

REPORT TO: BEST VALUE SUB COMMITTEE - 18TH SEPTEMBER 2001

REPORT ON: BEST VALUE REVIEW: EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE 2000/2001

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT NO: 242-2001

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is the result of a Best Value Review into the Emergency Planning Service provided by the Support Services Department as part of the Council's Best Value Review Process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Sub Committee agrees to develop the service within existing structures with the aim of ensuring that officers with sufficient knowledge of the emergency planning arrangements are available to respond to an emergency at any time.

2.2 It is further recommended that

- 1) A Council wide emergency planning liaison group be set up under the chairmanship of the Director of Support Services or Administration manager;
- 2) The Emergency Planning Officer arrange further half day seminars to brief key staff on local emergency planning issues;
- 3) The Emergency Planning Officer prepare a training plan to ensure that staff are adequately trained for their emergency role;
- 4) A complete review of Dundee City Council's Civil Emergency Plan be undertaken and a report presented to the Chief Officers' Management Team by September 2002;
- 5) The Emergency Planning Officer carry out an annual survey to determine that progress is being achieved in relation to issues identified in the course of the Best Value Review.
- 6) Discussions are initiated to explore the possibility of developing mutual aid arrangements with Fife Council, in addition to those currently in place with Angus and Perth and Kinross through the Regional Emergency Co-ordinating and Planning Group (RECAP).

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 This review accounts for 1% of the revenue budget of the Administration Division of the Support Services Department at a budget cost examined of £46,000. This represents 11% of expenditure reviewed in this dept. in 2000/2001.

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

None

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

None

6. DEFINITION OF SERVICE REVIEWED

- 6.1 Emergency Planning provides a wide ranging service to the Council covering the preparation of the Council's Civil Emergency Plans; participation in the Tayside Regional Emergency Co-ordinating and Planning Group (RECAP); liaison with the emergency services, neighbouring councils and other external agencies (voluntary organisations, Tayside Health Board, Scottish Executive, the military etc). In addition emergency planning arranges participation in local and national training for staff and is responsible for maintaining the Council Emergency Centre. The Emergency Planning Officer is also expected to provide advice to the Chief Executive and other officers in the event of a major civil emergency.
- 6.2 The statutory basis for emergency planning is based on the Civil Defence (General Local Authority Functions)(Scotland) Regulations 1993 as amended.
- 6.3 The emergency planning function is provided by the Emergency Planning Officer (PO grade 1-4) who is located within the General Services section of the Support Services Department. Admin and clerical support is provided from keyboard services and office services sections.

7. JUSTIFICATION FOR REVIEW

- 7.1 Emergency planning is a key function of the Council and there is an ever-increasing expectation that local authority departments will provide support to the emergency services and the community in the event of a major incident. The Scottish Executive intends to cease paying civil defence grant from the end of the current financial year although central government support will continue through normal Aggregate External Finance settlement. It is therefore essential that the emergency planning service be scrutinised at this stage to ensure that it is being delivered in the most appropriate and cost effective manner.

8. REVIEW PROCESS

- 8.1 The Review Team consisted of Steve Swann, Personnel and Management Services Department (Review Team Leader), John Smith, Support Services Department. (the lead officer), Stuart Galloway, Support Services Department and Philip Owen, Finance Department.
- 8.2 The Review was carried out by establishing critical success factors following consultation with internal and external stakeholders; performance appraisal, benchmarking and option appraisal.

9. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- 9.1 Emergency Planning involves all council departments as well as external agencies represented on the Tayside Regional Emergency Co-ordinating and Planning Group (RECAP).
- 9.2 Stakeholders were identified as being all departments within Dundee City Council and the following external agencies which were all involved in the consultation:-

Tayside Police
 Tayside Fire Brigade
 Tayside Health Board
 Scottish Ambulance Service (East Central Scotland Division)
 Maritime and Coastguard Agency
 Military Liaison Officer for Tayside
 Tayside Branch British Red Cross
 Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS)
 St. Andrew's Ambulance Association
 Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network (RAYNET)

- 9.3 The consultation was carried out by means of questionnaires sent to all stakeholders asking them their views on the suggested critical success factors and to rate them in

order of importance. Opportunity was also given for additional comments to be submitted and other critical success factors to be proposed. (Copies of questionnaires are at Appendix A).

9.4 As a result the Critical Success Factors identified were as follows (in order of importance):-

1. Key staff within departments/services should know and understand their role in the event of an emergency;
2. It is essential that the roles and responsibilities of the emergency services/local authority and voluntary organisations are fully understood by all concerned;
3. Key individuals must be adequately trained for their roles in a civil emergency;
4. The Council's Civil Emergency plans must be accurate, comprehensive and up to date;
5. Adequate consultation must take place between all interested parties during the preparation of the emergency plans;
6. It is important that Dundee City Council's emergency planning service is provided at reasonable cost.

10. **PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

10.1 The majority of respondents to the questionnaire expressed satisfaction with the present service provided. The following shows how many respondents agreed or agreed strongly, expressed in percentage terms of those who were able to comment on the statements. (A full breakdown is at Appendix B).

1.	Respective roles and responsibilities of the emergency services, local authority and voluntary organisations are fully understood by all concerned	81%
2.	Key staff within your department/ service know and understand their own role in the event of a civil emergency	95%
3.	Key individuals are adequately trained for their role in a civil emergency	95%
4.	The Council's Civil Emergency Plans are accurate, comprehensive and up to date.	90%
5.	Adequate consultation takes place with interested parties during the preparation of the emergency plans	100%
6.	Dundee City Council's emergency planning service is provided at reasonable cost (The cost per head of population).	100% 42p

10.2 Although overall the perception of the service's performance was considered satisfactory, it is clear that those consulted felt it was of critical importance that all those involved in emergency response need to be aware of the roles and responsibilities of all participants and that there is room for improvement in this area. Therefore it is essential that attendance at relevant multi-agency seminars should be encouraged and promoted.

10.3 Other points to emerge from the exercise were as follows:-

Need to ensure that emergency planning is given a sufficiently high profile within the Council;

Appropriate personnel should be nominated to attend joint training exercises etc.

Regular meetings should be arranged to ensure all departments were fully aware of their emergency responsibilities and to progress planning generally.

There is also a need to identify back up staff to be called upon in the event of the Emergency Planning Officer being unavailable when an emergency occurs.

11. COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNCILS

- 11.1 It was not possible to obtain qualitative comparisons from other councils but information was provided from 11 other councils showing their staffing levels and expenditure in relation to emergency planning activities and comparisons were made in relation to population levels.
- 11.2 Appendix C shows that the cost per head of population ranges from 33p in Council G to £1.77 in Council E. Dundee's figure of 42p is third lowest of the Councils which provided information.
- 11.3 The research also revealed that Dundee, Angus, Perth and Stirling are the only councils among those who responded which employ single emergency planning officers without dedicated staff assistance.

12. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 12.1 The Best Value review showed that there is a general level of satisfaction with the current delivery of the service and that key issues are related to ensuring the availability of suitably trained cover for the EPO and that all participants in emergency planning are aware of each other's roles and adequately trained for the task.
- 12.2 A number of options could be considered in connection with developing the service -

Option 1 -No Change

In this option the emergency planning service would continue to be provided by a single officer located within the Support Services Department with admin. and clerical support provided centrally.

The advantages of this option are:-

- Service provided in a familiar manner at low cost;
- Emergency Planning Officer is available full time to Dundee City Council;
- The officer is part of the overall Council team.

Disadvantages are:-

- Lack of dedicated support creates difficulties for staff in dealing with queries in the Emergency Planning Officer's absence;
- Limitations on work which can be done within a reasonable timescale;
- Difficult to arrange sufficient local training for staff and volunteers;
- Little opportunity for informal discussion/brainstorming with colleagues on issues.
- It is impossible to provide a proper "duty officer" service to facilitate contact from emergency services to Dundee City Council;

Option 2 - Develop Service within existing departmental structures

This option is aimed at ensuring additional support is available to the Emergency Planning Officer and that an officer with emergency planning knowledge is available to respond to emergencies at all times by means of a list of other officers from the Support Services Department as back up in the absence of the Emergency Planning Officer.

Advantages:-

- Opportunity for more officers to gain knowledge of emergency planning issues
- Officers share out of hours cover.
- Emergency planning experience available to Council at all times;
- Officers familiar with role and functions of City Council departments;
- Assurance that Council can be contacted by external agencies in an emergency;
- Officers drawn from single department (Support Services).

Disadvantages:-

- Additional workload for participating officers;
- Training commitment for staff involved;
- Potential minor cost implications.

Option 3:- Joint Emergency Planning Service

This would involve setting up an Emergency Planning Unit to provide a service to two or more of the Councils within the Tayside RECAP area. One Council would be "host" to the Unit and provide accommodation and be responsible for day to day administration, salaries etc.

The Unit's size and structure would have to be decided in consultation with the other councils involved.

Advantages:-

- Staff can provide training to local departmental staff and volunteers as required;
- Single co-ordinating Centre could be provided for major emergency;
- Facilitate liaison with Scottish Executive and local emergency services.
- Single unit can provide coherent strategy and approach to Local Authority emergency planning and deal with agreed priorities;
- Officers can ensure adequate cover at all times (including duty officer system);
- Financial resources can be pooled to provide better value service at reasonable cost;

Disadvantages:-

- Agreement would have to be reached on lead/host council for EP unit;
- Appropriate cost sharing to be negotiated and additional costs would be incurred;
- EP staff would have to understand structures of three different councils;
- Feeling of "loss of ownership" of emergency planning service by individual councils;
- Councils may feel they get unequal share of staff time/service

Option 4: Emergency Services Lead Emergency Planning

In this option the Emergency Planning Unit for the area would be part of the police or fire brigade organisation. It would be led by the police or fire brigade Emergency Planning Officer, supported by civilian EPO's with responsibility for the local authorities. Funding could be provided as part of the Council's Police or Fire Joint Board arrangements.

Advantages:-

- Closer working relationship with the emergency services;
- Council emergency response seen as part of the overall response;
- Consistent level of emergency planning in three council areas;
- Resources of emergency services available to assist in planning;
- 24 hour contact point for emergency planning officers;
- Opportunity to develop uniform systems across police/fire brigade area;
- The service would be co-ordinated by a single Joint Board rather than another Council

Disadvantages:-

- Councils may feel isolated from emergency planning function;
- Council departments may not feel as close a sense of "ownership" of plans;
- Lack of direct accountability within councils for emergency planning;
- Councils may feel they get unequal share of staff time/service.

This option would require the agreement of all three local authorities as well as Tayside Police and Tayside Fire Brigade.

- 12.3 The Review Team carried out an Options Appraisal of the options discussed above. The results are tabulated below:-

Options	1	2	3	4
Factors				
Cost of service	4	3	2	2
Dundee City Council Decision	4	4	2	1
Quality	1	3	4	3
Continuity of Service	1	4	3	2
Training Provision	1	1	3	3
Totals	11	15	14	11

- 12.4 On the basis of the Options Appraisal, the review team feel that the emergency planning service could be improved with the adoption of **Option 2- Developing service within existing departmental structures**. It is therefore recommended that the Director of Support Services introduce a back up list of officers to ensure continuous cover for emergencies.

13. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROPOSALS

- 13.1 The Review Team have identified a number of measures which should be put in place to address issues raised in discussion of Critical Success Factors

- 13.2 Critical Success Factor - Key staff in departments should know and understand their emergency role

Present performance is good but will only remain so if the profile of emergency planning remains high and is regularly reviewed in the light of changing circumstances and experience. To facilitate this a Council wide emergency planning liaison group should be established, comprising appropriate representatives from all departments and chaired by the Director of Support Services or the Administration Manager. The remit of this group is to address emergency planning issues across the council including the identification of training needs of key staff.

The Group should be established by the end of November 2001 and would expect to

maintain or improve on the current 95% level of satisfaction by the time of the first review of the implementation of the Continuous Improvement measures.

13.3 Critical Success Factor - Roles and responsibilities of the emergency services/local authority and voluntary organisations must be fully understood by all concerned

The present level of performance is 81% and there is therefore a need to improve on this level. To raise awareness of emergency planning issues the Emergency Planning Officer will arrange local half-day seminars to brief key staff on local emergency planning issues.

At least three such seminars will be held each year, with the first being arranged by the end of November 2001.

The aim of this action will be to achieve a satisfaction rating of 85% by the time of the first review of implementation of the Continuous Improvement measures, and to reach 90% by the end of the second period.

13.4 Critical Success Factor - Key individuals must be adequately trained for their roles in a civil emergency

Although the present satisfaction level is high it must be recognised that staff change from time to time and it is essential that the current level is maintained and that training is delivered in an organised rather than an ad hoc basis. To achieve this, the Emergency Planning Officer, with the assistance of the emergency planning liaison group and Council departments, will produce an emergency planning training plan to provide appropriate training for staff including local briefing, attendance at RECAP and Scottish Executive organised events as well as Home Office Emergency Planning College courses.

This plan will be prepared by the end January 2002

The aim of this measure will be to ensure that the present 95% level of satisfaction is maintained and an on going pattern of training is established.

13.5 Critical Success Factor - The Council's Civil Emergency plans must be accurate, comprehensive and up to date

The Civil Emergency Plan Part 3: Emergency Contacts Directory is already reviewed on a twice yearly basis and amendments issued as required. The Emergency Planning Officer, in consultation with the emergency planning liaison group and other agencies as appropriate, will undertake a comprehensive review of all sections of the Dundee City Council Civil Emergency Plan and present this to the Chief Officers' Management Team by September 2002. Steps are also being taken to publish the Council's Civil Emergency Plans on the Corporate Intranet to ensure they are more readily available to key officers and kept up to date.

The aim of these measures is to raise the level of satisfaction to 95% by the time of the first annual review of Best Value issues.

Other Continuous Improvement Issues

13.6 The Emergency Planning Officer will carry out an annual survey to determine if progress is being made in relation to issues raised during this Best Value Review. The first annual survey will be carried out by the end of December 2002.

13.7 As Dundee has close geographic links with Fife, it is suggested that the Director of Support Services approach Fife Council by 31st October 2001 with a view to entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with regard to the provision of mutual aid in an emergency along the lines of that agreed between the RECAP authorities within the Tayside Police Force area.

14 **CONSULTATION**

14.1 The Director of Support Services has been consulted on the contents of this report.

14.2 The following stakeholders were consulted during the preparation of this report:-

Dundee City Council Departments
Tayside Police
Tayside Fire Brigade
Tayside Health Board
Scottish Ambulance Service (East Central Scotland Division)
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Military Liaison Officer for Tayside
Tayside Branch British Red Cross
Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS)
St. Andrew's Ambulance Association
Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network (RAYNET)

Signed

Chief Executive

Date

Appendix A**EMERGENCY PLANNING BEST VALUE REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE****Critical Success Factors**

In order to assist in assessing the effectiveness of the current emergency planning service provided by Dundee City Council, it would be helpful if you could consider the following statements and tick the appropriate box for each.

Please tick as appropriate

1. The respective roles and responsibilities of the emergency services, local authority and voluntary organisations are fully understood by all concerned.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly* *No basis for Comment*

2. Key staff within your department/service know and understand their own role in the event of a civil emergency.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly* *No basis for Comment*

3. Key individuals are adequately trained for their roles in a civil emergency.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly* *No basis for Comment*

4. The Council's Civil Emergency Plans are accurate, comprehensive and up to date.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly* *No basis for Comment*

5. Adequate consultation takes place with interested parties during the preparation of the Emergency Plans.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly* *No basis for Comment*

6. Dundee City Council's emergency planning service is provided at reasonable cost.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly* *No basis for Comment*

Please add below any additional comments which you feel may be helpful in connection with the current review of the emergency planning service.

Appendix A

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The following are the possible success factors which we have identified as part of the review of Dundee City Council's emergency planning service. Please rank the importance you attach to each in the box provided (*1 for most important, 2 for next and so on*)

It is essential that the roles and responsibilities of the emergency services, local authorities and voluntary organisations are fully understood by all concerned.

It is important that key staff within your department/service know and understand their role in the event of an emergency.

Key individuals must be adequately trained for their roles in a civil emergency.

The Council's Civil Emergency Plans must be accurate, comprehensive and up to date.

Adequate consultation must take place between all interested parties during the preparation of the emergency plans

It is important that Dundee City Council's emergency planning service is provided at reasonable cost.

Please add below any other factors which you believe to be important to ensure the provision of an excellent emergency planning service.

Appendix B

PERFORMANCE REVIEW RESULTS

Detailed breakdown in percentage terms of the responses received to the Emergency Planning Best Value Review Questionnaires issued to stake holders

1. Respective roles and responsibilities of the emergency services, local authority and voluntary organisations are fully understood by all concerned	Agree Strongly: - 9.5%; Agree - 71.4% Disagree - 19.1%
2. Key staff within your department/ service know and understand their own role in the event of a civil emergency	Agree Strongly - 9.5% Agree - 80.9% Disagree - 4.8% No comment - 4.8%
3. Key individuals are adequately trained for their role in a civil emergency	Agree strongly - 4.8% Agree - 85.6% Disagree - 4.8% No Comment - 4.8%
4. The Council's Civil Emergency Plans are accurate, comprehensive and up to date.	Agree strongly - 9.5% Agree - 71.5% Disagree - 9.5% No comment - 9.5%
5. Adequate consultation takes place with interested parties during the preparation of the emergency plans	Agree strongly - 28.6% Agree - 71.4%
6. Dundee City Council's emergency planning service is provided at reasonable cost	Agree strongly - 9.5% Agree - 47% No comment - 42.9%

Appendix C
Emergency Planning Best Value Review - Budget Comparisons

Council	EP Budget	Staff	Population	Cost per head of pop.	Comments
Dundee City	£61,537	1 x PO4	144430	£0.43	Budget includes costs of £15,650 for internal support (Admin., word-processing etc.)
A	£66,000	1 x AP5/PO1	109840	£0.60	
B	£58,000	1 x PO3	134030	£0.43	
C	£237,636 (gross, includes capital costs of "bunker etc)	1 x Ch. Officer 1 x PO2 2 x AP4 1 x GS 1/2 0.5 X GS1/2	146800	£1.62	All but AP4 staff have duties in addition to EP (Community safety)
D	£119,521	1 x POA 1 x POB 0.5 x GS1	106400	£1.12	
E	£85,770	1 x PO1 1 x AP 1/2	48530	£1.77	Staff also have other duties
F	£65,000	1 x PO3 0.5 x GS1/2 0.2 x CO22	114250	£0.57	
G	£115,000	1 x Team Leader 2/3 1 x AP4/5 1 x AP 4 1 x GS3	349200	£0.33	

Council	EP Budget	Staff	Population	Cost per head of pop.	Comments
H	£56,329	1 x PO 1	84700	£0.66	EP based on em. Management and response team
I	£69,934	1 x PO 3 1 x GS 2 10% Asst Ch. Exec. 3.5% Corporate EP Team	89280	£0.78	
J	£68,411	1 x PO 4 1 x AP 4	177230	£0.39	
K	£74,740	1 x PO 5 0.5 X GS 3	154680	£0.48	

Notes:-

- Population figures are based on the 1999 mid year population estimates as provided by the General Register Office for Scotland.