

10 November 2015**Agenda Item:12****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**Syrian Refugee Resettlement

2. The emergency planning team have led the County Council's preparations for the possible arrival of Syrian refugees in the County following the Prime Minister's recent announcement that an additional 20,000 would be brought to the UK during the lifetime of the current parliament.
3. At present no Council in Nottinghamshire is part of the existing Syrian refugee scheme; however all have expressed a willingness in principle to play a part in the future. Gedling Borough Council has taken a lead role in coordinating the local response, and their Chief Executive, John Robinson, hosted a meeting on 14 October to consider what capacity can be offered. The Government have advised that the first 12 months of a refugee's resettlement costs will be fully funded by central government, and that they will also provide additional funding to assist with costs incurred in future years.
4. Refugees would be brought direct from camps near the Syrian border and will be among the most vulnerable people in the region. Their disabilities and vulnerabilities will have been assessed by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to determine their priority for evacuation to the UK. Priority is given to those who cannot be supported effectively in their region of origin: women and children at risk, people in severe need of medical care and survivors of torture and violence. When they arrive in the UK, many will have specific pre-identified needs. Some may have disabilities that require specially adapted accommodation. Children that are unaccompanied will have to be brought under local authority care. Spare bedrooms offered by local residents would not be suitable for these refugees, however fostering may come in to the equation and charities and voluntary agencies could be involved. Children of school age will be entitled to school places, and as part of this their language needs will need to be accommodated.

5. Planning has begun to organise County Council services to contribute to the care of refugees coming to Nottinghamshire. Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle is the lead County Councillor and Paul McKay is the lead Service Director. Rob Fisher, Group Manager Emergency Planning and Registration, is the lead for planning the County Council's response, and the 'Single Point of Contact' for partner councils and agencies to ensure appropriate access to relevant County Council services.

Training and Exercising

6. A variety of training events are available to ensure that County Council personnel are adequately prepared for their role in an emergency. Some courses are organised internally, by the emergency planning team, whilst others are facilitated by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Training Group, to which the County Council emergency planning team contributes. The team informs colleagues when relevant training is available, and provide instructions on how to reserve a place.
7. Major Emergency Response (MER) training explains how a major emergency is managed within Nottinghamshire County Council and outlines the operational procedures within the County Emergency Centre (CEC). It is designed for staff that may be required to:
 - Work in the CEC during an incident, or
 - Attend the Risk, Safety & Emergency Management Board (RSEMB), or
 - Participate in the multi-agency response to an emergency.
8. The next training dates are as follows:
 - Thursday 3rd December 2015 (9am – 3.30pm): Emergency Centre, County Hall
 - Tuesday 2nd February 2016 (9am – 3.30pm): Emergency Centre, County Hall
9. Exercising is an essential part of validating emergency plans and ensuring that training can be put into practice. The emergency planning team invite trained employees to attend exercises organised by Nottinghamshire County Council or by the LRF. Over recent weeks the team has been involved in planning and preparation for a multi-agency exercise to test contingency plans for responding to a major Road Traffic Accident (RTA). Part of the supposed accident will include a release of hazardous materials that may contaminate members of the public caught up in the incident.

Safety of Sports Grounds

10. Recent key events have included the issuing of a Special Safety Certificate (following consultation with partners) for the premiere of the film 'I believe in miracles' at the City Ground on Sunday 11th October. A temporary screen was erected on the pitch and a total of 3200 spectators were seated in the Trent End Stand. The club reported that the event was a great success.
11. A Special Safety Certificate was also issued for the annual fireworks display at Mansfield Town Football Club, which was held on 1st November. This event followed the same format as equivalent events held at the One Call Stadium over recent years. Also, permission has

been granted for the club to erect a new electronic scoreboard and to make changes to the hospitality facilities within their Ian Greaves Stand.

12. Work to strengthen the roof trusses in the grandstand at Southwell Racecourse has been approved by the County Council and is due to be completed on 2nd November. Once complete, this will mean that current restrictions on the use of the stand in very high winds, will be lifted.
13. JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles) training, organised by the emergency planning team, took place on 7 September and was delivered to representatives from the three major sports grounds in the County. This was to ensure that those staff who would be involved in the response to a major incident are fully up to date on the working methodologies used by the emergency services.
14. Routine Safety Advisory Group meetings took place for Nottingham Forest and Mansfield Town on 13 October, and the next for the cricket ground is due on 24 November. Also, routine match inspections have been completed at Nottingham Forest on 3 October and 6 November, and Mansfield Town (by a Highways colleague) on 26 September. No safety concerns of significance were found during any of these inspections.

Preparations for school emergency

15. The emergency planning team have long maintained guidance on 'Coping with a school emergency' designed to help schools to develop and review an emergency plan. It includes information on business continuity arrangements, to help maintain normal school operations and minimise disruption whilst responding to an incident. Version 3 of the guidance and template school emergency plan was issued in January 2013. A minor revision (v3.1, October 2015) has since taken place to ensure that contact details and website links remain up-to-date. All the resources, including a summary of the recent changes, are available on the Nottinghamshire Schools Portal.
16. The emergency planning team offer to assist schools in reviewing their emergency plan and provide training events as part of the Services for Schools programme. The emergency planning team have recently assisted the following schools:
 - 3rd September 2015: Meeting with Chilwell School to review arrangements within their emergency plan.
 - 4th September 2015: Meeting with Northfield Primary School to review their emergency plan and discuss possible training requirements.
 - 24th September 2015: Meeting with Redlands Primary and Nursery School to provide support in reviewing their emergency plan.
 - A training event for staff at Northfield Primary School on 2nd November 2015.

Business Continuity Lessons from Oxfordshire

17. Members of the emergency planning team benefited from attending a one-day workshop in Oxfordshire to learn lessons from a business continuity incident there in January 2015.. In the incident, the head office of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse District Council were destroyed by fire after a member of the public drove a car loaded with gas canisters through the front doors in the early hours of the morning.

18. The event provides an opportunity for the team to bench mark the County Council's business continuity processes and plans against systems that had been tested in extreme circumstances.

Recent Incidents

19. In recent weeks, the emergency planning team has been alerted to the incidents listed below. In each case, the emergency planning team passed information to the local County Councillor for the area affected.
20. On 24 September, a pungent chemical smell discovered in Selston library led to a call to the Fire and Rescue Service, who cordoned off the area, closed an adjacent road and advised the nearby Selston High School to keep pupils inside and close doors and windows. On examination of the building they discovered a leak of ammonia from an old refrigerator. The spillage was cleaned up and the fridge was made safe. The building was then returned to the library manager. No one was injured by the incident and there was minimal disruption caused. Ammonia has not been used in domestic fridges for many years, due to the hazards, but may be found in very old appliances or sometimes in fridges used in caravans and boats. In view of the hazardous nature of ammonia, the Emergency Planning Team cascaded this message to the Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Group for each departments, for onward dissemination to all teams, with advice to examine all refrigerators currently in use in County Council buildings and to report any concerns.
21. On 14 October the Emergency Planning Duty Officer was alerted by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service that a large fire was in progress at the former Noble Foods Ltd premises on Kirklington Road, Bilsthorpe. We were advised the building was well alight and there was asbestos involved. As a consequence, they had issued information to local media advising local people to keep doors and windows closed. The duty officer made contact with Nottinghamshire Police Control Room and the Newark and Sherwood District Council CCTV control room. Local residential properties were unaffected and County Highways were involved as Kirklington Road was closed.
22. On 15 October we were alerted of a major fire at Imperial Commercials, Padge Road Beeston. The Fire Service had put in place a 200m cordon and the police had evacuated people from within this area. Local buildings affected were mainly industrial premises, but it did include the County Council's Prospect House, which is an area base for the START Team and Home Care. The incident was brought under control by the Fire Service, and the cordons were lifted within a few hours, with no ongoing hazard to local people. A remaining issue for the County Council was to debrief lessons learned from the evacuation of Prospect House. This coincided with a scheduled meeting of the ASCHPP Department's 'Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Group', on 22 October, at which business continuity issues were discussed.
23. On 22 October, the team were alerted to another serious fire in Bilsthorpe. On this occasion the fire was in a building containing vehicles, fuel, acetylene cylinders and other hazardous and explosive materials. The fire service and the police implemented a 200m cordon and they evacuated local people initially to a nearby pub. However, this was deemed too close to the fire, and so, at the request of the police, the emergency planning team contacted and arranged for the use of the Miners Welfare Social Club as a Place of Safety. One

emergency planning officer attended the Club to support the evacuees, and was stood down during the evening when the Group Manager took over until the last of the evacuees was able to return home at approximately 9pm. The incident was in the Electoral Division of Councillor Peck, close to the border to that of Councillor Jackson. Both were contacted, and Councillor Peck attended the Place of Safety. One of the evacuees advised that medicines had been left at home, and so the emergency planning team contacted the NHS on-call emergency number to place out-of-hours GP service on stand-by.

Registration and Celebratory Services

Eastwood Registration Office

24. Registration Service and Property colleagues are currently investigating options for the replacement of the current Eastwood Registration Office, following the decision of Broxtowe Borough Council to close the DH Lawrence Heritage Centre (Durban House), where the service is currently based. The local member, Councillor Longdon, has also been closely involved in this work and has participated in two meetings in Eastwood to consider a possible alternative venue.
25. The current Eastwood Office is normally open two days per week, with additional days when staffing has allowed. Diary appointments fill up quickly, and the service has piloted alternative opening times, which have proved popular with the public. During the period from 25 January 2015 to 27 August 2015 (60 opening days) there were 469 appointments at the office (7.82 appointments per day). These included the registration of 187 births and 173 deaths. There were 94 four notices of marriage and 15 other appointments. In the absence of an Eastwood Office, these appointments would have had to travel to Hucknall or Sutton-in-Ashfield.
26. Work is in progress to evaluate the relative merits of three possible options for a new Eastwood Registration Office that have emerged so far.

Approved Premises for Civil Ceremonies

27. The Work Programme for the Community Safety Committee had included the intention that a stand-alone report would be provided to 10 November Committee meeting. on the subject of Approved Premises for Civil Ceremonies. However, as this a straightforward matter, the information has been included in this Update Report, as follows.
28. The Constitution of the County Council identifies that the Planning and Licensing Committee is responsible for all licensing functions given to the Authority by law. This includes licensing of premises for civil marriages and civil partnerships, and each year the Registration Service provides the committee with an annual update and overview of the County Council's role in licensing premises for the solemnization of marriages and the registration of civil partnerships.
29. This year the report went to the 22 September meeting of the Planning and Licensing Committee, and gained approval of a recommendation that the contents of the report be noted and that further reports will be brought to the committee annually.

30. The report outlined that current legislation allows the solemnization of marriages (for any couple) and the formation of civil partnerships (for same-sex couples only) to take place in venues other than register offices. The County Council is concerned with approval of:
- Secular premises for civil marriages and civil partnerships
 - Religious premises for civil partnerships
31. Secular premises such as historic or romantic buildings, including castles, stately homes and country houses can be licensed, as can hotels, civic buildings and sports stadia. In all cases, approval can only be granted if this can be done without compromising the fundamental principles of English law and Parliament's intention to maintain the solemnity of the occasion. To be approved, a venue must be a permanently immovable structure, comprising at least one room, or any boat or other vessel which is permanently moored. Premises outside this definition, such as the open air, a tent, marquee or any other temporary structure, and most forms of transport, would not be eligible for approval. It cannot be a religious premise, other than for the formation of Civil Partnerships, and must be regularly available to the public, which rules out a domestic home.
32. At the time of the report, there were 65 Approved Premises in Nottinghamshire (a net decrease of four since last year), and these are listed in Appendix A to this report. The fee for approval of a premise is included in the set of registration fees, which is reported annually to the Community Safety Committee for consideration and approval.

Other Options Considered

33. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

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

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 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

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

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) It is recommended that the Committee notes the update on recent key activities and events in the work of the Emergency Planning Team and of Registration and Celebratory Services.

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Constitutional Comments

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

Financial Comments

38. There are no financial implications

Background Papers and Published Documents

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All