

## EMERGENCY PLANNING UPDATE

### Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee – 8 July 2014

Report of Chief Officer, Environmental and Operational Services

Status: For information

Key Decision: No

---

**Executive Summary:** This report provides an update to the Advisory Committee on current Emergency Planning practises and procedures.

---

**This report supports the Key Aim of** Safe Communities; Healthy Environment; sustainable economy and effective management of Council resources.

---

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. R Hogarth

**Contact Officer(s)** Kevin Tomsett – Head of Parking and Surveying Services  
Ext: 7368

---

**Recommendation to Advisory Committee:** That the Committee note the report.

---

### Introduction and Background

- 1 Members last considered a report on emergency planning at the Services Select Committee on 10 June 2008. Since that time the arrangements for the Council fulfilling its statutory duties with regard to emergency planning have changed considerably.
- 2 Following a budget saving agreed in 2010, the post of a dedicated Emergency Planning Officer was deleted from the establishment and responsibility for the function was absorbed into the Building Control team with a greater emphasis on corporate responsibility and greater resilience in knowledge and response being spread over a number of Officers rather than through one dedicated Officer.
- 3 An internal audit of the Emergency Plan was undertaken prior to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games and recommendations made, however, due to the unique demand of this period and the District being a host Authority to the Paralympic Road Cycling Event, bespoke PAN Kent Multi agency plans were put in place for this event.
- 4 The key recommendation was to review the Emergency Plan to reflect the new management organisational arrangements.

## **Statutory Responsibilities**

- 5 The Council has statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as a Category 1 responder, along with the 'Blue Light' emergency services, Kent County Council, the Environment Agency and the NHS.
- 6 The District Council's main responsibilities are to provide humanitarian assistance during any event or evacuation, immediate care and longer term housing needs whilst aiding recovery, and throughout any event assisting with multi agency response, sharing information and mutual aid.
- 7 An Emergency is defined, under the Act as an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare or the Environment.

## **Major Emergency Plan**

- 8 The major emergency plan is a framework document cross referencing with Councils' and other Agencies' plans, consisting of numerous document, but principally are:
  - Major Emergency Plan
  - Mutual Aid Agreement
  - Contacts List
  - District Emergency Centre Operations
  - Business Continuity Plan
- 9 As a result of the SDC organisational changes and those of the Emergency Planning team at KCC it has been necessary to review and update all the above plans, with the exception of the Business Continuity Plan, to ensure information held is current.
- 10 These documents have not been reproduced in the report as they run to many pages, however, a copy has been made available in the Members Room and are available on the Members Portal.
- 11 The Business Continuity Plan is currently under review and amendment and a Business Continuity Plan and Management System will be presented to your next Committee meeting.

## **Key Roles and Responsibilities**

- 12 To increase resilience across the Council, and to embed Corporate responsibility, an Officer Emergency Planning Working Group has been set up chaired by the Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services, and comprising Officers from Building Control, Housing, Environmental Health, Customer services, CCTV, Communications, HR, Direct Services, Facilities Management and Communities and Businesses.
- 13 Key roles are:
  - Emergency Planning Co-ordinator and Assistant Co-ordinator
  - Information Managers
  - GIS Mapping
  - Call Handlers

- Communications Officers
  - Incident Liaison Officers
  - Function Co-ordinators, and
  - Representatives for Strategic Command (Gold) and Tactical Command (Silver).
- 14 Furthermore additional staff are trained in areas such as Rest Centre Management and Operation of the District Emergency Centre (DEC).
- 15 Exercises are regularly delivered to test the group's preparedness and resilience and to identify any further areas for development.
- 16 Examples of exercises and real emergencies to test preparedness and resilience:
- February 2011 – Exercise BALDR – Local Multi Agency Flood Plan Validation exercise
  - November 11 – September 12 – Torch Relay and Paralympic Cycling Planning & Testing
  - January 2012 – Severe Power/Gas Outage
  - October 12 – Temporary Accommodation of Stranded Dutch Students
  - April 2013 – East Coast Flooding workshop/exercise
  - September 13 – Exercise EDEN – Multi Agency & Voluntary Sector evacuation exercise
  - December 13 – March 14 – Severe Weather including Flooding/Power Outages
  - Ongoing – Ash Dieback
  - Ongoing – Severe Weather Monitoring
  - Ongoing – Potential Restriction in Fuel
  - Ongoing – Various Gas Leaks/Cylinder Fires/Small Scale Evacuations

## **Training**

- 17 Training both internal and external has been undertaken by various Officers since 2011 covering the following areas:
- Introduction to Civil Protection
  - Strategic Emergency and Crisis Management
  - Working in Safety Advisory Groups
  - Public Safety at Mass Gatherings
  - Developing & Maintaining Business Continuity Management
  - Recovering from Emergencies
  - Television & Radio Interview training
  - Mass Evacuation & Shelter training
  - 'Berwicks' Emergency Management training/exercises
  - Rest Centre Management training
  - Incident Liaison Officer Training
  - Scientific and Technical Advisory CELL (STAC)

## **Relationship with Other Emergency Planning Agencies**

- 18 The Council is a member of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) and continues to build strong relationships with Multi Agency Partners such as Kent County Council, the newly formed Kent Resilience Team (KRT comprises KCC, KF&RS and Police Emergency Planning Departments) amongst other partners such as the Environment Agency and Voluntary Sector.

- 19 The Council is a representative on the following KRF groups:
- Risk Assessment Group
  - Voluntary Sector Group
  - Resilient Communications Group
  - Local Authority Emergency Planning Group
- 20 The District is also the Vice-Chair of the Mass Evacuation & Shelter working group, currently tasked with writing a new plan for the County.

### **Safety Advisory Groups**

- 21 Since the 2012 Olympic Games there has been a greater emphasis on all Local Authorities to host and Chair Safety Advisory Groups (SAG) potentially covering any public show or event within the District. Key responsibility here, is to ensure public safety.
- 22 The Council has traditionally held such SAGs for large scale events such as at Brands Hatch and the London Golf club but now Chairs a SAG for any event which may cause partners agencies such as the Police, Highways or any other agency concern for public safety and well being.
- 23 The role has developed and continues to develop with attendance at cross boundary SAGs (Tonbridge half marathon) with the potential for a Kent wide attendance and approach to create greater efficiency for all agencies attending.
- 24 The Council also has a representative on the Kent Safety Advisory Steering Group.

### **Community Resilience**

- 25 With particular reference to severe weather, the Council continues to work with Parish Councils such as Edenbridge to support and enhance where possible their local and immediate response to an unfolding event.
- 26 Further to recent flooding, greater links and pre-deployment of sandbags have been agreed with Westerham and Otford, whilst work is currently underway with Brasted and Shoreham Parish Councils.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

The Council has a small budget for Civil protection (£33,000) which is largely salary allocations for key staff responsibilities. In the event of invoking emergency Planning procedures and actions funding would need to be found from Partner Agencies, or from Council reserves, depending on the nature of the response. In certain larger scale events, where expenditure exceeds a certain limit, funding can be recovered from Government above this limit (Belwin Scheme).

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The Council has statutory responsibilities as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingency Act 2004.

## Equality Impacts

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

## **Conclusions**

### **Background Papers:**

Major Emergency Plan and Appendices  
Mutual Aid Agreement  
District Emergency Centre Operations

**Richard Wilson**

**Chief Officer, Environmental and Operational Services**