Notifiable Animal Diseases Plan

Prepared by and issued by: Fife Council Emergency Resilience Team

Version	Published	Review
3.0	January 2025	January 2028

Prepare • Respond • Recover

READY FIFE

Distribution

Role

- Communications Team
- Council Leadership Team
- Emergency Resilience Team
- Incident Managers
- Protective Services
- Resilience Co-ordinators

Contents

1. Introduction

This plan focuses on the specific arrangements in response to and recovery from an animal disease outbreak impacting Fife. These arrangements will be activated alongside, and will support, the Council's generic arrangements detailed in the Incident Management Plan.

1.1 Aim

This plan outlines the arrangements that Fife Council will activate to respond to, and recover from, a notifiable animal disease outbreak impacting the Fife area.

1.2 Objectives

In addition to the objectives set out in the Incident Management Plan, the objectives of this plan include, to:

- Identify the triggers for activation of this plan.

- Outline Fife Council's roles and responsibilities in response to a notifiable animal disease outbreak impacting Fife.

- Provide an overview of how Fife Council reports into the national, regional and local command-and-control structures that will be activated to ensure a co-ordinated multi-agency response to a notifiable animal disease outbreak.

- Outline the procedure for standing down the response to a notifiable animal disease, and the transition to the recovery phase.

1.3 Scope

This plan covers the:

- Arrangements that Fife Council will activate in providing support, as required, to Scottish Government and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) to achieve their objectives in response to a notifiable animal disease outbreak impacting Fife.

Outwith the scope of this plan:

- The operational response arrangements that will be activated in response to an exotic notifiable animal disease outbreak impacting Fife. The Public Protection Team Response to Notifiable Diseases Procedures are owned and maintained by Protective Services.

- The response to a non-notifiable disease which will be dealt with using operational procedures and relevant national arrangements.

- Arrangements for working with partner organisations in response to an animal disease outbreak. The relevant plans which provide this information are detailed at para 2.7 under Associated Plans.

1.4 Planning Assumptions

This plan will contribute to the effort to mitigate the impact and deal with the consequences of an animal disease outbreak in Fife. The following assumptions and limitations are acknowledged:

- The occurrence, spread and severity of an animal disease outbreak is difficult to predict. Any planning arrangements need to be flexible and adaptable to any developing scenario.

- Council Services with roles and responsibilities relevant to a notifiable animal disease outbreak have operational arrangements in place to support the arrangements outlined in this document.

- An animal disease outbreak can occur outwith office hours which limits the availability of staff to respond. Services with a key role will include an appropriate level of response in their operational procedures.

- Identified council employees will attend training and exercises to ensure that they understand their role in response to and recovery from, a notifiable animal disease outbreak.

1.5 Risk

- The National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) considers animal diseases as a risk that would have a substantial impact on the UK's society and economy.

- The likelihood and impact of an outbreak of an exotic notifiable animal disease varies depending on the disease.

- However, it should be highlighted that the threshold for inclusion in the NSRA highlights the potential severity of impacts of an outbreak of a notifiable animal disease on Fife.

- Fife Council's generic, flexible and adaptable arrangements will mitigate the impact and consequences of this risk to Fife's communities.

1.6 Training and Exercising

Services should ensure that staff have received, and encouraged staff attendance at, appropriate training, exercising and briefings in relation to their role during a response to a notifiable animal disease outbreak. This will supplement training, exercising and briefings provided for Council staff with a role in Fife Council's incident management arrangements, as outlined in section 1.5 of the Incident Management Plan.

1.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

As per the Incident Management Plan, this plan will be reviewed by the Emergency Resilience Team (ERT) as part of a formal three-year review schedule. Amendments may also be made as required to incorporate lessons identified from incidents, training, and exercising.

1.8 Responsibility

Fife Council's Chief Executive is responsible for this Notifiable Animal Diseases Plan.

2. General Information

2.1 Background

An animal disease outbreak can vary in scale and has the potential to have a significant impact on both society and the economy. Responding to such an outbreak will involve joined up working at both a local and national level.

Scottish Government has the legal responsibility and authority for the control of notifiable animal diseases in Scotland. This role is primarily carried out by APHA, the lead organisation in the operational planning and response to an animal disease outbreak. In carrying out their responsibilities, APHA will require support from other partner organisations, including local authorities across Scotland.

Local authorities are the statutory bodies for enforcing livestock disease controls and are empowered to monitor compliance with movement licences. Local authorities therefore have a major role in responding to outbreaks of notifiable animal diseases.

2.2 Terminology

The term 'notifiable' means that there is a legal obligation to notify the relevant authority, in most cases APHA, if a person suspects a disease. These diseases are notifiable because of their potential in most cases for very serious and rapid spread. They can have serious socioeconomic or public health consequences and are of major importance to the international trade of animals or animal products.

Many notifiable animal diseases pose no risk to human health, but some do, i.e. avian flu and rabies. These diseases are known as being 'zoonotic'. Where an animal disease outbreak is zoonotic, local authorities would also work closely with the relevant health board(s) in managing the human health response.

Notifiable animal diseases are called 'exotic' when the disease is not currently present in the UK and 'endemic' when they are present in the UK.

A full list of notifiable diseases are named in Section 88 of the Animal Health Act 1981 and can be found on Scottish Government website (Notifiable Animal Diseases).

A glossary of terms is provided in Appendix A.

2.3 Role of Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

APHA is the operational lead agency in dealing with notifiable animal disease outbreaks and will implement animal disease control measures. The assistance of the relevant local authority and Police Scotland will be called upon to enforce those control measures (for infections with zoonotic potential, the public health response is the responsibility of the NHS board(s) in liaison with Public Health Scotland).

APHA's key responsibilities include:

- the detection of diseased animals
- the slaughter and disposal of animals
- the containment of disease on suspect, infected or dangerous contact premises
- the containment of disease in declared zones/areas

Fife Council and other partners support APHA, as required, in carrying out these responsibilities. However, Fife Council and other partners also have responsibility for the management of the wider community impacts and consequences following an animal disease outbreak.

2.4 Restrictions on Premises and Control Zones

The premises where disease is suspected will be placed under restrictions, preventing movement of anything liable to spread disease, such as livestock, vehicles, and visitors. A temporary control zone (TCZ) around the suspected infected premises may be put in place by Scottish Ministers.

If disease is confirmed, Scottish Ministers have powers to put a Protection Zone (PZ) in place as well as a wider Surveillance Zone (SZ). The size of these zones will vary depending on the nature of the animal disease but is likely to be a minimum radius of 3km for the PZ and a minimum radius of 10km for the SZ.
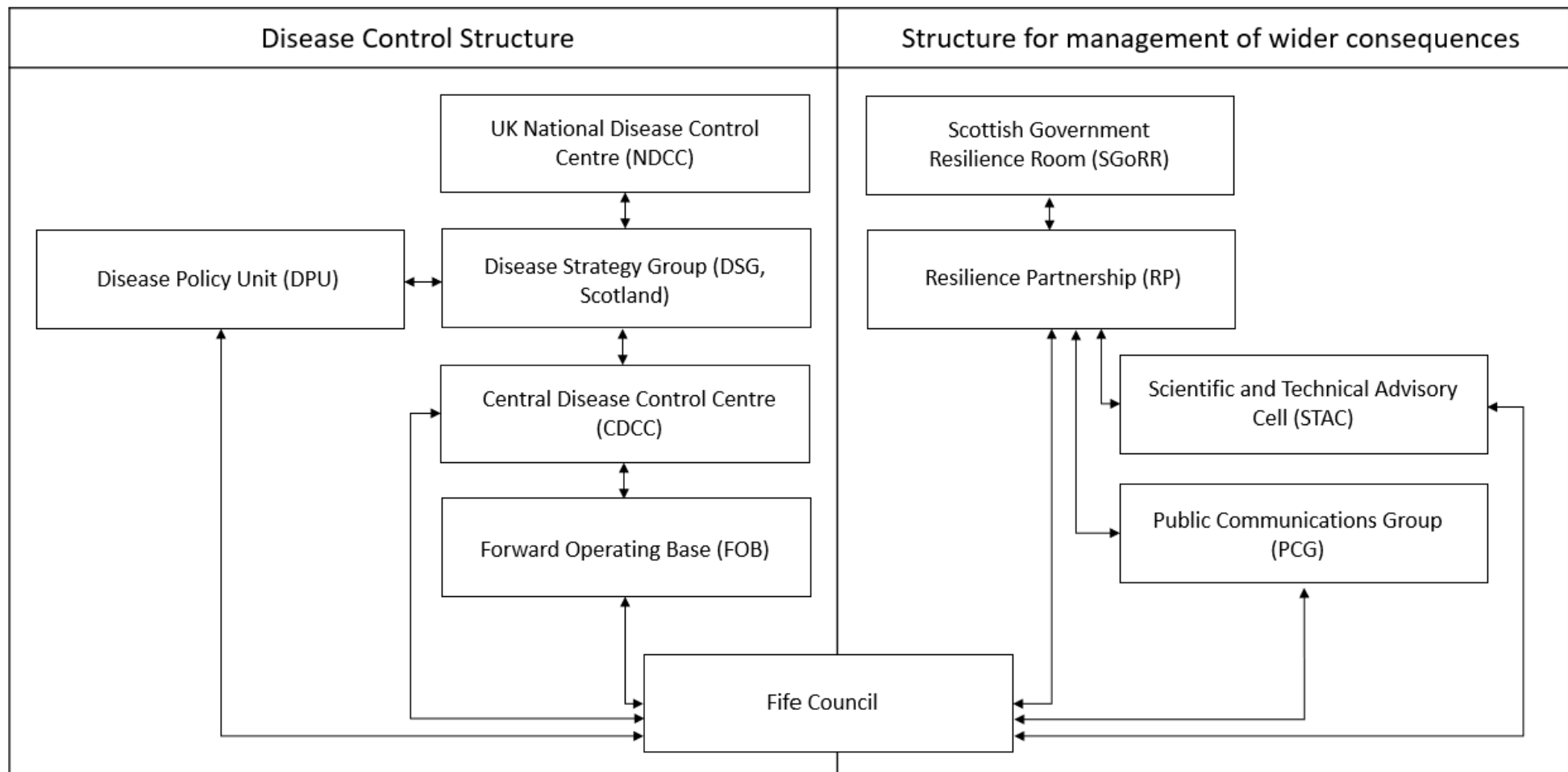
It is the responsibility of local authorities - and specifically for the purpose of this plan, Fife Council - to enforce the restrictions put in place within these zones.

2.5 National and Regional Command and Control Structures

Specific national and regional command and control arrangements have been established to ensure a fully co-ordinated response. These are detailed in the Scottish Regional Resilience Partnerships' (RRP) Framework for Exotic Notifiable Animal Diseases Contingency Plan and will be activated dependant on the scale of the animal disease outbreak.

The following diagram summarises the information flow between the key organisations and multi-agency groups that may be established to effectively respond to and recover from an animal disease outbreak in both the control of the disease and the wider consequences.

Fife Council will be involved in both disease control and the management of wider consequences via the Resilience Partnership and Scottish Government's Resilience Room (SGoRR), and will contribute to relevant groups as detailed in diagram 1 below.

Diagram 1. Illustration of the multi-agency response structures activated following the identification of an exotic notifiable animal disease outbreak in Fife. Note: this diagram is not intended to illustrate the communication or reporting routes across these structures, only those which Fife Council reports into. The Scottish Government Exotic Animal Disease Contingency Framework Plan and the Scottish Regional Resilience Partnerships' (RRP) Framework for Exotic Notifiable Animal Diseases Contingency Plan provide more information on multi-agency response structures.

2.6 Battle Rhythm

To manage the outbreak, meetings and reporting that takes place across the command-and-control structures should adhere to a pre-determined schedule (known as a 'battle rhythm').

The exact battle rhythm followed will depend on several factors including the circumstance of the disease, stage of the outbreak and affected areas. Appendix B details the main meetings held and reports compiled.

2.7 Issues for Local Authorities

- Staff resources to respond to a large-scale outbreak both during and outwith office hours, including attendance at local and national meetings,

- Increase in demand for information from internal and external sources.

2.8 Associated Plans and Arrangements

The following associated plans detail the specific control strategies that may be activated for each type of exotic notifiable animal disease:

- Scottish Government Exotic Animal Disease Contingency Framework Plan
- Scottish Regional Resilience Partnerships' (RRP) Framework for Exotic Notifiable Animal Diseases Contingency Plan

The following generic plans may be activated to support the response to an animal disease outbreak:

- East of Scotland RRP Response Protocol
- East of Scotland RRP Public Communications Group Response Framework
- Fife LRP Generic Response Arrangements
- Fife LRP STAC Plan
- Fife LRP Recovery Plan
- Fife Council Incident Management Plan
- Fife Council Directorate Business Continuity Plans
- NHS Fife and Fife Council joint Health Protection plan 2020 - 2022
- Fife Council's Communicable Diseases Plan may be activated where the notifiable animal disease is 'zoonotic' and impacts on human health.
- Fife Council Protective Services Notifiable Animal Diseases Response Plan

3. Incident Management Arrangements

3.1 Activation

When APHA has been informed about a suspect notifiable disease, APHA will alert Protective Services by email.

If suspicion of disease is strong, a member of Protective Services may be invited to participate in an Amber Teleconference organised by Scottish Government. This meeting is the forum where any planned communications are discussed and reviewed with all UK administrations.

Following an amber teleconference APHA will notify the Council, via 2 routes: Protective Services and the Emergency Resilience Team.

An assessment will be carried out by Protective Services to consider the activation of this plan in discussion with the Duty Emergency Resilience Officer.

It is worth noting that certain aspects of the response will be led by other agencies, for example, NHS Fife will be responsible for tracing of human contacts (for zoonotic diseases), the disinfection of domestic premises are responsibility of the householder, and APHA arranges the disposal of animal carcases.

3.2 Council Incident Management Team (IMT)

On notification of any emergency, consideration should be given to establishing a Council Incident Management Team (IMT) to enhance the Council's co-ordinated response.

The objectives of the Incident Management Team will, in addition to those detailed in Fife Council's Incident Management Plan, include the following:

- Work with partners to contain the outbreak.
- Monitor and ensure compliance with restrictions.
- Assess, and manage, the impact of restrictions on the local community (including businesses).

3.2.1. Fife Council Key Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to the roles and responsibilities detailed in the Regional Resilience Partnership (RRP) Exotic Notifiable Animal Diseases Scottish Framework Plan and Fife Council's Incident Management Plan; the specific roles and responsibilities of Fife Council staff in relation to an animal disease incident are outlined in table 1 below. These will be carried out as required with Protective Services being the lead.

Table 1. Council Service roles and responsibilities during an animal disease outbreak impacting Fife.

Service	Role
Protective Services	Within Protective Services, the following teams have a key role in the response to any animal disease incident: • Public & Environmental Protection • Food & Workplace Safety This service will lead the council's response to an animal disease incident. Key tasks include: • Decide on the level of response required by the Council and advise on all environmental health aspects. • Chair and attend the Council IMT (if formed). • Attend birdtable meetings run by APHA or UK government. • Deploy a liaison officer to the Disease Policy Unit (as required). • Member of LRP STAC (if formed). • Link with NHS Fife, where NHS Fife IMT formed. • Serve restriction notices and secure infected or suspect premises (up-to-date notices can be found on Resilience Direct) • Assist Scottish Government in the issue of licences for movements. • Liaise with the Central Print Unit on the production of signage. • Produce and erect signs warning of disease at controlled zones/area boundaries (up-to-date signage can be found on Resilience Direct) to make the public aware of the incident, the area impacted and guidance to comply with. • Liaise with Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (FCCT), Roads & Transportation and Environment & Building Services in the monitoring and closure of public access routes and to install signage and monitor the use of footpaths. • Liaise with private landowners/managers, where required e.g., islands in the Forth under the legal jurisdiction of Fife Council during an outbreak of avian influenza outbreak. • Provide advice to the public, including businesses and neighbouring properties on restrictions; monitor compliance with legislation, investigate incidents on non-compliance and issue official notices. • Advise on environmental health aspects to all affected, both businesses and private properties.

Protective Services (continued)	• Dependent on the disease, arrange for the patrol of infected areas to ensure compliance with movement restrictions and/or closure of public right of access within control zones for pedestrians and vehicles.
	• Set up fixed cleansing and disinfection sites within infected areas and/or roadside points for vehicles leaving the control zones.
	• As specified in the Rabies Control Order 1974, Protective Services would seek help from other services to assist in seizing, collection and transportation of stray animals to detention pounds.
	• During an outbreak of rabies only, control of stray animals in an Infected Area, establish and administer stray animal pound(s) and arrange the destruction and disposal of unclaimed strays.
	• Liaise with APHA when they arrange the disposal of animal carcasses, especially to identify sites for disposal of animal carcasses that will not impact the environment, e.g., contamination of water in nearby rivers, burns or wells.
	• Identify and monitor municipal and private water supplies.
	• Liase with APHA in relation to the potential sharing of data from the Scottish Kept Bird Register.
	• Liaise with the Communications Team to advise when public messaging should be released to notify the community when protection and surveillance zones are lifted by Scottish Government
	• Link with SSPCA, RSPB and other organisations to share information on Social Media.
	• Any other tasks, which may vary and are not always a requirement of the legislation. E.g., clearing the snow on private land, requests usually come via a birdtable meeting or directly from an APHA field officer who will contact a manager in the relevant council service directly or via the ERT.
Business and Employability Services	• Member of Council IMT, if formed.
	• Assess economic impact of the incident on local businesses and tourism.
	• Consult with external stakeholders to discuss and agree appropriate strategies to mitigate the economic consequences of any outbreak.
	• Liaise with local businesses impacted by the incident.
Roads & Transportation Services	Key tasks of this service may include:
	• Road diversions and closure signage.

	• Identification of suitable buildings for detention pounds. • Allocation of vehicles adapted to carry stray animals. • Construction of any ad-hoc facilities for the detention of stray animals. • Placing signage on closure of public access routes.
Environment and Building Services	• Assist with collection of animal carcasses during an avian influenza outbreak, ensuring compliance with relevant health and safety requirements. • Assist with distribution of signage.

Any other representatives deemed necessary at the time of the response will also be included. See table 2 below.

Table 2. Roles of external agencies represented at Fife Council IMT during an animal disease outbreak.

Agency	Role
APHA	Lead agency for dealing with notifiable animal disease outbreaks and implementing animal disease control measures.
NHS Fife	Where infections have zoonotic potential, the public health response is the responsibility of the NHS board(s) in liaison with Public Health Scotland.
Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (FCCT)	Monitoring impacts on coastal and rural footpaths, supporting collection of carcasses in coastal/countryside areas, and supporting placement of signage in coastal/countryside areas.
SSPCA, RSPB and others	Work with Fife Council to support the response, including social media messaging.

3.3. Standdown

When the notification for stand down is received, arrangements for recovery as detailed in the Incident Management Plan will be put in place.

The lead will be handed over from APHA to the responsible local authority i.e. Fife Council.

The decision to 'stand down' the Incident Management Team will be noted during incident management meetings.

Appendices

Appendix A. Glossary

Term/Acronym	Definition
APHA	Animal and Plant Health Agency
CDCC	Central Disease Control Centre
DPU	Disease Policy Unit
DSG	Disease Strategy Group
FCCT	Fife Coast and Countryside Trust
FOB	Forward Operational Base
IMT	Incident Management Team
LRP	Local Resilience Partnership
NDCC	National Disease Control Centre
OCC	Outbreak Co-ordination Centre
PCG	Public Communications Group
PZ	Protection Zone
RP	Resilience Partnership
RRP	Regional Resilience Partnership
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SGoRR	Scottish Government Resilience Room
SSPCA	Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
STAC	Scientific and Technical Advice Cell
SZ	Surveillance Zone
TCZ	Temporary Control Zone

Appendix B: Exotic Animal Disease Outbreak Battle Rhythm

NB: These times are guides and some meetings may not need to take place, or times may be adjusted depending on the circumstances of the incident.

Time	Operational	Tactical	Strategic
0800 – 0830	• FOB Manager Briefing		• CVO strategic stock take • Disease Policy Unit (DPU) Team Brief (Scotland) • Helpline staff brief (Scotland)
0830 – 0900		• NDCC Bird-table	• FOB Bird Table
0900 – 0930	• FOB operational management teleconference	• NDCC communications meeting	
09:30-10:00			• Disease Strategy Group (DSG) (Scotland) • CVO (W)'s Daily Review (Wales)
1000 – 1100			• National Security Council (NSC) • Emergency Coordination Centre Wales (ECC(W)) Bird Table (Wales)
11:00 – 11:30			• Scottish Government Resilience Room (Officials) (SGORR(O)) (Scotland)
11:30 – 12:00			• Defra media briefing
12:00 – 12:30	• FOB Bird Table	• NDCC Bird Table	• DPU Team Brief (Scotland)
12:30 - 13:00			• ECC(W) Bird Table (Wales)
13:00 – 13:30	Management Information data reconciliation teleconference		
14:00 – 14:30	CDCC tactical-operational management teleconference		
15:00 – 16:00			• NSC (THRC)
17:00 – 17:30			• ECC(W) Bird Table (Wales)
17:30 – 18:00			• DPU Team Brief (Scotland)
18:00	Sit Rep submissions due		
18:00 – 18:30	FOB Bird Table	NDCC Bird Table	
21:00 approx.	Outbreak Co-ordination Group (OCG) report circulated providing a comprehensive situation report.		