

29th May 2012**Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF GROUP MANAGER, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT &
REGISTRATION****UPDATE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND REGISTRATION SERVICES****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on recent key activities and events of the County Council's Emergency Planning Team and of Registration and Celebratory Services.

Information and Advice**Emergency Management**Emergency Planning Team Business Plan 2012 - 2013

2. With the start of the new financial year, a fresh business plan has been commenced for the Emergency Planning Team. The plan confirms the overarching aim of the team to ensure that Nottinghamshire County Council, and communities within Nottinghamshire, are resilient to the impact of emergencies of all kinds.
3. The team facilitates the preparations of County Council departments for their part in the response to an emergency. The types of emergencies that are considered include all those that call for a response that goes beyond the ability of the 'blue-light' Emergency Services to deal with unaided. Such incidents may include industrial incidents, transport accidents or events of natural causes, such as severe weather. Key activities of the team include:
 - Preparation of specific emergency plans required by legislation
 - Development and maintenance of multi-agency generic plans for aspects of response that are common in most emergencies
 - Provision of effective emergency response training
 - Development and staging of relevant validation exercises
 - Liaison with all stakeholders
 - Emergency Response.
4. The team also undertakes the County Council's statutory function of 'Safety of Sports Grounds' and facilitates the development and maintenance of 'Business Continuity' planning within the County Council. This involves assisting all

departments to prepare arrangements that will enable them to continue their critical services at times when they would otherwise cease, perhaps due to flood or fire affected key buildings.

5. A large proportion of the teams' work relates to the County Council's status as a 'Category 1' organisation under the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004. Much of this work is carried out in collaboration with partners in the Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum.
6. Other Specific Legislation for which emergency plans are required include:
 - Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations, 1999.
 - Pipeline Safety Regulations, 1996
 - Radiation Emergencies Preparedness and Public Information Regulations, 2001.
7. In addition to the continual maintenance of existing plans and the ongoing training and exercises that accompany these key events and activities for the year ahead include:
 - Crowd safety aspects of the Queens Diamond Jubilee Beacons and Olympic Torch Relay in Nottinghamshire.
 - Arrangements for dealing with, harnessing and maximising the benefit of 'offers of help' during an emergency.
 - County Council arrangements for responding to a school emergency.
 - Updating and re-issue the Major Incident Plan for Mansfield Town Football Club.
 - Contributing to the creation of a 'Survivor Reception Centre' plan.
 - Developing improved arrangements for identifying vulnerable people during an incident.
 - New emergency mortuary awareness training.
 - A major part in the organisation and delivery of a floods response exercise.

Olympic Torch Relay Planning

8. The emergency planning team is participating in the overall planning for the Olympic Torch relay through the County (which takes place on 28th June) and, in particular, is chairing the 'Safety Advisory Group' for the event. As part of these preparations the team participated in a table top Exercise (Exercise 'Salerno') for the relay, which was hosted by Nottinghamshire Police and took place on 30th April. The event involved strategic and tactical groups, plus a specialists group and groups of representatives covering the five District Council areas directly affected by the Relay Route. Valuable learning was gained in topics such as traffic management, stewarding, school closures, and waste collection policy. An information plan in each local authority will be used to ensure all key audiences are briefed and aware of requirements for them. Also, learning has been gained from a recent relay rehearsal in Leicestershire. Contingency plans are in development, including consideration of alternative routes and site specific plans for all static celebration sites.

Community Flood Signage Scheme

9. During previous periods of significant rainfall, several communities across the county have experienced flooding of residential properties caused by vehicles driving at speed through flooded roads. The vehicles create bow waves which cause flood water to inundate properties along the roadside. During the floods in 2007 it was acknowledged that by the time County Council Highways are able to attend and set up road signage to encourage drivers to slow down or avoid using certain roads, properties may already be flooded by bow waves. Therefore, the emergency planning team have pioneered the introduction of a community volunteer-based flood signage scheme. This enables participating communities to set-up their own road signage during significant heavy rainfall when flooding is expected before Highways are able to attend and set up diversion routes.
10. Communities now participating in the scheme are Bleasby and Woodborough. 'Flood Wardens' within each community have received the necessary training to enable them to set up road signage to warn drivers of flooding, advise them to slow down and close minor roads to traffic where necessary. Road signs were purchased with funding received from the Environment Agency. Signs are stored in 'Community Resilience Stores' within each of the participating villages. This scheme is believed to be the first of its kind in the country.

Incidents

11. Paradoxically, the month that a drought was declared formally across much of Britain (including Nottinghamshire) was also the UK's wettest April since reliable records began in 1910. Drought conditions exist as ground water levels are low, and aquifers are not replenished from rainfall onto hard ground running off into rivers.
12. The peak flood risk in Nottinghamshire was on Sunday 29th April when the County experienced between 20mm and 30mm of rainfall in addition to that experienced during the previous week. The emergency planning team monitored the situation closely, and passed on flood warnings in accordance with our emergency plans. Environment Agency colleagues were mindful of potential flooding from the Retford Beck in Retford, from which adjacent properties flooded in 2007. To reduce the risk of this, and to protect properties and people, they pumped water from the watercourse into the Chesterfield Canal.
13. The heavy rainfall led to another incident as a train derailed when it struck a Land Slide at Clarborough, near Retford. The driver and one passenger were taken by ambulance to Bassetlaw Hospital, while the journeys of all other passengers were completed by road transport arranged by Network Rail. An emergency planning officer from Network Rail kept the County Council emergency planning team informed of developments, and local plans for emergency transportation, accommodation and humanitarian assistance were available to be activated if necessary. Happily, on this occasion there was no need of these measures. Information about the incident was passed to the local County Councillor for the area.

14. The emergency planning team were also involved by provision of advice when a fire affected flats in Attenborough on 29th April. The ambulance service took two adults and three children to the Queens Medical Centre for treatment and the local Borough Council provided alternative accommodation for the families affected. Again, our emergency plans were available for use had they been required, however the incident was dealt without recourse to these. Local Elected Members were informed of the incident.

Update on Safety at Sports Grounds

15. In addition to the separate report on this topic, an emergency meeting of the Safety Advisory Group for Mansfield Town Football Club took place on 4th May. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the implications for safety management at the club following the arrest and caution of the Chief Executive of the club, who is also the 'holder' of the General Safety Certificate. The seriousness of the issue was impressed on the Certificate Holder; however no sanctions were taken against her.

Registration and Celebratory Services

Key achievements in 2011 - 2012

16. The major achievement during the last financial year was the completion of a major re-structure of the service. This involved the formal amalgamation of the previous five Registration Districts in the County to a single District for the County, and was accomplished while maintaining statutory services, expanding non-statutory services and introduced new services, most particularly the 'Tell us once' service.
17. The service has been given the challenge of becoming financially self-sufficient by 2014-2015. This will be achieved by off-setting the costs of statutory duties (e.g. weddings) via additional income from non-statutory services (e.g. baby naming). From a net annual budget for the service of £495K in 2009-2010, the budget was £183K in 2011-2012, and an underspend was achieved. At the same time, national standards for birth and death appointments were met as follows:
- 100% births registered within 42 days (national standard 98%)
 - 100% still births registered with 42 days (national standard = 98%)
 - 96% deaths registered within 5 days (national standard = 95%)
 - 97% deaths after post mortem registered within 7 days (national standard = 95%).

Registration Service Delivery Plan 2012 - 2013

18. With the start of the new financial year, a revised Service Delivery Plan for the service has been produced. This confirms a vision that Nottinghamshire Registration and Celebratory Services will be a successful, innovative business, focussing on the core business principles of high levels of customer satisfaction, income generation, efficiency of operation and staff commitment.

19. The Service has the statutory function of providing a responsive service to the public for the registration of all births, stillbirths, and deaths, notices of marriage and civil partnerships, and the consequent ceremonies, production of legal documentation, and the approval of premises for marriages and partnerships. The service is also responsible for Citizenship Ceremonies in the County. In addition, the service offers an increasing number of non-statutory ceremonies such as naming, renewal of vows and civil funerals.
20. The move, a few years ago, to a 'New Governance' scheme of working provided for a more flexible, less prescriptive scheme than previously, allowing the County Council greater discretion to deliver services which meet both national standards and local community needs. These arrangements involve include a 'light touch' inspection regime by the General Register Office, local self monitoring and regular consultation with customers. The scheme requires the County Council to:
- Adhere to a national Code of Practice.
 - Meet national standards set out in a set of 'Good Practice Guides'.
 - Consult with staff, customers and stakeholders.
 - Publish a 'Service Delivery Plan' to set specifications, including a suggestions and complaints procedure, description of the service structure, access times, and a statement of commitment to service levels.
21. The 'Service Delivery Plan' referred to above is designed to implement the arrangements and set out our improvement programme for the year ahead. In addition to the continual maintenance of existing standards and the ongoing response to public expectations, key events and activities for the year ahead include:
- Consolidation of the changes introduced by restructuring the service.
 - Creation and development of a central records repository and copy certificate service
 - Introduction of a nationality checking service
 - Re-decoration and improvement of accommodation for customers
 - Improved provision of staff training
22. At the same time, the service is planning and preparing for the possible relocation of registration offices in Newark, Rushcliffe and Retford, arising from the County Council's 'Ways of Working' programme.

Statutory and Policy Implications

23. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, 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.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) It is recommended that the contents of the report be noted.

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Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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