

Decision Maker: PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT PDS COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 16 March 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Key

Title: EMERGENCY PLANNING AND CORPORATE RESILIENCE
BUSINESS CONTINUITY SERVICE - ANNUAL UPDATE

Contact Officer: David Tait - Emergency Planning and Corporate Resilience Manager –
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Chief Officer: Colin Brand Director of Environment and Public Protection

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

This annual report provides the Committee with an account of the key resilience activities undertaken in 2020-21; it further provides assurance of the Council's Civil Contingencies priorities across the organisation for 2020-21.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to note the report.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: In an emergency situation certain groups of people may become vulnerable, depending on the situation faced. The Emergency Planning Team (EPT) work closely with blue light services and other partners to ensure that those who may be particularly vulnerable are identified and the appropriate levels of support are provided.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council Quality Environment Safe Bromley:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head: £
 5. Source of funding:
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 1.8 FTE
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement: Legal Requirement: Statutory requirement - the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 requires that Local Authority to assess the risk of emergencies and plan for them and to have business continuity arrangements in place.
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All residents and businesses in the Borough could be affected by emergency situations.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. Commentary

- 3.1 Under the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA), Local Authorities, as Category One Responders have a legal duty to prepare, exercise & update their Civil Contingencies arrangements, and to ensure that whilst responding to an incident and / or business interruption, their core essential public services can continue to be delivered. Such arrangements must also consider essential services that are delivered by third party contractors, alongside those delivered by directly employed staff. These arrangements and responses aim to provide the framework for effective management during such emergencies. The CCA also requires Local Authorities to ensure that the local community and businesses understand what the borough will provide during an emergency, and further to provide local businesses with guidance on business continuity, particularly the need to plan for emergency events to aid their recovery from the impacts as soon as possible.
- 3.2 This Annual Report provides a summary of the activities undertaken by the EPT in undertaking its duties under the Act.

Incident Response:

- 3.3 The EPT have responded to 18 emergency incidents over the last year, the response to which can be split into three broad categories:
- **Monitoring** - where Officers are only required to monitor the situation.
 - **Information sharing and Communicating** - whereby Officers cascade information to partners; and
 - **Incident Response and Co-Ordination** - where Officers have attended the scene and or utilised Local Authority equipment / services to assist in the emergency response.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 provides the details of the incidents responded to in the 2020-21 period. The most notable was the response to a fire at County House Beckenham on 15/01/21, which resulted in 32 families requiring temporary rehousing. EPT worked with Environment and Housing colleagues, with the response requiring 2 rest centres to be opened under COVID -19 guidelines. A subsequent debrief highlighted inadequacies in the housing providers emergency response procedures, as a result, these are currently being addressed.

COVID -19 Pandemic response

- 3.5 As you would expect, over the past year EPT have been heavily involved in the Council's response to the pandemic. These works have taken up the vast majority of the time and effort of the team. Below is a summary of their involvement.

COVID-19 Strategic Group:

- Advice provided regarding the command and control structure required for the strategic and operational management of the pandemic.
- Emergency Planning and Corporate Resilience Manager acts as the Resilience Advisor to the Chief Executive and develop the recovery management process; he reports to the group in respect of Business Continuity, Mobile testing, Mortality Management and COVID secure preparations.

COVID-19 Tactical Group:

- **Ongoing** support provided to the Director of Public Health in respect of terms of reference and command and control structure, Mobile Testing unit management, emergency planning matters and risk assessment.

Health protection COVID-19 Board:

- Contributed to the development of strategy and outbreak control plan, command and control structure and testing and exercising.
- Assisted in development of contact tracing response and identification of local testing sites. Contributing to action plan development and identifying best practice.
- Provision of training.

South East Mortality Management Group:

- Represents the Local Authority at a Coronial area level, monitoring death management process end to end, identifying pinch points, liaising with NHS, Registrars, Funeral Directors and Cemeteries to problem solve issues.

Establishing Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) and Local Testing Sites (LTS):

- The Norman Park MTU is now testing in excess of 400 people every deployment. Cotmandene Crescent and Crystal Palace Park sites provide 7 day a week testing facilities open from 8am to 8pm each day, recently increased to 7am to 9pm increasing the testing capability across the Borough by 800 tests per day. A further LTS has been identified and recommended for consideration by Dept of Health and Social Care.

COVID-19 secure building preparation:

- Volunteered to prepare all Local Authority satellite sites to the Government COVID secure standard for preparing return to work. Over a two-month period 23 sites were prepared in terms of required signage and social distancing measures with cleaning regimes occupancy rates and risk assessment advised to the respective building managers.

MPS raid on the Star Lane Travellers site:

- Performed role of Police liaison in the planning phase, worked with Director of Housing to prepare operational plan including briefings, risk assessments, staffing requirements and set up of 2 rest centres. Performed role as site lead and Rest Centre Manager on the day of the raid, with 25 staff beginning work at 0315hrs.

Targeted Testing and Mass Vaccination sites:

- The team formed part of a programme board to identify and set up our targeted testing sites with go live dates of 04/01/21 at the Council Chamber, and 11/01/21 at the Kentwood Adult Education Centre respectively.

- Worked alongside the Clinical Commissioning Group to set up a mass vaccination centre in The Great Hall, with go live date of 27/02/21, with the capability of delivering 1000 vaccinations a day.

Staffing the Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) and required returns:

- Continued 'virtual' staffing of the BECC. Co-ordinating the daily returns re COVID impact upon services, conduit for all communications from London Resilience Group to respective Directorates.

Training and exercising during 2020-2021

- 3.6 The COVID pandemic severely impacted upon planned training and exercising regimes, and planned events including a Gold exercise and Senior Officer media training, scheduled for early March 2020 were cancelled. Planning for this year's Safer City exercise has also been delayed until October 2021 by the London Resilience Group. Additionally, the planned refresher training during 2020 was put on hold due to the team's unavailability through working on our COVID response. However, a number of Officers did attend Rest Centre training which was provided by the Red Cross via Zoom.
- 3.7 A updated training schedule is currently being formalised, this will include the first refresher course which is scheduled to take place in March 2021, for our Local Authority Liaison Officers (LALOs) via Microsoft Teams. Staff will continue to be scheduled to attend the online Rest Centre and Rest Centre Manager training; there will also be a campaign to increase the numbers of trained staff beginning shortly. Moving forwards, greater emphasis will be placed upon refresher training as the situation begins to return to normal.
- 3.8 Notwithstanding the issues that have arisen, the pandemic has provided The Council the opportunity to put into practice much of the learning gained from previous exercises and training. This is especially true in relation to command control protocols and business continuity processes. Furthermore, the pandemic has highlighted the 'can do' attitude of Bromley Officers, with many volunteering for additional roles and responsibilities to deal with the challenges faced, whilst service delivery was maintained.

Borough Resilience Forum update

- 3.9 The Borough Resilience Forum (BRF) is a statutory body established by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004; it is responsible for multi-agency emergency preparedness and co-ordination at the local level as determined by identified Borough Risks and needs. The BRF meets three times a year and is chaired by the Emergency Planning and Corporate Resilience lead. The last meeting is due to be held on the 8th of March 2021 and the main focus will be upon partnership working during the pandemic, and further developing the work plan for the next financial year.
- 3.10 A major piece of work for the forum this year will be the review of the Borough Risk Register. This follows on from a fundamental review and re-write of the National and the London Risk Registers. This has seen a consolidation of old risks, identification of new risks but now also includes identified threats. It is anticipated that the London Risk Register will be republished in the by May 2021. The BRF will work as a partnership to reshape the Borough's Risk Register to reflect the new format and analyse the changes in risk profile and applying them to a local perspective.

Resilience Standards for London (RSL)

- 3.11 The standards were launched in July 2019; they were designed to enable Local Authorities to assess their capability and capacity against 12 standards that ensure Local Authorities have the appropriate procedures and policies in place, so as to lead to good outcomes and leading practice, whilst supporting compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- 3.12 Following the submission of the Council's first audit against the 12 standards; the assessment disclosed 9 standards as being judged as 'established', with 3 being judged as 'developing'. The developing standards relate to:
- Community resilience
 - Recovery Management; and
 - Roles and responsibilities
- 3.13 During this year, two further audit/reviews have been conducted, enabling the reflection of the work undertaken by the Council during the pandemic against the standards. This has enabled the Community Resilience and Recovery Management standards to be increased from 'developing' to 'established'.
- 3.14 A bench marking exercise will be undertaken when the results of the external peer reviews conducted at several London Boroughs are published.

Business Continuity

- 3.15 The progress made with our Business Continuity (BC) arrangements assisted with continued service delivery during the pandemic. Owners of BC plans gained a better understanding of their key suppliers BC arrangements to enable them to mitigate any service delivery issues. 95% of Bromley Officers have been working at home for almost a year now, which is testament to the successful IT rollout, and to the commitment of staff during very difficult circumstances.
- 3.16 The overarching BC plan for the council was utilised by the COVID Chief Officer Executive to identify areas of our business to draw staff from to support new critical programmes, these included Shielding, Track and Trace and the various testing regimes.
- 3.17 This year the BC cycle will begin again, with a review of Bromley's Business Impact Analysis work for all services, a refresh of each BC plan and a regime of testing, with an emphasis on Cyber-attacks.

4 IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 In an emergency situation certain groups of people may become vulnerable, depending on the situation faced. The Emergency Planning team work closely with blue light services and other partners to ensure that those who may be particularly vulnerable are identified and the appropriate levels of support are provided.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Policy Implications Personnel Implications; Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	