

**26 April 2016****Agenda Item: 13****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR SOUTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
AND PUBLIC PROTECTION  
UPDATE ON EMERGENCY PLANNING 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 Planning**COMAH Site Emergency Exercises

2. The Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Regulations 2015, set out to prevent major accidents occurring at sites that handle dangerous substances, and to limit the consequences of any accidents which do occur. The regulations define a major accident as any emission, fire or explosion leading to serious danger to human health or the environment, and they apply to any establishment holding dangerous substances at or above specified threshold quantities. Upper tier COMAH sites must have internal emergency plans, prepared by the company, and external plans (to deal with off-site effects) that are prepared by the local authority. There are two such sites in Nottinghamshire, the Misterton Petroleum Storage Depot (which receives, stores and distributes aviation fuel) and DHL Supply Chain in Harworth (which stores and distributes household and healthcare products)
3. Under the COMAH Regulations, Nottinghamshire County Council has a statutory requirement to facilitate the testing of Upper-Tier COMAH sites off-site emergency arrangements every three years. The two Nottinghamshire sites are in close proximity to one another, and so are of interest to the same local agency representatives (from the emergency services, local authorities and health bodies for example). For this reason, a combined event covering both sites was held on 9 March.
4. The exercise was well attended with over 50 delegates participating from a variety of agencies, including emergency services, health, water companies, the Environment Agency and Local Authorities. A multi-agency site visit was held prior to the event for all responders. Outcomes from the exercises provided assurance for the Site Operators and members of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) that the off-site emergency plans for the two sites are fit for purpose should a major accident occur at either location. The emergency planning team will include lessons

from the exercise into a routine review of the emergency plans and ensure they remain up-to-date.

### Exercise Mercian Shield

5. Exercise Mercian Shield took place from 15 March to 17 March 2016 and was part of a four year rolling national programme of Home Office sponsored exercises in conjunction with UK police forces and other government departments. The scenario for the exercise involved two simultaneous and connected incidents in crowded places in the city centres of Derby and Nottingham. These required a coordinated, multi-agency response. The overall aim of the national programme is to test and improve the ability to prepare for and manage terrorist incidents and investigations.
6. The event included a 'live' exercise site utilising the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service Training site at Waddington in Lincolnshire. This element of the event enabled emergency service responders to test their plans and arrangements for rescue, casualty management and body recovery. In addition, a Multi-Agency Coordination centre was established at Nottinghamshire Police HQ, hosting a Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) and Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG). The exercise also included a test of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire emergency plan for mass fatalities.
7. Although the scenario for the incident was based within the City the nature of such an incident would undoubtedly require the support of the County Council. Accordingly, two members of the County Council's Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Board, Paul McKay and John Nilan, took part at the SCG and TCG elements of the exercise supported by members of the Emergency Planning Team.

### Community resilience

8. The emergency planning team has continued to provide support for communities across Nottinghamshire who wish to prepare their own plans for emergencies in their area. Since the last meeting of the Community Safety Committee the team has attended meetings with Carlton-in-Lindrick Parish Council and South Muskham and Little Carlton Parish Council. Both were given information, advice and encouragement to assist them preparing their plans. A similar meeting will be taking place with community representatives in Gorton in May, and the team continues to provide support for the community resilience work of the Southwell Flood Forum.

### Business Continuity response exercise for Ashfield and Mansfield District Councils

9. On Thursday 31 March, two members of the Emergency Planning Team facilitated a half-day table-top discussion exercise for the senior leadership teams of Ashfield District Council and Mansfield District Council. The aim of the event was to assess business continuity and mutual aid arrangements for each local authority. This provided both organisations with an opportunity to consider:
  - Their role during a major business continuity incident.
  - The procedures and arrangements within their organisation's emergency plan and business continuity plan.
  - The provision of mutual aid between local authorities.

- Methods of co-ordinating the response to an incident.
10. The scenario was based on a real incident that affected South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council, in which an arson attack severely damaged council offices at Crowmarsh Gifford in Oxfordshire on 15th January 2015.

### Incidents

11. At time of writing, there have been no major incidents since the March meeting of the Committee, however the emergency planning team were alerted by the emergency services to a number of minor incidents. These included a sink-hole on Spring Lane in Lambley and a light aircraft that crashed on take-off from Lambley airstrip and damaged a County Council vehicle. This alert was passed on to County Highways and to Gedling Borough Council. For both of these incidents, Councillor Gilfoyle was alerted and he notified the local Member, Councillor Elliot.

### Safety of Sports Grounds

12. The annual pre-season safety inspection and audit for Trent Bridge Cricket Ground was completed on 24 March. No significant spectator safety issues were found, and as in previous years, members of the multi-agency Safety Advisory Group were unanimous in their praise for the high standards of safety management maintained by Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club. The meeting noted the dates of forthcoming international matches at the ground including One Day Internationals between England and Sri Lanka on 21 June and between England and Pakistan on 30 August.

## **Registration and Celebratory Services**

### Death Registration Reforms Consultation

13. The Department of Health have launched a national consultation on the 'Introduction of Medical Examiners and Reforms to Death Certification in England and Wales'. The consultation document describes the proposed introduction of a system of scrutiny by independent medical examiners of all deaths that are not investigated by a coroner. The stated aims would be to strengthen safeguards for the public, make the process simpler and more open for the bereaved, and improve the quality of certification and data about causes of death. The proposals have been informed by the findings of the Shipman Inquiry arising from the Dr Harold Shipman murders. The proposals have overarching implications for local authorities, who would establish medical examiner services, and include specific proposals affecting registration services.
14. Under the proposals, for all deaths not investigated by a coroner, registrars will receive a statutory notification from a medical examiner that must match the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death provided to the bereaved family by the doctor involved. They will then register a death and/or issue a Certificate for Burial and Cremation. If a family were to raise concerns about the cause of death at the time of registration, the registrar would refer this to the Medical Examiner that scrutinised the death and, if necessary, invite the attending practitioner or medical examiner to prepare a fresh certificate.

15. A new fee for the Medical Examiner scrutiny and confirmation of cause of death will apply to all deaths, cremations and burials. This fee will be payable to the Local Authority, who will have the discretion to determine the local process for payment. In view of the implications for other County Council Departments, the consultation has been brought to the attention of Finance and Public Health colleagues who may wish to contribute comments. The consultation will close on 15 June 2016.

#### Performance in 2015 - 2016

16. During the financial year 2015 – 2016, the registration service continued to expand and develop the services offered to the public. Take-up increased in many areas and as a consequence of this the income raised off-set the overall cost of running the service such that the registrations service overall was virtually cost neutral for the year.
17. The total number of marriage and civil partnership ceremonies during the year was 2708, which was an increase of 124 over the figure of 2584 achieved in 2014 – 2015, while the figure for 2013 – 2014 had been 2506. The most popular venues for civil ceremonies were as follows:

• Mansfield Registration Office	446
• Rushcliffe Registration Office	431
• The Gilstrap Centre, Newark	308
• Swancar Farm Country House	133
• Nottinghamshire Register Office, Worksop	122
• Woodborough Hall	87
• Mansfield Manor Hotel	65
• Rufford Mill	62
• Goosedale	59
• The Carriage Hall	53

18. Completion of statutory birth and death registrations, and the ‘Tell Us Once’ appointments that accompany many of them, represent significant costs to the service (although TUO enables savings elsewhere in the public services). In the past year there were 5024 birth registrations and 5886 death registrations, compared with 5126 and 6273 respectively in the previous year.

#### **Other Options Considered**

19. None.

#### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

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

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

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), 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**

22. There are no financial implications for Emergency Planning or Registration budgets.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1) Notes the update on recent key activities and events in the work of the Emergency Planning Team and of Registration and Celebratory Services.

**PAUL MCKAY**

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### **Constitutional Comments**

23. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

### **Financial Comments**

24. There are no financial implications

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

- None

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

- All