

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Public Protection Policy Development and Review Panel

Date 17 January 2017

Report of: Head of Parking and Enforcement

Subject: **EMERGENCY PLANNING**

SUMMARY

This report provides an update in respect of the work that has been undertaken by the Council to enable it to effectively respond to emergencies. It highlights the arrangements that are in place, the training and exercises that have been undertaken to test our emergency planning arrangements. The report is provided as a source of information and evidence to demonstrate that the Council are satisfying its responsibilities and duties under the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act.

RECOMMENDATION

Members' views and comments are sought on the service that is provided prior to it being reported to the Executive as a record/update of the work that has been undertaken to enhance the Council's emergency response capability.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) has considerable implications for local authorities as it means that civil protection and resilience is now a statutory responsibility for all local authorities.
2. The Council has a recognised role in responding to emergency situations and supporting the emergency services and the Council's Emergency Plan sets out how it will respond, and support the emergency services, in the event of an emergency incident. This could include the setting up of a control centre to co-ordinate the Council's response, as well as the provision of rest centres. The Plan has been developed in association with Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit.

OBJECTIVES OF THE EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE

3. The Council's objectives in delivering an emergency planning function are:
 - To protect and safeguard the local community and its environment;
 - To provide a call out, management and communication control system that will enable the Council to provide an effective response to an emergency;
 - To put measures in place that will assist in business continuity and service delivery in the event of an emergency.
 - To comply with the Statutory duties of a Category 1 Responder, as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING AND EMERGENCY PLANNING

4. The Act places specific duties upon the Council to demonstrate that it has robust arrangements in place to provide the assurance that is required for both Business Continuity and Emergency Planning.
5. The Council's responsibilities in respect of Business Continuity Planning are to ensure it has prepared plans in place as far as is reasonably possible in order to deliver its critical services/functions in the event of a disruption.
6. This report provides an update in respect of the Council's Emergency Planning arrangements and highlights the work that has been undertaken to date.

THE COUNCIL'S EMERGENCY PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS - UPDATE

7. The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) established a statutory framework for civil protection at the local level. This, together with accompanying guidance and regulations, sets out clear expectations and responsibilities for front line responders at the local level to ensure that they are prepared to deal effectively with the full range of emergencies from localised incidents through to catastrophic emergencies.

8. The CCA divides local responders into two categories under the Act; both Hampshire County Council and Fareham Council, together with all other local authorities in the country, are “Category 1 responders” (the same category as the Police and Fire and Rescue services fall into).
9. There is a statutory duty to comply with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act, regulations and guidance in order for the Council to be prepared to deal effectively with emergency situations.

Key duties are:

- Assess local risks and use this to inform emergency planning;
 - Put in place emergency plans;
 - Put in place business continuity management arrangements;
 - Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency;
 - Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination;
 - Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency; and
 - Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (Local Authorities only).
10. In addition, there is also a necessity to work with partner organisations as part of the Local Resilience Forum.
 11. All district Councils in Hampshire, other than Eastleigh Borough Council, have entered into a Service Level Agreement with Hampshire County Council to undertake some of these responsibilities, which enables the Council to meet its statutory duties.
 12. The Emergency Planning Service contributes to the corporate objective of making Fareham **a safe and healthy place to live and work**, which itself contributes to local people being confident that sound measures are in place to ensure the health and safety of people who live, work in or visit the Borough.
 13. The Council has, over recent years, undertaken a complete review of the emergency planning arrangements, involved more employees in the process and the roles that need to be undertaken on aspects of emergency planning and have introduced new procedures, plans and actions based on the needs of the Council and likely requests and demands that may be made of the Council in an emergency. These are continually being reviewed.

14. The Emergency Plan is reviewed annually. It is on the Council's intranet and all key personnel have hard copies. A fundamental review of the plan last took place in August 2015 and this meets the requirements of the CCA.
15. The Service Level Agreement (SLA) developed in conjunction with other Hampshire District Councils, where Hampshire County Council takes the lead, has been effective in enabling the Council to meet its emergency planning duties as required by the CCA. The agreements are reviewed on a three yearly basis and the current agreement took effect from 1 April 2015. The cost to the Council is £20,225 per year, this includes £886.00 per annum for the LRF secretariat function. Given the work undertaken on Emergency Planning in the Council and the level of support that has been obtained to date from the County through the SLA, it has to date delivered value for money in the improvements and enhancements that have been delivered. However it is important that this is kept under review.

HAMPSHIRE LOCAL RESILIENCE FORUM (LRF)

16. Hampshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), consists of representatives from emergency services, local authorities and any other organisations who would be involved in an emergency. The role of the LRF is to ensure that all of these organisations work together to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. Fareham's Chief Executive represents all the district councils on this group.
17. The LRF is responsible for the development; maintenance and testing of plans and procedures for major emergencies and incidents to ensure all of the organisations are prepared to respond to a major incident in the county. This joined up approach helps to ensure the best possible service for people living in Hampshire and the effective delivery of the duties under the Civil Contingencies Act.
18. There is also an LRF Local Authority Group made up of the district council's emergency planning officers that meet with the County to ensure the service is being delivered in line with the SLA. In addition Fareham, Gosport, Havant, East Hants and the New Forest together with the unitary authority of Portsmouth City Council have developed a Southern sub group. This is facilitated and meets on a 6 monthly basis.
19. There is one dedicated HCC Emergency Planning Officer that works with the five district councils of the sub group. The fact that Portsmouth is part of the group lends itself to better co-ordination and integration of the emergency planning work. The group members work together to ensure consistency, exchange of information and to ensure performance of HCC against the standards within the SLA.

EMERGENCY CONTROL CENTRE (ECC)

20. The Emergency Control Centre is located within the meeting rooms on floor 8 of

the civic offices. Exercises and testing of the Emergency Control Centre have taken place over the years as well as being set up to respond to real time incidents and have demonstrated that adequate arrangements are in place that would enable the Council to provide an effective response in an emergency.

21. The council depot at Broadcut can be used as an Emergency control centre should the civic offices become unavailable, a second exchange has been provided that in essence will allow the Council's 236100 number to be transferred and redirected from the Civic Offices to the Depot. This not only provides the added flexibility of using the Depot as part of the business continuity arrangements but also provides the required back-up as part of the emergency planning arrangements.

TRAINING

22. Using the Fareham Borough Council Emergency Response Plan as the guiding document, all of the FBC staff who have emergency response roles listed in that plan have received a number of training sessions on their roles, such as Call Operator, Logger, Plotter, Supervisor. Training has also been run out to other specialist emergency response staff, such as Incident Liaison Officers, Environmental Health Officers and Housing Officers.
23. To maintain the level of preparedness required in order to respond to an emergency situation the Council has a continuous programme of training for everyone involved with emergency planning. This is delivered by the HCC Emergency Planning Officers through the Service Level Agreement the Council has in place with them.
24. More volunteers have also joined the existing team, these new volunteers have also had training in various roles.
25. Members' training sessions have also been held on Emergency Planning, including the role of Members. The next members training session to be held will be December 2016.

REST CENTRES

26. In the event that an incident requires the evacuation of the local population, HCC has ensured that robust plans and procedures are in place to be able to support them, day or night. There are 6 Prepared Rest Centres in the Borough, Portchester Community Centre, Ferneham Hall, Fareham Leisure Centre, Crofton Community Centre, Locks Heath Community Centre and the new Holly Hill Leisure Centre. The staff of these centres have been trained in what their duties are, and how to react when their buildings are taken over during an incident. The rest centres have been risk assessed and an emergency equipment box is available in each centre. This is checked by HCC Emergency Planning Officers as part of their audits of the facilities.
27. During an incident much needed support would be required from the voluntary sector and, to aid this support, a Voluntary Sector Welfare Group has been established for the Fareham area.

28. The overall management of the Prepared Rest Centres is taken on by staff from HCC Adult and Children's Services (ASSIST). The ASSIST staff members in the FBC area have attended training sessions on the support and management of displaced persons.
29. Training for the HCC ASSIST team (Adult & Children's Services) is an ongoing process and is undertaken by HCC Emergency Planning Officers. With the current pressures on Hampshire County Council to cut back, the EPU's current list of ASSIST volunteers is continually being reviewed, as staff members leave or are relocated to other areas. The EPU are conducting a continual recruitment drive to ensure that the level of staffing required is maintained and is fit for purpose.

ANNUAL FBC EMERGENCY PLANNING EXERCISE

30. This year's exercise was arranged and facilitated by the HCC Emergency Planning Unit. The aim of the exercise was to test the FBC Emergency Response Tactical Command and Control System, it also tested the councils recovery function, as this function is seen as fundamental part of getting those affected by an emergency back to normality as soon as possible, an emergency not only affects residents and businesses, it also affects visitors to the Borough. This exercise was a test of the decision and actions made within the Tactical Management Team, which then led to the recovery phase with the Chief Executives Management Team being tested on how best to recover from a major emergency within the Borough.
31. The scenario involved a HGV tanker crash into the railway bridge structure at the Delme roundabout, the tanker was carrying Bromine which had leaked, this meant that a 200M cordon was put around the crash site affecting all major roads into and out of the town centre, it also had a knock on effect on the M27 and the rail line which would have had to have been closed if this happened for real.
32. Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit conducted a de brief at the conclusion of the exercise and concluded that the aim of the exercise had been met and all officers involved in the exercise were more than capable of doing the job if there were a real incident. Like most exercises there may be recommendations and actions that would enhance our arrangements and these will be looked at and progressed once the final report is received.
33. Overall HCC were satisfied that Fareham Borough Council could provide an effective team to respond to a real incident.

RISK ASSESSMENT

34. The testing and exercising of the plan and the training of those who have key roles to play is important in giving the reassurance that we can effectively respond to an emergency if required.
35. It is important the Council's Emergency Response Plan is regularly tested and the officers undertaking specific roles are provided with the necessary training to undertake their specific duties effectively.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

36. The cost of this service can be met from existing budgets.

CONCLUSION

37. Over the last 12 months the emergency response capability of Fareham Borough Council has been maintained. This has been achieved through the provision of a comprehensive training schedule put in place in conjunction with the HCC Emergency Planning Unit. This training and exercising is undertaken using the Council's Emergency Response Plan. The Plan and the arrangements and procedures are kept under review and these are covered by the regular training and exercising in order that we can be satisfied that our arrangements meet the Council's statutory responsibilities and that this is being delivered in accordance with the terms of the Service Level Agreement.
38. As in previous years the work undertaken by Council officers in conjunction with officers from HCC Emergency Planning Unit in reviewing and developing arrangements in order to provide an effective response to an emergency, together with the comprehensive training that has been supplied has provided a solid base, from which the Council will be more than capable of responding to any incident.
39. The programme of continued training, exercising and reviewing our arrangements will be maintained in order to maintain the standard of response at a good level.

Background Papers:

None

Reference Papers:

None

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Kevin Wright (Ext 4359)