

Briefing/Discussion Note

Meeting:	E&BI O/S
Date:	30 November 2009
Report title:	Critical Services in the event of a Flu Pandemic
Report author:	Grahame Lewis Strategic Director
Item no.	9

Subject: *Critical Services in the event of a Flu Pandemic*

The Senior Leadership Team members (SLT) were asked at their meeting on 10 November to consider if the services listed below align with their view of 'critical'.

SLT were also requested to consider the merits of these services, or indeed any others which they felt needed to be so classified.

Following debate, SLT agreed:

A definitive list of critical services as listed below:-

- To consider the level of additional staffing support that will be required if a pandemic is declared in their respective service areas.
- To consider what additional training or support may be needed to ensure additional support staff can undertake different roles in these crucial service areas.
- Any Budget implications.

Background

The indication from the Health Protection Agency and other relevant Government bodies is that it is likely a flu pandemic will develop this autumn.

We therefore need to be fully prepared to deal with the implications of this, and ensure that we can continue to deliver those services we believe to be essential to protect and safeguard our community.

If a flu pandemic was to strike our key resources are our staff. Wherever feasible redeployment policies and procedures would therefore be utilised to protect the Council's critical services.

In some instances, where specific skills and qualifications are essential to run the specific critical service, redeployment is unlikely to provide a satisfactory solution.

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Where this is the case, existing business continuity plans will have already carried out an appropriate assessment and made alternative arrangements.

Guiding principles when deciding what is a critical service or function include emergency management, impact on human welfare, the environment and security, legal, financial and reputation.

The following services have been agreed by SLT as being those which, in the event of flu pandemic need to be supported at all costs.

All such services will require additional staff from across the organisation to be identified to support the service in question. Assistant Directors and Service Managers have been asked therefore to identify these staffing needs and liaise with Human Resources in terms of additional training.

1. Critical and immediate response services:

Duty Officers for Emergency Response are vital as part of our Civil Contingency Plans in order to provide:-

- Public advice on waste management arrangements
- Reactive investigations affecting drainage or flooding
- Reactive investigations affecting Health and Safety at high risk premises
- Reactive investigation of petroleum leaks from licensed sites
- Reactive investigation of outbreaks of notifiable diseases
- HMO's - reactive investigations
- Reactive investigation of fly tipping incidents potentially involving hazardous substances, e.g. asbestos
- Reactive investigation of possible fatality incidents at notifiable premises
- Reactive investigation of pollution incidents from licensed sites
- Reactive food safety incidents

2. Cemetery and Crematorium

3. Public Space Cleansing

4. Contact Centre:

- Telephony – land lines
- Telephony – mobiles
- IT Helpdesk
- Customer Relations
- Complaints

5. Building Control:

- Dangerous structures

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6. Communications

- Website

7. Finance

8. Homeless support

Skeleton staff will also be provided in Revenue & Benefits and Payroll.

What Next

Assistant Directors and Service Managers have now been sent the definitive list of agreed critical services. They have been requested to ensure their respective Business Continuity Plans have been properly updated, and to liaise with Human Resources regarding the identification of alternative support staff and the preparation of any additional training.

It is intended to arrange a Business Continuity Management exercise for these critical service areas before the year end.

For further information contact Grahame Lewis, Strategic Director on extn 4312 or Barbara Exley on extn 4220.

20 November 2009