

8th January 2012

Agenda Item: 7

**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

Incidents

2. Significant flooding affected Nottinghamshire from Sunday 25th November 2012 to the end of the following week. The scale of the flooding has been estimated by the Environment Agency (EA) to have been a 1 in 7 year event on the River Trent and 1 in 15 years on the River Soar. The Midlands region, as a whole, received 167% of the long term average amount of rainfall for November.
3. The County Hall Emergency Centre operated during the week and maintained regular contact with the EA Incident Room, and other agencies involved in the response. Contact was also established with members of the public in affected areas, including flood wardens, Parish Councils and vulnerable residents.
4. The response of all agencies was informed by EA flood forecasting and the contents of well-developed flood response plans. A distinctive feature of this flood was the experience of a prolonged peak of river levels just below the point where many more properties would have been inundated. This caused protracted anxiety for communities under the threat of flooding. The communities most affected or at greatest risk during the week included Lowdham, Tollerton, Colwick, Gotham, Gunthorpe, Hoveringham, Caythorpe, Rolleston, Bleasby, Newark, Shelford, Fiskerton, Rempstone, Edingley, North Wheatley, Averham, Girton, Collingham and North Muskham.
5. As planned, the EA took the lead in coordinating the exchange of information and in the coordination of the multi-agency response. This was done through regular 'Flood Advisory Service' teleconferences. These were superseded by the introduction of 'Tactical Coordinating Group' teleconferences, at the point when the floods threatened to inundate a significant number of properties. Later, a Recovery Coordinating Group was established.

6. Good communication was established and maintained between the County and District Councils, regularly updating one another and conferring on response priorities, tactics and resources. Highways colleagues introduced road closures when and where there was a risk to public safety. Inspectors monitored these locations, and roads were re-opened when the danger had passed. Diversions were signposted as appropriate, and traffic lights were used where necessary to control the flow of traffic around diversions. A Community Flood Signage scheme was operated in Bleasby, whereby local trained volunteers were able to put in place pre-planned road closures.
7. The first opportunity to reflect on the experience of the incident came on Friday 30th November, with a meeting of the Local Resilience Forum. All main agencies involved in flooding from the Trent were represented at the meeting. These discussions were followed by a (routine) meeting of the Local Resilience Forum's Flooding Sub-Group on 6th December, which was given over to a debrief of the floods.
8. It was concluded that the extent of flooding seen on this occasion did not correlate precisely with the prediction models. The Environment Agency will be using data collected during this event to improve their warning system for future incidents. This is likely to result in revised trigger levels for flood warnings. The EA are also considering how to ensure that their incident room only sends Flood Warnings when they are certain that flooding will affect homes.
9. It was further concluded that the flood event experienced at the end of November 2012 was modest compared with the scale of events for which our emergency plans have been prepared. The River Trent peaked short of levels that would have caused very serious problems. A little higher, and the river could have inundated hundreds more properties and blocked strategically important roads including the A6097.

Update on Safety at Sports Grounds

10. At the time of writing this report, Mansfield Town Football Club had been drawn to play Liverpool Football Club in the FA Cup on 6th January. This would be the highest-profile fixture played at the One Call Stadium (Field Mill) for many years. As the club is unaccustomed to managing a full capacity crowd, they were reminded that they must not sell, or agree to sell more tickets than the permitted capacity. This had stood at 75% of the maximum capacity of the stadium; however this was reviewed by a special meeting of the Safety Advisory Group on Monday 17th December and was increased to 90% to take account of the detailed preparations being made.
11. It was stressed to the club that safety must take priority over all the other issues in planning for the event. Consideration needed to be given to how to handle the introduction of allocated seating, and that the stewards would need to be proactive in getting people to the correct seats. Emergency vehicle access must be kept completely clear and an ambulance space must be reserved next to it. The club has been required to prepare an event specific plan for the game, including issues such as the arrival of the Liverpool team and how coaches will be dealt with, car parking, media and TV company management, potential pitch invasion and additional contingency plans for overcrowding and any problems with the system of allocated seating, and for dealing with any attempts by visiting fans to force their way through gates and turnstiles, as had been seen at Wembley recently.

Voluntary Agencies Training Event

12. An emergency planning training event for Voluntray Agencies was held on 17th November, hosted in the Assembly Hall at County Hall. The aim of the event was to increase the knowledge and understanding of volunteers regarding 'Active Shooter' incidents, and issues connected with these. An 'Active Shooter' is an armed person who shoots and continues to shoot and kill people until they decide to stop or are forcibly stopped. The Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings in Connecticut, USA, a month after this event was an example of this type of incident.
13. In total of 80 delegates from 8 different voluntary agencies booked onto the event, but due to sickness only 54 attended on the day. The following voluntary agencies were represented:
 - British Red Cross
 - Cruse bereavement Care
 - RAYNET
 - Salvation Army
 - Nottinghamshire 4x4 response
 - WRVS
 - Nottingham search and rescue
 - Colwick Lifeguards
14. The event comprised two presentations from guest speakers and a discussion session based on a 'Survivor Reception Centre'. The first presentation was from Nottinghamshire Police and described their response and overall strategy for active shooter incidents. The second was by Judy Evans of the British Red Cross, who described the community recovery process that followed the shootings by Derrick Bird in Cumbria in 2010.
15. Evaluation of the event found that 78% of participants rated the event as very useful or useful. The majority of the delegates said they found the pitch and pace of the event about right, and liked both informative presentations plus discussion time.

Registration and Celebratory Services

Registration Service Development Update – Training

16. The service now has two new Registrar Training Officers (part-time, job share) following the implementation of the One District reorganisation. The Training Officers have devised a 'Training, Learning and Development' Strategy for the service, which will be launched formally before Christmas. The strategy takes a person-centred approach to individual learning and development, with a strong emphasis on encouraging individuals and their line managers to prioritise training. The strategy links registration specific formal classroom based training sessions to group/team development, sharing positive practice sessions whereby representatives from across the county come together to share their own experiences, knowledge and good practice. This is designed also to improve networks and communications and informal learning opportunities.

17. A comprehensive set of tools have been introduced to help individuals and their line managers to judge what form of development is necessary. These complement NCC EPDR and supervision documents, and integrate with the County Council's wider learning aims. They also include the introduction of an online staff survey, the first of which has provided valuable insight to how colleagues have adapted to organisational change and will help set the pace for future service improvements. A training plan forms part of the strategy and will be adapted and modified based on service and team requirements. Between December and June the training officers will have delivered new and refresher training on all elements of technical registration such as notice taking, corrections, ceremonies, and so forth. As the year continues, so will the delivery of appropriate learning modules, all of which will be reviewed for return on investment.

Registration Service Development Update – Marketing

18. The 'Celebrate in Nottinghamshire' brochure has been produced at no cost to the service. The look and feel of the magazine reflects the style the service has wanted to achieve and has proven popular with other NCC departments as learning from its development has also been shared across other areas. A double-page article in East Midlands's 'BRIDE' magazine in return for distribution of the magazine in registration offices in waiting rooms and at wedding fayres means that the two documents together help to promote the customer service experience that the Registration Service is striving for.

19. A further new brochure is now in production which will help recently bereaved people and those who work with them (such as care homes and bereavement centres) to plan civil funerals, understand the death registration process and to personalise the customer journey. The brochure is an example of how the service is working with other sections within the directorate, such as trading standards; with information on how to avoid door step crime and staying safe at home. This brochure is also produced at no cost to the service and will be in an appropriate and sensitive format.

Statutory and Policy Implications

20. 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.