

**29 September 2015****Agenda Item: 8****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**Summer Weather 2015

2. Throughout the summer, the emergency planning team received twice weekly temperature forecasts and current Alert Level reports as part of the national 'Heatwave Heat Health Watch System' of the Department of Health. This runs from 1 June until 15 September.
3. The four stages of alert comprise Level 1 - 'Summer Preparedness and Planning', Level 2 - 'Alert and Readiness', Level 3 - 'Heatwave Action' and Level 4 - 'Emergency'. A heatwave emergency involves temperatures that remain abnormally high over more than a few days. In these circumstances there is an increased risk of health problems among vulnerable people and to people visiting large scale public events such as festivals and sporting events. There is also an increased risk of wildfires and animal welfare problems. As a consequence of this, the Local Resilience Forum maintains a specific emergency plan for heatwaves.
4. Information was circulated on 29 May 2015 to County Council managers involved in adult and child social care, education and youth services, families and cultural services, and to Borough and District Councils. Thereafter, further notices were issued whenever there was a change in the alert level. There was just one occasion during the past summer when a Level 3 (Heatwave action) alert was issued. This was between 1 and 2 July. The Heatwave plan provides managers with advice and guidance on what measures should be considered in these circumstances.

Planning and preparation for flood emergencies

5. During August, members of the emergency planning team and a representative from County Highways met with community volunteers in Lowdham who wish to establish a Community Flood Signage Scheme. Initial planning work has begun to enable trained volunteers to

close flooded roads on behalf of Highways when they become dangerous for motorists and risk exacerbating property flooding due to bow waves created by vehicles. There are schemes of this nature currently serving Woodborough, Bleasby, Collingham, Thurgarton and Southwell.

6. The team have also played a leading role in planning and preparation for a County-wide Flood Warden Training Workshop, scheduled to take place at County Hall on 23 September. The event, in collaboration with the Environment Agency, is designed to provide refresher training on topics such as water safety, risk assessment skills and manual handling techniques. The work of volunteer Flood Wardens helps their communities to be more resilient to flood emergencies and enables responding organisations to focus their resources on areas of greatest need.

#### East Coast Tidal Inundation Planning

7. The June meeting of the Community Safety Committee heard that the County Council had been invited to contribute to a Lincolnshire Strategic Alliance Agreement to provide mutual aid in respect of possible major flooding along the Lincolnshire coastline. The risk of such flooding is significant and, in the worst case, could lead to over 120,000 residents being evacuated from their homes. Local consultation among affected agencies was completed by early summer this year, and a subsequent report recommending participation in the scheme was approved unanimously at a meeting of the Nottinghamshire Chief Executives Group.
8. As previously reported, the Strategic Alliance Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding set out terms for the management and funding of evacuation and shelter across Local Resilience Forum boundaries. In the event of East Coast flooding the following mutual assistance may be requested:
  - Provision of Local Authority centres for immediate and short term shelter for up to 30 days, for up to 2000 - 3000 evacuees.
  - Provision of medium to long term shelter for 12 months for displaced persons.
  - Provision of transportation to transport evacuees to temporary accommodation, including the provision of specialist transportation for vulnerable people.
  - Provision of basic and immediate needs e.g. food, water, blankets, bedding.
  - Resources to staff rest centres and provide transportation support.
  - Provision of social care / safeguarding for vulnerable adults and children.
  - Resources to provide logistical support and coordination.
9. Detailed operational planning is now in progress to enable an effective response to such requests, should they arise.

#### Emergency Centre Maintenance and Development

10. Nottinghamshire County Council's response to a major emergency is co-ordinated from the County Emergency Centre (CEC), which is located in the basement of County Hall. The facility contains various information technology (including PCs, laptops, videoconferencing, projectors, and smart-boards) to aid the management of the County Council's response. It is available on a 24-hour basis and has been used during a variety of emergencies and business interruptions in recent years, including flooding, heavy snowfall and industrial

action. When not in use for incident response, the facilities and equipment are used for meetings and training events, including those of other services and departments.

11. The last major refurbishment of the CEC took place in 2005 / 2006. More recently it became apparent that a number of technical and maintenance issues had arisen with bespoke equipment such as the room control system, satellite television and videoconferencing, and some of it no longer operated as intended. Also, lessons from previous incidents identified the need to keep pace with technological developments and to maximise the amount of space available within the centre. Following discussions involving Councillor Gilfoyle and the Chief Executive, provision was made for improvements to the CEC in the 2015 / 2016 financial year, with the intention of establishing a rolling maintenance programme thereafter. Maintenance and improvements to date have included:
  - Reinstatement of satellite TV, for media monitoring during emergencies, by repositioning the satellite dish on the roof of County Hall and replacing parts.
  - Provision of three HDMI connections to the input / output panels in the operations rooms which link with the CEC smart-boards and television in order to improve vision quality.
  - An update to the room control system that operates the smart-boards and satellite TV.
  - Provision of a new projector in the main meeting room, with the ability to play audio.
  - Provision of a new HDMI connection in the main meeting room to improve picture quality.
  - Relocation of smart-board / projector connections to improve ease of use.
  - Maintenance and testing of the videoconferencing equipment, projectors, PSTN (Virgin) telephone lines and police network points.
12. ICT colleagues have assisted the process and have provided cabling to ensure that ThinkPads, laptops and desktop PCs can all connect to the smart-boards and projectors. Also, spare headsets have been provided to enable staff working in the CEC to log-in to receive telephone calls via their own Microsoft Lync account. Approximately £4,200 has been spent on the works detailed above, but is separate to the emergency planning budget.
13. Further work will focus on maximising space in the CEC (by reviewing the layout and furniture design) and on developing and maintaining a rolling programme of maintenance into the future. This will aim to ensure that a long-term maintenance programme exists to ensure the facility remains fit for its purpose.

#### Safety of Sports Grounds

14. In August, an in-performance inspection of Trent Bridge Cricket Ground was completed at the Fourth Ashes Test Match between England and Australia. This included attendance at the Steward Supervisors briefing and at one of the subsequent Steward's briefings, plus the police briefing for the first day. Safety operations were seen to operate smoothly during the match, with a very high standard of safety management demonstrated by the Safety Officer and all members of his team. Stewarding was found to be of an excellent standard, with many examples of good service by stewards who demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the ground. The inspection was joined in part by the Service Director, Access and Public Protection to observe that the County Council's responsibilities in respect of the Safety of Sports Grounds were being fulfilled.
15. A Special Safety Certificate was issued to Southwell Racecourse for a music concert that took place after racing at their Family Fun Day on 12 July, and which featured the 'Britain's

Got Talent' winning singing group 'Collabro'. The racecourse prepared a detailed Event Management Plan for the concert, containing the method of managing the event including contingency plans to resolve emergencies. The Special Safety Certificate stipulated a maximum number of spectators permitted to use the Tattersall's section of the stand during the concert, and that this must be monitored by stewards.

16. On Tuesday 21 July, satisfactory pre-season safety inspections and audits were completed for Nottingham Forest and Mansfield Town Football Clubs. Routine outcomes and actions from these will be monitored by the emergency planning team, and match-day inspections will follow at key fixtures.
17. The Group Manager, Emergency Planning and Registration has written to the Chief Executive of Nottingham Forest Football Club to express concern regarding a photograph that featured in local media. This depicted him holding a hunting rifle and a dead ram that was reportedly shot by him. Mindful of the fact that Derby County Football Club are known as 'The Rams', and that their emblem is a ram, and in view of the historic rivalry between Nottingham Forest and Derby County, it was considered that publication of the photograph increased the risk of friction between rival supporters and was therefore potentially detrimental to the safety of supporters visiting the City Ground to attend fixtures against Derby County. This was particularly regrettable as Nottingham Forest Football Club do have an excellent record of safety management and have worked well over many years to maintain a very high standard of spectator safety.

## **Registration and Celebratory Services**

### Citizenship Ceremonies

18. Organising and conducting Citizenship Ceremonies is one of the routine functions of the registration service. Under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, applicants for British Citizenship who are aged 18 years and over, and who have been accepted for naturalisation as a British Citizen, are required to attend a Citizenship Ceremony. This is the final step in a process that includes satisfying application criteria, passing a language test and an examination of knowledge of life in the UK. The ceremony provides the new citizens with a formal welcome to the community of Nottinghamshire, and during the event they receive their certificate of naturalisation, which confirms them as a British Citizen with the right to apply for a British passport and to vote in elections.
19. The overall number of citizenship applications nationally has reduced in recent years as a result of central government policy. However, the Home Office has now advised that, due to changes in their processes, the throughput of citizenship certificates to local authorities will increase significantly for a while from September, and that it may be necessary to increase the number of ceremonies available.
20. Ceremonies in Nottinghamshire normally take place fortnightly and are offered at five venues around the County. There is also the opportunity for applicants to arrange a private ceremony to take place in one of our ceremony rooms for an individual or a family. An additional fee is chargeable for this service.

21. Group ceremonies comprise a welcome from the registrar, followed by short speeches from civic dignitaries. The applicants are then asked to either swear or affirm their allegiance to the Queen and to the United Kingdom. This is done in groups and is led by the registrar. After the oaths and affirmations, the new citizens are called up individually to receive their certificate of naturalisation from the civic dignitaries. The ceremony concludes with the National Anthem.

### Ceremonies in Nottinghamshire

22. The number of ceremonies completed by Nottinghamshire registrars is continuing to rise. By the end of July this year the total number completed or booked for the remainder of the current financial year was 2520. This surpasses the total achieved in 2014 – 2015, which was 2499.
23. The most popular venues so far this year are listed below, with the total number of ceremonies and bookings to date shown in brackets.
- Welbeck Banqueting Hall, West Bridgford (363)
  - The Salvin Suite, The Gilstrap, Newark (277)
  - The Oakdale Suite, County House, Mansfield (216)
  - The Gallery, County House, Mansfield (156)
  - The Library Room, The Gilstrap, Newark (143)
  - Swancar Farm Country House, Trowell (129)
  - Woodborough Hall, Woodborough (84)
  - The Victoria Suite, Worksop (80)
  - Mansfield Manor Hotel, Mansfield (64)
  - Goosedale, Bestwood Village (60)

### **Other Options Considered**

24. None.

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

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

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

26. 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**

27. There are no financial implications for Emergency Planning of Registration budgets. The financial implications of the Emergency Centre update are covered in paragraph 12.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 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.

## **PAUL MCKAY**

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

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## **Constitutional Comments**

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

## **Financial Comments**

29. There are no financial implications

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

- None

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

- All