



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

ADDITIONAL PAPERS

for the

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 January 2009

at 6.00 pm

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 January 2009

ADDITIONAL PAPERS

3. TRAVELLER'S PROTOCOL

... The Committee will be asked to consider the attached proposed Traveller's Protocol (pages 10 - 16).

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Subject: Traveller Incursions – Draft Protocol

Report to: Scrutiny Committee

Report by: Head of Regeneration and Environment

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee are recommended to

- i) note the progress made on this matter
- ii) endorse the draft Traveller Incursion Protocol attached at Appendix 1 as a basis for further discussions with other key agencies
- iii) note that the final protocol will be submitted to Cabinet for approval and consideration

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Following a major travellers incursion onto the Beach Coach Station in August 2008, Scrutiny Committee received a verbal debrief of the incident from the Chief Superintendent of Police with responsibility for Great Yarmouth and the Head of Regeneration and Environment of the Borough Council. Although Members expressed their satisfaction with the general handling of the incident, there were concerns that inter-agency activity was not as well co-ordinated as it might have been and that there was merit in seeking to establish a series of joint procedures that would underpin the handling of future incidents of this nature.

As a result discussions have taken place between the police and Council Officers to identify and structure those processes and systems that need to be in place to ensure a fully co-ordinated response to future incursions. The outcome has been the production of a draft Traveller Incursion Protocol, which is attached at Appendix 1.

In summary, the draft protocol sets out and orders a number of proposed approaches, functions and responsibilities, together with a proposed command/co-ordination structure. Taken together, these elements attempt to provide a simple, yet systematic way of gathering information, deciding actions and co-ordinating effort.

2. NEXT STEPS

Although the draft protocol has been produced with considerable input from the Police, it will be necessary to secure their formal agreement to its implementation. Also, as other agencies may be involved, notably the County Council in respect of Traveller Liaison functions, it will be necessary to consult with them and obtain their endorsement of the final document.

In addition, given that traveller incursions are not confined to Great Yarmouth but often affect other areas, it may be useful to consult with neighbouring Councils to seek their views and co-operation. Therefore, subject to Member agreement, it is proposed to consult further on the draft protocol prior to producing a final document for consideration by Cabinet.

In the interim, Members can be assured that officers continue to work closely with the police to monitor and respond to the risk of future incursions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: None at this stage, although traveller incursions carry a cost, both to the Council and to other agencies

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS: None at this stage
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EXECUTIVE BOARD OR DIRECTOR CONSULTATION: Executive Director for the Economy and Environment
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RECOMMENDATIONS

Does this report raise any legal, financial, sustainability,	Issues	
	Legal	None at this stage

equality, crime and disorder or human rights issues and, if so, have they been considered?	Financial	None at this stage
	Risk	The proposed draft protocol seeks to reduce risk
	Sustainability	None at this stage
	Equality	None at this stage
	Crime and Disorder	The proposed draft protocol seeks to minimise disruption to residents, businesses and visitors
	Human Rights	None at this stage
	Every Child Matters	None at this stage

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Scrutiny Committee 14/1/09

Appendix 1

Draft

Traveller protocol

Introduction

This protocol has been prepared in order to ensure the highest levels of collaboration between the responsible authorities in the event of a traveller incursion. It has 3 specific objectives

- The protection of the environment of the Borough
- The safeguarding of the interests of residents, businesses and legitimate visitors
- The minimisation of disturbance to the life of the Borough

In pursuit of these objectives, each authority has committed to a coordinated approach to traveller incursions based on 3 principle considerations

- States of preparedness
- Command/co-ordination structures
- Resource deployment
- Incident debrief

States of preparedness

It is critical that all agencies adopt a consistent approach to planning, preparing and managing responses to possible and actual traveller incursions. It is therefore intended to adopt a common 'state of awareness' system to ensure that this is achieved.

The normal condition will be **green**, where, although there is a need to maintain vigilance and to monitor activity and gather intelligence, there is no immediate threat of an incursion. The gathering of intelligence, led principally by the Police, will enable an assessment to be made as to whether to raise the state of readiness in anticipation of a likely incursion.

Should the Police deem it necessary to move the level of alert to **amber**, this will trigger a number of preparatory activities designed to alert people to the

likelihood of an incursion and to align staff and equipment to respond rapidly to the event. In addition, the Police will assume lead responsibility for cross border liaison to reduce the risk of the problem simply being passed from one location to another. The mechanism for co-ordinating this work will be the establishment of a Silver Command Unit, comprising nominated officers from key agencies.

Upon **red** status arising, the key functions will revolve around the co-ordinated management of the incursion until the incident has been concluded. At this point and following a formal debrief, the Police, based on an analysis of available intelligence, will determine whether green or amber status should apply.

The table below summarises the key features and actions of this system.

Condition	Description	Activities	Responsible bodies	Triggers to next level
Green	Low risk. Situation normal. No imminent threat or predictions of incursions	Intelligence gathering and monitoring Event monitoring Routine refreshment of legal position Routine security measures	Police, GYBC, County Council	Police assessment of seriousness of risk of incursion
Amber	Medium risk. Reason to believe incursions likely or imminent.	Silver Command activated Predictive planning and target hardening Staff briefings and deployment Impact assessments Media liaison Landowner alerts	Police, GYBC, GYBS	Arrival of traveller group
Red	High risk. Incursion has occurred	Silver Command briefings (twice daily) Traveller liaison activities Media/resident/business liaison Preparation and serving of notices Further site security measures Site supervision/policing Provision of waste disposal facilities	Police, GYBC, GYBS, County Council	Conclusion of incident (may be followed by either amber or green conditions, according to Police assessment)

		Possible removal from site Clean up of site Post event debrief		
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Command/co-ordination structures

Given the potential complexity of incursions, both in themselves and in terms of their wider impact, clear lines of command and co-ordination are essential. As the initial onus for intelligence gathering rests with the Police, it is logical that the Police carry the primary responsibility for determining whether the alert status should be changed from green to amber.

Thereafter, once an incursion has happened, operational command and agency co-ordination should be vested in a Silver Command team, which would continue to meet on a daily basis until the incursion had been resolved. Again, given the centrality of the Police to the management of an incursion, the leadership of the Silver Command Group should be vested in the Boroughs Chief Superintendent, with support being provided nominated officers of the Borough and County Council. These would include

- The Head of Regeneration and Environment
- Services Unit Managers for Environmental Health, Property and Environmental Services
- Emergency Planning Officer
- Traveller Liaison Officer
- Communications Officer

This core group would be augmented as required by other officers, depending on the nature and location of the incursion. This supplementary team would include the Car Parks Manager, Tourism Officer, Managing Director of GYBS and Head of Legal Services.

Incident Debrief and Reporting

In order to ensure that systems and processes are routinely reviewed and evaluated, each incursion will be concluded with a formal debrief. This will take the form of a structured meeting of the extended Silver Command Team and will, as a minimum assess the following

- Quality of intelligence/information gathering
- Effectiveness of legal instruments
- Effectiveness of target hardening activities
- Communications strategies (internal and external)
- Traveller liaison activities

- Effectiveness of security measures
- Management of environmental impacts
- Impacts upon residents, businesses and visitors

This will ensure that responses to all such incursions are rigorously evaluated, lessons learned and practises changed as appropriate. From the Councils perspective, it is proposed that a formal debrief report is produced in respect of each incursion, so that actions and outcomes are properly logged and can be subject to scrutiny if necessary.