

Briefing Paper

Emergency Planning Shared Service Joint Committee – Rotherham and Sheffield

Thursday 6 December (Rotherham Town Hall)

Purpose of paper: Item 8

To provide members of the Joint Committee with the initial findings from Exercise Trio, this took place for Sheffield City Council (SCC) on 29 / 30 November 2012. A version of this exercise is to be repeated in Rotherham MBC on 21 February 2013.

This interim brief is provided in advance of any formal debrief having taken place (to take place on 12 December 2012). A formal post exercise report will then be produced, with recommendations and learning points highlighted.

Background information:

The aim and objective of Exercise Trio were defined as;

Aim:

To exercise processes and procedures in preparedness for a major emergency affecting SCC

Objectives:

- To consider the Response and Recovery elements of the Major Incident Plan
- To assess the processes for interaction with partners/contractors
- To consider how the public, businesses, staff and elected members are kept informed
- To consider Business Continuity practices
- To assess the communication processes between the EOR and Portfolios
- Assess procedures in a Reception Centre
- To assess the resilience of the council over an extended period.

There was also an emphasis on business continuity plans and staff resilience during a protracted incident.

This aim will be adjusted to suit the needs of RMBC in that the exercise will focus on the recovery and BC elements of responding to an incident.

Key issues:

This exercise was believed to be the largest SCC Emergency Planning response and recovery exercise ever held. It was aimed mainly at the Tactical level, but with Strategic involvement by EMT and, as part of the exercise, a live Reception Centre was established with approx 70 participants from the public

A number of preliminary discussions have taken place with various participants and early learning points to be further explored with wider participants include;

- Communications with contracted partners
- Communications between EOR and portfolio Control Rooms
- Community tension monitoring and links to the Ops Room Manager in a major incident
- Use of Town Hall as a reception centre
- New corporate communications arrangements in the EOR
- Links between EMT and Ops Room.
- Opportunity for staff to carry out their emergency role in a safe environment
- Resilience in terms of staff able to fulfil particular roles in an incident
- The need for loggist training for some roles
- Better links between Emergency Planning, Business Continuity and Recovery elements
- More work is required in terms of Recovery

Conclusion:

At this early stage, the exercise is considered to have been successful and provided much benefit to participants and the aims and objectives as detailed above were either fully or partially met. Based on the outcome of the exercise, the EPSS team are confident that SCC are better placed to respond to an incident of such magnitude – including if presented with a loss of ICT issue within the EOR.

Owing to the previous level of rehearsal of an initial response to a Major Incident within RMBC, the Senior Emergency & Safety Team has agreed to hold an exercise based on a similar scenario on 21 February, this will run over a half day and focus specifically on the Recovery phase, with threads of Business Continuity.

Recommendations:

- A structured debrief will take place on 12 December 2012.
- Learning points to be noted and a formal post exercise report to be produced
- Any recommendations contained within the post exercise report to be implemented within SCC.
- Lessons identified from Exercise Trio to be incorporated into the February exercise in RMBC