1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Cabinet on the current emergency planning and business continuity risk management arrangements at the city council including work that has been done so far and future work that is planned.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the contents of this report are noted and the following actions supported:

- Directors and the Chief Executive to retain strategic responsibility and receive reports from Senior Managers to ensure there is a process in place to sustain the strategy.
- Senior Managers from all service areas across the organisation will take responsibility for the day to day management of the risk management strategy.
- The Group Manager for Environmental Health & Regulatory Services signs the cross border mutual aid agreement between Gloucestershire and Worcestershire local authorities.

3.0 Background

3.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, emergency responders are split into two categories. The city council is a category 1 responder which places certain statutory duties on it including:

- Risk assessment
- Development of emergency plans
- Development of business continuity plans
- Arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
- Sharing of information with other local responders to enable greater co-ordination
- Co-operation with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency
- To provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management

3.2 Other category 1 responders include police, fire and rescue, ambulance service, Health Protection Agency and Environment Agency.

3.3 Category 2 responders are those who have a role in supporting category 1 responders in their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. They include utilities, train operating companies, Highways Agency and Health and Safety Executive.

3.4 Within the council, the responsibility for ensuring that emergency plans and business continuity plans are in place now rests with Environmental Health and Regulatory Services. This has been the case since 2008 and support is provided to the Chief Executive Officer, Directors and Senior Managers from across the council to make sure that plans are in place and kept up to date.

4.0 Progress

4.1 EMERGENCY PLANNING

4.1.1 Planning

(a) An emergency response plan is maintained and updated by Environmental Health and Regulatory Services. Access is shared with the relevant staff who are named in the plan. A full set of county plans is also held on a range of areas including flood prevention, water distribution, pipelines and vulnerable people.

(b) We have produced a pocket sized emergency contacts list for relevant staff and also a credit card sized emergency contact card for members. This is updated and re-distributed regularly.

(c) During 2009, a significant amount of planning work was done in relation to the swine flu pandemic. This was done in partnership with the Local Resilience Forum (LRF).

(d) Work has been carried out with our designated rest centres and the rest centre guides updated.

(e) We have started preparing our emergency plans ahead of the Olympic Games in 2012.

4.1.2 Flood alleviation

Since the widespread flooding in 2007, a significant amount of work has been carried out including:

- Approval of 205 flood protection grants for households Delivery of over 60 flood alleviation schemes helping to reduce the risk of flooding for over 400 homes. Secured over £500,000 of funding from various organisations to continue to reduce the risk and effects of flooding and coastal erosion
• Development of a Multi-agency flood plan developed by the Local Resilience Forum with a section specifically related to the City
• The creation of a building asset register and maintenance plan

4.1.3 Exercises

Various exercises have been carried out to test our planning arrangements. These have included:

(a) A Co-ordination Team exercise which was based on a chemical fire on an industrial estate in the city. The exercise included setting-up the Emergency Centre as well as dealing with and responding to the emergency.

(b) A county exercise based on a water mains incident. The aim was to test the inter-agency public health response to a realistic water related incident in Gloucestershire. It was also attended by representatives from NHS, Health Protection Agency and Severn Trent.

(c) A call out exercise held just before Christmas 2010. The aim was to test the call-out and alerting procedures of the county and district council emergency response teams with no prior notice, in the event of an emergency during the Christmas and New Year period.

(d) A call out exercise for district council rest centre teams - based on an incident at a large event resulting in the need for rest centres to be set up.

(e) A city council call out exercise was carried out during an evening in November 2010. This was a telephone exercise to test how effective our response would be – we were able to contact appropriate staff to enable an emergency response team to be set up within two hours.

(f) A multi-agency exercise to test a tactical level response to severe, wide-spread flooding. It provided some valuable learning points for further developing the multi agency flood plan and was held to respond to some of the recommendations of the Pitt Review which was written following the widespread flooding in 2007.

(g) Gloucestershire Airport ran an emergency planning exercise which we attended as a neighbouring District Council. The exercise was a useful opportunity to understand the airport activities and to advise on assistance that the District Council can offer in an emergency. As a result of this exercise Gloucestershire Airport will include District Councils in future exercises.

(h) An exercise involving the crash of a military aircraft carrying nuclear weapons was organised by the Local Resilience Forum. The exercise took place in Cotswold District Council and a Gloucester City Council representative was invited to work alongside Cotswold District Council.
4.1.4 Training

Officers from across the council have attended a range of emergency management training which has included:

(a) Briefing sessions for each of the city council’s functional emergency response teams. These were run as there have been changes to the people within the teams and to ensure that everyone is up to date with emergency planning and their roles in the teams.

(b) A swine flu briefing organised by the Local Government Association. This outlined the priority issues that will affect councils and their key services.

(c) A number of “Gold Awareness” training sessions – this training provides a useful insight into the role and operation of the Strategic Co-ordination Centre in the event of an emergency.

(d) Training on the Science and Technical Advice Cell (STAC). The STAC is activated when a major incident has been declared and its role is to provide timely, co-ordinated, understandable scientific and technical advice to the Strategic Co-ordinating Group (Gold Command). This training involved role playing a STAC around a scenario of a major incident.

(e) A members training session. The head of the emergency management service at County Council attended and gave an overview of the subject followed by an outline of the city council’s role in emergency planning and the members’ role in an emergency – particularly the importance of working with the local community.

(f) Introduction to Integrated Emergency Management training has been held on a regular basis. This training is aimed at providing delegates with a wider perspective on the response to major incidents within the county of Gloucestershire, thereby enabling them to be better prepared to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

(g) An emergency response plan workshop for communities in the city to assist them to develop community resilience plans. All groups have been given a community emergency planning toolkit with a simple step-by-step route through the process of an emergency plan.

(h) A multi-agency seminar will be held in Gloucestershire on 4 October 2011 and will be focused on the Olympics. Representatives from Fire and Rescue, Dorset Police, London Olympic Games Organising Committee (LOGOC) and the Torch Relay Team will be invited to give presentations.

4.1.5 Incidents

Fortunately, since the flooding of July 2007, there has not been a large scale emergency in the city of Gloucester. There have been some smaller scale incidents including:

(a) A break-in where there was an attempt to steal containers of chemicals resulted in a chemical spill. This had to be dealt with to leave the site in a safe condition
and ensure that it was cleaned up effectively. This involved liaison with the fire service, Enterprise, Highways and the Emergency Management Service of County Council.

(b) A power cut had been planned at short notice that would have affected a number of properties in the city during one of the coldest days of the year. After we negotiated with the energy company, they agreed to postpone the works as it could have affected a number of vulnerable people.

(c) The loss of telephone and internet access in the city centre and Longlevens for a number of days raised concerns, particularly for the vulnerable.

(d) During the fire at a retail unit in Quedgeley, the city council’s input was required to advise the Fire Service on issues from the smoke plume and the need for a possible rest centre. The Health Protection Agency were contacted but quickly it became apparent that the fire was under control and a rest centre was not required.

(e) A fire at a local business resulted in a stretch of the Bristol Road being closed for a period of around 2 hours. The Environment Agency and British Waterways were also involved in the incident.

(f) As a result of the overnight disturbances in Gloucester City Centre, the emergency response team was activated and planning put in place to provide any assistance required from the city council to the emergency services and local community. Enterprise ensured that they had contingencies in place to clean the streets and return the city to normality as quickly as possible. Councillors and senior police officers met with community leaders, businesses and the public to find out their views and offer reassurance.

The city council’s response was well co-ordinated with partner agencies and good feedback was received from all in the community.

4.2 BUSINESS CONTINUITY

4.2.1 Planning

(a) The corporate recovery plan is maintained and updated by Environmental Health and Regulatory Services. Access is shared with relevant staff who need access to this as they are named in the plan. We also hold a full set of business continuity plans for each service area of the council.

(b) There are designated business continuity “champions” for each directorate whose role is to ensure that service areas maintain and update their plans.

(c) During 2009, a significant amount of planning work was done in relation to the swine flu pandemic. This involved collating information from across the council in relation to minimum staffing required to maintain services as well as the provision of information for staff and managers on action to take for those affected. Information about skills was also collated to establish where staff could transfer to support critical services.
(d) We regularly liaise with human resources to ensure our policies are robust and clear for when there are times of disruption.

(e) We have started preparing our business continuity plans ahead of the Olympic Games in 2012. Work will be carried out with human resources on our policies to help managers ensure they have sufficient cover and deal with potential staff absences and staff shortages that are possible due to the games. We will be contributing our own set of risks to form part of a county wide joint risk register. This will help inform the Olympics Strategic Group to consider the risk mitigation process.

4.2.2 Exercises

(a) A business continuity exercise was held in February 2011 based on loss of accommodation and IT systems for a period of time. The exercise involved a number of people across the council setting up the corporate recovery team to test the effectiveness of our plans.

4.2.3 Incidents

(a) During times of severe weather, we have worked to ensure that services have been maintained. We have also worked with human resources in issuing advice to staff and managers in relation to policies regarding absence from work, working from home etc. and the majority of services have been maintained as normal. Where services were reduced (e.g. refuse collection), these were restored to normality in a short period of time.

5.0 Future Work

5.1 We have agreed a new service level agreement with Gloucestershire County Council. This will involve one of the emergency management officers working in our offices one day a month to assist us in delivering a jointly developed workplan for the year ahead which will include:

- An audit of our emergency plans
- Review of rest centre plans
- Review of internal rest centre team and associated training
- Development of further mutual aid between other agencies and partners
- Raising profile of business continuity management through drop in sessions and workshops
- A training programme

5.2 We will continue with training and exercises and ensure that our plans and emergency contacts are maintained and kept up to date.

5.3 There is a need to review the strategic lead on risk management so this will be revitalised and taken forward by group managers.

5.4 A cross border mutual aid agreement between Gloucestershire and Worcestershire local authorities has been written but requires sign off by each participating authority.
5.5 The purpose of the agreement is for authorities to provide assistance to each other during emergencies. This assistance will be in the form of provision of personnel and resources in accordance with agreed guidelines.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 In the relatively short period since Environmental Health and Regulatory Services have been involved with emergency planning and business continuity planning, significant progress has been made as outlined above. We will continue to strive for continual improvements and raise the profile and awareness through exercises, training and drop in sessions. As there have been staff changes, loss of key staff with expertise and more changes to the council likely, this will be a continual process.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 None

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 None at this stage

9.0 Risk Management Implications

A positive impact ensuring the city council is prepared for the potential issues.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

Please ensure you complete this section even if a PIA is not required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Explanation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is a PIA required?</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>The contents of this report were found to have a positive impact for all sectors of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has an initial PIA screening been completed?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Explanation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a full PIA been completed?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Explanation: No negative impact identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the PIA available?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Explanation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the PIA identified any negative impacts on any protected characteristic or community cohesion?</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Explanation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>*Please ensure PIA is available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any Further Relevant Information:
11.0 Other Corporate Implications (this may include Community Safety, Environmental, Staffing, Trade Union)

11.1 None associated with this report.

Background Papers : None
Published Papers : None
Person to Contact : Gill Ragon or Edward Pomfret
Tel: 396321/396069
E-mail:  
gill.ragon@gloucester.gov.uk
edward.pomfret@gloucester.gov.uk