

REPORT TO: Safer Policy Performance Board

DATE: 21st February 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director
Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Emergency Planning

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update the Policy & Performance Board on the work undertaken by the Emergency Planning team during the last year. This will be actioned annually in future.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

3.1 Risk & Emergency Planning is a team within the Enterprise, Community & Resources Directorate. The team consists of a Principal Emergency Planning Officer and two Emergency Planning Officers.

3.2 Emergency Planning Team - Key Duties and Responsibilities

The Emergency Planning Team has a number of key duties and responsibilities, which are:

1. To assist with the preparation, review and exercising of the Council's contingency plans for the provision of services during and following a Major Incident or Major Incident Standby and / or emergencies, including arranging and conducting de-briefs following incidents.
2. To assist with the preparation, review and exercising of the Council's plans required by statutory legislation (e.g. Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Regulations, Major Accident Hazard Pipelines (MAHP)) and other plans as required.
3. To liaise with External Organisations (Category 1 & 2 Responders) including emergency services, Health & Safety Executive (HSE), voluntary organisations, etc.), Members, and other Council Departments on functions covered by the Emergency Planning Team.
4. To assist with updating the Corporate and Directorate Business Continuity Plans, where appropriate including testing and exercising.
5. To arrange and present seminars and exercises for the Council and other relevant organisations to improve and refine the Council's response.
6. To ensure records of emergency planning training and exercises, involving the Council are maintained.

7. To provide specialist technical advice to the Council and other Council Departments, participating in senior level multi-discipline officer working groups, both internal and external.
8. To promote Business Continuity to local businesses.
9. To ensure the public information strategy is established and maintained before, during and after incidents in line with the Cheshire Resilience Forum (CRF) Media Plan.
10. To be part of the Council's on-call duty rota for response to Major Incident and Major Incident standby and to act as Staff Officer (if required) or as a member of the Council's emergency response team.
11. To support the working of the Cheshire Resilience Forum (CRF), attend Management Group meetings, act as Capability Leads, undertake Risk Assessment and Chair Groups when required.

These duties are governed under Key Legislation and Statutory Duties. These will be discussed in the next section of this report.

3.3 STATUTORY DUTIES:

Halton Borough Council, as a Local Authority, has a 'statutory duty' to comply with the following legislation:

- Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004
- Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations (COMAH) 2015
- Major Accident Hazard Pipelines (MAHP) 1996

Therefore, the Emergency Planning team are governed by this Legislation to ensure Borough of Halton is resilient.

3.3.1 Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Council has a duty to ensure the resilience of the Council's response to an emergency situation. Part: 1 of the Act is designed to deal with preparations by local responders for localised emergencies, such as risk of serious damage to human welfare or the environment. Part: 2 is designed for use in very serious emergencies, which affect a larger geographical area.

3.3.2 The Act divides local responders into 2 categories, imposing a different set of duties on each. Category: 1 organisations are at the core of the response to most emergencies (e.g. Emergency Services, Local Authorities, NHS bodies).

3.3.3 As a Category: 1 responder, Halton Borough Council is subject to the full set of 'civil protection statutory duties' and is required to:

- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning;
- Put in place Emergency Plans;
- Put in place Business Continuity Management (BCM) arrangements;
- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public regarding civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to 'warn, inform and advise' the public in the event of an emergency;

- Share information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination;
- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency;
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations regarding Business Continuity Management.

3.3.4 Category: 2 organisations (e.g. Health & Safety Executive, Transport and Utility Companies) are 'co-operating bodies' that are less likely to be involved in the heart of planning work, however, will be heavily involved in incidents that affect their sector.

3.4 Planning for Local Risks

3.4.1 In line with the CCA, Halton Borough Council have a number of Emergency Plans with the aim of ensuring resilience is in place to protect, minimise the effects and reassure the community of Halton; limiting the consequences of a Major Incident / Major Incident Standby within the Borough.

3.4.2 Emergency Planning have prepared a number of key plans to ensure resilience within the Borough of Halton, which are regularly updated and tested.

3.4.3 The CCA identifies two pieces of legislation that relate to Major Accident Hazards at *industrial establishments*, Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (COMAH) and to *hazardous pipelines* (Major Accident Hazard Pipelines) (MAHP).

3.5 Control of Major Accident Hazard Regulations (COMAH) 2015

3.5.1 COMAH applies mainly to the chemical industry, but also to some storage activities, explosives and nuclear sites and other industries, where a threshold quantity of dangerous substances identified in the Regulations are kept or used.

3.5.2 The COMAH Regulations requires Halton Borough Council, as a Local Authority, to prepare adequate emergency plans to deal with the off-site consequences of possible major accidents at 'Upper Tier' sites and should review and where necessary revise them. They must also test them at specified intervals at least once every three years.

3.5.3 The Seveso Directives are the main EU legislation dealing specifically with the control of on-shore major accident hazards involving dangerous substances. The Seveso III Directive came into force on 1 June 2015, replacing the Seveso II Directive.

3.5.4 The COMAH Regulations 2015, Regulation: 9, places eight industrial sites within Halton as 'Upper Tier' sites. Each of these sites requires an 'external emergency plan' to be in produced and exercised / tested at least once every three years.

3.5.5 The Runcorn Site COMAH Operators is the 'umbrella terminology' which is used to capture the six operators based on the original ICI site, which is based in Weston Point, Runcorn. This name has been agreed by The Competent Authority (HSE and The Environment Agency), the Operators and Halton Borough Council.

3.5.6 Below is a list of 'Upper Tier COMAH sites' in Halton:

'Upper Tier' - Runcorn sites

Runcorn COMAH Operators include:

- INOVYN ChlorVinyls Ltd
- INEOS Enterprises Ltd
- VYNOVA Runcorn Ltd
- Runcorn Membrane Chlorine Plant (MCP) Ltd
- Packed Chlorine Limited and
- Mexichem Fluor Limited

'Upper Tier' - Widnes sites

- Univar Ltd, Pickerings Road, Halebank, Widnes
- ICoNiChem Widnes Ltd, Moss Bank Road, Widnes (Originally Shepherds site)

3.6 COMAH Compliance

- 3.6.1 COMAH Regulations requires all 'Upper Tier' COMAH sites to produce and submit a 'Safety Report' to the Competent Authority and this is reviewed every 5 years by them.
- 3.6.2 These sites are also responsible for producing a Major Accident Prevention Policy (MAPP), which focuses on major accident hazards and details the Safety Management System, which will include the quantities of dangerous substances which are present or likely to be present.
- 3.6.3 All 'Upper Tier' COMAH sites are required to produce both an 'Internal' and 'External' Emergency COMAH Plan. The 'Internal' Plan is produced by the operator and the 'External' Plan is produced in partnership between Halton Borough Council and the Operator(s). All External Plans have been updated in the past 12 months to reflect changes at the site(s) and also in line with the new Cheshire Resilience Forum (CRF) COMAH Template.

3.7 Exercises / Validation

- 3.7.1 Due to the complexity and interconnectivity of the six operators at the Runcorn COMAH site, the External COMAH Plan is tested on an annual basis. This is a recommendation by the Competent Authority and has been implemented for a number of years.
- 3.7.2 Both the Univar and ICoNiChem 'External COMAH Plans' are tested every three years. This is in line and in agreement with the Cheshire Resilience Forum (CRF) 3-year cycle.
- 3.7.3 The number of 'Upper Tier' COMAH Sites within Halton effectively means the team is planning, exercising or amending a COMAH plan at least on an annual basis.

3.8 Lower Tier COMAH Sites

3.8.1 Halton Borough Council has no statutory duty for 'Lower Tier' COMAH sites. However, these sites remain governed under COMAH Regulations and are required to produce a Safety Report, an 'Internal COMAH Plan' and a MAPP. There is also an annual inspection from Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service. All dates of these inspections are circulated to the Emergency Planning Team.

3.8.2 Until recently Halton had three 'Lower Tier' COMAH sites:

- APPH Ltd
- Syntor Ltd and
- Emerald Kalama Chemical Ltd

3.8.3 HSE recently notified Halton of the change in COMAH status for the APPH site. This site is no longer regulated under COMAH. Due to the reduced thresholds of a particular substance at APPH Ltd site, which is based at Pembroke Court, Manor Park, Runcorn, which was regulated under COMAH Regulations, this site is now a non-COMAH site.

3.9 Cross Border Sites

3.9.1 Halton has one cross border COMAH risk. Vertellus Specialities UK Ltd (formerly Pentagon Chemicals). The site is an 'Upper Tier' COMAH site and is based in Lower Road, Halewood, but has a 'Widnes' postcode. This is Merseyside's largest COMAH risk in their area. The Public Information Zone for this site includes Univar Ltd. Therefore, this site has the potential, in the most extreme circumstances, to have a 'domino' effect to Univar. This means a 'major accident' at the Vertellus site, has the potential to cause a 'major accident' at Univar.

3.10 Major Accident Hazard Pipeline (MAHP) Regulations 1996

3.10.1 The Major Accident Hazard Pipeline (MAHP) Regulations 1996, governs all high pressure natural gas supply transmission and distribution network within the Borough of Halton. These substances are known collectively as dangerous fluids, as defined in Schedule 2 of the Major Accident Pipeline Safety Regulations (1996).

3.10.2 Major Accident Hazard Pipeline Emergency means an occurrence i.e. an explosion, fire or breach of a Major Accident Hazard Pipeline. This is further defined as a Mobile Cloudburst - an incident involving a release of chemicals or toxic substances at any location (usually during transportation) i.e. highways, railways, ships and pipelines and not relating to a specific site i.e. COMAH site.

3.10.3 Halton Borough Council, as the Local Authority has a statutory duty to work with the pipeline operators who have MAHP infrastructure in the area and partners to produce a MAHP Multi-Agency Plan. Consultations have taken place with pipeline operators, Emergency Services, NHS England, Public Health England, HSE and with members of the public via their Elected Members.

- 3.10.4 The plan for the Borough of Halton has been updated in the past 12 months and was produced in accordance with the legal obligations placed on Halton under the Regulations. The plan has also been updated in line with the new CRF Template.
- 3.10.5 Under the Regulations there is no specific duty on Local Authorities to test the plan but exercises may be carried out as part of duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. However, it was agreed between Halton, Warrington and Cheshire in partnership with all MAHP Operators across Cheshire to exercise and validate the MAHP Template. This table top exercise took place November 2016. A report has been produced with actions listed to be taken forward.

3.11 Public Reassurance

- 3.11.1 The 'Community' / Public Information Zone (PIZ) are consulted regarding a COMAH site which is in close proximity to their home / business. This consultation process includes a 'Safety Letter' and 'Information Card' which is circulated, at least every 5 years, and includes actions to be taken in the event of a major incident. This information is also posted on the HBC Website.

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/health/Emergency-Planning.aspx>

Halton also leads and host the Cheshire Resilience Website, where up to date information on risks and resilience work is posted for Cheshire.

<http://cheshireresilience.org.uk/>

As part of the community reassurance, the team have worked, with the local parish councils and schools, where appropriate, with the aim of raising awareness regarding a COMAH Site in their area

3.12 Emergency Centres

3.12.1 Local Authority Emergency Centres

In the event of a major incident / major incident standby, Halton has 2 Local Authority Emergency Centres, one is based at Municipal Building and one is based Runcorn Town Hall. All equipment and plans are checked and updated appropriately each month.

3.12.2 Emergency Rest Centres

In the event of a major incident / major incident standby, where people are required to be evacuated and taken to a place of safety. Halton has 10 designated rest centres throughout the Borough. These establishments and rest centre boxes are checked on a quarterly basis or before a major event.

3.13 Working with Cheshire Resilience Forum

- 3.13.1 Halton as part of the resilience forum works with partner agencies, such as Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, NWAS and Health Organisations. The aim and objectives of the Cheshire Resilience is to prepare for, respond to and recover from any emergency.

- 3.13.2 The forum brings together local emergency services, National Health Service and local authorities, plus other agencies that can help to prepare and respond to any event. Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 every part of the United Kingdom is required to establish a Local Resilience Forum, which is a multi-agency group covering a policing area that share information and resources, and respond together to an incident. Cheshire Resilience will not offer immediate information in the event of an emergency. The aim is to work together to protect the community and make Cheshire the best prepared place for any emergency.
- 3.13.3 The forum works towards the National Risk Register, where risks are assessed at a Cheshire level and risks assessed at a local level and where appropriate work programme.

<http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/Assets/1/CRF-CRR-Public-April-2014.pdf>

3.14 Working with Partners

Halton continues to work with partner agencies as part of exercise planning, training and validation exercises, both within Cheshire and Cross-Border. For example, Halton attend and umpire COMAH and Nuclear Power Exercises. Also, attending cross border exercises in Merseyside. Halton are also a member of the Liverpool John Lennon Airport Emergency Planning Group and are part of the exercise planning group for their next 'major live' exercise which is scheduled to take place March 2017.

3.15 Internal Resilience

- 3.15.1 Work to developing SharePoint and Emergency Planning Portal via the intranet with the aim to ensure emergency planning documents, Business Continuity Plans, Training Programmes and dates are easily accessible for Emergency Responders. Following the Elections, the section holds an annual Elected Members Training session.
- 3.15.2 Halton has recently formed a Corporate Resilience Group and it had its first meeting in December. The aim of the group is to ensure Halton has resilience it has an agreed group membership and terms of reference.

3.16 Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) PRINCIPLES

- 3.16.1 The aim of JESIP is primarily to improve the way Police, Fire & Rescue and Ambulance services work together when responding to major multi-agency incidents.
- 3.16.2 Halton have attended a JESIP workshop and are implementing the JESIP procedures and practices into the emergency planning work i.e. working with the 'blue lights' capturing information regarding incidents via the **METHANE** message (as shown below), updated the Major Incident Forms which HBC Contact Centre / Out of Hours Team use when recording the major incident / major incident standby via the 'blue lights' call. Please see Appendix: 1.

3.17 Major Incidents in Halton

The team has responded to a number of 'major incidents' in the past 12 months, from incidents at Residential Care Homes, Silver Jubilee Bridge and major fires within the Borough. To ensure there is resilience when planning, responding and recovering from incidents, Cheshire use Resilience Direct as an 'emergency planning platform.' To ensure that learning is captured following all incidents, a structured debrief will take place, where areas of good practice, areas of development and actions generated from the incident are recorded. A report is produced from the debrief to agree the work to be carried out to improve future responses to incidents.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton -

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Children and Young People in Halton' priority

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton -

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

6.3 A Healthy Halton -

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'A Healthy Halton' priority

6.4 A Safer Halton

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'A Safer Halton' priority

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal -

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Halton's Urban Renewal' priority

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS -

No full risk assessment is required

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES -

None

9.0 KEY DECISIONS ON THE FORWARD PLAN

These proposals do not constitute a key decision and are not included in the Forward Plan

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.

Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) PRINCIPLES**'METHANE' MESSAGE**

| | |
|----------|--|
| M | Major Incident / Major Incident Standby - Declared |
| E | Exact Location |
| T | Type of Incident |
| H | Hazards present or suspected |
| A | Access – route |
| N | Number, type, severity of casualties |
| E | Emergency services present and those required |