

23rd July 2013**Agenda Item: 11****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 seek Members approval to the proposed fees for the Nationality Checking Service.

Information and Advice**Emergency Management****Rest Centre Training and Exercise**

2. Caring for people evacuated from a nearby hazard is one of the more common emergencies the County Council needs to be prepared for, and so regular training and exercises are organised. During June, two training events were provided for 'Care and Support Coordinators' and 'Rest Centre Managers'. The aim of these events was to provide staff with essential knowledge and a broad understanding of the Emergency Accommodation Plan. To achieve this, the training examined the circumstances in which the plan would be activated, the procedures involved, resources available, other agencies that can help, and the range of care and support to be provided for evacuees.
3. This, and other training, was then rehearsed in a realistic scenario through 'Exercise Wellington' held at Rushcliffe Arena in July. The exercise was designed to test and validate the Emergency Accommodation Plan, with the specific aim being to test the operation of Rest Centres within the Rushcliffe area. The format of the event was a 'table top' discussion exercise comprising tables from three leisure centres in Rushcliffe plus a table of management staff from key agencies. A facilitator at each table ensured that discussion was focused and that all members had the opportunity to respond to the incident.
4. The exercise was based on a flooding scenario in which it was supposed that national and localised flooding was occurring and that parts of Nottinghamshire had flooded, with properties, homes and businesses affected. The exercise focused on the first few hours of an evacuation taking place, looking in particular at the activation of a Rest Centre, the set-up of the premises, and responding to the needs of evacuees.

5. A short debrief took place after the exercise, with feedback suggesting that the event had been a success, and that no major amendments are required to the plan. A debrief report will be written to identify key learning points and outcomes from the exercise will be included in the next review of the plan.

Planning for Floods

6. The risk of flooding is well known in Nottinghamshire, and is the subject of continual emergency planning work. The Emergency Planning Team has played a major part in completing an interim review of the Local Resilience Forum's Flood Response Plan ahead of the next major exercise on this topic, which is scheduled to take place in September. As part of this work, the team has prepared a useful overview document on flood response plans, which is available from the Emergency Planning Team.
7. The team are currently drafting a new County Council Flood Response Plan, which will help to clarify the operational flood response roles of Highways and other County Council services. Alongside this, the team are reviewing and co-ordinating the multi-agency arrangements for providing sandbags to the public at times of flooding.
8. A member of the team contributed to the training of staff involved in the local flood response plans for the Newark & Sherwood and Bassetlaw areas, and in the planning and delivery of Environment Agency led Flood Warden Training. This event involved a visit to Colwick sluice gates which have long been the subject of a false public concern that their use has led to property flooding in parts of the County.
9. Further training events have also been provided by the Emergency Planning Team for new Flood Wardens for Woodborough and Lambley, and an officer attended a meeting with Sutton Bonington Parish Council to support their developing a community emergency plan. Sutton Bonington and Zouch (a hamlet within the parish) were both affected by flooding in 2013. The Emergency Planning Team has produced guidance and a community emergency plan template for parish and town councils to use. This was distributed to community groups in 2010 and is available on the County Council's website. The team has also supported flood response planning for Lowdham, and has participated in meetings of the Parish Council's Flood Planning Group.
10. The team are continuing to facilitate a Community Flood Signage Scheme, whereby local trained volunteers can quickly establish temporary road closures in a flood emergency. This is the first scheme of its kind in the Country and the communities that currently have operational schemes are Bleasby and Woodborough. This scheme is likely to increase during the year, and at the request of Councillor Roger Jackson, the Emergency Planning Team will be promoting the arrangement with the 'Undefended Villages' community flood group, which involves six Trent Valley villages.

Planning for Severe Summer Weather

11. Recent history demonstrates that British summer weather can become an emergency in various different ways. Localised and prolonged heavy thunder storms can cause serious surface water flooding. On other occasions, prolonged hot weather can lead to a heatwave causing increased mortality among elderly people.

12. The response to summer flooding utilises the same training and plans in place for winter flooding, whilst heatwave arrangements stem from National Health Service arrangements for coping with the physical effects of high temperatures on vulnerable people.
13. The annual heatwave alert system for England and Wales began on 01 June. The Emergency Planning Team receive weekly updates and implement a cascade system to departments providing critical services to vulnerable people. The team ensures that departments are aware of the heatwave plan and warning system. The team also work with colleagues in the Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection department to ensure heatwave planning information is disseminated to independent sector care homes and homecare services.

Site Clearance Planning

14. Clearing the huge quantities of rubble and other debris arising from the destruction of the World Trade Centre in New York presented challenges that had not been encountered previously. Lessons arising from this experience have been incorporated in UK national emergency planning guidance and emergency planners have been advised to use this as the basis for local arrangements. The result in Nottinghamshire is a tactical-level 'Site Clearance' emergency plan that has been approved for use by the Local Resilience Forum. Work of this plan was led by a member of the County Council's Emergency Planning Team.
15. The plan relates only to those incidents for which site clearance operations would be of a larger scale than could reasonably be managed by the site owner or the local authority operating alone. Its aim is to assist in the management of the clearance, removal and disposal of debris. Topics covered in detail include plan activation, coordination of response, recovery of personal property, removal and transportation of debris, security, decontamination, public information and environmental considerations. It also includes information on the roles and responsibilities of agencies that can help. The appendices to the plan include a template to encourage organisations (primarily local authorities) to consider what level of capability they have to cope with a major site clearance operation.

Safety of Sports Grounds

16. As part of the national 'Armed Forces Day' celebrations in Nottingham, Hucknall Town Football Club hosted a match between a Combined Forces team and a Nottingham All Stars team, which included former players from Nottingham Forest and Notts County. In view of the nature of this fixture, the football club's preparations were made in anticipation of a far larger crowd than they are accustomed to seeing, and the Emergency Planning Team were in touch with the club to support this process. Safety Officer and Stewarding resources were increased, and a Match-day safety inspection was carried out to monitor the club's safety performance. In the event, the crowd of 485 was greater than normally seen at the ground, but less than expected. This was due to poor weather that evening.
17. During June and July, the Emergency Planning Team completed Annual Safety Audits and Inspections at Southwell Racecourse, Hucknall Town Football Club and Eastwood Town Football Club. They also supported Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club's preparations for hosting the first Test Match of this year's Ashes Series against Australia.

Registration and Celebratory Services

New Bereavement and Celebrate in Nottinghamshire Brochures

18. The registration service has produced a new brochure providing guidance, support and reassurance to bereaved families. The brochure aims to help people through this difficult time by giving information about registering a death, administering the estate and explaining the options available for funeral and memorial services. The brochure gives a step-by-step guide to the things the family must do, such as obtaining a medical certificate of cause of death, contacting a funeral director or Minister of Religion, and dealing with the deceased Will. There is detailed guidance on registering a death and the benefits of the 'Tell Us Once' service. There is also a section explaining the Coroner's involvement, should this be necessary.
19. A significant section of the brochure deals with the options families have for a funeral or memorial service. Recognising that a funeral marks a significant event for everyone close to the deceased, the registrars can help families create personal funerals that reflect their own beliefs and wishes. Their aim is to create a special ceremony that those left behind will always remember.
20. Also, as some people living alone after bereavement can be vulnerable and susceptible to crime, the brochure links the reader to related County Council services. These include the 'Handy Persons Adaptations Service', where a person over 60 or disabled can obtain help with practical jobs around the home, and the 'Buy With Confidence' scheme, which lists reliable local traders.
21. The brochure is produced by an external company at no cost to the Registration Service. It is funded by the sale of advertisements by local companies whose services may be of use to bereaved families.
22. Meanwhile, the second edition of the 'Celebrate in Nottinghamshire' brochure is now being given to couples enquiring about and booking marriages and civil partnerships. Like the bereavement brochure, this has been produced at no cost to the service. The brochure has been designed and produced to a high standard with a professional magazine concept. The Registration Service has been able to showcase existing and new venues in this publication. Copies of the brochure will also be in circulation through seventy plus approved and licensed premises across the County.

Introducing the Nationality Checking Service

23. The Registration Service is on schedule to introduce a Nationality Checking Service in September. This will be of benefit to people at the beginning of their journey to become British Citizens, reducing their application time by several months and realising income for the County Council.
24. Having previously secured committee approval to introduce this service, it is the intention of this report to confirm a suggested set of fees as follows: £55 adult, £40 child, £100 married/civil partnership couple, £130 married/civil partnership couple and two children,

any additional children applying with the above £25. These fees are consistent with those charged by other Councils that offer this service.

25. It is anticipated that some of the people who will use this service will be from outside the County, and so the service will provide an opportunity to offer other registration services that customers may wish to purchase, thereby bringing further revenue into the service and the local economy. It is known that people will travel great distances for this service and in Nottinghamshire we are well placed to help people access the service at convenient points. Registration Offices in Newark and Retford offer easy train access to London and the north of England, Mansfield is close to the M1 and our south area offices are in easy reach of the city centre.

Coroners

Forthcoming government consultation on Medical Examiner proposals

Medical Examiner Proposals

26. As previously reported to the committee, the Department of Health is developing proposals to simplify and strengthen the process of death certification as part of its response to the recommendations of the Shipman Inquiry. It is expected that the changes will require the certified cause of all deaths that are not investigated by a coroner to be independently scrutinized and confirmed by a locally appointed 'Medical Examiner'. The Shipman Inquiry was an independent public inquiry into the issues surrounding the case of the GP Harold Shipman, who was convicted of murdering 15 patients during his time as General Practitioner. The inquiry subsequently established that he committed some 250 murders.
27. A government consultation on this matter was to have been commenced by now, and so the Community Safety Committee Work Plan had included this topic for the July meeting. However, the consultation has yet to be launched and therefore the subject must be deferred until the September meeting.
28. Should the consultation period fall between committee dates, then the matter will be reported to committee members outside the cycle of meeting dates in order to prepare a County Council response.
29. It is anticipated that central government will fund set-up costs for the Medical Examiner Service under the 'new burdens' doctrine. Thereafter it is expected to be self-funding based on fees paid by the public. The likely changes will require coroners to carry out more inquests than currently, and the cost of this will fall to local authorities. It is also expected that the new arrangements will necessitate changes in the procedures registrars follow for registering a death. It is anticipated that national implementation of the new local Medical Examiner Service will take place in 2014.

Statutory and Policy Implications

30. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the 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 included in the report.

Financial Implications

31. The report includes proposed fees for Nationality Checking amounting to £55 adult, £40 child, £100 married/civil partnership couple, £130 married/civil partnership couple and two children, any additional children applying with the above £25. These fees are consistent with those charged by other Councils that offer this service.
32. By the nature of this new service, and the competition faced from other local authorities, it is impossible to predict accurately how many appointments will be made. However, once the service is established, it is thought there will be up to 500 appointments per year in Nottinghamshire. The additional income generated will contribute towards the overall income generation target of the Registration Service.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that the Community Safety Committee:

- 1) Note the contents of this report.
- 2) Approve the fees proposed for the new Nationality Checking Service.

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Constitutional Comments (NAB 10/07/13)

33. The Community Safety Committee has authority to consider and approve the recommendations set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (KAS 11/07/2013)

34. The financial implications are contained within paragraphs 31 and 32 of the report.

Background Papers None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected All. CS35