

14 June 2016**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**Emergency response training for the Corporate Leadership Team

2. On 3 May, the emergency planning team delivered an emergency response management training event for the County Council's Corporate Leadership Team and other senior managers. These included members of the County Council's 'Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Board' who could each be involved in managing key aspects of the County Council's response to an emergency. The three-hour event comprised a series of short briefings on key topics interspersed with an evolving major emergency scenario looking at various stages of the County Council's part in emergency response.
3. The briefings were on topics including the local multi-agency response structure and the UK national response, as well as the County Council's internal arrangements for emergency response coordination and business continuity. These were supported by a presentation from Councillor Gilfoyle on the role and expectations of Elected Members.
4. The scenario used to illustrate response options and challenges was based on an imaged serious rail crash occurring during a heatwave. Participants were led through the key issues likely be faced first during the initial few hours, then those after two days, and finally those expected after two months.

Resilience of Critical Infrastructure

5. During May, two members of the emergency planning team attended a table-top emergency response exercise organised by the 'Midlands Category 2 Utilities and Transport Forum' and the 'Trent Catchment Flood Group' (TCFG). The event was hosted by the Environment Agency (EA), and other key Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners were represented as well as colleagues from other LRFs across the East and

West Midlands. The Forum was established in 2011 as a means of networking and to enable dialogue between utility organizations with regional coverage and representatives of local agencies.

6. Attendees were placed in one of four groups; Power, Water, Communications and Roads, and were joined by members of the TCFG plus an EA 'Subject Matter Expert'. Following a Met Office and EA initial incident report, the exercise began with a local brief, followed by discussion and then feedback. The exercise recreated a Tactical Coordinating Group discussion focussing on decision making in response to a loss of critical infrastructure following a major flood event.
7. Learning from the event will be used further revise our own LRF emergency plans for flooding and loss of critical infrastructure, as well as looking to standardise some aspects of emergency plans across the Midlands area. This will aid the response of organisations to a widespread cross-border incident.

Business Continuity Awareness Week

8. Week beginning Monday 16 May was the UK Business Continuity Institute's 'Business Continuity Awareness Week'. This opportunity was taken to remind the managers of critical County Council services of their duty to prepare effective plans for the continuance of the service under all circumstances. As part of this, managers were reminded to ensure that key suppliers and contractors also have adequate business continuity arrangements in place. Also, the team worked with communications colleagues to send out 'tweets' over the course of the week to encourage local businesses to have plans in place to enable them to continue to trade during interruptions such as power cuts.
9. The County Council aims to be a resilient organisation, able to continue to provide vital services irrespective of fires, floods, loss of ICT or power cut, or any other business interruption. When a plan needs to be updated, or if a business impact analysis is required, or if a plan needs to be exercised, all of the information required by managers is maintained on a business continuity OneSpace site.

Syrian Refugee Resettlement

10. The Group Manager for Emergency Planning and Registration has continued to fulfil the 'Single Point of Contact' role in coordinating the County Council's involvement in the government's Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme (SRRP). This has included working with internal and external partners in planning for further arrivals of Syrian families following those that came to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire before Christmas.
11. At time of writing, arrangements have been completed for a family to be accommodated in Beeston in early June. Broxtowe Borough Council has booked transport and a property has been prepared. Refugee Forum staff and translators will be in attendance to welcome the family from the plane, along with two people from the group of resettled families that arrived before Christmas. Appropriate school places have been allocated and a GP surgery has been identified and registered. Similar preparations are being

made for further arrivals in to Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough at the end of June.

Incidents

12. On 23 May, the emergency planning team was alerted to a series of bomb hoax calls to a small number of schools right across the UK (believed to up to 30). None had been sent to Nottinghamshire schools, however one had been sent to a primary school in Nottingham City, and it was possible there would be more to come and these might affect County schools. The calls took the form of automated, computerised messages containing menacing threats. Police advised that that similar incidents have happened before and are likely to happen again, and that schools should maintain their 'normal vigilance' and respond in accordance with their emergency plans if they receive a threatening call. Schools around the UK that did received the calls were evacuated and then searched.
13. On the same day, the Nottinghamshire Police Control Room alerted the emergency planning team that a shoe box sized suspicious package had been found in the Idlewells Shopping Centre in Sutton-in-Ashfield. The area was evacuated and the Explosive Ordinance Disposal Team attended from Chilwell. A controlled explosion was carried out and Police crime scene officers recovered evidence. The library in the Idlewells Centre was evacuated for just over two hours, however Sutton-in-Ashfield Registration Office (which is in the library) was not open for appointments at the time of the incident.

Safety of Sports Grounds

14. The emergency planning team carries out routine match-day safety inspections at high-profile, sensitive or unusual fixtures at major sports ground across the County. These included one at the Mansfield Town verses Notts County fixture on 16 April. Following this fixture an incident is currently being investigated by the emergency planning team. The outcomes will be reported to the Safety Advisory Group for the ground, with a view to identifying the causes and lessons to be learned to reduce the risk of similar incidents occurring in the future.
15. A series of annual audit and safety inspections has been arranged over the summer. The inspection of Southwell Racecourse takes place on 27 June, and inspections of Nottingham Forest and Mansfield Town Football Clubs will take place on 7 July. Match-day inspections have been planned at Trent Bridge Cricket Ground for the One-Day cricket international matches between England and Sri Lanka on 21 June and between England and Pakistan on 30 August.

EPS Hillsborough Event

16. The Emergency Planning Society held a workshop at Nottingham Forest Football Club on Thursday 26 May 2016, to examine a range of emergency management issues that were identified during the Hillsborough Inquests. Issues considered related to strategic, tactical and operational matters.

17. The workshop was the first to be organised following the recent Hillsborough inquests, and specific consideration was given to crowd safety, security, emergency planning and response implications arising from the verdicts. There was discussion also of issues of beyond sport and sporting events, including in respect of the transport sector, local authorities and leisure event organisers. These were examined with a view to taking the events in 1989 and considering what lessons and issues are applicable in 2016.
18. The event was attended by County Council officers involved in 'Safety of Sports Ground' work, and Councillor Alice Grice in her capacity as Vice Chairman of the County Council Committee that is charged with the overview of this area of work.

Registration and Celebratory Services

Registration office accommodation

19. Various changes of registration accommodation, previously approved by the Finance and Property Committee, are now coming to fruition. In May, the previous office in Carlton was closed, to be replaced by an office in Arnot Hill House, Arnold. At the same time a full birth, death and notice appointment service is being operated from County Hall pending the return to The Hall in West Bridgford in spring 2017. Importantly, the diary for wedding ceremony bookings at The Hall has now been opened and bookings are now being taken for ceremonies to take place there from 1st June 2017. Once the Hall is fully operational, the ceremonies service currently operating from The Welbeck will be ceased. This is expected to be from 31 July 2017.

GRO Stock and Security Audit

20. In the early part of this year officers from the UK General Register Office (GRO) carried out an audit of the systems and practices of the Nottinghamshire Local Registration Service in respect of the use of secure certificate stock. This was the first audit undertaken in Nottinghamshire since the amalgamation of the previous five Registration Districts in the County, which took effect from 1 July 2009.
21. The Nottinghamshire Registration Service handles around 15,000 certificates each year, for the registration of births, deaths and marriages, and each one is a legal document that could be used for fraudulent purposes if lost or stolen. Audits are undertaken by GRO to provide assurance to the Registrar General and HM Passport Office Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) that Local Authorities have systems and processes in place to protect certificate stocks. The audit involved examination of the security arrangements around the receipt, storage and use of certificates. In addition, a review took place of the data storage arrangements and security of, and access to, registration records and information. Audit visits were made to offices in Worksop, Basford, Retford, Newark, Ollerton, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Southwell, Eastwood, Hucknall, Rushcliffe, Carlton and Beeston, plus the offices in Kings Mill Hospital and West Bridgford Library. The visit included:
 - A full check of secure certificate stock issued to all principal officers for reconciliation against records held by the Registrar General

- Review of procedures in relation to receipt, control and issue of certificate stock and associated record keeping
 - Review of wider security arrangements over locality and storage of certificate stock
 - Review of the security of and access to registration records and information
 - A review of data storage arrangements
22. During the course of their visit, the auditors found they were unable to reconcile just one certificate (dating from 2009 against their records). Other adverse findings included some local office practices around the management of keys for access to secure certificate stock. On the positive side, the report noted that it was encouraging that, in all offices, when stock is delivered it is immediately stored in a secure area and subsequently checked against the consignment note for completeness. Also that certificate stock is then stored in sequential order in appropriate safes, and that there are good security practices in place around transportation of marriage stock and registers.
23. The overall result is given as one of four levels of assurance: Low, Limited, Reasonable or High. The assessment of the Nottinghamshire Service was “Reasonable’ meaning that a “Reasonable level of assurance achieved with some scope for improvement in existing arrangements. Action required”. The Registration Management Team have considered the detail of the audit report and are implementing actions arising from this.

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 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.

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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

- 'Stock and Security Assurance, Nottinghamshire Local Registration Service' GRO Local Government Delivery Partnership Unit

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All