



APPENDIX C(iii)

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT



Emergency Planning 2017/18

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Emergency Planning 2017/18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION & OVERALL OPINION

Effective emergency planning is an essential component of the Council’s overall governance arrangements to ensure the resilience of all key services and the support of the community in the event of a major incident. The Council also has a legal responsibility under the Civil Contingency Act 2004 for maintaining plans to help prevent, control and manage emergencies.

Based on Internal Audit’s review the Council has effective and clearly documented emergency plans, including a Major Incident Plan, in place which are regularly reviewed and tested through the local resilience forum.

There is a clear multi-agency approach to emergency planning through the use of the local resilience forum, which works closely with the council and the nine additional districts to produce, review and test plans and provide qualified, experienced resilience officers to support and assist in the event of an emergency.

Clear arrangements are in place to make the public aware of civil protection matters and arrangements for regular risk assessments are in place to support the established community risk register. Test exercises are completed bi-annually and used to refine and update the plans and any lessons learned are formally recorded.

Response and recovery training arrangements are in place for the corporate management team and wider training in the form of an e-learning module has been introduced for all staff.

Additional training in the form of more specific e-learning modules are being developed by the local resilience forum to give more in depth training for officers with specific roles in relation to emergency planning.

The audit was carried out in accordance with the agreed Audit Planning Record (APR), which outlined the scope, terms and limitations to the audit. The Auditor’s Opinion is summarised below:

Internal Audit Assurance Opinion					
Control environment		Substantial		●	
Compliance		Substantial		●	
Organisational impact		Minor		●	
Risk	Design	Comply	Recommendations		
			H	M	L
01 - The Council’s emergency planning arrangements are not fit for purpose leading to a failure to respond effectively to a major incident.	Substantial Assurance	Substantial Assurance	0	0	0
Total Number of Recommendations			0	0	0

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



Risk 1: The Council's emergency planning arrangements are not fit for purpose leading to a failure to respond effectively to a major incident.

The Council's emergency planning arrangements have been developed as part of its membership of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Local Resilience Partnership (LRP). The partnership employs a specialist Resilience Officer who leads and co-ordinates a multi-agency approach to emergency planning, including the development of comprehensive Major Incident Plans (MIP) for each member authority and associated plans, such as Flood Response Plan, Emergency Centre Plans and Care of Major Accidents and Hazards (COMAH).

Internal Audit review of the Council's MIP confirmed that the document is up-to-date, clear and comprehensive. The plan includes activation procedures, command and control arrangements and clearly specified roles and responsibilities for the Council, each of the key service areas, and the resilience partnership team. It also includes a number of succinct action cards to provide practical guidance to staff when responding to a major incident.

The plan is subject to version control and is reviewed bi-annually to comply with government regulations. It is peer reviewed and, as noted above, developed on a multi-agency basis with input from the other councils in the partnership, emergency services and relevant local companies (e.g. those working with hazardous substances). A risk assessment group meets annually to review and develop formal risk assessments which inform the MIP and feed into the community and national risk registers.

The plan is tested within the two year review period to ensure that it will operate effectively in practice and provide an opportunity to review and test the comprehension and capability of the staff with key roles and responsibilities. Test exercises are developed by the LRP planning team and peer reviewed in advance to ensure they are as robust and realistic as possible and meet the objectives of all participating organisations.

The most recent test was undertaken as a desktop exercise in November 2017 and the results were recorded by the Local Resilience Officer (LRO). The LRO stated that observations are kept and if there are lessons learned these are integrated into a 'lessons learned' register maintained by the LRP that includes lessons and information from tests completed by all members of the partnership and associated agencies to support sharing of best practice.

There were no lessons learned from the latest test exercise, and the observations were used to review and enhance the MIP. Feedback from the desktop exercise was given to the Corporate Management Team so that further skill development could be assisted.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 requires councils as category 1 responders to warn and inform the public with advice on potential emergencies. This is delivered primarily through publication of the community risk register and information and advice on the resilience partnership website and the 'LLR Prepared' website, which provide information and materials for the public and local businesses regarding different types of incident. There are also two dedicated weeks where resilience forum members hold roadshow events and give presentations on what to do in the event of an incident, and a series of published Webinars are also available to view on the website.

Internal Audit review of the community risk register confirmed that it contains a clear explanation of the nature and basis of each risk. The register is comprehensive and effective in communicating how and why risks are scored in a specific way, and gives a clear table to show the level of priority and importance placed on each risk detailed in the summary. One of the underlying detailed risk assessments was also reviewed and found to be clear, concise and easy to understand with evidence of appropriate controls and mitigations.



Response and recovery training are provided through the LLR throughout the year for the Corporate Management Team in the form of no notice exercises. Major test exercises which involve testing the incident plan are undertaken biannually are also training platforms for key personnel. There is also an introductory emergency planning e-learning module which was rolled out at the end of 2016 for all staff to complete. This is part of the induction package therefore all new starters will complete it as part of the induction process, and the majority of existing staff have completed it.

There are no plans for refresher training for emergency planning due to the basic nature of the e-learning module, however the LRP are in the process of developing additional e-learning modules which will be more specific to emergency planning roles. A timeframe was queried with the Local Resilience Officer for the more specific e-learning modules to be rolled out. The response was that Priority Modules were initially to be completed by December 2017 and the remaining modules completed by March 2018, however due to current workloads and staffing the LRF has agreed to extend these timelines. Dates will be confirmed at the next Partnership Board meeting on 8th March 2018.

Based on these findings, the assurance rating for the control environment and compliance with controls is **Substantial assurance** as the overall control framework is sound and controls are generally operating as intended.

3. LIMITATIONS TO THE SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

This is an assurance piece of work and an opinion is provided on the effectiveness of arrangements for managing only the risks specified in the Audit Planning Record.

The Auditor's work does not provide any guarantee against material errors, loss or fraud. It does not provide absolute assurance that material error, loss or fraud does not exist.

GLOSSARY

The Auditor's Opinion

The Auditor's Opinion for the assignment is based on the fieldwork carried out to evaluate the design of the controls upon which management rely and to establish the extent to which controls are being complied with. The tables below explain what the opinions mean.

Compliance Assurances		
Level	Control environment assurance	Compliance assurance
Substantial ●	There are minimal control weaknesses that present very low risk to the control environment.	The control environment has substantially operated as intended although some minor errors have been detected.
Good ●	There are minor control weaknesses that present low risk to the control environment.	The control environment has largely operated as intended although some errors have been detected.
Satisfactory ●	There are some control weaknesses that present a medium risk to the control environment.	The control environment has mainly operated as intended although errors have been detected.
Limited ●	There are significant control weaknesses that present a high risk to the control environment.	The control environment has not operated as intended. Significant errors have been detected.
No ●	There are fundamental control weaknesses that present an unacceptable level of risk to the control environment.	The control environment has fundamentally broken down and is open to significant error or abuse.

Organisational Impact		
Level	Definition	
Major ●	The weaknesses identified during the review have left the Council open to significant risk. If the risk materialises it would have a major impact upon the organisation as a whole.	
Moderate ●	The weaknesses identified during the review have left the Council open to medium risk. If the risk materialises it would have a moderate impact upon the organisation as a whole.	
Minor ●	The weaknesses identified during the review have left the Council open to low risk. This could have a minor impact on the organisation as a whole.	

Category of Recommendations

The Auditor prioritises recommendations to give management an indication of their importance and how urgent it is that they be implemented. By implementing recommendations made managers can mitigate risks to the achievement of service objectives for the area(s) covered by the assignment.

Priority	Impact & Timescale	
Essential ●	Action is imperative to ensure that the objectives for the area under review are met.	
Important ●	Requires actions to avoid exposure to significant risks in achieving objectives for the area.	
Standard ●	Action recommended to enhance control or improve operational efficiency.	