

15 September 2021**Agenda Item: 10****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES****UPDATE ON KEY EMERGENCY PLANNING MATTERS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on recent key activities and events in the work of the Emergency Planning Team.

Information

2. The County Council's Emergency Planning Team works with all departments to plan and prepare for the authority's part in the response to any major emergency that may affect Nottinghamshire. Such incidents may be rare but when they do occur it's essential that the County Council is ready to respond quickly and effectively. The key functions of the emergency planning team are to:
 - Assess local and national risks to identify emergencies to plan for.
 - Prepare and maintain emergency plans.
 - Train and exercise (internally and with other organisations) to prepare for effective coordination of emergency response and recovery.
 - Ensure that Nottinghamshire County Council has plans in place to continue to deliver its own essential services to the public during an emergency.
3. The team also facilitates the authority's contributions to the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), which is the multi-agency partnership for the co-ordination of local emergency planning. The LRF is led by Nottinghamshire Police, and includes all local emergency services, local authorities, NHS services, government agencies, utility companies and voluntary organisations.

Covid-19 – Supporting the work of the County Council and Local Resilience Forum

4. The Emergency Planning Team has worked throughout the Covid-19 pandemic to facilitate and support the emergency response management structures of the County Council and the LRF. The Group Manager has been a member of the County Council's Covid-19 Corporate Leadership Team, and an Emergency Planning Team Manager has facilitated the Covid-19 meetings of the Risk, Safety and Emergency Management Board.
5. At the same time, the team has also fulfilled the role of LRF Covid-19 Secretariat and has facilitated the meetings of the multi-agency Tactical Coordination Group (TCG), including provision of support to the TCG Chair, Jonathan Gribbin, Director of Public Health. Individual members of the team have participated in the work of, and supported, various Cells and Sub-groups established as part of the LRF response including:

- Health and Social Care TCG
 - Logistics Cell
 - Local Authorities Cell
 - Humanitarian Assistance
 - Excess Deaths Cell
 - Recovery Coordinating Group
6. One member of the team was assigned to LRF work in respect of variants of concern and provided the emergency planning role in the development of the 'Operation Eagle' surge testing plan and exercise. Public Health funding has been agreed for emergency planning team support for the work of the Covid Response Service until September 2023.

Local Resilience Forum Funding Pilot

7. As part of the Government's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have funded LRFs to assist them in undertaking a pilot project in the current financial year. The review work includes research and development work aimed at:
- Strengthening the role and responsibilities of LRFs.
 - A new National Resilience Strategy.
 - Developing a whole of society approach to resilience.
 - A review of the Civil Contingencies Act.
8. One member of the emergency planning team has been released to participate in this work and the County Council will be reimbursed the cost of the recruiting a replacement officer.
9. This work represents a key moment for resilience across the country, with the LRF Funding Pilots being a critical first step in addressing key questions arising from the experience of Covid-19 and other recent emergencies. The Secretary of State for MHCLG has approved the funding to support LRFs to:
- Build core strategic capacity and capability.
 - Take an active role in developing and delivering national priorities as set out in the Integrated Review.
 - Provide evidence to feed into the National Resilience Strategy.
10. The funding is provided with the instruction that it must not displace existing funding or fund routine core activities of LRFs. It is intended that the outcomes of the pilot will include a greater understanding of the efficacy, challenges and opportunities for central government funding to LRFs. It will also provide data for considering changes to the roles and responsibilities of LRFs, and evidence for future Spending Reviews.

Emergency Plans

11. An emergency plan has been prepared in respect of possible off-site effects of an emergency occurring at DHL Manton Wood, which is a new 'Upper Tier' site under the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) regulations. The site, to the South East of Worksop, has been constructed to allow safe storage of substances including flammable aerosols and products that are hazardous to aquatic environments. The aim of the emergency plan is to provide procedures for dealing with the off-site consequences of a major accident occurring at the site.

The plan includes information about the local area (including residential, recreational and business areas) and information about facilities available in the event of a major emergency.

12. Emergency plans for responding to flooding have been improved by the establishment of a Community Flood Signage Scheme for Holme Pierrepont. This has included on-site training for local community volunteers. Other such schemes are in development in respect of local flood risk in Lambley, Caythorpe, Colston Bassett and Sutton Bonington. Existing schemes are already operating in a further six flood risk communities across the County.
13. In February and March this year, members of the emergency planning team joined colleagues from the Environment Agency to provide 'virtual' Flood Warden training, for volunteers from across the County.
14. A bespoke training event in July was provided to Thurgarton Flood Wardens / signage scheme volunteers by the team, with further community training scheduled for other areas later this year.

Safety of Sports Grounds

15. The emergency planning team leads the work of the Safety Advisory Groups for the four major sports grounds in the County: The City Ground (Nottingham Forest), the One-Call Stadium (Mansfield Town), Trent Bridge Cricket Ground and Southwell Racecourse. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, appropriate requirements were included in the General Safety Certificate for each sports ground to ensure adherence with government guidance.
16. Fixtures at Trent Bridge Cricket Ground this summer included two international events. A T20 match between England and Pakistan on Friday 16th July and a Test Match between England and India from 4th to 8th August. The emergency planning team ensured that the preparations for each of these met all appropriate safety requirements and carried out During Performance Inspections. The T20 international took place prior to the national move to Step 4 of the government's 'roadmap' for relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, however a full capacity crowd was possible as the event was a 'Test Event' in for Phase III of the government's 'Events Research Programme'.
17. Pre-season Annual Audit and Inspection meetings for the football grounds were held after the move to Step 4 of the government's 'roadmap', and so it was possible to remove Covid-19 conditions and permit full capacity attendance fixtures for the start of the new season. Both audits were completed to the satisfaction of the Safety Advisory Groups. During Performance Inspections were carried out by the emergency planning team for the Mansfield Town verses Bristol Rovers fixture on Saturday 7th August and Nottingham Forest against Blackburn Rovers on Wednesday 18th August. A During Performance Inspection was conducted at the 'Ladies Day' fixture at Southwell Racecourse on Sunday 15th August.

Summer Heat Health Warnings

18. A national Heat-Health Watch system operates in England and Wales from 1st June until the 15th September each year. The system comprises of four levels of response based on likely maximum daytime and minimum night-time temperatures. Warnings are issued by the Met Office in association with the Department of Health and recommends steps so that people can take steps to look after themselves and organisations can help vulnerable people to cope.
19. The emergency planning team receive Heat-Health hot weather alerts and distribute these by email to relevant teams across County Council departments.

Incidents

20. Throughout the duration of the pandemic the emergency planning team has continued to plan for and respond to concurrent emergencies, the most significant being Storm Christoph in January and a fire at a gas substation in Trowell in March resulting in the evacuation of nearby residential properties.
21. Following forecasts of severe weather and potential flooding from the Met Office and Environment Agency the County Council worked alongside partners to warn, inform and assist communities at risk to prepare for flooding. Some early forecasts had suggested that we may see similar flood events to those experienced in November 2019 and February 2020. Fortunately, on this occasion, river levels reached a height just short of those two previous flood incidents.
22. The gas substation fire in March resulted in Nottinghamshire Police evacuating all properties within a 200m cordon of the fire. A place of safety was established with the assistance of Trowell Parish Council and approximately 70 residents attended. An emergency planning officer was deployed to the scene to ensure that residents were safe and well, and that evacuation arrangements were taking place in line with the Covid restrictions at that time. This involved the emergency planning team providing PPE for the place of safety from stocks held for emergency evacuations.

Service Level Agreements with District and Borough Councils

23. The emergency planning team has continued to provide services to all seven Borough and District Councils through a set of long-standing Service Level Agreements. All local authorities share duties under the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004, and the agreements aim to ensure that there is no duplication of effort, or gaps, in the work to fulfil these duties.

Other Options Considered

24. The report provides an update on the work of the emergency planning team, which addresses statutory requirements on the County Council. Prioritisation of the work of the team is based on assessment of the risk of major emergencies.

Reason for Recommendations

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, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the committee notes the information contained in the report and,

- 1) Considers if there are any actions required in relation to the issues contained in the report;

- 2) Agrees to receive further updates periodically.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Robert Fisher, Group Manager for Emergency Planning and Registration

Constitutional Comments (CEH 17/08/2021)

27. The report and recommendations fall within the remit of Communities Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (RWK 16/08/2021)

28. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All.