

PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 May 2005

SCRUTINY REVIEW – EMERGENCY PLANNING

REPORT OF THE EMERGENCY PLANNING INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP

Contact Member: Councillor Chamberlain (Tel - 01489 896141)

RECENT REFERENCES:

Report PS136 – Work Programme and Appointments to Informal Scrutiny Groups – Principal Scrutiny Committee 6 July 2004.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Principal Scrutiny Committee established an Informal Scrutiny Group in July 2004 with the following Terms of Reference:

- To assess the scope and state of development in arrangements in place to protect the public in the event of an act of terrorism or civil disaster in or affecting the Winchester District.
- To review the effectiveness of communications with the public and local organisations including Parish Councils on arrangements to be followed in the event of a civil emergency.
- To consider the City Council's role in implementing the Civil Contingencies Bill when it becomes law (now the Civil Contingencies Act 2004).

Any review should also look carefully at the integration of the various services and the effectiveness of their shared command structures, communications etc.

The Group has concluded that undertaking the review has been worthwhile. Having taken evidence from both internal and external witnesses the Group has decided that the preparedness of Emergency Planning in Winchester is satisfactory and well advanced. Emergency Planning roles are filled by staff that are competent and occasionally act nationally as well as locally. The Group is therefore reassured that in the event of an emergency incident its duties will be fulfilled.

The Group also notes that in common with other Hampshire District Councils the City is considering entering a Service Level Agreement with Hampshire County Council to carry out

its requirements under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Key among these is publishing a Community Risk Register; Business Continuity Planning; Warning and Informing the public; added training and exercises and improving the resilience and robustness of all existing plans.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet be recommended to approve:

1. That in respect of assessing the scope and state of development of arrangements in place to protect the public in the event of an act of terrorism or civil disaster in or affecting the Winchester District the preparedness of Emergency Planning in Winchester is satisfactory and well advanced.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. That the provision of training for Members be welcomed.
5. That an annual update report and presentation by District and County Officers of emergency incidents to Cabinet be reintroduced.
6. That the Council's Communications Officer continues to be part of the Emergency Planning Media Plan.
7. 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.
8. That the roles of the Council's Environmental Health Team for dealing with the risks from sewage-infected water and protecting food supplies and of the Housing Team in providing for vulnerable people be noted and continue to be supported.

#### RELEVANCE TO CORPORATE STRATEGY

To work with partners to make our communities safer.

## RESOURCES

To comply with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, establishing a Community Risk Register and Business Continuity Management will require staff time to organise and a limited call on budgets to provide a suitable response.

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

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

E-mails received by Councillor Chamberlain from Councillors in response to his inquiries as part of this review.

Minutes of meetings of the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group.

## Appendix

Appendix 1 – Report by the Emergency Planning Informal Scrutiny Group.

Appendix 2 – Civil Contingencies Act 2004: A Short Guide.



**Winchester**  
City Council

# **PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT**

## **Emergency Planning**

May 2005

## SCRUTINY REVIEW – EMERGENCY PLANNING

### REPORT OF EMERGENCY PLANNING INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP

#### 1. Introduction

##### 1.1 Principal Scrutiny Committee decided on 6 July 2004 to set up an Informal Scrutiny Group with the following terms of reference:

- To assess the scope and state of development in arrangements in place to protect the public in the event of an act of terrorism or civil disaster in or affecting the Winchester District.
- To review the effectiveness of communications with the public and local organisations including Parish Councils on arrangements to be followed in the event of a civil emergency.
- To consider the City Council's role in implementing the Civil Contingencies Bill when it becomes law.

Any review should also look carefully at the integration of the various services and the effectiveness of their shared command structures, communications etc.

##### 1.2 The Group has now concluded its work, with this report setting out its key findings and conclusions.

#### 2. Background to the Study

##### 2.1 Following comments raised by a Member about the Council's readiness about Civil Emergencies, Principal Scrutiny Committee instructed the Informal Scrutiny Group to consider how the provision of Emergency Planning in the City might be improved upon. The review firstly considered the appropriateness and robustness of the present arrangements, the methods of communication that are in place and the new responsibilities that will be placed on the City Council following the introduction of the Civil Contingencies Act from April 2005.

##### 2.2 Councillors Bennetts, Chamberlain, Davies, Lipscomb and Nelmes were appointed to the Group and Councillor Chamberlain (Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee) agreed to lead the Group. The Group met on four occasions to explore its terms of reference and take evidence on the issues identified.

##### 2.3 The Group has been supported by Simon Eden, Chief Executive, who has responsibility for Emergency Planning and David Shaw, Principal Committee Administrator who has day-to-day responsibility for the Emergency Planning work.

##### 2.4 Meetings of the Group took place on 15 November 2004; 20 December 2004; 27 January 2005 and 15 March 2005.

### 3. Terms of Reference and Work Plan

- 3.1 At its first meeting on 15 November 2004 the Group decided to review its Terms of Reference and agree its Work Plan to report to Principal Scrutiny Committee with suitable recommendations.

### 4. Investigations

- 4.1 To meet its objectives the Group agreed to invite comment from several internal and external witnesses.

1. To discuss partner views of Winchester City Council's readiness, Ian Houlton, County Emergency Planning Officer, and Superintendent Rose and Inspector May, Hampshire Constabulary, were invited to meet with the Group. This meeting took place on the 20 December 2004.
2. To review the effectiveness of communications with Parish Councils in the event of a Civil Emergency, Councillor Coates representing Hambledon Parish Council and Chairman of the Winchester District Association of Parish Councils, attended the meeting of the Group held on 27 January 2005. Councillor Coates told the meeting of Hambledon Parish Council's experiences of dealing with flooding.
3. To provide an introduction to the work required under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 about Business Continuity, the Group met with Mr D Read, the Council's Risk Management and Insurance Officer on the 27 January 2005.

### 5. Analysis of Current Situation and Recommendations.

- 5.1 Objective 1 - To assess the scope and state of development in arrangements in place to protect the public in the event of an act of terrorism or civil disaster in or affecting the Winchester District.

#### 5.2 Work Plan

To investigate Objective 1. above the Group agreed on the following plan of work:

(a) That the Group consider to the Council's Emergency Response Plan Parts 1 and 2. Part 1 contains the Call Out list of Council employees and external agencies involved in providing an emergency response and Part 2 contains the detail of how to respond.

(b) That Ian Houlton, County Emergency Planning Officer, and Superintendent Rose, Hampshire Constabulary, be invited to a meeting of the Group to discuss partner views of Winchester City Council's readiness.

Issues to be explored included:

- ◆ County and District liaison;
- ◆ the quality and effectiveness of the District's Emergency Response Plan and whether we could do better;
- ◆ If the experiences of scrutiny review of Winchester can be shared with other districts in the County;
- ◆ the professional expertise that can be called on in the event of an incident;
- ◆ to explore detail on the responsibility for each stage of the emergency planning process;
- ◆ the liaison between the County Council and the City Emergency Planning Units at Portsmouth and Southampton;
- ◆ the City Council's new responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act and how the City Council can discharge these responsibilities;
- ◆ was value for money being delivered, and;
- ◆ the relationship between the Hampshire Constabulary and the British Transport Police.

(c) That the relationship between the City Council and its contract suppliers (for example Serco) should be examined.

(d) That the self-assessment checklist for Emergency Planning readiness as produced by the Audit Commission be circulated to the Group.

### 5.3 Results of the Informal Scrutiny Group's Investigation:-

#### 5.4 Callout of Key Personnel

5.4.1 It was commented by the Group that a few key personnel identified within the Plan lived a considerable distance from Winchester, for example at Dorchester and Bournemouth. This was particularly the case within the Engineering Department. The Chief Executive was asked whether this could have any implications for the operation of the Emergency Response Plan.

5.4.2 The Chief Executive explained that within each Department, for example Engineers, there existed their own emergency call-out procedure and, therefore, by example, if Engineering staff were unable to provide a rapid response they will use their own internal call out cascade system to find a member of staff who can readily respond to an incident.

5.4.3 It was the role of the Controller (the Chief Executive or other named officer and the first person contacted in an emergency) and Link Person (the person who

deals with the first call out of Emergency Control Centre staff and then acts as directed by the Controller) to identify persons from the cascade list of telephone numbers who can provide an appropriate and rapid response.

- 5.4.4 Mr Hoult added that officers living outside a district council's area, therefore possibly providing a slower response time to attend an emergency planning control centre, has not presented itself to be a problem so far.

## 5.5 Status of the Response Plan

- 5.5.1 The Chief Executive clarified that in response to a major terrorist incident, control of the incident will be taken at regional level but responsibility will remain at district level for the recovery period. The Emergency Response Plan should be seen as a short-term rapid response to an incident and the longer term recovery should be regarded as a second phase. The longer term recovery can be dealt with by the City Council and Hampshire County Council through their normal business procedures which are satisfactory to deal with these issues rather than by a Response Plan.

## 5.6 The Role of Hampshire Constabulary

### 5.7 Experience of dealing with Major incidents

- 5.7.1 The Police provided considerable training for such circumstances and Hampshire Constabulary is well placed in having many staff having both practical and academic training in such matters. The Police had strong links with Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Team and have its own Emergency Planning Officer, Derek Good, who specialised in liaison between the Police and Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit.

## 5.8 The Police response to a major incident

- 5.8.1 The first response for the first hour of an incident (known as the 'golden hour') will be provided by the emergency services. The Initial Response Plan is a joint document between the Police, the Fire and Rescue Service and the Ambulance Service. Critical training is provided for the action to be taken during the first hour of an incident. This included setting up Bronze Command at the incident scene, Silver Tactical Command and Gold Control to provide a strategic lead at the Police Headquarters at Netley. This is a tried and tested procedure which is regularly practised with joint partners.
- 5.8.2 The Police also kept a call-out (or cascade) list of names to call on for support in the event of an incident. These included Hampshire County Council and district authorities, for example to open rest centres and to provide transport.
- 5.8.3 After the first hour of an incident it is envisaged that for a period between two to six hours Gold Command will be set up and running. The role of the local authority is important in providing the necessary resources that are requested by Gold Command and importantly during the post-incident phase when the community is returning to normality.



## 5.9 Overlapping of Borders

- 5.9.1 The Police are moving towards having common boundaries between Police and local authorities. It is envisaged that this will be in place by September 2006 following a review of Police area boundaries. At present Bishops Waltham, Whiteley and Wickham are policed by Meon Valley Police Station at Bishops Waltham reporting to Fareham Division and Denmead by Havant and Waterlooville. These areas will be incorporated within a new Police boundary that will provide coverage for the entire Winchester City Council area.
- 5.9.2 A Chief Superintendent will be in charge of each new command unit with a call-out system providing cover for periods outside a 9 am to 5 pm working day. The cover will be provided by a duty Chief Superintendent who can be called on from any divisional area across the County, but it was stressed that all senior officers had received generic training.

## 5.10 Examples of Joint Working

- 5.10.1 The Group noted that Superintendent Rose was confident in the state of the City Council's readiness and the joint work that was carried out on emergency planning readiness with the County Council. There were examples of good work that had been carried out during the fuel dispute, foot-and-mouth and in flooding incidents where he had been impressed by the preparation and detail that both the City and the County had provided when called on to help and to take a lead role.

## 5.11 Quality and promptness of service provided

- 5.11.1 Superintendent Rose stated that he was impressed with the practical support that can be provided by local authorities through the Emergency Planning Unit at Hampshire County Council. This included the extensive contacts that were available to secure equipment or other items of support at short notice, for example sandbags and crowd control barriers.
- 5.11.2 All resources asked of the local authorities had been provided quickly and in enough quantities to provide satisfactory help.

## 5.12 Joint working with the British Transport Police.

- 5.12.1 There is close working between Hampshire Constabulary and the British Transport Police.
- 5.12.2 Following an incident on railway property, both will work closely to provide a cordon around the incident and to take witness statements. Although, because of resource issues, it is more probable that Hampshire Constabulary will be the first to attend the scene of an incident, it is usually the case that the British Transport Police will take over control of the incident once they have enough resources on-site to provide an effective response.

5.12.3 Hampshire Constabulary will provide support to the British Transport Police if asked, for example, in taking witness statements. In the event of a specific threat there is a planned response in place if needed.

5.13 Hampshire's readiness to deal with a major incident.

5.13.1 Hampshire is at the forefront of national readiness in the event of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear threat, with a trained unit in place to deal with any terrorist threat. The Local Response Unit is fully equipped in its ability to provide a cordon, respiratory equipment and a decontamination unit. This unit has close liaison with the Fire and Rescue Service and the Health Service. There is a procedure of common aid for the south-east region, and the Local Response Unit is on call sixteen hours per day in its working hours' availability.

5.14 Dealing with a large-scale evacuation

5.14.1 If a large-scale evacuation is required, then this will be coordinated with Hampshire County Council and the Highway Agency to provide one-way evacuation routes. The BBC provides specialist media training and has twenty-four hour staff to be called on in the event of a major incident.

5.15 The relationship of the County Council and Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils' Emergency Planning Units

5.15.1 If there is an incident outside, for example, Southampton that affects the fringe areas of the District, then the County Council will coordinate the response. The County also provided a twenty-four hour duty officer for Portsmouth and Southampton.

5.16 Emergency Food and drink supplies and local food retailers

5.16.1 In the event of an emergency where large-scale catering is needed (which entails that hot meals should be provided) Hampshire County Council Catering Service will undertake this role. They have large stocks (intended for school meals) of food, and arrangements with key suppliers for continued supply in the event of an emergency.

5.16.2 Additional to the above, the County has a written national agreement with a national supermarket chain for the supply of food and drinks in emergency situations. Further, the County have undertaken discussions and made verbal agreements with local retailers, including Tesco, Sainsbury's and Marks and Spencer about this provision.

5.16.3 The County is very confident that its arrangements will give the ability to provide food and drink to large numbers of people over a continued period.

## 5.17 Supporting Vulnerable People

- 5.17.1 The Group considered that it was broadly satisfied with the provision that was made for vulnerable people in the District. It will however wish to keep issues such as plans for evacuating people from isolated dwellings; the operation of Rest Centres; the integration between the work of Social Services and the City's Council's own personnel and the Council's own internal arrangements for its sheltered housing schemes under regular review.

### Conclusion:

1. That in respect of assessing the scope and state of development in arrangements in place to protect the public in the event of an act of terrorism or civil disaster in or affecting the Winchester District the preparedness of Emergency Planning in Winchester is satisfactory and well advanced.

6. Objective 2. To review the effectiveness of communications with the public and local organisations including parish councils on arrangements to be followed in the event of a civil emergency.

## 6.1 Work Plan

To investigate Objective 2. above the Group agreed on the following plan of work:

- (a) The Group agreed to review the effectiveness of communications with Parish Councils in the event of a Civil Emergency by inviting Councillor Coates representing Hambledon Parish Council and Chairman of the Winchester District Association of Parish Councils to attend the meeting of the Group held on 27 January 2005.

- (b) The Group also discussed the possibility of finding out from the public what was expected of the City Council in the event of an incident. Soundings could be taken and perhaps independent witnesses called to give evidence. If it was thought that a good service was provided, then this should be independently verified.

## 6.2 Results of the Informal Scrutiny Group's Investigation:-

### 6.3 Communications following an emergency incident

### 6.4 Elected Members

- 6.4.1 In terms of involving Elected Members, one of the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act will be to train Members in their role of community leadership for delivering duties under the new Act. This is all part of providing a robust and resilient response to an incident, and the type of support to be provided by Ward Members can include, for example, providing support at a rest centre if opened. There is also a role for liaison with parish councils as part of a community

leadership role. The County Council will contact relevant County Ward Members as part of their call-out cascade system.

- 6.4.2 The Group welcomed the opportunity for training led by the County, which will be structured and dovetailed to meet the City Council's needs.
- 6.4.3 The Group were aware of examples of some incidents, for example flooding, where the Ward Member was unaware of the action being taken by the City Council when enquiries have been of them made by local residents. The need to define the role of the Ward Member in any incident was also discussed.
- 6.4.4 The Group believed that a Cabinet Member should take the lead for Emergency Planning and any continuing review. In the event of an incident the most suitable Cabinet Member to be contacted by the media will be chosen by the Controller given the nature of the event.
- 6.4.5 There is a need to keep Members informed of information about emergency planning incidents across the District over the course of a year. A Member stated that in the past there had been an annual update report and presentation by District and County Officers of such incidents, and it was agreed that this be reintroduced.
- 6.4.6 The Chief Executive clarified that regular liaison meetings took place between the County Council's Emergency Planning District Liaison Officer and the Principal Committee Administrator on a six-weekly cycle, with meetings of all Districts' Emergency Planning Officers and the County Emergency Planning Team taking place on a quarterly basis.

#### Conclusion:

- 1. 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.
- 2. That the provision of training for Members be welcomed.
- 3. That an annual update report and presentation by District and County Officers of emergency incidents be reintroduced.

#### 6.5 Media Response Plan

- 6.5.1 The Strategic Media Plan is led by the Police and is carried out through Gold Control at Netley. There is also a Joint Media Plan, in which the Council's Communications Officer is involved.

Conclusion:

1. That the Council's Communications Officer and Community Safety Officer continue to be part of the Joint Emergency Planning Media Plan.

## 6.6 Communication with Parish Councils

- 6.6.1 The Group interviewed Councillor Coates on the lessons learnt from flooding in Hambledon.
- 6.6.2 At the time of the flooding incident in 1994, Councillor Coates commented that Hambledon had been poorly served by the City Council with too little provision too late to provide effective support. He was now satisfied that this has been improved upon.
- 6.6.3 Improved assistance had been provided in the 2001 floods by Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit, which had provided sandbags for extensive use. In the latest incident the County Council had employed three sandbag filling machines which can handle 500 sandbags per hour and provided an effective response.
- 6.6.4 The City Council's Housing and Health Department had provided support. Elderly vulnerable people had been rehoused in Denmead and the Environmental Health Department had provided temporary toilets, as the rising water levels had made many residents' toilets ineffective.
- 6.6.5 Increased monitoring by the Environment Agency of the aquifers near the village now took place so a rise in groundwater level can be more effectively predicted to enable preventive action to take place.
- 6.6.6 As a result of the latest flooding incidents, a Hambledon Flood Plan had been prepared, which in turn had led to producing a Countywide Parish Flood Plan. This is now being promoted nationally as an example of good practice.
- 6.6.7 With respect to communications and the lessons learnt from previous floods, Hambledon had been initially overwhelmed when the flooding took place. There was a lack of resources and contractors lacked the staff resources to facilitate the action needed. These issues had now been addressed as part of the Parish Flood Plan.
- 6.6.8 The Group also asked questions over the chain of command. At the time of the last floods the Parish had used much self-help, but it is now clear that Hampshire County Council's Emergency Planning Unit will be the first contact for sandbags. With their facilities for filling sandbags and capacity to transport them on pallets there is more confidence that an effective response can be achieved. The labour used will be a mixture of Parish self-help, Hampshire County Council and contractor labour. This information had been passed on to the Hampshire Association of Parish Councils and there is now a higher understanding of how to deal with floods across the County. This provision is improved by the improved

checking of ground water-table levels and information on flood plain risks as provided by the Environment Agency.

Conclusions:

1. That the Council's liaison with Parish Council's on Emergency Planning continues to be developed, including where possible liaison with a named person.
2. That the roles of the Council's Environmental Health Team for dealing with the risks from sewage-infected water and protecting food supplies and of the Housing Team in providing for vulnerable people be noted and continue to be supported.

7. Objective 3. To consider the City Council's role in implementing the Civil Contingencies Bill when it becomes law.

A copy of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004: a short guide, as produced by the Cabinet Office is attached as Appendix 2. The short guide provides background and an outline of the Act. Further information including a copy of the Act can be found at <http://www.ukresilience.info/ccact/index.htm>.

7.1 Work Plan

To investigate Objective 3. above the Group agreed on the following plan of work:

- (a) The Group wished to explore Business Continuity planning, both for the City Council itself and for organisations within the District.
- (b) With regard to Business Continuity at the City Council, officers would be asked to provide evidence to the Group on the City Council's readiness (for example in the areas of housing, revenues and community services).
- (c) The Group considered inviting a representative from the private business sector to give evidence on Business Continuity and to provide examples of best practice that the City Council can learn from. Types of organisations suggested for inviting a representative to attend included IBM; an insurance company or Air Traffic Control at Whiteley and a food business such as Tesco.

7.2 Results of the Informal Scrutiny Group's Investigation:-

7.3 Service Level Agreement for the County Council to carry out the District's duties under the Civil Contingencies Act.

- 7.3.1 All district councils in Hampshire have showed their willingness for the County Council to carry out their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act. As a result, the County Council has prepared a Service Level Agreement to be signed by the

district councils. Because of the need to clarify some points of detail, the draft Service Level Agreement is to be considered by the groups representing the Chief Executives, Legal and Financial officers before being agreed.

- 7.3.2 The duties within the Act will be audited by the Audit Commission. If the districts choose to carry out the duties under the Act themselves it is expected that it will need a team of five officers in each authority to carry out a district's duties. For Winchester City Council the County is proposing a charge of £19,600 a year over a 3-year period for the service to be provided.

#### 7.4 Reporting Structure

- 7.4.1 The Civil Contingencies Act places responsibilities on local authorities to co-operate with statutory partner agencies (through a body known as the Local Resilience Forum), and other organisations.
- 7.4.2 In Hampshire the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) comprises the executive and working groups. The executive group, which is led by the Chief Constable, meets biannually. There are 31 members of the Forum including representatives from the following organisations: Hampshire Police, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, Isle of Wight Fire Service, Hampshire Ambulance Service, Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, Hampshire District Council representation, The Maritime Coastguard Agency, Primary Care Trust Representation, Strategic Health Authority representation, the Regional Health Emergency Planning Advisor (on behalf of the Health Protection Agency), The Environment Agency, Military Representation, Regional Resilience Unit.
- 7.4.3 Other organisations or representative bodies may be invited to attend on an occasional basis or as deemed appropriate by the LRF.
- 7.4.4 The aim of the LRF is to pursue a policy of integrated emergency management involving all the responder bodies within Hampshire. It will help responder bodies address their duties by:
- ❖ Compiling agreed risk profiles for the area, or Community Risk Registers, and taking further action as necessary to encourage responder bodies, according to their functions, to address the risks identified in a systematic and co-ordinated approach.
  - ❖ Examining all aspects of policy in relation to risk, to planning for emergencies and for business continuity management, to arrangements to warn and inform the public and to other aspects of the civil protection duty.
  - ❖ Facilitating information sharing and co-operation between its members, including for example reports on recent incidents and exercises.
  - ❖ Supporting the preparation by all or some of its members of multi-agency plans and other documents, including protocols and agreements.
  - ❖ Supporting and helping to co-ordinate multi-agency exercises and other training events.
  - ❖ Publish information about the working of integrated emergency management in Hampshire as necessary.

- 7.4.5 The LRF will achieve the majority of these aims through the setting up of sub groups. The LRF Working Group will report back to the LRF on its activities twice yearly. It meets three monthly and is chaired by the Police Emergency Planning Officer with the County Emergency Planning Unit providing the Secretariat.
- 7.4.6 In terms of daily working practice some the services carried out have in the past been ad hoc, and under the Act these will now be delivered in a more structured way. Evidence will need to be obtained to satisfy the Audit Commission's questioning of the efficiency of emergency planning delivery.
- 7.4.7 In the event of an incident, the County Emergency Planning Officer will go to Gold Control at Netley. If an incident is contained within a district's border, then it will be for the district council to lead on that incident, but once a cross-border response is required, then the County Council will take the lead.

#### 7.5 Liaison with the Districts

- 7.5.1 There will be an increase in frequency of meetings with all district councils (from four times a year) and the County's District Liaison Officers will physically work within the District's offices for half a day per week in order that emergency planning become more embedded into the culture of each organisation.

#### 7.6 Community Risk Register

- 7.6.1 One of new needs of the Act is to produce a Community Risk Register. This will be the result of a risk assessment of the likelihood of an event occurring in each district's area, leading to a plan of how to respond to all hazards. The project will take up to two years to complete. To publish this information will need some sensitivity. As part of developing the Service Level Agreement, the County Council has already started the process of identifying risk hazards. The results, when published, will be national and not just specifically related to Hampshire.

#### 7.7 Business Continuity Management (BCM)

- 7.7.1 Mr David Read – Risk Management and Insurance Officer, stated that the proposals for BCM has received approval by the City Council's Corporate Management Team in November 2004 and in parallel will be a requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act. The need to provide BCM is covered within the proposed Service Level Agreement with Hampshire County Council to provide emergency planning services. In a separate exercise the Council has created a Strategic and Operational Risk Register, with top risks now being featured in Departmental Business Plans. The need for BCM has been identified as the second highest priority in the top ten strategic risks. Potential Risks and progress made on mitigating these risks will now be the subject of quarterly reports to the Principal Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.7.2 The above exercise is corporate BCM for the City Council and will complement some of the BCM plans already in place within the City Council, for example those about IT and Benefits. It could possibly be a period of up to two years



before the City Council is able to offer BCM expertise to the wider business community and voluntary sector.

Conclusions:

1. In common with other Hampshire District Councils the City is considering entering a Service Level Agreement with Hampshire to carry out its requirements under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Service Level Agreement is being considered by the Officer Groups representing the Chief Executives, Legal and Financial officers before being agreed.
2. Outside organisations have not been invited to meet with the Group to discuss Business Continuity, but this will be picked up when the Council's work to prepare for Business Continuity for the community is started. This will involve considerable liaison with the private sector to ensure its progression.