

EMERGENCY PLANNING JOINT COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD 2nd March 2021

The meeting commenced at 11.00am and was an online remote meeting in compliance with the Council Procedure Rules Relating to the holding of Remote Meetings and the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Present:

Councillor: Karen King (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council) (In the Chair)

Councillors: Marjorie James (Hartlepool Borough Council
Dennis McCabe (Middlesbrough Borough Council
Mike Smith (Stockton Borough Council)

Also Present: Councillor Tony Richardson (Hartlepool Borough Council)

Officers: Stuart Marshall, Chief Emergency Planning Officer
Jon Hepworth, Group Accountant (Regeneration and Neighbourhoods)
Jo Stubbs, Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Declarations of interest by Members

None

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 28th November 2019, 27th February 2020 and 19th March 2020.

Minutes received and noted.

The Chair noted a request within the minutes that the Chair of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) be invited to the next meeting of the Committee. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer advised that the LRF Chair had

submitted apologies to this meeting however he was aware of the need for him to attend these meetings in future and was committed to retaining the link between this committee and the LRF. It was hoped that he would be able to attend the next meeting to answering questions on the proposed LRF action plan. A member highlighted the importance of members having oversight of the LRF budget before approving it.

The Chair queried whether there had been any progress on the appointment of an apprentice as detailed within the minutes. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer indicated that the pandemic had halted progress in this area however he hoped to be able to take action in the future.

4. Financial Management Update Report (*Director of Resources and Development and Chief Emergency Planning Officer*)

Purpose of report

To provide details of the forecast outturn as at 31st January 2021 for current financial year ending 31st March 2021 and to recommend the budget for 2021/22.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

A summary of the outturn position at 31st January 2021 was provided as set out in the report. A favourable variance of £65,000 on the main Emergency Planning Unit (EPU) budget was forecast. This was due to employees not being included within the pension scheme and additional income from chargeable overtime resulting from the coronavirus pandemic which had been funded through the Government's Covid-19 grant

An additional £78,000 for 2019/20 (plus £38,000 in 2018/19) had previously been allocated to the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) by the Government to assist in Brexit preparations. A further £200,000 had been allocated for covid related expenditure. It had previously been suggested that £43,000 of LRF monies be rebated to the member local authorities to assist with Brexit preparations however members of the LRF Strategic Board had recommended that this money be placed into a joint contingency pot to be used collectively. Members were happy to approve this recommendation

In terms of the Emergency Planning Unit budget for 2021/22 Local Authority contributions had been set at £310,000, an increase of £7,000 on the previous year. The bulk of spend would be on employee costs.

Decision

That the latest financial forecast for 2020/21 be noted and the budget for 2021/22 be approved.

5. CEPU Proposed Action Plan 2021-2022 (*Chief Emergency Planning Officer*)

Purpose of report

To provide the Committee with the action plan of the Emergency Planning Unit and assist members in overseeing the Unit's performance, effectiveness and value to the four unitary authorities.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

During 2020-21 the CEPU action plan had been significantly impacted by Covid-19, through activities being curtailed and through reallocated resources. It was expected that this would continue into 2021-22 and the action plan approach was therefore different to previous years and focused on a number of priority areas. Details were given of the key areas of work for 2021-22 many of which were statutory functions. Non-statutory functions that had been included were those considered critical to resilience. There would also be further actions related to the LRF however the LRF Action Plan was currently under review due to the ongoing response to Covid and therefore could not be provided at this time.

Decision

That the proposed CEPU action plan be approved and update reports continue to be provided to members.

6. Activity Report (8th February 2020 – 5th February 2021) (*Chief Emergency Planning Officer*)

Purpose of report

To inform members of the activities undertaken by the CEPU between 8th February 2020 and 5th February 2021.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Details were given of the progress made during the period against the CEPU Action Plan and key LRF activities undertaken. Information on the key CEPU support provided in the response to Covid-19 was also provided. All non-statutory duties had been suspended due to the pandemic and would be moved into the plan for 2021-22. The Chief Emergency Planning

Officer highlighted core actions which had been completed including the regular update of contact details for key agencies, and the maintenance of key documents and key procedures. He also noted that some procedures, specifically evacuation, needed to be revised with consideration to Covid-19 i.e. evacuating while socially distancing or shielding.

Members noted the statement within the summary of progress that only 11% of elected member activities such as briefings had been completed. They felt this was incorrect as while the normal briefings provided on resilience by the Unit had been cancelled, members had received regular updates from the LRF Chair and their individual local authorities.

Decision

That the areas of work undertaken be noted.

7. Incident Report (8th February 2020 – 5th February 2021) (Chief Emergency Planning Officer)

Purpose of report

To inform members of the incidents reported and responded to by the CEPU between 8th February 2020 and 5th February 2021.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Between 8th February 2020 and 5th February 2021 17 incidents of note had taken place, brief details of which were given within the report.

Decision

That the areas of work undertaken be noted

8. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

The Chairman ruled that the following items of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

The Chair noted that this was potentially the final meeting of the Committee before the Local elections. Members paid tribute to Councillor James for her commitment to the Emergency Planning Committee and Unit during her tenure as a member of the Committee.

The meeting concluded at 11.45am.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 8th March 2021