

Supplemental Report

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL  
22 JUNE 2010

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**'BE PREPARED' – A REVIEW OF PREPAREDNESS FOR  
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This supplemental report advises Members of two changes determined by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel to the draft report on the review of preparedness for public health emergencies. At its meeting on 17 June, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel decided to delete recommendation 5.6 and remove the passage, 'such as staff and specialist decontamination vehicles' from recommendation 5.7.
- 1.2 The changes are shown as struck through text on page 157 of the agenda papers, as attached. With those changes, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed to recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission that the report should be adopted.

**2 SUGGESTED ACTION**

- 2.1 **That the attached report reviewing preparedness for public health emergencies be noted.**

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

Richard Beaumont – 01344 352283  
e-mail: [richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Andrea Carr – 01344 352122  
e-mail: [andrea.carr@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.carr@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

## 5. Recommendations

Although existing emergency preparedness arrangements are robust, the Working Group has identified some recommendations that seek to maintain good practice or secure improvements. It is therefore recommended to the Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection, the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing, and the relevant partners of the Council that:

- 5.1 Good hygiene campaigns and practices be encouraged at all times;
- 5.2 More engagement with residential care homes be undertaken to mitigate the risks to their vulnerable clients posed by high food poisoning risk rating, possible source of Legionnaire's Disease and threat of the Winter Vomiting virus;
- 5.3 The Thames Valley emergency preparedness advice booklet, 'Are You Ready?', be continued and updated as appropriate and distributed as widely as costs allow.
- 5.4 As the Voluntary Sector's resources fluctuate, its capacity to provide support during public health emergencies be monitored by the Council and its partners at the time of need depending on the situation.
- 5.5 As the Army is not integral to any emergency response mechanism, the Council and its partners seek to identify the parameters within which military aid may be available.
- ~~5.6 As public health emergencies can emanate from a great many sources and affect different departments, and changes in Council structures may result in related personnel being relocated across departments, the system for identifying the appropriate Director to lead a response and rapidly establish an effective emergency response group be monitored to ensure that communication links are maintained and that there are no gaps in coverage;~~
- 5.7 The South Central Ambulance Service ensures that it has adequate contingency arrangements with other strategic health authorities to ensure that sufficient resources, ~~such as staff and specialist decontamination vehicles,~~ are available on demand when required to respond to public health emergencies;
- 5.8 Communication systems between the Council and its partners be reinforced to ensure that all agencies are made aware promptly of all public health threats and emergencies to prevent incidents such as the Health Protection Agency being uninformed of situations from re-occurring.
- 5.9 The Council communicates its plans for the potential use of its community centres as rest centres in an emergency scenario to the lessees and keyholders of the community centres.