

5th November 2013**Agenda Item: 10****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE
AND PUBLIC PROTECTION****UPDATE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND REGISTRATION SERVICES****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on recent key activities and events in the work of the Emergency Planning Team and of Registration and Celebratory Services and approval the introduction of a pilot Ceremony Rehearsals Service.

Information and Advice**Emergency Management**Exercise Diamond 3

2. A major, multi-agency emergency response exercise was held on 19 September 2013, with the overall aim of testing the response to a supposed widespread flooding event. This was done to validate the current procedures and response plans for Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. The first part of the event tested operational response to flooding in the Gunthorpe and North Leverton areas of the County and the Old Basford area of the City. This was followed by a second phase to test 'Tactical Coordination Group' and Multi-agency Coordination Centre' arrangements.
3. During the early phase of the exercise, localised fluvial and surface water flooding issues were considered, along with the risk of further widespread flooding. Participants were required to identify and implement the appropriate command and control structure to effectively deal with this scale of flooding. This ensured that relevant emergency plans are known and practiced by all, and that pre-planning arrangements are in place. Participants in the later phase of the event were required to identify and prioritise the resources required to enable an effective operation response. These key strands of the exercise provided validation of various Local Resilience Forum (LRF) emergency plans including the 'Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Flood Response Plan', 'Community Resilience Plan' and 'Telecommunications Plan'.
4. A representative from the Emergency Planning Team contributed to the planning and delivery of the exercise, and the County Council was well represented with participants for both parts of the event. Emergency Planning Officers and

Highways managers were involved in the early phase of the exercise, and then for the second phase the Council was represented by a Service Director and two Group Managers. Other principle agencies involved included the Police, Fire & Rescue, Environment Agency, District and Borough Councils. Learning points from the exercise will be reported to the Local Resilience Forum for inclusion in the next revision of the emergency plans involved.

Flood Community Engagement Events

5. As previously reported, significant flooding occurred across Nottinghamshire during the late afternoon of Tuesday 23 July, when a long period of dry weather ended abruptly with violent thunder storms. Heavy rainfall caused surface water flooding and some fluvial flooding. The areas most affected were Southwell, Lowdham, Thurgarton, Hucknall, East Bridgford and Arnold. Once the immediate emergency response activities were completed, the Recovery Coordinating Group turned its attention towards arranging a set of public engagement events. At time of writing, events have been held in Thurgarton, Southwell, Lowdham and Broxtowe, and a further event is planned in Ashfield.
6. The Emergency Planning Team's part in these events has been to provide information and advice on individual and community resilience to emergencies. This has been provided in close concert with Highways colleagues whose involvement has been in respect of the County Council's 'Lead Local Flood Authority' duties under the 'Flood and Water Management Act (2010).'
7. In Southwell, the Emergency Planning Team has provided advice and support to a Southwell Community Emergency Planning Group, which has arisen as a specific strand of work from the new Southwell Flood Forum.

Safety at Sports Grounds

8. A match-day safety inspection was carried out at the league fixture Nottingham Forest and Derby County on 28 September, which is one of the highest profile, and potentially volatile fixtures of the season for Nottingham Forest. The inspection noted that safety was managed well, and there were relatively few issues for the club's Safety Officer to deal with at the ground (although there were ten arrests arising from a confrontation between rival supporters in Trowell later in the day). This fixture was the first time that the new arrangements for the accommodation of visiting supporters were in place for a local derby. There were also a reduced number of visiting supporters (an allocation of 2000 tickets compared to 4500 for the equivalent fixture last season). This, along with the early kick off time of 12.15pm, contributed to a lower number of incidents.
9. An inspection took place at Mansfield Town's Johnstones' Paints Trophy fixture at home against Chesterfield on 08 October. A weekday match in the early stages of a cup competition would normally attract only a fraction of the club's usual home crowd; however there is a long standing and fierce rivalry between the two clubs, which have not been in the same league for 5 years. Consequently, the crowd on this occasion was 4,837. Overall the improvement in safety

management which has been seen in recent months was sustained, and the match passed without significant incident.

10. Also in relation to Mansfield Town Football Club, the club has applied for and has been granted a special Safety Certificate for a fireworks display on 03 November 2013. A certificate for the event was issued with a capacity of 2,815 following consultation with the Safety Advisory Group for the ground.

Exercise 'Gravitas', 23-27 September

11. During September, Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle and Councillor Alice Grice observed Exercise Gravitas, which was a police-led test of the Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) process within an emergency mortuary facility.
12. In a mass fatalities incident, such as a train derailment or a terrorist bombing, the Local Authority in whose area the incident occurred is responsible for funding and setting up an emergency mortuary. The police DVI teams and health service pathologists operate their processes within this facility. In a genuine incident, local authorities would have 72 hours to set up an operational facility to comply with the conditions of a Human Tissue Authority licence (although it is possible that bodies may be moved onto a site in as little as seven hours). A memorandum of understanding has been in place since June this year to set out payment of costs between all agencies involved. A member of the Emergency Planning Team sits on the LRF mass fatalities planning group and is currently involved with colleagues from Nottingham City Council in drawing up a Local Authority's operational plan for activating and commissioning an emergency mortuary. National guidance dictates that local plans must be prepared for up to 300 victims with National Emergency Mortuary Arrangements (NEMA) being activated for 300 – 600 plus victims.
13. This particular exercise was based on the scenario of an aircraft crash involving 150 potential victims on the A453. Observers were shown the work of the police specialist recovery teams at the scene of the incident and given details of the body recovery strategy, with every piece of material of 5 cubic cm or larger being treated as human remains. They then followed the process of identifying the remains within the emergency mortuary. Within the mortuary itself they were able to view specialist equipment and see the pathologists and teams at work within the autopsy area. They were informed how the identification information from the autopsy, from relatives via the family liaison officers and information from the casualty bureau then enabled a positive identification to take place at an Identification commission chaired by a coroner.
14. The overarching mission of the emergency mortuary is dignity to the deceased and care and respect for the relatives. Exercise Gravitas was the second exercise to test parts of the LRF emergency mortuary plan after the table top exercise of May 2012 to test the emergency mortuary coordination group, which the Service Director for Promoting Independence and Public Protection attended. It is planned to test the Local Authority logistics and procurement aspects of the plan in 2014.

Exercise 'Tempest' - Control Room Exercise for Broxtowe Borough Council

15. As part of the County Council's Service Level Agreement with District and Borough Council's for Emergency Planning Services, the Emergency Planning Team supported Broxtowe Borough Council in the development of their control centre plans and procedures including an event to train and exercise Borough Council staff in their role in emergency response. In addition, the event was used to validate roles within the plan and the operation of the centre during a major emergency. The event took place over the 02-03 October 2013 and a total of 18 Broxtowe staff were trained.

Planning for Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA)

16. On 26 September a member of the Emergency Planning Team participated in a Home Office / Department for Communities and Local Government workshop for LRFs on responding to a MTFA. This had been arranged in advance of, but was based on an event similar to that experienced in September at the Westgate Shopping Mall in Kenya.
17. The aim of the event was to enhance the understanding and awareness of how the emergency services would respond to such an incident in the United Kingdom. The day comprised of presentations from the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC), Emergency Services and Counter-Terrorism Security Advisers. There was also a table top exercise to provide the opportunity for different LRFs to share learning and best practice.

Incident Management System

18. The Emergency Planning Team have worked with ICT colleagues to install a new version of AIMS (Atlas Incident Management System) software. This is used by the Emergency Planning Team to record key information related to an incident and provide a log of actions taken and decisions made. AIMS is also used by departmental colleagues when working in the County Emergency Centre (CEC). An updated training manual will be issued to staff who are accustomed to the previous version of the system, and refresher training will be provided for staff who wish to familiarise themselves with the software. Back-up electronic and paper-based systems are in place to ensure that important information continues to be recorded should AIMS be unavailable due to any IT failure.

Registration and Celebratory Services

Ceremony Rehearsals Service

19. The current Service Delivery Plan for the Registration Service includes an objective to bring forward proposals for a Ceremony Rehearsals service in December this year. However, current financial and other circumstances have led to the acceleration of this timetable for the benefit of customers and so that income can be generated as soon as possible. Whilst it is not permitted to charge

a fee for ceremony rehearsals for statutory fee ceremonies at the Register Office (Worksop), there is no legal impediment for offering this service for enhanced ceremonies at registration ceremony rooms.

20. The public are already familiar with church wedding rehearsals, and the Registration Service often receives requests for similar appointments. For this reason, the service proposes to offer rehearsal appointments across the County to couples booking ceremonies at Registration Offices, and that an appropriate fee is charged for this. It is not generally practical to consider offering these for ceremonies at Approved Premises, due to logistic and cost issues.

21. Following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Community Safety Committee, and advice to the opposition spokesman, a pilot service is currently operating in the South of the County, and it is proposed to extend this initiative as experience is gained, taking care to avoid detriment to other services, such as the new Nationality Checking Service.

22. The pilot rehearsal appointments comprise:

- An explanation of the pre-marriage interview, what it involves and where it takes place
- Reconfirmation of the time the bride and groom are expected to arrive, particularly if they don't wish to see each other before the start of the ceremony
- A run through of seating arrangements, reserved seating, witnesses and any special needs, including disabled access
- Discussion of location of any photographers and what permission they may have to take photographs at any given time during the ceremony
- Discussion of the entrance of the bride, escorts and formation when entering the room
- Choices of music to be played and at what specific times
- Ceremony choices, such as declaration and contracting words and if there are any readings to be part of the service.
- Explanation of the legal role of witnesses
- Demonstration of arrangements for signing the register
- Discussion on processes for exiting the ceremony room
- Information that the service offers for sale commemorative certificates, guest books and commemorative trees and rose bushes

23. It is proposed that the service will be offered during periods of the week when ceremony rooms are not in great demand for ceremonies. Where possible, the service will be delivered by Registration Support Officers so that it does not impact on the normal workload of Registrars. For the purpose of the pilot, a fee of £25 is being charged for a 20 minute appointment, and initial feedback is that customers regard this as an acceptable figure. When the service is established fully across the County it is anticipated that there could be around 400 appointments a year, yielding an income of up to £10,000.

24. It is proposed to continue to operate the service as a pilot until the next Registration Fees report is brought to the Committee, at which time recommendation will be made for the formal incorporation of the service.

Registration Records Software

25. The Registration Service has completed the replacement of the 'Registration Service Software' (RSS) which was used for registering births and deaths in Nottinghamshire from 1992 until 2009. Since then, the system had been in use for the production of copy certificates from that period, however the software had become obsolete and technical support was no longer available from the General Register Office. Consequently, service continuity has been enabled by the acquisition of a new electronic records management system (RAFTS). A particular advantage of the system is that it enables staff to access records for the whole County from any office, thereby helping to improve the process of customers obtaining certificates. Further improvements will be made in the coming months by the addition of a module to enable online application and payment for certificates.

Verification of child benefit forms

26. As part of the 'Tell Us Once' (TUO) process within Birth Registration appointments, Registrars are now able to verify completed Child Benefit Forms. This benefits parents as they will then no longer need to send a copy of the birth certificate with the form.
27. The service began in October and is offered when the parents call the Customer Service Centre to book a Birth Registration appointment, and they are advised that the service can be provided only as part of the TUO process. Parents must take their fully completed Child Benefit form with them to their appointment, the Registrar will verify that the child's date of birth and name are correct and send it to HM Revenues and Customs on their behalf. During the process, the customer is advised of their responsibility to ensure details are correct, and Registrars provide information on how to contact the Child Benefit helpline telephony and web based services should they need to pursue their application.
28. Customer satisfaction survey results indicate that this is well received by customers and Registrars where it has been running in other local authorities; Nottinghamshire Registration Service is pleased to be able to offer it to parents of children born in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City hospitals.
29. There are no financial implications attached to this service, as the verification of Child Benefit forms is offered free of charge to the public as part of the TUO agreement with the Department for Work and Pensions.

Accommodation

30. As a result of accommodation pressures, the Registration Service is amalgamating some of its records under one roof. The Basford Registration Office, Bulwell now also holds the records for the Newark and Southwell area. In

December, the records for the Rushcliffe area will also be brought to this office. This will be a temporary measure until such time, possibly summer 2015, as operations can be moved to the Nottinghamshire Archives building. Before 2015 the Service will be marketing certificate services more extensively, trying to develop a modest family history research service, digitising a large collection of indexes and looking for new means of income generation.

31. Registration Services in Newark have now been established fully in the Gilstrap Centre. Initial reactions of customers have been very positive, as have those of the Gilstrap Trustees and local media.

Registration Staff Conference – 25 September 2013

32. Registration services are provided from 17 offices across the County and at around 70 Approved Premises for civil ceremonies. As a consequence of this, most registration personnel work in small teams and rarely have the opportunity to share views and ideas about the service with other colleagues outside of their own area. In view of this, and as the service is continuing to change rapidly with the introduction of new services, it is beneficial to bring all staff together for occasional conferences. The acquisition of the Gilstrap Centre provided the opportunity to do this without incurring the cost of an external venue.
33. Therefore, a one-day Registration Staff Conference was held at The Gilstrap, on 25 September. The event included a variety of workshop sessions designed to enable colleagues to discuss their thoughts and ideas on developing the service, and gain answers to any questions they may have. Key note presentations were provided by Councillor Gilfoyle and the Service Director for Promoting Independence and Public Protection and by two guests from the General Register Office who explained the national training strategy for registration services. The final substantive session of the day addressed progress in the development of the Council's Civil Funerals offer and experiences from delivery of the service.
34. A very substantial volume of specific feedback was gathered from staff during the course of the day, concerning specific and generic aspects of registrations services. All of this information was collated and has been presented to the Registration Management Team for analysis and reflection as part of the ongoing development and improvement of services.

Statutory and Policy Implications

35. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

36. The Registration Service is currently running a Ceremony Rehearsals Pilot for which a fee of £25 is being charged for a 20 minute appointment. When the service is established fully across the County it is anticipated that there could be around 400 rehearsal appointments a year, yielding an income of up to £10,000 per annum.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that the Community Safety Committee:

- 1) Notes the work that has been done by the Emergency Planning Team and the Registration Service.
- 2) Endorses the introduction of a pilot Ceremony Rehearsals service and the fee of £25 per appointment, data in relation to the fee will be included in the next annual registration fees report to Committee.

PAUL MCKAY

Service Director, Promoting Independence and Public Protection

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Robert Fisher

Group Manager, Emergency Management and Registration

Tel: 0115 977 3681

Email: Robert.fisher@nottsgov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LM 28/10/13)

37. The Community Safety Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (CLK 28/10/13)

38. The financial implications are contained in paragraph 36 of the report.

Background Papers

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.