



Agenda Item: 11

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

16th March 2009

BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Report by: Bill Murphy, Senior Operations Manager

Purpose of Report

- 1 To provide Members with an update on the progress being made regarding the arrangements in place to identify and address significant risks to the Authority's ability to discharge its statutory responsibilities.

Background

- 2 The Civil Contingencies Act places a requirement on Category 1 Responders, such as the Fire and Rescue Service, to have in place business continuity arrangements so that its ability to assist other Category 1 responders, in the event of a major incident, will not be significantly compromised. Similarly, the Fire and Rescue National Framework for Wales expects and the Operational Assurance Peer Assessment Audit, challenges, Business Continuity Management arrangements within each of the Fire and Rescue Services in Wales.
- 3 The Service policy on Business Continuity Management, issued on 1st October 2007 after ratification by the Authority, provides the basis and framework from which the Service develops specific measures to minimise the impact of significant risks such as a major absence of staff, unavailability of key functions or buildings or major system, utilities or supply failures.

Information

- 4 During 2008, the Service took part in an all-Wales exercise which concentrated on the impact of a national fuel shortage. Subsequent measures have been introduced which will ensure that fire appliances and operational managers will have access to designated filling stations, serving emergency services only, helping to mitigate the disruption caused by such an event.
- 5 The Service has in place a Key Station Plan which, in the event of a major absence of staff resulting in a limited number of staff being available to crew fire appliances, can be introduced to ensure that the most effective use of available resources is targeted in the right areas, based on the risk profile of the Service's area.
- 6 During April 2009, an all-Wales exercise concentrating on the impact of an influenza pandemic will test the Service's planning arrangements for such an event.
- 7 A significant amount of work has already taken place in assessing and prioritising a wide range of other risks to ensure a programme of control measures is put in place to reduce, remove or transfer risk so that the ability of the Authority to deliver its statutory functions can be maintained.
- 8 The Authority's policy on Business Continuity is currently being reviewed on a short term project basis by a dedicated member of staff. This review will involve:
 - raising awareness of the culture of Business Continuity and how it effects all members of staff
 - challenging existing control measures and seeking opportunity for improved measures to be put in place
 - introducing a structured exercising regime to test effectiveness and resilience.

Recommendation

- 9 That Members note the current position relating to the Service's management of Business Continuity.