

Milly Southworth

From: Torpoint Town Council <admin@torpointtowncouncil.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 October 2024 14:22
To: Milly Southworth
Subject: FW: Telecommunications Resilience Planning
Attachments: Telephony Outages Community Level Planning Workshop.ppsx

Harriet Bastin

Torpoint Town Council Support Officer

p. [01752 814165](tel:01752814165)
e. admin@torpointtowncouncil.gov.uk
w. www.torpointtowncouncil.gov.uk
a. 1-3 Buller Road Torpoint Cornwall PL11 2LD



From: Jamie Whitford-Robson <Jamie.Whitford-Robson@cornwall.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 October 2024 13:40
To: Emergency Management <emergencymanagement@cornwall.gov.uk>; Cllr Martyn Alvey <cclr.martyn.alvey@cornwall.gov.uk>
Subject: Telecommunications Resilience Planning

Information Classification: CONTROLLED

Sent on behalf of Cllr Martyn Alvey, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Cornwall Council

You may recall that in June I wrote to you all regarding the transition to Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP). This was undertaken as part of my Cabinet responsibility of public protection and emergency management, and the warning and informing element of that role.

Some concerns have been raised in communities regarding resilience as the new system will require your telephone to be connected to a broadband connection, which is then dependent on electrical power.

Some residential and business addresses will have a back-up battery, or even their own generator for emergencies. However, the majority will be solely dependent on electrical supply into their home. This means that in the event of electrical failure the main means of communication with a phone will be redundant.

A mobile phone may be an option. However, in Cornwall we do have some areas where the coverage is not strong, or the mobile mast in the vicinity does not have a back-up battery or generator.

In response to this, the Emergency Management Manager has been working with colleagues in the Forrabury Minster Parish to understand the risk at a community level. He has also been discussing the risk with the Government department for Science, Innovation and Technology to listen to the resilience measures that are being developed. In addition to this he is also working with multi-agency partners with the Local Resilience Forum to ensure the plan for responding to telecommunication outages is aligned with the advancement in technology.

However, there still remains a risk that within communities, and in particular rural areas, that a loss of power will impact the ability for residents and businesses to communicate outside of their area. For this reason, I have written to the Minister of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, the Right Honourable Sir Chris Bryant to highlight the concern we have and asked that the Government urgently undertakes a review of the following:

- The reliability and longevity of back-up VOIP phone batteries for vulnerable persons,
- How many telephone exchanges have back-up generators,
- The number of mobile telephone masts with no back-up generation
- An ability for the 999 service and other critical infrastructure in Cornwall to remain telecommunication operational at all times.

In the meantime, the Emergency Management Manager has developed the attached workshop that you can undertake in your area to develop a community level action plan.

Regards

Jamie Whitford-Robson (He/ Him) | Emergency Management Manager

Cornwall Council | Emergency Management

New County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY

Jamie.Whitford-Robson@cornwall.gov.uk | Tel: 01872 322222

www.cornwall.gov.uk | 'Onen hag oll'

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