could lead to sewer/surface water flooding in the town centre. When sensors indicate surface water flooding is imminent or occurring, pumping resources will be deployed

This monitoring will trigger the deployment of the Council's dedicated pump units that will be used in London Road and Weaver Way to over-pump surface water to the river from existing gullies. There will be four pumping units deployed in total.

United Utilities response will involve additional temporary pumps that will be deployed at Dock Road and Barron's Quay to over-pump excess surface water flows to river.

If the situation continues to worsen the Environment Agency will deploy its high-capacity surface water pumps units from its National depot at Sale, as and where required.

The trigger response for activating the emergency over-pumping is included on the trigger levels and actions table.

If flows continue to increase, as groundwater levels rise, mitigation measures at certain locations will be required across the town centre. Using experience from previous major flood events, areas likely to be affected within Northwich Town Centre are identified. The requirement for over pumping will be driven by levels in the existing manholes/gullies locally within the town centre.

If over pumping to the river is required, there are pre-determined pump operating locations to be reviewed as and when required multi-agency:

Location 1: London Road opposite Waitrose Car Park (CW&C)

Location 2: Weaver Way rear of McDonalds (CW&C)

Location 3: Over-pumping at Baron's Quay pumping station (United Utilities)

Location 4: Waitrose Car Park northern side (Environment Agency)

Location 5: Waitrose Car Park adjacent to electrical kiosk (Environment Agency)

Location 6: Watling Street (The Bullring) (Environment Agency)

Location 7 :Over-pumping at Dock Road pumping station (United Utilities))

Section 8: Emergency Contact and Communication Details

Emergency Contact Details		
Organisation	Telephone (office)	Telephone (out of hours)
Cheshire West Contact Centre	0300 123 7036	0300 123 7036
Environment Agency	0800 80 70 60	0800 80 70 60
United Utilities		0345 672 3723
Cheshire Constabulary	101	101 or 999