

CABINET

13 April 2006

EMERGENCY PLANNING – ANNUAL UPDATE OF INCIDENTS

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contact Officer: Dave Shaw Tel: 01962 848221, email: dshaw@winchester.gov.uk

RECENT REFERENCES:

Report PS174 – Scrutiny Review – Emergency Planning - Report of the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group 11 May 2005.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Principal Scrutiny Committee's Informal Scrutiny Group carried out a review of the Emergency Planning service in early 2005 and reported its findings to Principal Scrutiny Committee on 11 May 2005.

Following Principal Scrutiny Committee's consideration, a number of recommendations were put forward for consideration by Cabinet at its meeting held on 1 June 2005.

Cabinet agreed to the recommendations put before it, which included those set out below:

1. "That the Council enter a Service Level Agreement with Hampshire County Council for the carrying out of the City Council's duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
2. That a Cabinet Member takes the lead for Emergency Planning and any continuing review. In the event of an incident the most appropriate Cabinet Member to be contacted by the media will be chosen by the Controller (the Chief Executive or other nominated officer and the first person contacted in an emergency) given the nature of the event.
3. That the provision of training for Members be welcomed.
4. That an annual update report and presentation by District and County Officers of emergency incidents to Cabinet be reintroduced.
5. That the Council's Communications Officer continues to be part of the Emergency Planning Media Plan.

6. That the City Council's liaison with Parish Council's on Emergency Planning continue to be developed, including where possible liaison with a nominated person."

This report addresses resolution 4 above: "That an annual update report and presentation by District and County Officers of emergency incidents to Cabinet be reintroduced."

The recommendations additional to 4 above have been progressed by means of regular updates being submitted to the Environment Scrutiny Panel, of which Report EN13 - Environment Scrutiny Panel – 25 January 2006 (Environmental Health Portfolio Holders Report - Third Quarter Performance Monitoring) was the most recent.

This report also included reference to the City Council's liaison with Parish Councils on Emergency Planning. Following discussion at the Winchester District Joint Consultative Committee with Parish Councils on 10 December 2005, a draft Town and Parish Plan for community use was sent out to all Town and Parish Councils on the 5 January 2006. As part of this the Parish Councils were asked to nominate relevant 'link' persons to liaise with the City Council. There have been a number of enquires from Parish Councils who wish to have their own Plan, and are in the process of their production. A further article on the production of the Plans will be published in the May edition of Parish Connect.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information regarding the response to emergency incidents be noted.

CABINET13 April 2006EMERGENCY PLANNING – ANNUAL UPDATE OF INCIDENTSREPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVEDETAIL1 Introduction

- 1.1 There have been a number of incidents where the City Council has been called on to provide support to the emergency services in the last municipal year. These have been managed through normal office arrangements without the need to open the Emergency Control Centre. In each case the Emergency Planning Officer has carried out close dialogue with the nominated Controller for the incident and relevant Liaison Officers.

2 Incident – 3 November 2005

- 2.1 On 3 November 2005, the City Council received a call from Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit that there was an incident at North Walls Police Station.
- 2.2 It was requested that the City Council should give consideration as to arrangements for a possible evacuation of the local population within the vicinity of North Walls Police Station.
- 2.3 After seeking the advice of the Chief Executive (acting as Controller) and alerting the Director of Communities, the Emergency Planning Officer attended the scene and spoke to the Police Officer on duty at the cordon.
- 2.4 It was explained that the incident was near completion and that North Walls Road would be re-opened shortly. The City Council was not required to take any further action.
- 2.5 The incident related to an explosive training device that had been taken to the Police Station by a member of the public, requiring the Police Station's evacuation, and as a precaution, an exclusion cordon had been implemented.

3 Incident – 2 February 2006

- 3.1 On Thursday 2 February 2006, the Emergency Planning Officer received a call from the Emergency Planning Unit at Hampshire County Council that there was a traffic incident involving a tanker and a car on the A272 Spitfire Link at Bar End, adjacent to the M3 motorway.
- 3.2 A chemical spill had taken place from the tanker and a police cordon had been established. It was reported that there were severe traffic disruption and also that the Environment Agency was progressing to the scene to assess the chemical spill.

- 3.3 The County Council requested support from the City Council by means of a Traffic Engineer and an Environmental Health Liaison Officer. After taking advice from the City Secretary and Solicitor (who acted as Controller in the absence of the Chief Executive from the City Offices), it was agreed that Neville Crisp from the Traffic Section and representatives of the Environmental Health Department (Sue Blazdell and Kevin Gosling, Environmental Protection) should proceed to the scene.
- 3.4 Mobile telephone contact was established to each officer attending the scene, and the latest information on the chemical leakage was obtained from Hampshire County Council. Contact was made through the Chief Executive's Department, with the Chief Executive who stated that the City Secretary and Solicitor should continue to act as Controller, and the Media Unit was also informed. The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health was also informed that the incident was taking place.
- 3.5 Reports from the scene of the incident by the Traffic Engineer confirmed that traffic management was being undertaken by the County Council and their contractor, Raynesway, and that messages on traffic management were being broadcast by Meridian News and local radio.
- 3.6 Following confirmation from Hampshire County Council, the incident was classified as a Hazmat incident.
- 3.7 Environmental Health Liaison Officers informed the Controller and the Emergency Planning Officer the Public Health Laboratory had been contacted and was on stand-by should their services be required. Linda Booth, the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC), had contacted the Environmental Health Liaison Officers on site with the relevant information of the chemical involved. There was no population in the immediate vicinity that required assistance. Water courses in the area were protected by an interceptor on the carriageway, and the Environment Agency were present at the scene should the spillage reach the adjacent aquifer.
- 3.8 On their return to the City Offices, the Environmental Health Liaison Officers confirmed that the tanker had released approximately 20,000 litres of waste acid (polysulphate acid), and the interceptor on the road had contained the spillage.
- 3.9 Separate to the action taken by the Emergency Planning Officer, the Environmental Health Department had obtained information on wind direction and speed and had contacted the Chemical and Poisons Unit in London to discuss the nature of the chemical involved. The Council's Health and Safety Officer had also been informed.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

4 RELEVANCE TO CORPORATE STRATEGY

- 4.1 To work with partners to make our communities safer.

5 RESOURCES

- 5.1 The Government has provided financial assistance for the additional statutory functions. From this approximately £20,000 representing Winchester's share is forwarded to the County Council under the terms of the Service Level Agreement.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

Appendix

None