

29 JULY 2021

PC5-21 | NATIONAL RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Summary

The Cabinet Office (CO) has recently launched a call for evidence into its development of a National Resilience Strategy. The COVID-19 pandemic has stretched the capacity of governments around the world and their resources. This has demonstrated the importance of a resilient society with well-developed plans and capabilities and response structures able to react appropriately to the unexpected.

A National Resilience Strategy is required to help frame such future responses and this needs to include strengthening Local Resilience Forums and examining in some depth how local communities can play their part. This call for evidence seeks public views regarding how best to frame a National Resilience Strategy supporting UK National Resilience and the objectives required for it. The main consultation document can be downloaded [here](#) . The consultation closes at the Cabinet Office on 27 September 2021.

Context

The government's stated aim for the National Resilience Strategy is to make the UK the most resilient nation. In delivering this vision, the government will be guided by a series of core principles:

- o We should understand the risks we face, including the impacts they could have, and our exposure to them.
- o We should invest in preparation to better prevent, mitigate and recover from risks.
- o We should energise and empower everyone who can make a contribution.

The government's vision for 2030 is to have a strengthened ability to assess and understand the risks we face. The national suite of systems, infrastructure and capabilities (including international systems) for managing those risks should become more proactive, adaptable and responsive; and there should be fewer regional inequalities in resilience terms.

As a result, the government wants our local communities, businesses, and the UK as a whole, to be more cohesive, resistant to shocks and stresses, and ultimately more adaptable to future threats and challenges.

Questions in this Call for Evidence focus on six broad thematic areas:

- Risk and Resilience: Strengthening our ability to manage an evolving risk landscape depends on improving our ability to both predict and adapt to identified and unexpected challenges.
- Responsibilities and Accountability: It is fundamentally important that all those involved in building resilience have a clear understanding of when, where and how to apply tools, processes and relationships effectively.
- Partnerships: Resilience is not solely a government or public sector responsibility. Other parts of society play an essential role in building our collective resilience.
- Community: A whole-of-society approach will be central to strengthening the UK's resilience, with a revived effort to inform and empower all parts of society who can make a contribution.
- Investment: The challenge of where to place investment in the risk cycle is one that affects the public and private sectors alike. As government, individuals and businesses, we face choices around what, and how much, to invest.
- Resilience in an Interconnected World: UK resilience is closely entwined with the wider global context. Challenges and opportunities are frequently experienced on a global scale.

NALC's current policy positions

NALC will be responding to this call for evidence given many local (parish and town) councils are already working with partners and supporting the community. We would also like to gather examples of resilience strategies from local councils or county associations to submit as part of our response.

Consultation Questions

The main consultation questions NALC will be responding to in this consultation are as below and NALC seeks the views of county associations and member councils in response to these questions to help inform its own submission to MHCLG:

Questions on Vision and Principles:

1. Do you agree with the proposed vision of the Resilience Strategy? Is there anything you would add, amend, or remove?

2. Do you agree with the principles laid out for the strategy? Is there anything you would add, amend, or remove?

Risk and Resilience:

1. Is there more that the government can do to assess risk at the national and local levels? If so, what?

2. Is there more that the government can do to communicate about risk and risk appetite with organisations and individuals? If so, what?

3. How could the government make risk assessment and data more accessible by frontline personnel in an emergency?

4. How does your organisation assess risks around unlikely or extreme events, when there is limited or no data?

5. How could the current local risk assessment process, managed through Local Resilience Forums, be strengthened to help local partners?

Responsibilities and Accountability:

1. Do you think that the current division of resilience responsibilities between Central Government, the Devolved Administrations, local government and local responders is correct? If not, why?

2. How can the UK Central Government, DAs, local and regional forms of government and local responders better collaborate on resilience?

3. What role, if any, should the UK Central government have in assuring that local areas are effectively carrying out their resilience responsibilities, whilst also respecting local responsibilities?

Partnerships:

Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) owners and operators:

1. Do you think that the resilience of CNI can be further improved? If so, how?

2. Do you think the introduction of appropriate statutory resilience standards would improve the security and resilience of CNI operators? Why? a. How would such standards define the necessary levels of service provision? b. Are there any risks associated with implementing such standards?

3. What do you think is the most effective way to test and assure the resilience of CNI? a. To what extent do you think regulators should play a role in testing the resilience of CNI systems and operators?

4. During an emergency, what do you think should be the role of the operators of CNI in ensuring continued provision of essential services (e.g. water, electricity, public transport)? a. How can the government support CNI owners or operators during an emergency?

Wider critical sectors

5. What role, if any, does your business or sector play in national resilience?

6. What are the risks that your business is most concerned about?

7. What information, tools or guidance could the government provide to help your business better assess or prepare for these types of risk?

8. What is your business' approach to building resilience in any key supply chains that your business is part of?

9. How useful have vehicles such as Local Enterprise Partnerships, Growth Hubs and other local business support services been strengthening your organisations' resilience? Why?

Academic and research organisations

10. What can the government do to make collaboration between academic and research organisations more effective?

11. Are there areas where the role of research in building national resilience can be expanded?

Community and local resilience:

1. Do you agree that everyone has a part to play in improving the UK's resilience? If not, why not?

2. Do you understand the types of emergencies that might impact you and other members of your community? a. What would help you better understand the risks that could affect your community? b. Do you know where to access information about emergencies that could affect you?

3. Have you considered the actions you might take to prepare for or during an emergency? a. What has motivated you to plan or make preparations? b. What has stopped you from planning or making preparations? c. What would help you to be able to make a plan or prepare?

4. Have recent emergencies (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic, flooding, terrorist attacks) made you think differently about risks or changed the way you prepare for emergencies?

5. Are there any barriers in accessing local volunteering schemes or finding community groups that discuss local emergency planning? If so, what are the barriers?

Investment:

1. How does your organisation invest in your approach to the risks outlined in this document? Is your investment focussed on particular stages of the risk lifecycle (for example, on prevention)?

2. Has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the way your organisation is investing, or will invest, in preparing for these risks? If so, how?

3. Are there models of successful resilience investment? If so, to what extent could they be adopted in the UK?

4. Are there examples of where investment (whether by the government, by businesses or by individuals) has driven improvements in resilience?

Resilience in an Interconnected World:

1. Where do you see the UK's resilience strengths?

2. Are there any approaches taken by other countries to resilience that you think the UK could learn from?

3. Which of the UK's international relationships and programmes do you think are most important to the UK's resilience?

4. What international risks have the greatest impact on UK resilience?

5. How can the UK encourage international partners to build resilience to global risks?

Your evidence

Please email your responses to this consultation to chris.borg@nalc.gov.uk by 17.00 on Friday 10 September, 2021 along with any examples of local resilience

strategies. County associations are asked to forward this briefing onto all member councils in their area.

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