

Name of Cabinet Member:
Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance)
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

22 March 2012
04 April 2012

Director Approving Submission of the report:
Assistant Chief Executive

Ward(s) affected: All

Report Title:

Sub-regional Resilience 1 year on...Progress report on the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Resilience Team

Is this a key decision?
No

Executive Summary:

At the Cabinet Member's 1st September 2011 meeting, a progress update was given on the work of the new Sub-Regional Resilience Team for Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW Resilience Team) following the new way of working going live on 1st April 2011.

The 6th month progress report committed to updating the members on the team's progress after a year of operation, this report provides the 12 month update.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that members:

- (i) Consider the progress made during the first year of operation of the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Team and
- (ii) Approve the continuation of the sub-regional approach to resilience planning.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1: Diagrammatic representation of the CSW Resilience Team

Other useful background papers:

Reports to Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance) on 8th July 2010, 26th November 2010, 20th January 2011 and 1st September 2011.

Has it been or will it be considered by scrutiny?

Yes – 4th April 2012

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body:

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title:

Sub-regional Resilience 1 year on...Progress report on the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Resilience Team

1. Context

- 1.1 Since the 1st April 2011 the former three emergency planning teams have been working together as a single team to deliver a joint resilience programme under a single management structure.
- 1.2 Over the last 12 months, the new single team has had to undertake a significant change programme, whilst both learning new arrangements, maintaining existing arrangements, responding to incidents/developments and also managing the significant resilience challenges associated with the Olympic Games.
- 1.3 This report updates the Cabinet Member on the progress implementing the new team over the last 12 months, together with some of our successes and realised opportunities.

2. Key Activities Undertaken and Advantages of the Shared Service

- 2.1 Since April 2011, the team have undertaken a significant work programme to develop as a single shared service whilst also maintaining business as usual, identifying (and plugging) immediate gaps and planning for the future, the joint team have delivered this challenging programme and have established a path for future development.
- 2.2 The team are heavily involved in all aspects of the Olympic Games – including regional planning activities. The Olympic workload has been significant and has continued to increase over the last 12 months, causing significant (but manageable) disruption to our normal activities. The larger team has (albeit it with some changes made to existing activities) managed to assimilate the additional burden, being able to spread the additional work and required partnership engagement across the larger team. The advantages of being able to meet this requirement have been significant.
- 2.3 The team has also developed and implemented its replacement, single 24/7, duty officer system for the three authorities. This single system was developed taking the best practice from the three existing schemes and created the single new streamlined scheme for the partnership. Whilst this scheme will continue to be refined, the system has been tested by real incidents and has met the demands placed on it, providing officers with a reduced duty commitment and the organisation a more resilient 24/7 response.
- 2.4 The team's work programme has covered the development of a wide range of arrangements both individually for Coventry, its two partners and also for the Sub-Region as a whole. Where possible we have used the opportunities of joint working to develop these arrangements, as joint arrangements and utilise the collective resource and capability of the partnership.
- 2.5 After 12 months of development, there are a number of examples of these improved joint arrangements, each with a different "added value" bringing either new capabilities, capacity, resources, financial savings or all of these benefits. Some examples of these developments are:
 - 2.5.1 New Joint Plans and Arrangements:
 - Coventry & Warwickshire Temporary Mortuary Plan;
 - Coventry & Solihull Humanitarian Assistance Centres Plan;

- Industrial Action Plans (Part of Business Continuity);
- Stronger Internal Business Continuity Process;
- Sub-regional Fuel Shortage Plan;
- Duty Officer Standard Operating Procedures;

2.5.2 New Capabilities

- Harwell Document recovery;
- WRVS /Red Cross Agreements;
- Telephone conferencing for incidents;
- Mass text messaging alert system;
- Emergency Facilities via Community Resilience;

2.5.3 Financial Savings

- Single Kenyon's Contract (Same Cover (Joint) + 45% saving);
- Harwell Critical User Subscription (Additional Area and + 25% saving);
- National Satellite Telephone subscription (Same cover + 25% saving);
- WRVS Service Level Agreement (additional area + 30% saving).

2.5.4 We have also been able to rapidly create (from shared templates or from a single concept) local plans or exercises, that can then apply and benefit each agency, some examples are:

- Multi-Agency Flood Plan(s);
- "Active Shooter" exercise;
- Elected Members Role in Emergencies training;
- Joint communications team emergency training;
- Corporate Business Continuity Plan.

2.6 In addition to the "new" capabilities added across the partnership, we have been able to focus on our existing capabilities and either develop them or revise them - to ensure they remain fit for purpose. There are lots of specific examples of this, however, we wouldn't have been able to achieve this without the integrated working and capacity now across and within the team.

2.7 We have also been able to participate actively in a range of groups where previous physical resource constraints have prevented us from fully engaging. We have therefore been able to add value to those groups and meet partners expectations. Examples of such activity are;

- First Mortuary imaging scanner test;
- Health Meetings;
- Warwickshire and West Midlands Local Resilience Forum (LRF) meetings;
- Town Centre Evacuation Meetings;
- Safety Advisory Groups;
- Olympic Meetings.

2.8 Finally, working across the three authorities has enabled members of the team to provide links between the authorities. This has led to stronger working between other disciplines in the authority allowing them to share documents and ideas that may help in their normal business activity. Key examples of this are:

- Flood Risk Managers Group
- Communications Teams exercise

3. Human Resources & the Team

3.1 The structure of the CSW Resilience Team is indicated in Appendix 1 to this report and is unchanged from original proposals and member briefings.

- 3.2 The team structure has embedded well across each authority, with team members increasingly integrating within each authority and acting equally for each authority.
- 3.3 The team are currently recruiting for a CSW Assistant Emergency Planning Officer and we have also been able to support Warwickshire LRF when the secretariat post became unexpectedly vacant.
- 3.4 Monthly unit (Coventry) meetings and monthly full team meetings have occurred since inception of the shared service, these will continue in future years. The team also hold various team days to share knowledge, awareness and understanding to ensure the full team has an understanding of each aspect of the resilience service.
- 3.5 Each officer continues to operate across each local authority site as required and improvements and developments in the team ICT capability make flexible working increasingly more possible and straightforward.

4 Caradoc Hall – Example of Sub Regional Resilience

- 4.1 A detailed debrief report into the Caradoc Hall incident, its response and recommendations for the future is available. However, this incident serves to highlight the numerous benefits and continuous opportunities of a joint resilience team.
- 4.2 The incident occurred on Friday 13th January with notification through our new single duty process (The officer on duty on this occasion was a member of the Warwickshire unit). The Duty Officer managed the operational delivery of the response including activating Coventry Staff and Volunteers to support the core response over the weekend.
- 4.3 The team was able to muster and deploy 2 additional officers to support the response at the scene/rest centre (the previous entire team complement). Leaving the duty officer to coordination/contacts and an incident commander to direct activity and provide information to the wider group. This extra capacity in high profile, time sensitive, stressful situations improves the response and thus the outcomes on the ground.
- 4.4 Some of the new capabilities brought to the partnership, were employed by the team during this incident. Two prime examples were the use of telephone conferencing to make command decisions, thus enabling all appropriate officers (including Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive, volunteers and duty officers) to work together, share a common briefing and agree the appropriate course of action. The team also utilised the National Resilience Extranet to electronically access and share documents that are normally classified as “restricted” (including our emergency plans) at home.
- 4.5 Availability of volunteers to staff our rest centres proved to be a challenge. However, we had recently extended the WRVS and Red Cross agreements to cover the partnership and were able to call on both agencies for support – the addition of WRVS to Coventry, resulted in us being able to provide a second shift at the rest centre.
- 4.6 There were a number of other advantages of a joint team during this incident, however, the principles of increased capability, capacity and flexibility were tested in this incident and shown above.

5 Other Points of Note

- 5.1 The draft 4 work priorities being considered for the team in 2012/13 are:
 - The Olympics;

- Development of new Emergency Plan(s);
- Development and implementation of new Business Continuity processes;
- Ensure the integration of our new health responsibilities within our resilience arrangements for Public Health's return on the 1st April 2013.

5.2 The joint team have provided modest, rechargeable support, to other local agencies (namely neighbouring district/borough authorities), the income for which will support the partnership activities.

5.3 The Partnership Board continue to meet – the partnership board recently held a full team workshop to look at the successes of year one and opportunities for year two.

5.4 We have two undergraduate students with the team for 3-4 months, supporting two areas of work and working closely with the workstream leads from within the team. We will actively seek to continue our student placement programme in 2012-13 academic year.

6 **Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services**

6.1 Financial implications

Local financial savings have been made in Coventry, including the reduction of two management posts, to enable the implementation of this approach on the 1st April 2011.

Each member of the partnership commits a fixed annual sum to the partnership, providing for the partnership budget and posts – this fund benefits the partnership activities, individually or collectively.

Each partner retains a budget locally to ensure local officers and the “fully functioning” office can be provided and committed to the joint programme.

Solihull hosts these arrangements and ensures the HR and financial management of the partnership posts – there is no “charge” to the partnership for this as it's provided in the spirit of the partnership agreement

6.2 Legal implications

A detailed Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, with a legally binding section outlining the partnership agreement for its initial five years.

7 **Other implications**

7.1 **How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS)?**

This way of working improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing resilience planning functions across all three agencies and ensures an improved and more coordinated response to our communities can be delivered.

7.2 **How is risk being managed?**

A Community Risk Register (West Midlands and Warwickshire) informs planning activity and therefore the team work programme – The community risk register and risk work has an

active lead within the team and has progressed well. A Sub-regional risk map is being created to help us further identify priority areas.

Corporate Risk is managed in the normal way and are developed and reviewed by the Head of the team.

7.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The impact to the authority is that it now has a larger resilience resource. There may be officers leading on work that are not employees of the authority – but all are enabled and empowered (under the MOU) to act for each authority as employees.

7.4 Equalities / EIA

HR, during the scoping of this arrangement, ensured all Equalities and EIA issues were integral to establishing the partnership approach.

Resilience arrangements and activities will continue to recognise the need to take account of issues of equality.

7.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

Climate change is a significant driver for a number of risks that are contained in the Community Risk Register of all three principal partner agencies, as is the need to protect the environment quickly following incidents that have a chemical element.

The effects of “severe weather” incidents (flooding, storms, extensive snow/ice, heatwaves) are not limited to restricted geographic areas, nor are the impacts of incidents which release toxins into the environment and are better planned for across a wider region. Equally we have had additional responsibilities added under national arrangements such as the cold weather plan, which as a team we have been able to pick up once. This is an example of the benefits that are intrinsic to the new team.

7.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The three partners have already recognised that these arrangements are of mutual benefit to the organisations and our communities. This way of working encapsulates the principles of the Civil Contingencies Act and continues to strengthen our arrangements and our ability to respond to incidents in Coventry or the sub region.

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