

REPORT TO: Policy and Resources Committee - 23 June 2008
REPORT ON: Emergency Planning Progress - 2007/2008
REPORT BY: Depute Chief Executive (Support Services)
REPORT NO: 349 - 2008

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.0 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the work undertaken by the Emergency Planning Unit for the period April 2007 to March 2008.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Background

The Emergency Planning Unit comprises the Emergency Planning Officer who is supported by the Principal General Services Officer and the Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) as appropriate. The role of the unit is to ensure that the council meets its statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005 and is able to respond effectively to an emergency or major incident that might occur within the Dundee City Council boundaries.

4.2 The emphasis over the last reporting period has been to develop an integrated emergency management approach, involving all departments of the council, the emergency services and the voluntary sector.

4.3 Local Authorities have 7 main duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005. Audit Scotland is currently working on an audit programme which will concentrate on these duties. This report has been formulated with these duties in mind and concentrates on the emergency planning functions.

4.4 There are 2 duties that are specific to Business Continuity and although the Emergency Planning Officer works closely with the Business Continuity Manager these areas are the responsibilities of the Business Continuity Manager.

4.5 Summary of Incidents

Although there have been a number of incidents in the City that would be classed as emergencies by individuals and possibly small groups of people there have been relatively few that have required a coordinated response by the Council.

- A fire which resulted in the evacuation of 79 residential properties in Kirkton on the 11 April 2007 required the coordination and deployment of Council resources in support of the Emergency Services. A multi agency debrief was conducted following this incident and lessons learned have been taken forward into future planning.
- Throughout the reporting period there have been a number of severe weather warnings issued by the Met Office. These were passed to departments and services with advice on preparatory measures to reduce the impact of the expected severe weather events. All passed without major incident however there have been minor localised flash flooding events in different parts of the City. Run off water, caused by torrential rain on the 4th of July 2007 caused some concern to residents in Claverhouse and Whitfield in particular but fortunately the rain stopped very quickly.
- High tides at the same time as severe weather warnings have prompted the deployment of sandbags to Fisher Street in Broughty Ferry in the past. The September 2007 tides were particularly high but no severe weather was predicted. Tayside Contracts were put on alert but were not required.
- On the evening of Thursday the 2nd of November 2007 the Emergency Planning Officer was called out with Environmental Health Officers in relation to an incident in Broughty Ferry concerning Scottish Water. A key sewer pipe had been breached during works. Waste water was stored in holding tanks at Stannergate Pumping Station whilst remedial work took place. The work was finished before the tanks reached capacity therefore no waste had to be discharged into the Tay and no further action was required by the Council.

4.6 **Co-operation**

The former Tayside Regional Emergency Coordinating and Planning (RECAP) Group underwent a review in October 2007. It was renamed the Tayside Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) in line with the other 7 SCG's in Scotland (established in the existing Police Force areas). The purpose of the SCG is to establish and maintain a formal partnership, as required under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005, as an aid to planning for the effective management of response to emergencies.

- 4.7 The SCG consists of all Category 1 and Category 2 responders, the Military, the Procurator Fiscal Service, Animal Health and the Scottish Government. It meets three times a year in March, September and December. It is chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable with the three Local Authority Chief Executives rotating as joint chair.
- 4.8 The Emergency Planning Officer is a member of the SCG Working Group whose role is to make tactical and operational decisions and implement strategic policy. The group follows a clear programme of work for the Category 1 responders to co-operate in fulfilling their duties under the Act and for the development of multi-agency and generic emergency response arrangements at the SCG level.

- 4.9 The Emergency Planning Officer chairs the SCG Working Group Voluntary Agency sub group. Voluntary agencies across Tayside have been involved with training and exercising throughout the reporting period and, in particular, the British Red Cross have been called out by the Emergency Planning Officer to assist during emergencies.
- 4.10 The Council has formed a Civil Contingencies Working Group (CCWG) chaired by the Emergency Planning Officer and comprising senior officers from each department. The groups aim is to ensure the effective management of Dundee City Councils preparation, planning, response to and recovery from emergencies which have a significant impact within Dundee City Councils boundaries and is critical in our long term bid to ensure integrated emergency management throughout the Council. The group meets every 6 to 8 weeks and has proved to be particularly effective over the last year when taking forward threat specific plans.
- 4.11 For the purposes of co-operation with our partner agencies and external auditing, it is vital that all communications and actions carried out by the Council are properly managed and logged. Over this reporting period the Council Emergency Coordination Centre has been updated with new IT technology including access to the Councils Geographical Information Systems and the Emergency Planning Officer is working with the IT Department on a project to develop an Integrated Emergency Information Management System.
- 4.12 **Risk Assessment**
The Emergency Planning Officer is a member of the SCG Risk Assessment Group and is working closely with SCG partners to ensure that the Community Risk Register is continually updated having regard to changing circumstances.
- 4.13 **Emergency Planning**
All Council emergency plans are being developed following the principles of Integrated Emergency Management (IEM). The aim of IEM is to develop flexible and adaptable arrangements where the focus is on the effects rather than the cause of an incident and preparation, planning, response and recovery is undertaken as an extension of normal day to day activities by all departments and services.
- 4.14 The Emergency Planning Officer has developed and introduced a generic emergency response and recovery plan which provides a framework to allow Dundee City Council to respond effectively to any major civil emergency or any lesser incident requiring a multi agency response. These arrangements were first published in February 2007, tested during the Kirkton incident in April 2007 (see summary of incidents), reviewed and issue number 2 was published in February 2008. This plan is reviewed annually.
- 4.15 Whilst the generic plan provides the framework for initial response, additions in the form of specialist plans are required to deal with specific or high risk hazards. Responsibility for the preparation of these plans has been remitted to departments with the skills to respond to the hazards with guidance and support from the Emergency Planning Officer. These plans are being prioritised according to the level of risk determined by the Community Risk Register. Flooding and Emergency Rest Centres have been the main focus throughout 2007/2008.

- 4.16 The Emergency Planning Officer is working closely with the Business Continuity Manager to ensure that emergency plans are integrated with internal business continuity plans.
- 4.17 An 'Elected Members Emergency Guidance' document was published and distributed in December 2007.
- 4.18 In February 2008, the Emergency Planning Officer started working on a project to develop Local Authority Mutual Aid Protocols for Local Authorities in Scotland with Dumfries and Galloway Councils Resilience Manager.
- 4.19 **Emergency Planning - Training and Exercising**
The Emergency Planning Unit has arranged and/or facilitated a total of 27 external and internal training events involving 237 people throughout the reporting period. Records of courses/ training events and Council employee attendance are being maintained.
- 4.20 The Emergency Planning Officer has been working with the Organisational Development Section to develop a short electronic basic awareness course. The course is designed to give all Council employees a basic understanding of civil contingencies arrangements in Dundee and the role of the Council before, during and after a major incident.
- 4.21 It is envisaged that the course will become part of the induction process for new employees and existing employees with access to the Council Intranet will be expected to complete it. The course will be delivered manually to those employees with no access to the intranet.
- 4.22 The Emergency Planning Officer has been working with the Tayside Strategic Coordinating Group and the Scottish Resilience Development Service to develop a training package for Council Officers who would be required to make strategic decisions during an incident.
- 4.23 **Communicating with the Public**
Civil Contingencies/Emergency Planning has been allocated pages within the Councils new website. These pages are being populated with updated emergency plans and guidance on 'what to do in an emergency' specifically aimed at the general public.
- 4.24 **Public Event Resilience**
The Emergency Planning Officer continues to offer a supporting role to departments and organisations with regard to safety and contingency arrangements at events. Events are growing in size with Dundee becoming popular with event organisers. This is good for economic growth and for the promotion of Dundee, and therefore it is essential that a proactive and helpful approach is facilitated.
- 4.25 To ensure a coordinated and consistent approach internally and external the Emergency Planning Officer has been working with departments and services to produce a guidance document designed to give basic advice to Council staff and

external event organisers on how to organise a safe and legal event having regard to local circumstances. This guidance should be available in June 2008.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

There are no major implications.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, the Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), the Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Head of Finance were consulted in connection with this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 The auditing and monitoring guidance from Section 3, Chapter 8, 'Preparing Scotland', Scottish Guidance on Preparing for Emergencies was used to assist with the compilation of this report.

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Date: 04 JUNE 2008