

**EMERGENCY PLANNING JOINT COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**  
**2 MARCH 2022**

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am at the Emergency Planning Annex,  
Stockton Police Station, Bishop Street, Stockton-On-Tees, TS18 1SY

**Present:**

Councillor: Councillor Mike Smith (Stockton Borough Council) (In the Chair)

Councillors: Councillor Eric Palano (Middlesbrough Borough Council)  
Councillor Julie Craig (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)

Also present: Councillor Darren Price as substitute for Councillor Cameron Stokell  
(Hartlepool Borough Council)

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

**18. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Cameron Stokell (Hartlepool Borough Council)

**19. Declarations of interest by Members**

None.

**20. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021**

Received.

**21. 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, 2022 for current financial year ending 31st March, 2022 and to propose the budget for 2022/23.

**Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Group Accountant reported that the latest forecast outturn of the 2021/22 budget showed a favourable variance of £8,000. The latest position for the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) budget was also reported. The budget includes the LRF Pilot Funding grant of £208,000, which is a Section 31 non ring fenced grant awarded by the ‘Government Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities’. The forecast reflected the expectation that £100,000 of the grant would be spent in the next financial year and was, therefore, transferred into an earmarked reserve at year end.

In relation to the 2022/23 budget, the Group Accountant reported that the budget for the Emergency Planning Unit was self-financing and mainly determined by the level of contributions approved by the Local Authority partners and income from fees and recharges. For the 2022/23 the Local Authority contributions would be £315,000, which was an increase of £5,000 compared to the previous year, in line with amounts proposed by this Committee on 21st June 2017 covering the period 2018/19 to 2023/23. The Income budget has increased to reflect an increase in staff costs chargeable to the LRF budget.

The budget for employee costs had been increased to include 3 new posts (2 temporary), costing £92,000 which would be funded from LRF government grant funding which was being continued for the next 3 years. There has also been a reduction to staffing costs of £41,000 to reflect the increased amount management chargeable to the LRF budget. Staffing costs have also been inflated to allow for an assumed pay award.

Proposed Main Emergency Planning Budget 2022/23:

<b>2021/22 Budget £'000</b>		<b>2022/23 Budget £'000</b>
324	Direct Costs - Employees	383
107	Direct Costs – Other	109
(431)	Income	(492)
0	<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	0

The proposed LRF Budget included another year of government grant funding, estimated to be £208,000 based on the current years ‘Pilot’ funding, which had now been confirmed for the next 3 years. Although the actual allocation for the year was not yet known, a minimum of £160,000 had been guaranteed to each recipient body. In the event that the actual allocation was less than the £208,000 estimate, the non-staffing budget could be reduced accordingly, most likely by reducing the number of outreach projects.

**Table 4: Proposed LRF Budget 2022/23**

<b>2021/22 Budget £'000</b>		<b>2022/23 Budget £'000</b>
76	Direct Costs - Employees	168
177	Direct Costs – Other	184
-45	Income	-44
-208	Government Grant	-208
0	Release of Reserve*	-100
0	<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	0

\*Unspent Pilot Grant carried forward from 2021/22

The Chief Emergency Planning Officer indicated that there were some significant national issues to be addressed in the resilience structures across the UK. There was an expectation that there would be forthcoming new guidance, particularly for Local Resilience Forums and also new legislation.

It was anticipated that a new funding agreement may be required as the current five-year local authority funding agreement had come to an end.

### **Decision**

1. That the financial forecast reports for 2021/22 be noted.
2. That the proposed 2022/23 budgets for the Emergency Planning Unit and the Local Resilience Forum be approved.

## **22. Activity Report** (*Chief Emergency Planning Officer*)

### **Purpose of report**

To assist members of the EPJC in overseeing the performance and effectiveness of the Emergency Planning Unit and its value to the four unitary authorities.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Chief Emergency Planning Officer updated the Committee on the activity within the Unit and the significant areas of work that had been completed over the last quarter. Staff continued to work effectively despite the challenges of Covid and ongoing requirement for social distancing impacting on a number of work areas. Previous contingencies were also still in place to ensure that officers could attend command centres in person should it be required. The report also set out details of the work undertaken by the team in support of the Local Resilience Forum.

In debate Members discussed the continuing issues around cyber security and the work the Emergency Planning Team was involved in across the north east region. The continued monitoring around this threat was a key priority and the experience from the Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council attack was being shared across local authorities.

Members also discussed the power outages that had been experienced with the recent storms and in particular storm Arwen. Members expressed their concerns around the situation experienced with care homes and those vulnerable people that used life support equipment at home. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer reported that in many isolated country communities, there was a greater level of preparedness for power cuts as they experienced them more often. The significant issues came around power cuts to whole towns and villages that might not be so prepared. There was ongoing work with Northumbria University on the potential of identifying 'community hubs' that could be supplied with generators in future emergency situations to support surrounding communities, particularly the vulnerable.

The Chief Emergency Planning Officer also highlighted that the recent power outages had highlighted the need for further work between power companies and local authorities in relation to identifying the most vulnerable households as while both maintained such lists, greater information sharing may be required for the future. There was also some discussion around the potential for greater involvement from local businesses in providing assistance and aid during such incidents in the future. The Chief Emergency Planning Officer reported that this was one of the aspects of community resilience that the LRFs were looking at and some case studies were being examined. A report could be provided to a future meeting to update the Committee.

### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

## **23. Incident Report (13th November – 18th February 2022)** *(Chief Emergency Planning Officer)*

### **Purpose of report**

To inform members of the EPJC of the incidents reported and responded to by the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit (CEPU). The report covers the period between the 13th November – 18th February 2022.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Chief Emergency Planning Officer submitted details of the incidents that Emergency Planning Unit staff had been involved in over recent months.

**Decision**

That the report be noted.

**24. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

None.

The meeting concluded at 11.05 am.

**H MARTIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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