



**Environment & Regeneration  
Municipal Offices, 222 Upper Street, London N1 1YA**

<b>Report of: Assistant Director (Public Protection)</b>
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Meeting of:	Date:	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Standards Committee	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2007		All

Exempt:	No
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## **Subject: COMPLIANCE WITH THE CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ACT 2004**

### **1. Synopsis**



- 1.1 This report sets out how the Council has been progressing compliance with the Civil Contingency Act 2004. This contributes to 'One Islington' by ensuring that we address the needs of all our community and that in any crisis, we are able to respond to all needs.

### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004 took effect in November 2005, with the exception of the sections relating to advising on business continuity, which were deferred until May 2006. The Act replaced the outdated legislation relating to emergency planning, and introduced new measures affecting all responders who would be needed in any emergency situation.

- 3.2 The Act placed seven statutory duties on Local Authorities who, by virtue of the new legislation became 'Category One Responders' in line with the traditional 'blue light' services.

The seven duties are

- Emergency planning
- Risk Assessment
- Council Business Continuity Planning
- Warning and Informing the public
- Provision of Business Continuity advice to businesses and the voluntary sector
- Co-operation

- Information sharing

This report details the work we have undertaken to ensure that we meet our obligations under the Act.

- 3.3 Our responsibilities under the Act are more extensive than those that previously existed however additional funding was made available to the Council by Central Government in order to finance these new areas of work. A team of four officers, based in Public Protection now lead the function. The nature of the work is such that many more people both within and outside the Council contribute to ensuring that we comply with the Act and provide a good service.

## 4. Discussion

- 4.1 The CCA places greater responsibility and accountability on Local Authorities in relation to Emergency Planning. A Best Value review of the function was undertaken and as a result of this, the team now includes three Emergency Planning Officers (EPOs), one of whom manages the team. The first emergency response is undertaken by 16 Local Authority Liaison Officers (LALOs) who operate alongside an EPO and a Director on Call. In order for our emergency response to be successful, a network of arrangements has to be in place. A full review of our Emergency Plan and these arrangements has taken place and each department now has a designated lead officer at senior management level who is responsible for maintaining arrangements and documentation.
- 4.2 The areas of work that the team are covering are:
- Provision of an emergency response to incidents
  - Co-ordination of the support to the London Local Authority Gold Rota
  - Provision of our emergency control centre
  - Provision of rest centres
  - Planning for incidents
  - Facilitating exercises
  - The Council's emergency plan
  - Local and pan London level arrangements
- 4.3 The emergency arrangements will be invoked for all manner of incidents, not just major incidents. They are initiated by 'Contact Islington' who give a 24 hour response. In the last two years we have had to respond to 26 and 28 incidents respectively.
- 4.4 Risk assessment of the likelihood of incidents is now an inherent part of our service. Risk Assessment is undertaken for London in six groupings of Boroughs known as Local Resilience Forums (LRFs). We are grouped in the North Central LRF with Camden, Hackney, Haringey, Barnet and Enfield. Each LRF has to produce it's own Community Risk Register (CRRs) which detail their highest risk incidents. Islington is fully involved in this process and one of our EPOs has 'lead' responsibility for CRR issues. The current CRR is posted on the LFEPA website and identifies 21 specific risks to our LRF area. These have been weighted as to likelihood and impact, with the combined score identifying the level of risk, which then drives planning work at the local level.

- 4.5 The new duty of warning and informing requires us to advise the public of what to do before, during and after an emergency to mitigate the impact on them. It has potentially a very wide remit and requires a co-ordinated pan London implementation to avoid conflict of information. We have upgraded our website pages to assist with this, reviewed the role of our Communications Team and are progressing local initiatives. On the wider issues affecting London, the London Resilience Team (LRT – a central co-ordinating service supporting London boroughs) is reviewing how this can be taken forward.
- 4.6 In relation to business continuity, the Council has two new duties to meet. The first of these relates to ensuring that the Council itself has robust arrangements to address its needs. In order to support this work, the Council has appointed an officer to manage the process and is now advancing its arrangements. As with emergency planning, each department has a lead officer who works with the dedicated officer on business continuity.
- 4.7 The second duty requires us to provide information to businesses and voluntary agencies and one of the EPO's has been dedicated to supporting this function. An exercise to capture what work is already in place has been completed and we are now progressing new initiatives including seminars and a 'self assessment' pack. The uptake has not been as good as we hoped, which is common to other London boroughs. We have reviewed our strategy and are now taking a more targeted approach starting with health-related agencies and then moving to non-profit making companies and the voluntary sector. We are also exploring the development of a new course on BCM, in conjunction with City University.
- 4.8 The Act requires us to deliver our duties in collaboration with other agencies. This has always been seen as essential in Islington and we have been able to use a number of existing forums at strategic and tactical level, which were in place to address cross agency issues such as health, crime, regeneration and emergency response. These groups involve voluntary agencies, the faith community and resident groups. An information protocol between the police, fire brigade, primary care trust and others is in place to support our collaborative work

## 5 Implications

### 5.1 Financial Implications:

Public Protection received the funding allocated by central government to implement the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and has sufficient resources to implement the requirements of the Act. Where incidents take place, funding for these is identified on a case by case basis.

### 5.2 Legal Implications:

The Council must maintain plans to ensure that it can, so far as is reasonably practicable, deal with emergencies and continue to perform its functions (Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004). The Council must collaborate with partner organisations in the performance of its civil protection duties (The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations 2005 and the statutory guidance Emergency Preparedness).

