
MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	25 FEBRUARY 2013
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS DOUGLAS (CHAIR), HEALEY (VICE-CHAIR), KING, HODGSON, WATSON, STEWARD AND ORRELL

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

41. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

42. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/OTHER SPEAKERS

There had been two registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme and one Member had also registered to speak. The speakers had withdrawn their request to speak prior to the commencement of the meeting.

43. PRESENTATION ON SURFACE WATER FLOODING

Alan Bravey from East Riding Council gave a presentation as to their best practice methods of building up community resilience in times of surface water flooding. The information was provided to complete the committee's consideration of City of York Council's readiness for dealing with this type of flooding. Copies of a Community Resilience Information Pack were also circulated for information.

The presentation covered the following issues:

(i) Context

In the East Riding, severe flooding had taken place in 2007 and many communities had taken action to “help themselves” during the response period and the recovery. However, formal plans had not been in place and a number of lessons had been learned:

- There was a need to formalise the approach that would be taken when emergency situations arose in the future.
- Plans needed to be generic and not flood specific (examples of emergencies included flooding, severe snow, cuts to power supplies and fire).
- The importance of support from town and parish councils.

(ii) Examples of information to be included in the Plans:

- Identifying people to be included in an emergency team.
- Being aware of the skills and expertise that were available within the community.
- Identifying emergency contact points and placing emergency boxes at these locations (eg village halls, community centres, schools etc)
- Identifying vulnerable people.
- Identifying the resources available within the community which could be useful in the event of an emergency (eg machinery or equipment)
- Calling on the support of parish and town councils to assist in “door knocking” to advise residents of emergency situations or to check on the wellbeing of vulnerable members of the community at such times.

(iii) Scenarios

- A community cut off by an emergency and having to fend for itself.
- A community not cut off but, because of the need to prioritise, emergency responders cannot provide immediate assistance.

- A community not cut off and working with emergency responders.

(iv) Types of Plan

The level of detail in the plans drawn up by town and parish councils varied considerably. In the best cases a full plan was in place. For some parish and town councils only a guidance plan was in place which contained only basic information such as contact details. Others had drawn up an abridged plan which was an intermediate level in terms of the information it contained. Details were given of the percentage of town and parish councils in the East Riding area that had plans in place.

(v) Promoting the Drawing Up of Plans

Members were shown examples of supporting materials that had been produced to promote the plans. These included templates and a DVD. Officers had met with community groups and delivered presentations and workshops to promote this initiative.

(vi) Levels of Community Resilience Plans

- Town and Parish Council Plans
- Community Group Plans eg Neighbourhood Watch or Tenants/Residents Associations
- Household or Business Plans

(vii) Reasons given for not putting a plan in place:

- Concerns about health and safety
- Concerns about litigation
- Lack of resources
- “It’s not our job” to put a plan in place
- “Why write down what we already know?”

(viii) Snow Plans

LSP funding had been used to purchase equipment to assist with snow clearance. In order to access this

grant funding town and parish councils had to have snow clearance plans in place.

(ix) Working with Other Services

Members were informed that the Fire and Rescue Service and the Environment Agency had welcomed the drawing up of Community Resilience Plans and were keen to work with communities.

Members thanked Mr Bravey for the informative presentation.

Discussion took place as to whether a similar initiative should be implemented in York. Members noted that, unlike the East Riding, there were a number of areas within the boundary of City of York Council that did not have parish councils. They suggested that in these instances groups such as Neighbourhood Watch or residents' associations may take the lead in the drawing up of plans. There was also the possibility of exploring whether the plans could be drawn up on a ward basis, perhaps being incorporated into the ward action plans.

Members suggested that consideration may also need to be given as to incentives that could be put in place to encourage residents to engage with the process.

Members requested that a report be presented for consideration at the next meeting. It would be helpful if the report also included maps identifying areas within the city that were at particular risk.

RESOLVED: That a report be presented at the next meeting covering the issues raised and including recommendations arising from these.

REASON: To assist the committee in finalising its consideration of City of York Council's readiness to deal with emergency situations at a local level.

44. WORK PLAN

Consideration was given to the committee's work plan.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the inclusion of the item agreed under minute 43, the work plan be approved.

REASON: To ensure that the committee has a planned programme of work in place.

Councillor Douglas, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.00 pm].