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**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY  
EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT**

***Committee Report***

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**Meeting: CIVIL CONTINGENCIES COMMITTEE: 7 JULY 2008**

**Subject: EMERGENCY PLANNING BEACON AUTHORITY EVENT**

***Report of the Chief Emergency Planning Officer***

**1.0 OVERVIEW**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to feedback the key issues and lessons learned from the one day Emergency Planning Beacon Event that was held on Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 at the Marriott Hotel in the centre of Leeds.
- 1.2 The event was well attended with around 100 delegates taking part from various locations of the UK. The day was organised into three workshop sessions and included the following subjects:
- Warning and Informing;
  - Business Continuity Management including Promotion;
  - Humanitarian Assistance;
  - Training & Exercising

**2.0 PURPOSE OF THE EVENT**

- 2.1 The aim of the event was to provide an opportunity for the two-way sharing of good practice between Beacon Authorities and Emergency Planning colleagues.
- 2.2 The event allowed delegates to:
- Learn about methods that the Beacon Authorities are using to implement the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act;
  - Learn about innovative solutions that could be applied to your own organisation; and
  - Be involved in a discussion about the obstacles and successes that different organisations have faced in implementing emergency planning duties.

**3.0 HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

- 3.1 The Humanitarian Assistance Workshop aimed to share practical ideas about how to provide appropriate humanitarian assistance to people affected by major emergencies.

3.2 Case studies were presented from three different organisations which helped to provide some of the main issues in developing humanitarian assistance plans. In particular, a Service Head from Nottinghamshire County Council's Adult Social Care & Health Department provided some areas of good practice. The importance of the following key points were highlighted:

- Cooperation from senior managers in social care;
- Close links with an appropriate LRF Corporate Group;
- Partnership Work (multi-agency approach), and
- HAC Plan launch events.

3.3 Tyne and Wear local authority arrangements are already well advanced in these areas. Information providing more detail around these areas has been distributed to councils for consideration to further enhance arrangements.

#### **4.0 PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE**

4.1 The Rotherham Humanitarian Centre manager provided an informative overview of some of the key issues that affected their Council during the major floods. Challenges included:

- Engaging statutory, voluntary and community sector agencies;
- Coordination of Daily Activities;
- Planning and Communicating Information, and
- Maintaining Long Term Relationships with Residents.

4.2 A CD was issued at the end of this session with all the relevant documents and plans.

#### **5.0 BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT (BCM)**

5.1 This workshop examined some of the different approaches that beacons have taken to embed a business continuity culture within an organisation, including how to achieve and maintain corporate support.

5.2 A presentation was also provided on the business continuity challenges faced by authorities during the 2007 floods. Several issues were highlighted for attendees to consider, such as staff training and awareness, risk analysis and information sharing.

#### **6.0 BCM PROMOTION**

6.1 This workshop was delivered by Newark & Sherwood District Council, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and Essex County Council. It investigated the obstacles to effective business continuity promotion and showcased examples of different approaches to promote business

Continuity to local businesses and voluntary organisations. A CD was issued which can be used by local authorities in Tyne and Wear.

## **7.0 TRAINING AND EXERCISING**

7.1 This workshop explored practical solutions to meet training and exercise obligations, both in respect of Major Incidents and COMAH. It compared and contrasted the benefits of multi and single agency approach to major incident training and offer examples of best practice to meet COMAH exercising and testing requirements, gaining 'buy-in' from the COMAH Operator, competent authority and responders. These methods are already in use in Tyne and Wear and the session served to reinforce and underline the good practice already in place for testing our local COMAH plans.

## **8.0 WARNING AND INFORMING**

8.1 This workshop was presented by representatives from Cleveland Fire Service, Humberside County Council and Essex County Council. It identified how these organisations have raised awareness of the risks of emergencies, including educating school children, communicating with vulnerable groups and providing advice to the public at the time of an emergency.

8.2 Some of the main issues covered in the workshop included:

- The requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act;
- Experience and lessons learned from the Humberside floods of 2007;
- Developing education packages to engage children at all ages as a means of promoting community resilience, and
- Developing good partnerships to communicate with all sectors of the community.

8.3 The Northumbria LRF Public Communication Group is currently addressing warning and informing issues; and a previous report to this committee has also outlined the significant work of the EPU in respect of the development of schools education initiatives.

## **9.0 SUMMARY**

9.1 This report captures the key findings of the event. It was reassuring to note that much of the good practice promoted by the Beacon councils is already in place in Tyne and Wear; nevertheless the information provided is being assessed to identify whether any further refinements can be made to improve practice.

## **10.0 RECOMMENDATION**

10.1 Members are requested to note this report.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

'Schools Emergency Plan Template and Resilience Teaching Pack Initiatives' –  
Report to Civil Contingencies Committee 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Various papers relating to LRF Public Communication Group, the LRF Training & Exercising Group, the LRF Humanitarian Assistance Working Group, the LRF Business Continuity Group and the LRF Flooding Task & Finish Group, held in the EPU offices