

Briefing Paper

Emergency Planning Shared Service Joint Committee – Rotherham and Sheffield

2 pm, 6 December 2012

Rotherham Town Hall

Purpose of paper: Item 4

To update Members on key issues affecting the development of the EPSS into 2013/14

Background information:

See next section.

Key issues:

The following have been identified as the key issues:

- Budget reductions – The two councils have agreed that the combined budget should be reduced by 15% in 2013/14 to meet their corporate savings requirements. Whilst this measure is achievable without any significant reduction in service provision, it should be noted that a recent benchmarking survey against other Core Cities and Shared Service units identified that the EPSS was already 'lite' in resources, even prior to the implementation of next year's reductions. Moreover, any further reductions will result in significant reductions to the unit's capacity to deliver its current services.
- Wider development of the Shared Service concept – Discussions have taken place with other potential partners but, at this time, there is little appetite elsewhere to take forward this concept.
- Revision of the Borough Emergency Plan (RMBC) and Major Incident Plan (SCC) – All plans require regular refreshing and our review indicates that both are still 'fit for purpose' and, in particular, that the Forward Liaison Officer (FLO) role, as supported by complementary Chief Officer rotas for both councils, works well. However, recent incidents have identified an area of concern in relation to the initial support of FLOs in the event of an incident. In normal office hours, this is not an issue as the EPSS itself can provide that support but 'out of hours' support is currently insufficiently robust. In effect, the FLO's immediate support is a Chief Officer and, in most cases, this is inappropriate. One solution has been identified but requires additional

financial resources for implementation and, given the current financial climate, this is unlikely to be supported. Accordingly, the EPSS is looking for an alternative solution to resolve this issue.

Conclusion:

Notwithstanding future budgetary restrictions, the Shared Service concept is still providing a good level of service and validates the decision to establish the EPSS.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- (1) To note this report.
- (2) To recommend to both councils that they set a budget for the EPSS in line with the recommended 15% reduction.