

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Audit and Performance Review Committee: 11 May 2011

Subject: Civil Contingencies Planning - Update

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** This report has been prepared to bring the Audit and Performance Review Committee up to date on where West Dunbartonshire is with regard to achieving compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 and the areas where further work is required.

2. Background

- 2.1** As a Category 1 responder, the 2004 Act places 7 main statutory duties onto the Council as follows:

- Co-operate with other Category 1 and 2 Responders
- Share information with other Category 1 and 2 Responders
- Assess the Risk of an emergency occurring
- Warn and Inform the Public
- Prepare Emergency Plans, training and exercising
- Prepare Business Continuity Plans
- Provide Business Continuity advice and guidance to local businesses and voluntary agencies (local authorities only).

This is further discussed in section three.

- 2.2** In August 2009, Audit Scotland undertook an audit of how Category 1 responders were complying with the Act. Their report on Improving Civil Contingencies Planning found that organisations generally were making progress towards meeting their main duties under the Act.

- 2.3** In addition, the Council's Internal Audit section undertook a systems review of the contingency planning function within the Council at the beginning of 2010 and identified 12 areas for improvement. One of these actions is the preparation of an annual report to this Committee on the Council's contingency planning performance.

3. Main Issues

Co-operate with other Category 1 and 2 Responders

- 3.1** The Council as a Category 1 responder is a partner in the Strathclyde Emergencies Co-ordination Group (SECG) at both Strategic and Tactical levels. The Civil Contingencies Officer attends the Tactical level meetings, and the Council is represented at the Strategic meetings by a member of the Corporate Management Team.

Share information with other Category 1 and 2 Responders

- 3.2** At a local level the Contingency Planning Officer participates in a number of working groups as well as the Dunbartonshire Area Local SECG Working Group to share information, discuss responses, prepare plans, train and exercise with the emergency services, health board, coast guard, procurator fiscal, SEPA, met office and voluntary agencies. This ensures that the Authority is compliant with this duty.

Assess the Risk of an emergency occurring

- 3.3** The SECG partners have prepared a Community Risk Register for the Strathclyde area which has been 'localised' for the East and West Dunbartonshire area and then further for West Dunbartonshire itself. This register is currently on the intranet and it is anticipated that it will be loaded onto Covalent once the most recent update has been completed by SECG. The Council is therefore, compliant with this statutory duty although the action has still to be fully completed.

Warn and Inform the Public

- 3.4** Information is maintained on the Council's website for members of the public to access. The new Public Communications plan is currently with Corporate Communications and should be completed and published this year. This along with the development and preparation of a number of information leaflets and booklets in partnership with the SECG and Scottish Government will ensure that the Council is then completely compliant with this duty.

Prepare Emergency Plans, training and exercising

- 3.5** The review of the Council's Civil Contingency Procedures is almost complete and the majority of procedures have been placed on the intranet. The council's response sections in 4 SECG Multi Agency Plans have also been reviewed and the Off Site plan for NuStar Terminals is currently being updated.

- 3.6** Although there is no budget available to undertake contingency planning centred training for employees, as part of the live exercise which took part in January, a ½ day training event was held on the Frontworks software registration system.
- 3.7** Two exercises for the NuStar Terminal off site plan were successfully carried out, the first being a table top exercise and the second a major live play exercise.
- 3.8** The SECG has prepared a training event for Elected Members. A presentation will be prepared and delivered to the Elected Members Business Day on the 17th August 2011 by a member of the Risk Management Section.
- 3.9** While Internal Audit recommended that an Elected Member be asked to champion contingency planning, this has yet to be done. However, it should be noted that an information booklet for Elected Members was prepared and distributed to raise awareness of the subject matter and to advise elected members of their roles and responsibilities before, during and after major incidents.
- 3.10** As well as the production of the Public Communication Plan, projects still ongoing are the development of departmental emergency procedures, the preparation of a Mass Fatalities/Major Incident Mortuaries plan, the inclusion of a Contingency Planning Core Training Prospectus in the corporate training programme, the delivery of a training event for Elected Members and the running of two exercises to test emergency communications and our response to a flooding event.

Prepare Business Continuity Plans

- 3.11** A two year action plan for implementing Business Continuity plans for all departments is currently being developed with actions and milestones that will address the requirement to complete the Council plans as soon as possible.

Provide Business Continuity advice and guidance to local businesses and voluntary agencies (local authorities only)

- 3.12** A number of leaflets have been prepared by the Scottish Government and ourselves for distribution throughout the local area however, there is no budget available for printing and distribution and the project has stopped until this has been resolved. However, all information has been placed on the Council's website as a partial means to resolve this issue.

4. People Implications

- 4.1** There are no people implications.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** There are direct financial implications in connection with this report with regard to the provision of training for employees, running exercises to test and evaluate plans and the provision of leaflets and information booklets to provide business continuity advice to local businesses and voluntary agencies. Currently there is no provision for this within the Risk Management Section's budgetary headings.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** A detailed risk analysis has not been completed however, failure to ensure full compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 will impact on the Council's need to address the key messages and recommendations outlined in the Audit Scotland report and the Internal Audit inspection and impede the Council's ability to support the Scottish Government's planned Resilience Framework Cycle to assess levels of preparedness throughout Scotland.

7. Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1** No significant issues are identified at this stage regarding potential equality impact of this report.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1** As a result of the Audit Scotland Report and subsequent service review by Internal Audit, a number of areas were identified in our current level of preparedness which required attention. Most of which were moved forward at a Tactical level by the Civil Protection Group supported by the Contingency Planning Officer. Outstanding areas are reliant upon documentation being prepared by the SECG.

- 8.2** The committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

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Date: 19 April 2011

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Appendix: None

Background Reports: Internal Audit Report (Civil Contingencies) 2010

Wards Affected: All Wards