

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### **Report to Public Protection Policy Development and Review Panel**

**Date**                    **23 July 2013**

**Report of:**            **Director of Regulatory and Democratic Services**

**Subject:**              **EMERGENCY PLANNING - ANNUAL REPORT**

#### **SUMMARY**

This report provides an annual 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 the Council's emergency planning arrangements as well as reference to some of the incidents that the Council has responded to. The annual report is provided as a source of information and evidence to demonstrate that the Council is 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. All Departments' business continuity plans are being updated to reflect any changes that have occurred; this includes changes in officers.
7. 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**

8. 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.

9. 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).
10. 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).
11. In addition, there is also a necessity to work with partner organisations as part of the Local Resilience Forum.
  12. 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.
  13. 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.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE OBJECTIVE

### To Protect and Safeguard

14. To protect and safeguard the local community and its environment by providing a call out, management and communication control system.

#### Processes

- **Emergency Plans** To have arrangements in place that through the Council's Emergency Plan will enable the organisation to respond to an incident affecting the local community.
- **Emergency Service** To support and assist the Emergency Services.
- **Risk Assessments** Assess local risks and use the information to inform the emergency planning process (covered by the Community Risk Register).
- **Test & Review** To test and review the Emergency Plan that will allow the organisation to respond to emergency situations in an integrated and co-ordinated way. To undertake review exercises to test the plan.
- **Response** The establishment of an Emergency Management Team and Emergency Control Centre in response to an emergency in order to co-ordinate the Borough Council's response / support.
- **Training** To identify personnel who would be prepared to undertake key roles in responding to an emergency and in liaison with other agencies. To undertake regular training of those undertaking key roles within an emergency.
- **Rest Centres** The provision and maintenance of five emergency rest centres throughout the Borough.
- **Public Information** To 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.
- **Business Continuity Plans** To put measures in place that will assist in business continuity and service delivery in the event of an emergency. To provide advice and assistance to businesses and the voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

15. 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.

16. The Emergency Plan is reviewed annually. It is on the Council's internet and intranet and all key personnel have hard copies. A fundamental review of the plan last took place in September 2008 and this meets the requirements of the CCA. This also included the development of Action Cards/Sheets for specific roles and has since been further enhanced to take account of improvements identified during training exercises. Working with the Emergency Planning Unit of HCC, the Borough Council's Emergency Plan has been reviewed and a new version (version 2) was issued in August 2011, there have been no major amendments since this last review. The updates and revisions are made to make sure these reflect new procedures and provide more robust measures and arrangements that enable the Council to provide an effective response.
17. 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 2012. The cost to the Council for this service in 2013/14 is £18,900. 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)**

18. Hampshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) consists of representatives from the 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.
19. 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.
20. 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 at Fareham Civic Offices on a quarterly basis.
21. There are two dedicated HCC Emergency Planning Officers that work 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.

### **Risk Assessments**

22. As part of the statutory responsibility within Emergency Planning, HCC have been reviewing how they communicate local risks to District Councils. Whilst HCC are all aware of the "wide area" risks within Hampshire (contained within the HIOW LRF Community Risk Register, such as flooding and pandemic flu) there are smaller incidents requiring local authority support that need to be communicated and shared for training purposes.
23. The HIOW LRF Community Risk Register (CRR) is the main driver for all Emergency Planning, Training and Exercising in Hampshire. Back in 2005, when the District Risk Registers were first developed, the CRR had not been completed - therefore the District Risk Registers filled that gap. Whilst the District Risk Registers aimed to identify local sites within each of the seven hazard categories, it is only really the first section (Industrial Accident & Environmental Pollution) that could provide any local value. The remaining six sections have generic mitigating plans in place and planning takes place at an LRF level.
24. Whilst incidents such as those involving acetylene will often require a generic response from us (evacuation; road closure, warning & informing), there are some that may involve a different element of response - such as tyre recycling sites, refrigeration plants etc. We are always keen to identify sites (where they are known) to assist us in preparing the district councils in how they would contribute towards that response supporting our emergency service colleagues.
25. In October 2012, a multi agency forum was facilitated by HCC Emergency Planning and HFRS to discuss how we could pro-actively use the Site Specific Risk Information Data (SSRI) that HFRS maintains. A joint Fareham and Gosport approach enabled joint services such as Environmental Health and Building Control to be represented. Data ranked as high or very high was shared with all those who attended (Building Control, Environmental Health, Licensing, Hampshire Police) which enabled them to gain a specialised overview of how their service would contribute to a potential localised incident. The sharing of information also enabled HFRS colleagues to update SSRI information during this session. The data gained from this forum will be used to influence exercises and training as well as provide briefings for senior managers on risks within the Borough. This risk assessment process will be repeated annually.

### **Emergency Control Centre (ECC)**

26. Following further changes to the layout of the civic offices and changes in the status of accommodation needs, The Emergency Control Centre has reverted back to its original place on floor eight of the civic offices, the ECC is set up on floor eight using the Vannes/Pulheim and Collingwood rooms, when there is a requirement to set up the ECC, facilities and officers who are responsible for emergency planning functions set up the room to enable it to be used, this has

been tested and works well.

27. If there were to be an incident involving the civic offices which negates the use of floor eight, arrangements are in place for the ECC to be set up at the depot in Broadcut.

### **Training**

28. To maintain the level of preparedness required by Fareham Borough Council a programme of continuation training was carried out in 2012/13, using the FBC 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, Loggist, Plotter, Supervisor. Training has also been given to other specialist emergency response staff, such as Liaison Officers, Environmental Health Officers and Housing Officers.
- **Incident Liaison Officer and Environmental Health Officer Training -** Joint training was provided in October 2012 for Incident Liaison Officers and Environmental Health Officers. It was run in conjunction with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and held at their training headquarters in Eastleigh. It was a full days training, which included lectures on command and control; hazardous material incidents; the role of the ILO and EHO at incidents; the Urban Search and Rescue Team as well as an input from Hampshire Constabulary on Incident Scene Management. The day was very well received by all those that attended –further training is being planned for spring / summer 2013.
  - **Loggist Training –** As a result of a number of exercises and incidents, it was recommended that further training be given to those that would support the emergency response as loggists for the Tactical Management Team during incidents. A training package was produced using best practice principles and theoretical models and was delivered in a number of sessions to loggists from FBC. The training was a three hour session that was designed to be interactive and enjoyable. The training was well received and all participants found it rewarding. It is evident from recent incidents and exercises that the loggist training is being implemented, with staff knowing and undertaking the role to a higher standard.
  - **Emergency Control Centre (ECC) Training –** Throughout 2012/13 there have been numerous training sessions focussing on the different roles and also the set up and establishment of the ECC. This has included Plotters, Call Operators, Loggists, Supervisors, Link Officers and Runners. This ensured that all staff involved within the operation of the ECC were all well trained and equipped for their roles.
  - **Media Training –** In June 2012, HCC EPU worked in partnership with Escott Hunt Consultants to provide a full days training focussing on the role of the media officer in an incident. It focussed on the responsibilities of the Local Authority for Warning and Informing – a duty of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004; how to produce media releases; the importance of

social media and how to brief spokespeople for a press conference. The consultants provided an excellent, worthwhile and fun day for all delegates.

- **Specialist Role Training** – Specific training for roles such as Elected Members; Customer Services Staff; Senior Managers and Housing Staff was undertaken throughout the training year. This training ensured that specialist staff, officers and members were aware of Fareham Borough Council's role in a civil emergency and their roles within it. The training focussed on the duties under the CCA 2004; different types of incidents and various scenario based exercises. Sessions were held specifically for Senior Managers to look at tactical incident management and how to make justifiable and defensible decisions.

### **Welfare and Rest Centres**

29. In the event that an incident requires the evacuation of the local population Fareham Borough Council have five Prepared Rest Centres (PRC) all have had their annual risk assessments and Health and Safety inspections carried out, and training has been provided to all buildings management teams.
30. Training for the HCC ASSIST team (Adult & Children's Services) is ongoing with 80% of the volunteers trained. The 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 / quality of staffing required is maintained and is fit for purpose.
31. Titchfield Community Centre is a new PRC that is now fully operational with the staff fully supportive of the use of the centre as a PRC. A live exercise to test the response of the buildings staff; HCC ASSIST and the Voluntary Sector was carried out at Titchfield Community Centre on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2012. The exercise was very well attended, and Fareham College Uniformed Public Services Course provided students to play the role of the evacuees. FBC Housing Staff also attended to assist with the exercise and to see firsthand the role of FBC at a Prepared Rest Centre.
32. The new Portchester Community Centre is now running as a PRC. All staff at the centre were trained in February 2013, with continuous training being provided in 2013/2014 to new staff, with an exercise planned to take place at the centre in 2013/14.
33. In 2012, two Prepared Rest Centres were used to support incidents within the Fareham BC area.
  - **Portchester Community Centre:** 3 vulnerable evacuees were accommodated at the previous Community Centre until it was safe for them to return home after an acetylene cylinder incident.
  - **Fareham Leisure Centre** supported residents evacuated as a result of the River Wallington flooding in December 2012. The PRC was established to accommodate those affected by the floods, but only a small number attended.



During both incidents staff at both centres were positive, helpful and supportive and provided a great overall response. This demonstrates the importance of continual training and support of the Borough and the County to PRCs and their staff.

34. An annual Joint PRC Welfare Meeting (Fareham, Gosport & Havant) was held on 31st January at Havant Borough Council with attendees from Gosport Borough Council, Fareham Borough Council, Havant Borough Council, St John Ambulance, Salvation Army and a number of the PRCs. This was a good forum to discuss changes to PRCs, identify lessons learnt and highlight any future exercises.

### **Annual FBC Emergency Planning Exercise**

35. In December 2012, the annual Emergency Control Centre exercise was held. The aim of the exercise was to test the emergency response arrangements in place, including business continuity; the management and information flow around the ECC; tactical management decisions / rationale as well as the welfare of staff, to ensure that the emergency response organisation was fit for purpose. The scenarios centred around two deliberate threats made within the borough. This required the management team to deal with "multiple incidents" and the demands made on them by the Emergency Services.
36. The exercise was the first exercise since the change of location of the ECC from floor 1 to the floor 8 committee rooms. The new room layout was a great success and well received by all staff using it. Overall the exercise went very well and achieved all objectives.
37. The exercise was co-ordinated by Hampshire Council Emergency Planning Officers, on completion of the exercise a hot debrief was carried out and this was followed by a more detailed report on the outcome of the exercise, there were recommendations contained within the final report and an action plan.
38. The final report that was received from HCC was very complimentary on how the exercise went, the most important point of note in the report was the fact that HCC Emergency Planning Unit state that " FBC are well equipped and prepared for an emergency within the Borough requiring Local Authority support".

### **Incident 19 September 2012 - 2.5KG Acetylene cylinder garage/house fire Portchester**

39. This incident was reported at around 0530 on 19<sup>th</sup> September, the fire started in a garage next to the house, and quickly engulfed the garage and entered part of the property. On arrival HFRS were informed that there was a 2.5KG acetylene cylinder contained within the garage. HFRS immediately put a cordon of around 100m of the scene. This was later reduced to a more manageable 25 metres once the immediate danger had been averted.
40. Nearby houses were evacuated, most occupants went to friends houses or

neighbours, however there were 3 residents that were identified as vulnerable, these residents were taken to Portchester Community Centre where the rest centre had been opened.

41. At approximately 11am after HFRS were happy that there was no further danger from the acetylene cylinder, occupants were allowed back into their properties.

#### **Incident 20 December 2012 - Severe Flood Warning River Wallington & Flooding in Titchfield**

42. The problem was caused by heavy rain and the rising water level of the River Wallington flowing into Fareham Creek that also coincided with a high tide. As a response to the severe flood risk at Wallington, Fareham Borough Council put into place its emergency response plan. As a result the Council: Opened its Emergency Control Centre within the civic offices through which the Borough Council's response was co-ordinated.
43. Resources were deployed to support the emergency services in response to the flooding incident at Wallington and also in Titchfield where Liaison Officers were sent to both areas to identify local need and response.
44. The Council worked closely with HCC officers (both Emergency Planning and Highways), Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Police and the Environment Agency. One of the Council's Emergency Rest Centres was opened (Fareham Leisure Centre) and whilst only 3 people elected to be evacuated and use the facility it demonstrated that our arrangements and preparations kicked in to accommodate the potential for more evacuees if the situation worsened.
45. Local media updates were provided through the Council's web pages and social media to ensure local residents were kept informed of the situation and actions taken.
46. In co-ordination with HCC, the Council provided over 600 sandbags to the Wallington and Titchfield areas threatened by the flooding.
47. The recently installed property defences within Wallington proved their worth and the flood alerts issued by the Environment Agency meant that these were all put in place to protect properties.
48. As river levels rose a concern was raised about a crack in the River Wallington defence wall and this was closely monitored by the Environment Agency engineers and as a precaution 8 one ton bags of ballast were been placed to reinforce and strengthen the wall.
49. Roads within the area were closed and a major supermarket closed due to vehicles not being able to access or egress the site.
50. The road diversions and action of the emergency services supported by Fareham Borough Council and HCC kept disruption to a minimum and sections

of road were gradually reopened as the flooding subsided.

51. As the Council's depot from which its refuse collection and street cleansing services operate had to be evacuated due to the closure of roads leading to the facility, the Council instigated its business continuity plans and alternative arrangements were put in place for the storage and parking of refuse collection and depot vehicles and temporary relocation of its operational base from the depot to the civic offices. This meant that there was no disruption to the refuse / recycling collection service, throughout the incident.
52. The Council's Emergency Control Centre liaised with the County's Adverse Weather Centre that had been set up in order to monitor the impact of the weather during the day and respond accordingly. River levels dropped and were closely monitored at the 16:30 high tide but there was no further flooding and the next high tide was closely monitored at 05:13 the next morning when officers again opened the Council's Emergency Centre.
53. I think the above scenario highlights the importance of how close co-operation between all the agencies and examples of where local communities take a proactive approach pays off.
54. Whenever there is an incident within Fareham, a debrief will take place to look at the response from FBC and other partner agencies, where it is identified that changes need to be made to a particular response, an action plan is put in place to ensure these changes are carried out.

#### **TRAINING PROGRAMME**

55. 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.
56. 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.
57. A training plan has been put together for 2013/14 which will include all officers already mentioned within the emergency plan and all new volunteers.

#### **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

58. As previously reported A Service Level Agreement was developed and agreed that set out what the districts would require the County to provide, on their behalf, to satisfy their emergency planning responsibilities as required by the Act. Hampshire County Council charges each district authority to provide this service. The current annual cost of this for Fareham as highlighted earlier is £18,900 for 2013/14.
59. Under these arrangements, the County Council become a Category 1

responder with lead responsibility. The districts become Category 1 responders without lead responsibility, but still retained their statutory responsibility under the Act, the work being undertaken by the County on behalf of the districts through the Service Level Agreement.

60. HCC are also responsible for ensuring that all other plans that are used within the emergency planning process are distributed and up to date.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

61. The cost of this service and the new agreement can be met within the existing budget.

### **CONCLUSION**

62. 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.
63. Joint working with HFRS has also been invaluable to ensure that everyone is aware of each other's responsibilities and the chain of command that everyone should follow. As previously mentioned under training above, HFRS facilitated training at the HFRS HQ in Eastleigh and officers who attended found this training to be invaluable, further training at HFRS HQ is planned for later in 2013.
64. 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.
65. 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).