

Meeting:	Governance, Audit & Risk Management Committee
Date:	22nd January 2009
Subject:	Emergency Planning – Stanley Road Explosion
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Myfanwy Barrett – Corporate Director of Finance
Portfolio Holder:	David Ashton – Council Leader, Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnership & Finance
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix : Anonymised Version of the Stanley Road Incident Report as sent to London Councils.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report was requested by the Committee at its meeting on 24th November 2008.

Recommendations:

That the Committee notes the Council's response to the Stanley Road incident, the lessons learnt and progress against the action plan.

Reason: (For recommendation)

To provide assurance around the Council's emergency response arrangements and progress against the improvement actions identified.

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

2.1 At its meeting on 24th November 2008 the Committee requested a progress report on the Stanley Road emergency response. This was in the context of the role of Members during a major incident.

The Role of a Member during a Major Incident

2.2 Members have an important role to play during a critical or major incident. This role needs to be clearly defined so that the areas of operational command and control do not become blurred with the duty to represent residents and local business issues and concerns.

2.3 Annual training on Emergency Planning specifically for Members has been arranged within the Member Development Programme, entitled, “The role of a Member during a Major Incident”. The first scheduled session will be held on the evening of Thursday 5th March 2009.

2.4 This training module has been developed using best practice from our neighbouring boroughs in the West London Alliance and also the shared emergency planning standards across the 33 local authorities in Greater London.

The training session will explain the following:

- Command and control during a major incident
- Strategic management and decision making
- Tactical deployment of resources
- Operational arrangements on the ground
- Concept of operations
- Common procedures and joint working with the emergency services
- Dos and Don'ts for Members.

2.5 Full training handouts to accompany the session will be provided. This will include an aide memoir consisting of a short briefing note to assist Members during an incident. This will also be incorporated into the Major Incident Plan to be issued to Members during a critical or major incident.

2.6 The session will consist of an interactive presentation on the above emergency planning procedures and roles, full handouts, and a question and answer session. Member support is requested for this event to maximise the benefit to Members and the community they serve.

Borough Emergency Control Centre

2.7 The venue of the Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC) is under review. The current venue is also a meeting room which presents difficulties with the storage and maintenance of IT equipment and office peripherals. A better set up is currently being investigated where four PCs could be permanently housed.

Review of Departmental Emergency Plans

2.8 The review of departmental emergency planning and business continuity plans has begun. This will be conducted during spring 2009. This will also link into the recruitment of additional Emergency Response Officers, as Directors will be tasked with identifying key departmental representatives.

Homelessness and Welfare Policy During a Major Incident

2.9 The Housing, Adults and Children's departments are all conducting reviews of their current policies on dealing with people during a major incident. These policies will be revised following the explosion at Stanley Road.

Recruitment of Emergency Response Officers

2.10 The recruitment of more Emergency Response Officers (ERO) is well underway. A further four have joined the current 12 officers. Directors will be asked to nominate departmental representatives during the review of their emergency procedures during spring 2009

Improvement of IT Provision

2.11 The provision of IT has been improved during autumn 2008, with better drive set up and accessibility to shared documents.

Legal Implications

2.12 The Civil Contingencies Act places a duty on Local Authorities to effectively plan for and respond to major incidents as "category one" responders.

Financial Implications

2.13 The improvements set out in this report will be carried out within existing council resources.

Performance Issues

2.14 Business continuity and emergency planning arrangements are part of the annual Use of Resources inspection carried out by the Audit Commission.

Risk Management Implications

2.15 Managing corporate emergency planning risks is an integral function of the Audit and Risk Group and a major incident scenario is one of the strategic risks that the authority needs to manage through thorough planning and preparedness.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Myfanwy Barrett



Chief Financial Officer

Date: 5th January 2009

Name: Helen White



On behalf of Monitoring
Officer

Date: 9th January 2009

Section 5 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: David Ward, Divisional Director, Audit & Risk
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