

**25 November 2014****Agenda Item: 9****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR ACCESS 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.

**Information and Advice****Emergency Management**Planning and preparations for Viral Haemorrhagic Fever (Ebola) in the UK

2. The government's Chief Medical Officer has advised that the risk to the UK from the Ebola virus is low; but that it is likely we will see a small number of cases in the UK over the coming months. Ebola is a rare but severe infectious disease. Early symptoms can include sudden fever, weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. In the later stages there may be vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, impaired kidney and liver function, and in some cases, internal and external bleeding.
3. At time of writing, the current outbreak of the Ebola virus primarily affects three countries in West Africa: Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and the UK Government has measures in place to help identify possible cases of Ebola coming into this country. Public Health England (PHE) is leading the preparations for UK cases of Ebola, and has issued guidance to GPs and hospitals on actions to take in the event of a possible case. These include isolating the patient, securing the premises and tracing anyone who has been in contact with the victim. Locally, the Director of Public Health is responsible for assuring that safe and efficient systems are in place to protect the health of the population.
4. In respect of emergency planning, the Prime Minister has requested all Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) to exercise local plans without delay. Consequently, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRF arranged an exercise to take place on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October. At time of writing, it is anticipated that this will take the form of a table-top exercise in which all agencies will have the opportunity to contribute. This will explore if existing generic plans are sufficient or if a specific LRF plan would be helpful for Ebola. The County Council will be represented at the event by the Director of Public Health, plus support, and a senior

member of the Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Board supported by the Group Manager, Emergency Planning and Registration.

#### Support for flood risk communities

5. The emergency planning team has continued to work closely with Highways colleagues regarding their support to flood risk communities. This has involved assisting in the design and implementation of arrangements, drafting correspondence and liaison with flood risk communities. The outcome of this work has been that a one-off stock of sandbags (one pallet) has been offered to those communities that have a significant historic risk of property flooding or that have a Community Resilience Store that requires restocking. Communities that have not received this offer will still be supplied, on request, during a flood to assist vulnerable residents at risk of property flooding.
6. The sandbags have been offered for communities to assist vulnerable neighbours whose properties may flood and who are unable to help themselves. The initiative is to support communities in their own flood preparations and to encourage self-resilience. Guidance on how sandbags stocks should be managed (ensuring prioritisation to vulnerable residents) is included in the letter to Parish / Town Councils. The letters also offer that if they would like information on how to protect properties from flooding and how to prepare their community, they should contact the emergency planning team.

#### Planning for Mass Fatalities

7. Following a regional table top discussion on mass fatalities earlier this year, a regional local authorities group has been created within the East Midlands to look at best practice and share knowledge. The group will also be looking at the practicalities of being able to share the use of emergency mortuary sites. Work is at an early stage and Nottinghamshire is one of three counties in the region to have a current operational plan.
8. A member of the emergency planning team sits on this group and is able to share knowledge in this area after work to create a site specific emergency mortuary plan for Nottinghamshire over the last two years. The County Council emergency planning team led on the creation of the site-specific implementation plan section of the Nottinghamshire LRF Mass Fatalities plan. This involved researching the requirements for establishing an emergency mortuary within the 72 hour timetable required by the Human Tissue Authority licence. Working closely with police colleagues and the hospital nominated 'Designated Individual', the team was able to produce layout plans, site-specific details, utilities and power requirements, and detailed procurement lists for all organisations. The plan covers the requirements for 20 – 300 fatalities. This recently approved plan is being used as best practice by the regional group in the development of the regional template plan.

#### Training events for emergency response

9. In September, a member of the emergency planning team delivered a training presentation to Gedling Borough Council's Senior Leadership Team, as part of the emergency planning service level agreement with district / borough councils. The event provided an explanation of planning and response arrangements within the Local Resilience Forum, a discussion of the roles fulfilled by district and borough councils during an incident, and an overview of the local authority statement of intent on mutual

aid. A summary of the incident at Wright Street in Newark was used as a case study to encourage managers to consider how they would respond to a similar emergency in Gedling.

10. Another member of the team contributed to the delivery of Tactical Coordinating Group Refresher training for senior managers from partners across the Local Resilience Forum. On this occasion there were no County Council participants, however Ashfield District Council and Gedling Borough Council were represented. The event was a half-day course that offered those that had previously attended the full LRF Tactical Management Training event an opportunity to put their learning into practice in a controlled environment through a short scenario based exercise. The exercise was based on a supposed large industrial fire at the Boots site located on the Broxtowe/City Border (although the issues raised and discussed could be applied to a response elsewhere in the County). Helpfully, the Business Continuity Manager from the Boots site was able to take part in the exercise, which proved beneficial to the event.
11. Staff training for implementation of the LRF Site Clearance emergency plan training took place on 30 September and was well attended by all local authorities and emergency services. The training was put into practical context by speakers on the Glasgow Clutha bar helicopter crash and on the Wright Street explosion in Newark. The response and recovery phase of site clearance will be tested on Day Two of the forthcoming major emergency response exercise 'Jarrell'.
12. In October, the Vice Chairman of the Committee, supported by a member of the emergency planning team, attended a seminar entitled 'The changing threats we face' The one-day event was hosted by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and covered the current threat of terrorism (domestic and international) and also the approaches terrorist groups take to radicalise their sympathisers. The event was delivered by Dr Dave Sloggett who has spent over 40 years working with the United Kingdom military forces as a scientific advisor and analyst. The afternoon session looked at how strategic and tactical commanders should respond to potential incidents within a multi-agency environment.
13. From a Nottinghamshire perspective, it was reassuring to hear that some of the principles being discussed are already ingrained in our planning and training. These included the models used for decision making and for logging decisions, the management structure of gold / silver / bronze, increased awareness of the role of social media, and the need to be adaptable and flexible in emergency response. Key points included:
  - The need to train staff and to test and exercise plans is fundamental
  - Monitoring all forms of media is essential, but that it can help and hinder the emergency response
  - For this type of incident, it is vital to provide support for staff who may have been affected, and that this needs to happen as soon as possible.

#### Response Coordination Group Exercise

14. Most emergencies are dealt with by responders at the local level, through a Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) formed by key partners of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). However, where an emergency response may benefit from co-ordination and support

across two or more LRF areas then a Response Co-ordinating Group (ResCG) may be convened. The Derbyshire LRF Exercise 'Polar Resilience', in October, provided a valuable opportunity to exercise plans for operating a ResCG. The scenario was of major flooding in Derbyshire with high risk of a dam burst and consequent risk of flooding in Nottinghamshire. Representatives from Nottinghamshire police, fire, City and County Council joined Derbyshire colleagues and regional agencies (East Midlands Ambulance Service and the Environment Agency) in a telephone conference simulation of a live ResCG meeting.

15. The event involved discussion of possible cross-border mutual aid in a situation when Nottinghamshire resources might be needed locally. It was anticipated that the scenario might have required the establishment of a SCG in Nottinghamshire, but it was recognised that it would be difficult for regional agencies to participate when heavily committed in Derbyshire. In view of this, it was concluded that this is where a ResCG can be of benefit. The event was followed by a debriefing process by correspondence to identify lessons for future emergencies.

### Incidents

16. The emergency planning team provided support to Social Care colleagues involved in the multi-agency response to safeguarding concerns in respect of the Acer Court Care Home. The facilities of the Emergency Centre at County Hall were utilised to host meetings of a Strategic Coordinating Group, and then once the response had been completed the team facilitated a multi-agency structured debrief to identify lessons learnt from the experience.

### Safety at Sports Grounds

17. Meetings of the Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) for Mansfield Town and Nottingham Forest Football Clubs, and for Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club have all taken place since the last meeting of the Community Safety Committee. At Mansfield Town, the club continues to maintain high standards of safety management. A match-day inspection of the fixture against Morecambe revealed no significant safety concerns. A briefing for new stewards delivered by a supervisor was assessed as excellent, with appropriate emphasis being given to the role of steward in ensuring crowd safety. The club has recently completed improvements to its public address system and are in the process of updating their CCTV system. More recently, a Special Safety Certificate was issued for a fireworks event taking place at Mansfield's One Call Stadium on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. This event has been staged for the past five years, with increasing popularity, and the club has satisfied the Safety Advisory Group that they have appropriate safety management measures in place.
18. At the Nottingham Forest SAG, the club reported the appointment of a new Chief Executive, Paul Faulkner, who was previously with Aston Villa Football Club. This meeting considered the match-day inspection for the fixture against Derby County on 14 September, and viewed footage of the pitch incursion, which took place during the second half. This unusual occurrence posed a significant challenge for the safety management team, with three intruders on the pitch and a strong reaction from the crowd. In line with club policy, stewards did not initially attempt to remove the first intruder from the pitch, however when it became clear that the situation might escalate if

not dealt with quickly, club security (assisted by the police) tackled and detained two of the intruders, with the third being detained shortly after he exited the ground. A further incursion was quickly headed off by stewards when Forest scored a goal shortly afterwards, and measures were put in place to prevent further problems at full-time. The club has debriefed the incident and have made slight amendments to their pitch incursion policy. The Safety Advisory Group considered that the club dealt with the matter professionally, and noted that this incident emphasises the importance of a well trained and adequately resourced team of safety management staff.

19. At another fixture, the ground was visited by a remote-controlled flying drone operated from outside the ground through a laptop computer. These devices can represent a significant risk of injury to spectators were they to crash into the crowd. The SAG noted that over recent months drones have been seen at other football grounds and the Civil Aviation Authority is involved in the issue. Since this incident, a suspected drone pilot was arrested by police after a device was flown over a packed stand at Manchester City's Etihad Stadium.
20. At the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club SAG, the group considered match reports from two international matches over the summer. Excellent safety management was demonstrated by the club, and particular note was made of the swift response by the club when minor issues were reported to the safety officer by the County Council's inspecting officers. The group also discussed the outdoor opera event held at Trent Bridge in July, which went well.
21. Nottingham Rugby Club has announced that from Sunday 18 January 2015 the club will be playing their matches at Lady Bay Sports Ground, in West Bridgford. The club owns the land jointly with Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club and Boots PLC. The site is used currently as the clubs' training ground, and is also the home of Boots Hockey and Nottingham Corsairs amateur rugby club. Nottingham Rugby Club has indicated its intention to create a first-class facility at Lady Bay, with a new hospitality area and a temporary stand for spectators. The County Council emergency planning team will monitor developments for implications in respect of safety at sports grounds legislation.

## **Registration and Celebratory Services**

### Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013: Conversion of civil partnership into marriage

22. National arrangements for couples to convert a civil partnership into a marriage are due for implementation on 10<sup>th</sup> December. The process initially outlined by the government involved an appointment with the superintendent registrar at the register office for each Registration District; which for Nottinghamshire is in Worksop. However, in order to give greater flexibility for couples on how and where they can convert their civil partnership a revised set of regulations is due to be laid before Parliament in the near future. Subject to parliamentary approval, the regulations will:
  - provide for the standard conversion procedure (as previously outlined) to be completed at local registration service points as well as at the register office.

- provide for an extended process where the signing of the conversion declaration can take place in the range of venues where marriage of same sex couples can be solemnized.

23. Extending the venues for conversions will allow those couples who wish to follow their conversion with a non-statutory ceremony to sign the declaration in the same venue as that where their ceremony is taking place. In these circumstances the completion and signing of the declaration will be split into 2 stages:

- Stage 1: Providing information. This will involve completion of the declaration and checking the evidence of name, date of birth, address, and details of the civil partnership. This can take place in a register office or local registration service point.
- Stage 2: Completion of the conversion. This will involve signing of the declaration by the parties involved and the superintendent registrar, and will be able to take place at Approved Premises and religious buildings registered for the marriage of same sex couples.

#### Marketing and Promotion

24. This autumn, two Wedding Fayres have been arranged to publicise and promote the County Council's registration ceremony venues in Newark and West Bridgford. The first took place at the Gilstrap in Newark on Saturday 18 October, and the second will be on Sunday 16 November at the Welbeck Hall, West Bridgford.

25. The Wedding Fayre at the Gilstrap attracted a wide range of local exhibitors including wedding venues, florists, photographers, car hire companies, entertainers, and formal wear companies. The event lasted four hours and was visited by more than sixty members of the public. One exhibitor commented in an email message afterward that "it was a great event with plenty of interest."

#### **Other Options Considered**

26. Not applicable to this report.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation/s**

27. To update the Committee on this area of work contained within its remit.

#### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

28. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described in the report.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) It is recommended that the Community Safety Committee notes the content of the report.

**PAUL MCKAY**

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**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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### **Constitutional Comments**

29. Constitutional Comments are not required as the report is for noting only.

### **Financial Comments (KAS 17/11/14)**

30. There are no financial implications contained within the report.

### **Background Papers**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All.