

20th April 2022**Agenda Item:7****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES****EMERGENCY PLANNING TEAM STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval in principle to add 1.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Emergency Planning Officer posts to the establishment of the emergency planning team to create capacity to fulfil three new requests from Borough and District Councils for extended Service Level Agreements for emergency planning services.

Information

2. Nottinghamshire County Council's preparedness for emergencies is facilitated by a small well established and well regarded Emergency Planning Team. As part of its role, the team has maintained Service Level Agreements for emergency planning with all seven Borough and District Councils since the inception of the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 (CCA). The prime purpose of these is to eliminate duplication of effort in addressing CCA duties across the two-tier area. Since 2008 the team has also provided an extended level of service to Rushcliffe Borough Council.
3. This year, three other Councils (Bassetlaw District Council, Gedling Borough Council and Mansfield District Council) have expressed an interest in having the extended level of service too. In order to meet these requests, it is proposed (subject to confirmation of their own approvals) to increase the establishment of Emergency Planning Officers from 6.0 FTE posts to 7.5 FTE posts. The cost of doing this is to be met from SLA fees to be paid by the Councils concerned.

The Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 (CCA)

4. The Civil Contingencies Act, 2004, provides the United Kingdom framework for multi-agency preparations and preparedness for major emergencies. The Act places duties on 'Category 1' organisations, including local authorities, emergency and health services, and others. In summary, these are to:
 - Assess major risks affecting the local area.
 - Develop and maintain appropriate Emergency Plans.
 - Put in place Business Continuity arrangements.
 - Warn and Inform the public.
 - Share information with other local responders.
 - Cooperate with other local responders.

5. In addition, local authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

Service Level Agreements

6. Since the CCA came into effect, the Emergency Planning Team has provided a 'Standard' level of service to six Borough and District Councils and an 'Extended' level of service to Rushcliffe Borough Council. This has been paid for by fees based on full cost recovery. The Borough and District Councils remain responsible for ensuring that they fulfil the duties and responsibilities imposed upon them by the Act and any future additional or amending legislation or regulations.
7. Under the SLAs the County Council provides the lead role and assists the Borough/District Councils, on joint activities in key areas including:
 - Providing advice, guidance and information on emergency planning and business continuity matters.
 - Carrying out risk assessments as part of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Risk Advisory Group.
 - Facilitating, producing and maintaining multi-agency, generic emergency response plans and other emergency schemes and arrangements.
 - Arranging multi-agency training events.
 - Testing emergency plans by exercise and review.
 - Providing emergency response capability, including that the County will provide a 24 hour, county-wide, Duty Emergency Planning Officer emergency response system.
 - Project managing multi-agency events and initiatives determined by the LRF.
 - Providing an annual work, training and exercise programme.
8. An emergency planning officer from the County Council is assigned as a nominated as first point of contact for each District/Borough Council.
9. Under the 'Extended' SLA (with Rushcliffe Borough Council only at present) the County Council provides a part-time officer (0.5 FTE) who will act as the Borough/District's lead officer for emergency planning and business continuity. This officer facilitates and supports the Council's internal work on the creation, maintenance and testing of the relevant plans. Also, the officer provides bespoke training events for staff identified in having an operational role in emergency and business continuity plans. The Borough/District Council provides a work-base at the Council's offices for the officer provided by the County, and a senior manager for the officer to report to.

Requests from Borough and District Councils

10. Recent dialogue with the Borough and Districts Councils has revealed the following interests:
 - Ashfield, Broxtowe and Newark & Sherwood Council all wish to continue with the standard SLAs with the County Council.
 - Rushcliffe Borough Council wishes to continue with the extended SLA.
 - Bassetlaw District Council, Gedling Borough Council and Mansfield District Council are interested in moving from the standard to the extended SLA (subject to their own internal approvals).
11. In order to satisfy the interests detailed above, the County Council emergency planning team will need to expand by 1.5 FTE Emergency Planning Officer posts.

Financial Information

12. Ashfield District Council, Broxtowe Borough Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council have agreed to the 'Standard' SLA have each agree to transfer £6,000 per annum to the County in return for the activities detailed in paragraph 7 above. In addition, Ashfield and Broxtowe Councils have opted for additional activities for a further £600.
13. Subject to their own internal approvals, Bassetlaw District Council, Gedling Borough Council, Mansfield District Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council would transfer £27,800 per annum to the County in return for the 'Extended' SLA services. This equates to the standard SLA services plus a dedicated Emergency Planning Officer (Hay Band A) working 2 ½ days per week for the Borough/District Council.
14. The figures identified in paragraphs 12 and 13 will be reviewed and revised on an annual basis and agreed between the County Council and the Borough/District Councils .
15. The Borough/District agree to pay fees associated with events and courses necessarily attended by the County's officer in carrying out work on behalf of the Borough/District, and reimburse the officer for travel and other expenses incurred during work for the Borough/District. Also, the Borough/District will cover the cost of any equipment or materials arising from work by the officer on behalf of the Council.
16. The current establishment of the County Council Emergency Planning Team is sufficient to provide for the existing SLA. The cost of extending the team to meet the request from the three Council that wish to extend the SLA is detailed below.

Current establishment	Proposed addition	Nature of the proposed change
0.5 FTE Group Manager	No change	No change.
2.0 FTE Team Managers	No change	No change.
6.0 FTE EP Officers	1.5 FTE EP Officers	Bringing the establishment to 7.5 FTE posts in total. One 0.5 FTE Emergency Planning Officer post will be assigned to fulfil the Service Level Agreement with each of four Borough and District Councils.

17. The provision of extended SLA to three additional Councils will raise £65k additional income per annum, for the emergency planning team, which is sufficient to employ an additional 1.5 FTE emergency planning officers (Hay Band A) .

Risks and Opportunities

18. Termination of the SLA agreements may be by mutual consent or, without prejudice, the Borough/District will be entitled to terminate their inclusion in the agreement by giving at least 12 months written notice to the County Council. Similarly, the County Council is entitled to terminate their arrangement with the Borough/District Council under this Agreement by giving at least 12 months written notice.

Other Options Considered

19. The report seeks approval to add 1.5 FTE Emergency Planning Officer posts to the establishment of the emergency planning team in order to create capacity to fulfil three new requests from Borough and District Councils for extended Service Level Agreements for emergency planning services. The County Council could choose to decline these requests, however no benefit has been identified from this option.

Reason for Recommendations

20. To create capacity to fulfil interest (subject to approvals) from Borough and District Councils for extended Service Level Agreements for emergency planning services.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. 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.

Financial Implications

22. The financial implications of the proposal are as detailed in the report.

23. The provision of extended SLA to three additional Councils will raise £65k additional income per annum, for the emergency planning team, which is sufficient to employ an additional 1.5 FTE emergency planning officers (Hay Band A).

Personnel Implications

24. Officers fulfilling extended SLAs will work from two bases (varying periodically), County Hall and the base of the Borough/District Council concerned. Officers will also spend a proportion of their time working remotely and from home.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee approves the proposal to add 1.5 FTE Emergency Planning Officer posts to the establishment of the emergency planning team to create capacity to fulfil three new requests from Borough and District Councils (subject to their own internal approvals) for extended Service Level Agreements for emergency planning services.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments [KK 08/03/2022]

25. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Communities Committee.

Financial Comments [SES 09/03/2022]

26. The financial implications are set out in the report.

27. The provision of extended SLA to three additional Councils will raise £65k additional income per annum, for the emergency planning team, which is sufficient to employ an additional 1.5 FTE emergency planning officers (Hay Band A).

HR Comments [MS 31/03/2022]

28. Any HR implications are contained in the body of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

- Service Level Agreements for the provision of emergency planning services from the County Council to Borough and District Councils.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected