

Appendix 2

A Collaborative Approach to Regional Emergency Planning

Final Business Case

January 2013

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In September 2010, following some deliberation of the benefits of taking a more collaborative approach to the Emergency Planning Support function, the North Wales Chief Executives commissioned a piece of work to develop a collaborative model which would establish a single regional emergency planning service with two hubs, one led by a regional manager and the other led by a deputy, with a local presence in each authority.
- 1.2 Since that time, those involved with the Emergency Planning function have reviewed the business case and developed a model which would build on the current system and capitalise on benefits which might accrue by taking a more collaborative approach.
- 1.3 It is important to note also that the “Other Services Implementation Contract” in the Compact for Change agreed between Welsh Government and Welsh local government includes a commitment to regionalise the delivery of emergency planning service within 2 years and with other partners on a multi agency basis within 4 years where practicable.
- 1.4 This final business case lays out the business benefits which would accrue and outlines financial estimates for the implementation of the proposed solution.
- 1.5 Detailed financial analysis could only be undertaken once the project is in transition (e.g. detailed employee/employer exist costs).

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Emergency Planning Support function for local authorities in North Wales is currently provided by five stand alone Emergency Planning Units typically staffed by between 1.5 and 3 people with two authorities (Denbighshire and Flintshire) having a joint arrangement.

- 2.2 Across North Wales therefore, 16.5 FTEs are involved in the provision of Emergency Planning support at an overall cost of £885,000 representing a figure of £1.29 per head of population.
- 2.3 A self-appraisal of the current arrangements by the emergency planning community shows that current arrangements exhibit:-
- Duplication and repetition of tasks;
 - Lack of harmonisation and resilience;
 - Inconsistency of response (suggesting a lack of systematic dissemination of best practice); and
 - Lack of integration and inter operability.
- 2.4 Effort is being expended by staff employed in these units in developing plans and protocols which are effectively the same from authority to authority, and whilst individual detail and implementation methods may vary between authorities, greater collaboration would reduce duplication.

Proposals contained in the business case

- 2.5 The proposed model would create a single emergency planning support function for local authorities in North Wales formed around two hubs – one in the East and one in the West.
- 2.6 A Civil Contingency Officer would be located at each authority who would be responsible for:-
- general liaison of emergency planning and recovery planning;
 - supporting local authorities in risk identification;
 - ensuring that strategies, plans, and exercises developed by the hubs are converted into local action at local authority level; and
 - ensuring that local authorities develop their business continuity plans.
- 2.7 These individuals would be supported by officers/assistants located at the two hubs charged with developing plans in particular areas and ensuring that we promote best operating practice.
- 2.8 The service would be managed by a manager located at one sub-regional hub area and they would have a deputy who, in order to ease administration and facilitate the distribution of workload, would be located at the other hub area.
- 2.9 Commissioning the required service would need to remain with individual authorities (as they would still be responsible individually for

meeting their statutory duties) and the purpose of the new service would be to ensure that each authority was in the optimum state of readiness to cope with an emergency; thus each authority would be able to agree their requirements at an appropriately senior level.

2.10 The business case leaves the exact nature of the commissioning arrangements to the next stage in the process.

Business benefits

2.11 The Emergency Planning Officer review identifies that there would be a number of advantages which would arise were we to change to a more collaborative model of delivery:-

- Improved resilience for partner councils due to the team's size (effectiveness);
- Improved focus of available resource by sharing specialist support and common tasks (efficiency);
- Ensuring greater consistency of response and dissemination of best practice amongst authorities (effectiveness); and
- Improved communication channels between the LRF individual authorities (effectiveness).

2.12 In the longer term there may also be some benefit both in effectiveness and efficiency in merging the secretariat of the North Wales Resilience Forum with the Unit. This has not been considered as part of this review as it was outside of its remit.

Financial benefits

2.13 The proposed model would reduce the staffing complement from 16.5 to 14.

2.14 Whilst this may be a conservative estimate of the available reduction, no further savings are proposed before greater assurance of our readiness for emergencies.

2.15 Whilst more detailed costing will be required as part of the next stage e.g. on grading assumptions, it is estimated at this stage that that as a result of the reduced staffing and consequent gradings the ongoing saving from the model could be around £75,000 with a further £12,500 accruing after disturbance and protection arrangements had expired (estimated three years).

- 2.16 The distribution of the £75,000 saving if the cost of the new model were distributed according to population are shown below although the business case also offers an alternative financing model which ensures a cost neutral position for Flintshire.

	Current Budget *	Distribution of costs (**)	(Saving) / Cost
Conwy	133,760	106,010	(27,750)
Denbighshire (***)	104,460	93,030	(11,430)
Flintshire (***)	125,160	142,150	16,990
Gwynedd	138,200	112,510	(25,690)
Wrexham	134,970	127,640	(7,330)
Ynys Mon	85,330	65,540	(19,790)
Total	721,880	646,880	(75,000)

(*) excluding recharges

(**) following immediate savings of £75,000

(***) Denbighshire's contribution assumed to meet the Flintshire support recharge 50:50

- 2.17 It is possible that a small number of employees may opt for early retirement or redundancy on a voluntary basis as a consequence of the re-organisation of this service. There will be some Human Resource impact in managing transfers and ensuring that advantageous terms and conditions of transferring staff are protected in the TUPE process.
- 2.18 Any costs will be met from future savings.

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE EMERGENCY PLANNING FUNCTION

- 3.1 Local Authorities are category 1 responders as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The act sets out the duties of local authorities and emergency services in preventing, preparing for and responding to emergencies. Duties include:-

- Assessments of risks in the local authority area
- Maintaining emergency plans
- Business continuity arrangements
- Liaising with other public services who are category one responders e.g. Police, Fire and Health Services
- Advising businesses on business continuity arrangements.

- 3.2 The Emergency Planning Support function for local authorities in North Wales is currently provided by five stand alone Emergency Planning Units typically staffed by between 1.5 and 3 people with two authorities' (Denbighshire and Flintshire) support function being provided under a joint arrangement.
- 3.3 The typical Emergency Planning support function involves an Emergency Planning manager with one or two assistants who endeavour to ensure that an authority has adequately planned ahead to prepare for the occurrence of an event, which would be classed as an emergency, along with the other statutory functions.
- 3.4 This entails detailed work on specific areas of activity (such as preparing plans, preparing exercises, mapping out resources etc) and will invariably involve ensuring that council services are themselves ready to respond in the event of an emergency, and facilitating individual service ability to do so.
- 3.5 It is not only local authorities which have duties under the Civil Contingencies Act – the emergency services; health organisations and environment agency are all category 1 responders and must co-operate to enhance the ability to respond to deal in an optimum way with an emergency.
- 3.6 To ensure coordination of emergency planning efforts by the category 1 responders, the North Wales Resilience Forum has been established on which local authorities have one representative (currently the Chief Executive at Conwy County Borough Council). The Forum aims to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to collective emergency planning work.
- 3.7 The North Wales Resilience Forum is supported by a lower tier North Wales Co-ordinating Group which has a number of sub-groups looking at various issues (for example dealing with fatalities; training; recovery plans etc) and officers from local authority emergency planning units play a leading role in the activities of these sub-groups.
- 3.8 In the event of a major emergency, there is a process whereby co-ordination would be facilitated by a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) which would meet at the SCG Centre in Colwyn Bay. Each authority would be represented at this group at a senior level (usually a Chief Executive or Senior Director) supported by emergency planning unit staff from their own individual authorities.

- 3.9 The current staffing establishment of the emergency planning support function for local authorities across North Wales is shown in table 1.

Table 1
Emergency Planning establishments 2011/12

	Manager	Assistants	Total
Conwy	1	2	3
Denbighshire	1	5	6
Flintshire			
Gwynedd	1	2	3
Wrexham	1	2	3
Ynys Mon	0.5	1	2
Total	4.5	12	16.5

- 3.10 The costs of the Emergency Planning Function are shown in table 2 below.

Table 2
Emergency Planning budgets 2011/12

	Employees	Other	Recharges	Income	Total	Pop (*)	Per head **
Conwy	114,920	18,840	1,590		135,350	112,347	£1.20/£1.19
Denbighshire		137,390			137,390	98,589	£1.19/£0.92
Flintshire	200,430	32,300	65,850	(140,500)	158,080	150,637	
Gwynedd	121,270	16,930	29,060	-	167,260	119,227	£1.40/£1.16
Wrexham	103,420	31,550	28,800	-	163,770	135,263	£1.21/£1.00
Ynys Mon	78,670	6,660	38,130	-	123,460	69,460	£1.78/£1.23
Total	618,710	243,670	163,430	(140,500)	885,310	685,523	£1.29/£1.05

(*) population figures used are the are used in the 2011/12 SSA for RSG distributional purposes

(**) Lower figure excluding recharges

- 3.11 Across North Wales therefore, 16.5 FTEs are involved in the provision of Emergency Planning support at an overall cost of £885,000, representing a figure of £1.29 per head of population.

4 THE CASE FOR CHANGE

- 4.1 A view has been expressed by some senior officers that effort is being expended by staff employed in these units in developing plans and protocols which are effectively the same from authority to authority and whilst individual detail and implementation methods may vary between authorities, there seems to be an argument that greater collaboration could lead to reduced duplication.

- 4.2 Experience at Strategic Coordination Group level has highlighted instances when having six individual authorities, each with their own plans with varying responses to particular issues and each requiring their own support tasks to be undertaken 6 times, has not been effective nor efficient.
- 4.3 For example, at a Pandemic Flu exercise back in 2009 (Exercise Taliesin) a key question was asked during the exercise over local authority plans for educating children in the event that their schools were temporarily closed. Each of the senior officers present had to reference six different plans.
- 4.4 Experience at that exercise also highlighted that each authority having its own support function was inefficient and indeed during the exercise, authorities re-modelled the support function available on an ad-hoc basis in order to make better use of the support which individual authorities had brought with them.
- 4.5 More recently this has led to the development of a new process for local authority liaison arrangements which centres around greater a single liaison function if a Strategic Coordination Group were called and liaison support required. We are already following a collaborative approach in this defined area of activity.
- 4.6 To test the hypothesis that a more collaborative approach would be more effective and efficient, the Emergency Planning managers from the six authorities conducted a self-appraisal of the current arrangements and they were asked to identify in what way they considered a more collaborative approach would change the situation. The result of that appraisal is shown in Appendix 1.
- 4.7 The key issues identified in this appraisal are:-
- Duplication and repetition of tasks;
 - Lack of harmonisation and resilience;
 - Inconsistency of response (suggesting a lack of systematic dissemination of best practice); and
 - Lack of integration and inter operability.
- 4.8 It should be recognised that local authorities can be faced with many difficulties when it comes to emergency planning which are not necessarily constraints for other organisations.

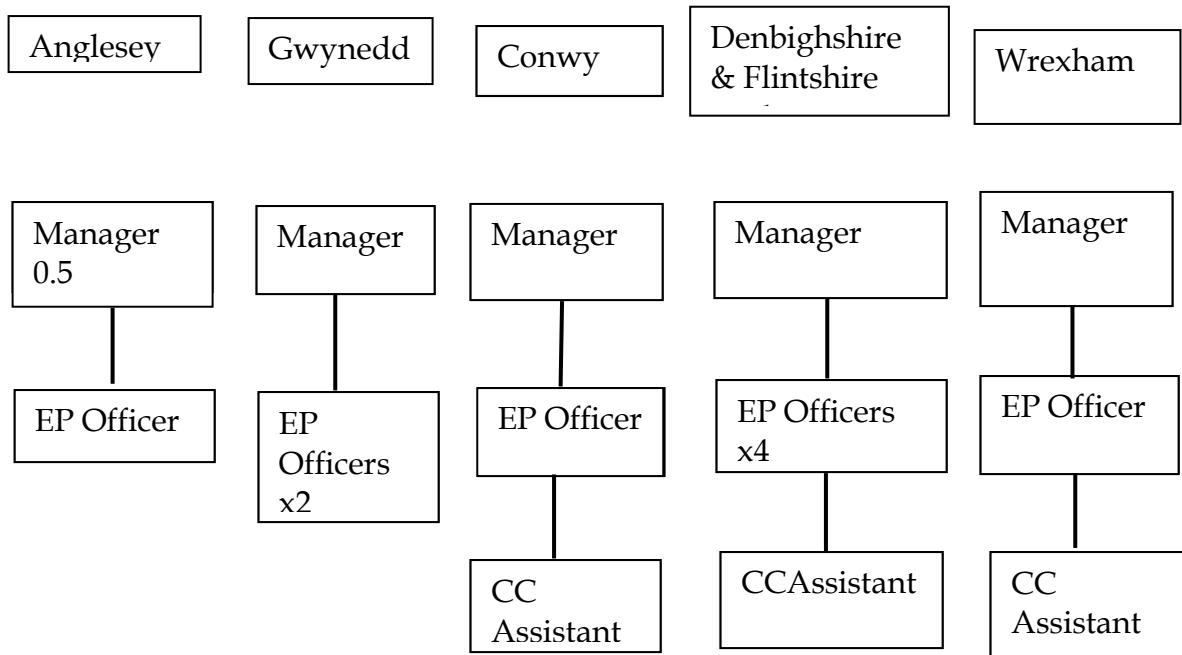
- 4.9 In particular, discussion with Emergency Planning managers highlighted the problem they face of the historical perception of the role of Emergency Planning function. Every one of the Emergency Planning managers identified to greater or lesser degrees the challenge of services owning emergency planning as part of business continuity.
- 4.10 There is also the challenge of immediacy. In times of increasing pressure on resources it is difficult to give priority to an issue which rarely, if ever, happens.
- 4.11 Authorities are embedding an empowering culture into their command and control culture which in itself can prove problematic.
- 4.12 The Emergency Planning Officer review suggests therefore that there would be a number of advantages from a collaborative model of delivery. These can be seen in Appendix 1. The main benefits are:-
- Improved resilience for partner councils due to the team's size. (effectiveness);
 - Improved focus of available resource by sharing specialist support and common tasks (efficiency);
 - Ensuring greater consistency of response and dissemination of best practice amongst authorities (effectiveness);
 - Improved communication channels between the LRF and individual authorities (effectiveness).

5 OPTIONS

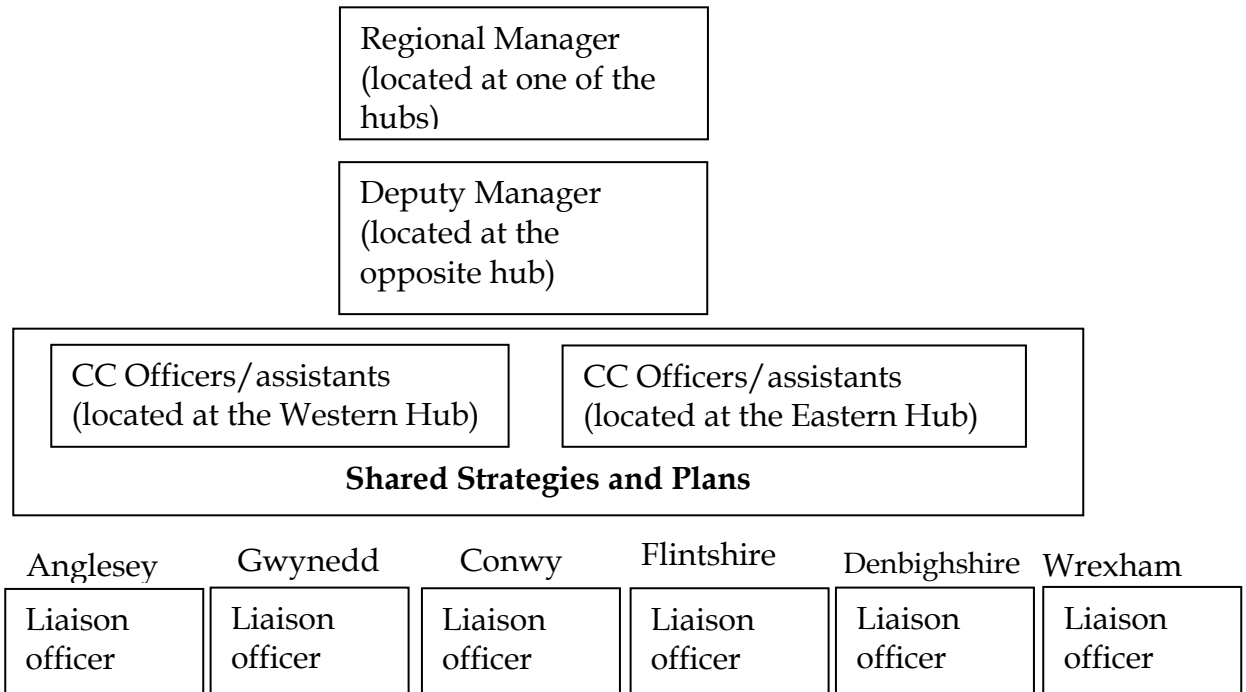
- 5.1 The key driver from the original commission was to make better use of the resource currently utilised for emergency planning.
- 5.2 This entails getting better results for the expenditure incurred or getting the same results for less resource (or a combination of both).
- 5.3 The Chief Executives considered 4 options:-
- Retain the existing provision;
 - Develop three emergency planning units pairing two neighbouring authorities;
 - Develop two emergency planning units each covering three local authorities; and
 - Develop a single regional group with outposted officers.

- 5.4 The paper considered by the Chief Executives contained an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the options.
- 5.5 Having considered the paper, the Chief Executives commissioned this business case to examine the viability of establishing a single regional service centred around two hubs - one for the East and one for the West with the manager of the service located in one area and the deputy in another.
- 5.6 This is effectively a hybrid of the last two options noted in 5.3 above and this business case centres completely on the commissioned option.
- 5.7 A summary of the proposed operating model and staffing structure for the new model is set out below.

Current organisational chart



New Organisational Chart



- 5.8 The proposed model would locate a Civil Contingency Officer at each authority who would be responsible for:-
- General liaison for emergency planning and recovery planning;
 - Supporting local authorities in risk identification;
 - Ensuring that strategies, plans, and exercises developed by the hubs are converted into local action at local authority level; and
 - Ensuring that local authorities developed their business continuity plans.
- 5.9 These individuals would be supported by officers/assistants located at the two hubs which would be charged with developing plans in particular areas and ensuring that we identify, and promote best practice.
- 5.10 All officers would be overseen by a regional manager located at one hub area and they would have a deputy who, in order to ease administration and facilitate the distribution of workload, would be located at the other hub area.
- 5.11 The general model would need to ensure that the linguistic characteristics of the service provided for Gwynedd and Ynys Mon Councils could be fully conducted in Welsh and a bilingual service would have to be available for all areas should they require such a service.

6 BENEFITS

- 6.1 The Emergency Planning Managers consider that the proposed model would have the potential to realise all of the benefits noted in 4.13 above.
- 6.2 It is clear to see the way in which the proposed model could lead to improved effectiveness in terms of resilience (due to a larger operating unit) and dissemination of best practice (as all authorities would be following the same practice).
- 6.3 In the longer term there may also be some benefit in effectiveness and efficiency from merging with the secretariat of the North Wales Resilience Forum.
- 6.4 It is clear to see how the new model could lead to efficiency savings by avoiding duplication.
- 6.5 The model would reduce the staffing complement from 16.5 to 14.
- 6.6 There is no doubt that reducing duplication should lead to a release of the staffing resource needed to fulfil current activities.
- 6.7 The staffing model is based on developing shared strategies and training through 4 FTEs. Taking into account that this activity is currently undertaken 5 times (assuming that Denbighshire and Flintshire's planning operations are already integrated) then one could raise an argument that this could potentially be reduced to 20% of the FTEs currently undertaking the work.
- 6.8 However, there will still be some degree of tailoring for individual authorities and coordination. Thus, on a superficial analysis a reduction of 2.5 FTEs is a realisable target.
- 6.9 Whilst we currently have a response capability across all authorities, there remains some question as to whether all authorities are implementing the actions and planning activities they should be doing in order to fully comply with best practice.
- 6.10 Initially therefore there could be some work in ensuring consistency of ability to respond across all authorities.

- 6.11 In the short term, therefore, the Emergency Planning Managers believe that the proposed reduction in resource implied by the new model should not be reduced further until such time as the new unit had managed to get all authorities up to speed and that only then should the new manager be charged with the aim of achieving further financial savings (as a longer term objective).
- 6.12 In essence this revolves around what the partner authorities want to achieve from this proposal – is it to ensure that the service is made more resilient and improved, or is it to get the current level of service at a reduced cost. This is a matter for each authority to determine but the EP Managers themselves recognise that there is some way to go before we can all be fully satisfied that our emergency readiness is as it could be.
- 6.13 There is some comparative data for a unit of this size. For example we are aware that in East Riding, they provide the EP support for 4 unitary authorities with an establishment of 14. However in Cleveland, they provide a service for 4 unitary authorities with an establishment of 10.

7 COSTS AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- 7.1 Any change will involve ongoing financial costs and benefits along with one off costs of change.
- 7.2 In terms of hosting the new model, staff would need to be transferred to a host authority and the relevant pay grade for the posts would be dependent upon that authority's pay evaluation mechanism.
- 7.3 In order to inform the decision making process, the proposed model has been fed through a council job evaluation mechanism. Based on outline job descriptions it is estimated that as a result of the staffing and the consequent gradings the ongoing saving from the model could be around £75,000 with a further £12,500 accruing after disturbance and protection arrangements had expired (say after three years).
- 7.4 This assumes that no central recharges or other operating costs could be saved. It also assumes that there would be no additional unforeseen costs e.g. ICT or at least that these could be subsumed in other compensating savings which have not been taken into account.
- 7.5 As the loss of one or two staff rarely result in authorities being able to realise reductions in central support services any adjustments in these costs have been assumed to be effected at marginal cost (i.e. an authority

- hosting the function would only be recompensed for the marginal cost of any movements in posts).
- 7.6 The cost of change would depend greatly on the appointments made and any resultant redundancies.
- 7.7 An evaluation of the nature of the revised jobs suggests that whilst the post of manager and deputy manager would be appointed from the current pool of emergency planning managers, those who were unsuccessful could be offered posts in the hub, which would not be classed as suitable alternative employment and as such they could claim constructive dismissal.
- 7.8 Various permutations have been calculated and on the information available the upper range of this cost could be of the order of £175,000.
- 7.9 Distributing the reduced service cost on the basis of population (which is the basis for the distribution of this element of the RSG) would result in the following budgetary effects. An alternative is shown which ensures that no authority pays more than they currently do (the protection being distributed to other authorities based on population).

Table 3
Assumed immediate and longer term budgetary savings

	Current Budget *	Distribution of costs (**)	(Saving) / Cost	Alternative
Conwy	133,760	106,010	(27,750)	(24,180)
Denbighshire (***)	104,460	93,030	(11,430)	(8,300)
Flintshire (***)	125,160	142,150	16,990	-
Gwynedd	138,200	112,510	(25,690)	(21,900)
Wrexham	134,970	127,640	(7,330)	(3,030)
Ynys Mon	85,330	65,540	(19,790)	(17,590)
Total	721,880	646,880	(75,000)	(75,000)

(*) excluding recharges

(**) following immediate savings of £75,000

(***) Denbighshire's contribution assumed to meet the Flint support recharge 50:50

- 7.10 It is likely however that the first two years savings would be required to meet the one off costs of change, and the savings would only accrue from year 3 onwards.

8 GOVERNANCE

- 8.1 As the new Unit would be delivering a service to six authorities there would need to be a provision whereby those authorities were able to feed into the commissioning process and hold the unit to account for performance. Clear commissioning arrangements at the outset will be essential.
- 8.2 Under the current arrangements, the governance arrangements are of course direct and straightforward.
- 8.3 More often than not, the Emergency Planning Manager is answerable to a senior officer in an authority and will be subject to the usual commissioning and performance management arrangements for that authority.
- 8.4 The governance arrangements for the revised model would need to be somewhat more sophisticated, and yet would need to be commensurate to the size of the service.
- 8.5 Commissioning services would need to remain with individual authorities (as they would still be responsible individually for meeting their statutory duties) and the purpose of the Unit would be to ensure that each authority was in the optimum state of readiness to cope with an emergency and thus each authority would need to be able to discuss their requirements at an appropriately senior level.
- 8.6 The Manager of the Unit would need to be answerable to a senior officer in the host authority.
- 8.7 Accordingly, one possible model is one whereby the host authority agreed to provide the service to all other authorities (backed up by a formal service level agreement) with the senior officer in the host authority along with the regional manager meeting the other senior officers from the other authorities on a periodic basis to discuss requirements and performance could be an appropriate model. In particular, they would need to agree far enough beforehand the demands to be placed on the service and the consequent resource implications.
- 8.8 Some consideration would also need to be given in the service level agreement to the day to day lines of communication between various officers in the new unit and commissioning officers at local authority level

along with the arrangements for cost sharing and scope for additional work to be carried out for an authority at an additional cost.

- 8.9 For example the governance process outlined above might need to be supplemented by less formal meetings between the manager or his deputy at local level as required.

9 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- 9.1 Following agreement of the proposal there will need to be a more detailed costing undertaken once a host authority is known; detailed job descriptions formulated and the appropriate manager and deputy appointed.
- 9.2 Thus there needs to be a decision based on the factors highlighted in this outline case before we can proceed further (or any further work defined in order to come to a decision).
- 9.3 The following timeline is proposed –

Commencement of briefing and consultation of staff on the business case and proposals.	February 2013
Each Council to nominate to an Implementation Team.	February 2013
Councils agree to join a regional service.	End of March 2013
Appoint a project manager to deliver the project.	End of March 2013
Appoint Regional Manager and Deputy.	June/July 2013
Notice of Transfer.	End of July 2013
Creation of operational structure, operating processes, development of the detailed budget and identification of accommodation.	September 2013
Development of Service Level Agreement and Partnership agreement.	September 2013
New service operational.	October 2013

10 CRITICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND RISK ASSESSMENT

10.1 There are a number of critical assumptions and risks which need to be taken into account. These are highlighted below along with possible mitigating actions.

	Risk	Probability	Mitigating actions
1	Focus on the change process results in less focus on the delivery of the service.	Medium	The relatively short period of implementation and the number of staff involved in major change should in itself be a mitigating factor. However it must be recognised that any upheaval can result in a lower level of service – the new regional manager’s change management abilities must be paramount in mitigating this risk.
2	The anticipated service benefits are not realised.	Low	The size of the new service must result in greater resilience and reduced duplication. If it does not the relative small size of the service could be undone without too much difficulty.
3	Moving to a central service makes it even more difficult to get services to plan accordingly	High	This will depend upon the new unit’s ability to inspire and facilitate. One commentator from another authority already operating such arrangements has warned against “confused chains of command” and another has commented that central teams unfamiliar with individual authority working practices can lead to difficulties. The location of liaison officers at each individual authority is a key mitigating factor along with the governance arrangements which will involve a senior commissioning officer from each authority and the regional manager / deputy.
4	A deterioration in communication between the	Medium	The location of liaison officers at each individual authority is a key mitigating factor along with the need

	emergency planning community and services arises as a result of the centralisation		to establish strong governance arrangements with clear lines of communication which will involve a senior commissioning officer from each authority and the regional manager / deputy.
5	Liaison Officers become isolated and follow a “local” agenda as opposed to the agreed programme	Medium	<p>There is some evidence from other collaborative ventures that liaison officers became isolated and started to go “native”.</p> <p>This would be mitigated by the fact that the line management for these individuals would be the Regional Manager or his/her deputy and they would have to have appropriate performance management arrangements in place to ensure that this did not happen.</p> <p>Strong commissioning and governance arrangements would also have to be in place to ensure that Liaison Officers were not deviated from the agreed programme.</p>
6	The loss of senior staff members leads to a reduction in the capability of the facilitation resource.	Unknown as yet	
7	The reduction in resource is too great.	Low	Data from areas such as East Riding and Cumberland suggest that the proposed solution is reasonable.
8	Authorities unable to deal with a commissioning approach and the service deteriorates due to loss of direct control.	Medium	<p>If an authority considers that it is insufficiently mature to manage such an arrangement then it should not subscribe.</p> <p>However differing priorities and political drivers could lead to friction and reduced buy in to the EP function in general.</p> <p>Simple and clear governance procedures should mitigate this risk.</p>

9	Costs are greater than anticipated	Low	<p>A prudent approach has been taken to the costs but nevertheless there may be some hidden costs and some key information is unavailable until such time as more detailed job descriptions are available, and those applied through the host authority's job evaluation procedure.</p> <p>The gateway review by Chief Executives once this process has been undertaken should mitigate this risk.</p>
10	Liaison Officers could find their pay grades changed as a result of the host authority's pay evaluation process putting them out of step in comparison with those with whom they work at an individual authority.	Low	<p>This could work both ways.</p> <p>In practice, it is inconceivable that pay rates would be significantly different but it would be an unavoidable consequence of working for a different organisation.</p> <p>The only other mitigating action would be to choose a different operating model.</p>
11	Greater concentration of expertise creates greater risk of loss should an individual officer retire / move on.	Low	<p>This risk is already faced by individual authorities.</p> <p>A larger unit should facilitate the ability to have better workforce planning thus reducing the risk.</p>

10.2 There is also a risk of course of not undertaking the project. It would directly undermine one element of the compact for change and one would have to ask whether the current 6 authority flavours of response is sustainable in the long term.

NORTH WALES EMERGENCY PLANNING REVIEW

SERVICE TASK STATUTORY	CURRENT PROVISION	JOINT PROVISION
Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regs, Pipeline Safety Regs; Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations (REPPIR)	Each authority has well developed plans updated according to an agreed common approach. The individual Emergency Planning Units ensure that their plan matches the common template and the local authority has officers who are able to discharge their emergency response duties through the respective plans.	One emergency planning officer would act as lead officer for the six local authorities on each specific planning topic. This provides consistency and harmonisation with Category 1 organisations across North Wales and the Regulator resulting in a more resilient approach.
Mass Fatalities; Risk Assessment	A single plan covers North Wales but this entails the involvement of officers from each of the emergency planning units to develop the work, resulting in repetitive and duplicated actions.	One emergency planning officer would act as lead officer for the six local authorities. This removes duplication and provides a more resilient approach. Local planning liaison will be needed to address county logistical issues.
Warning & Informing; Business Continuity Promotion	Each authority has developed an individualistic approach to deal with their needs. This results in a considerable amount of duplication across North Wales. There has been collaboration on the production of information leaflets.	A common model would be developed and applied across all the communities in North Wales. This removes duplication and provides a more harmonised and resilient approach.
Nuclear Site Liaison (Wylfa & Trawsfynydd EPCC)	Gwynedd & Ynys Môn have collaborated and liaised in developing plans, but site specific arrangements necessitate some duplicated actions.	Specialization would be developed providing more resilience. These skills could also be provided to support colleagues across Wales if necessary as part of regional collaboration.

<p>Business Continuity, Fuel Plan, Severe Weather plans & Health</p>	<p>Each authority has developed plans updated according to local circumstances. The individual Emergency Planning Units ensure that each local authority has officers who are able to discharge their emergency response duties through the respective plans. This inconsistent approach results in each local authority possibly responding in a different manner to very similar circumstances.</p>	<p>A common approach would be developed with the Primary Liaison Emergency Planning Officer for each of the authorities to take into account local needs. This removes duplication and provides improved resilience. There will remain a need to embed business continuity within each authority's culture.</p>
<p>Flood Partnerships Reservoir Inundation, Resilient Communications</p>	<p>Existing flood partnerships have arisen due to local experience of flooding, currently only formalised in two authorities. The dissemination of this learning has not been extended to those areas where actual flooding has not yet regularly occurred, but the risk exists. Local flood plans are tailored to the specifics of the locality.</p>	<p>One emergency planning officer would act as lead working closely with the Primary Liaison Emergency Planning Officer for each of the authorities, to ensure that flood partnerships are developed across all risk areas, and flood plans, although specific to their area, follow a common template.</p>
<p>Community Resilience & Voluntary Sector</p>	<p>Each authority has developed an individualistic approach to deal with their needs in relation to community resilience. There has been collaboration in engagement with the voluntary sector.</p>	<p>One emergency planning officer would act as lead officer for the six local authorities. A common approach would be developed with the Primary Liaison Emergency Planning Officer for each of the authorities to take into account local risks. This enhances consistency and resilience.</p>
<p>Learning & Development, Training Needs Identification</p>	<p>Each authority has developed an individualistic approach to deal with their needs. The individual Emergency Planning Units provide the focus for ensuring that each local authority has officers who are able to discharge their emergency response duties by providing local training and exercising . Whilst there is a North Wales provision through the Resilience Forum</p>	<p>A common approach would be developed with the Primary Liaison Emergency Planning Officer for each of the authorities to take into account local needs. This would feed the local needs into the North Wales Resilience Forum Learning and Development Group. This removes duplication and provides resilience, whilst reflecting client needs in the training programme. The provision of training could also be</p>

	<p>this provides only a limited capacity for generic training and does not meet all the local needs. This results in a considerable amount of duplication at the local level.</p>	<p>undertaken in partnership with other Cat 1 responders as part of the developing NWRP Strategy</p>
<p>Pollution of Controlled Waters, Marine Pollution, Events & Safety Advisory Group, Port Authority & Airports, Animal Health, Eisteddfod & Agricultural shows</p>	<p>Each authority has well developed plans updated according to national guidelines and local circumstances. The individual Emergency Planning Units ensure that each local authority has officers who are able to discharge their emergency response duties through the respective plans</p>	<p>A regional approach would be developed with the Primary Liaison Emergency Planning Officer for each of the authorities, taking into account local needs and risks, with the lead officer liaising with the Category 1 responders and event organisers to ensure a harmonised and compatible approach.</p>
<p>SERVICE TASK NORTH WALES RESILIENCE FORUM</p>	<p>CURRENT PROVISION</p>	<p>JOINT PROVISION</p>
<p>Learning & Development; Warning & Informing; Industrial Hazards; Pollution; Mass Fatalities; Risk Assessment; Logistical Preparedness; Telecomms; Voluntary Sector; Infectious Diseases; Flooding; Humanitarian Assistance; Recovery</p>	<p>Each local authority can provide a representative to one or more of the task groups that meet on a regular basis. This may lead to a considerable duplication of effort. However a sensible approach is taken with rationalization of representation at meetings, and subsequent cascade arrangements need to be effectively managed to disseminate information and tasking.</p>	<p>One emergency planning officer would act as lead officer for the six local authorities on a specific task/risk group. This removes duplication and provides a resilient approach and will allow for greater development of 'in-depth' knowledge on a particular topic.</p>

Advantages of two hub service delivery in supporting partnership councils:

- Improved resilience activity to partnership councils due to team size (recognising the limitations of this statement in the event of a widespread incident).
- Improved focus of available resources through hub unit providing shared specialist support to partnership councils
- Based on the underpinning principles of a joint unit that has operated effectively and successfully for 5 years between Denbighshire and Flintshire
- Reflects current out-of-hours duty arrangements
- Potential for eventual cost savings due to reduction in managers and support resources
- officers will provide local focus and gateway into specialist emergency planning support from a larger team for individual authorities
- Refines and simplifies support of NWRF Task Groups and other partners
- More consistent arrangements with respect to CCA duties with Category 1 & 2 Responders across North Wales
- Provides a single point of contact for strategic issues at LRF/SCG level
- Harmonisation of best practices across all Authorities
- Improved resilience for emergency response

Original report considered by Chief executives of North Wales authorities
which gave rise to the commission.

REVIEW OF NORTH WALES LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE

1.0 SCOPE

The Chief Executives have made a commitment to review the best use of existing emergency planning resources across the region to improve readiness for emergencies. The Chief Executives group were not fixated with efficiencies and are open minded about the scope for a regional unit or sub-regional units supported by local specialist placements in local authorities.

A parallel review of the North Wales Resilience Forum (NWRF) structures and resources is to take place, noting the keenness the new Chief Constable to review partnerships and their productivity, and recognising the overall resourcing of the North Wales Resilience Forum and emergency planning across the region.

The NWRF review is a part of a broader North Wales Partnerships Review that is currently being undertaken by North Wales Police in conjunction with partners. NWRF members agreed to wait for the WAO Report in CCA Implementation (likely to be in October 2010) and the CCA Enhancement Programme to be completed (possibly by the end of 2010) before any significant changes are made to NWRF structure or mechanics of operation.

Therefore the emergency planning review is not in a position to include the outcome of the NWRF review.

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 To review the current arrangements for delivering the Local Authority Emergency Planning function in North Wales, and identify options for future arrangements in order to provide the service in the most effective and efficient way possible

2.2 The reviewed service options must fully meet all statutory requirements and provide an appropriate level of support to the communities and responding partners in North Wales

2.3 The service options should be provided within current resources

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Local Authorities in North Wales have a good track record of collaborating on civil contingencies work since 1996. This includes collaborative working between

Local Authorities on specific issues, sharing of out-of-hours duty arrangements. Solid cooperation is ensured through the 'North Wales Local Authorities Emergency Planning Collaborative Group'.

3.2 All local authorities are also heavily involved in supporting all NWRP work streams and this includes chairing many of the working groups.

3.3 It also must be noted that the North Wales Resilience Forum (NWRP), and associated components including the Partnership Team, is **not** a statutory body and has no powers to direct its members, but is a forum that facilitates the CCA requirement for member organisations to cooperate and share information in relation to Civil Contingency planning.

3.4 It is important to note when reviewing Local Authority Civil Contingencies arrangement that the pursuance of duties as outlined in the Civil Contingency Act 2004 is the responsibility of the individual organisation, this includes the assurance 'that Category 1 responders are able to perform their functions so far as necessary or desirable to respond to an emergency'. The planning for response and recovery is to be undertaken as an extension of local responders' day-to-day activities.

3.5 It is also important for Chief Executives to be aware that Central Government is now robustly pursuing a Community Resilience agenda that no doubt will require major input from Local Members and the Local Authorities in general.

4.0 SUGGESTED OPTIONS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

See Annex 1 for strengths and weaknesses resilience analysis

See Annex 3 for current investment in local authority emergency planning service

See Annex 4 for structures of proposed options

See Annex 5 for outline risk assessment

4.1 OPTION 1 **Retain existing provision.**

Retain existing provision but develop joint/shared working in key areas such as training & exercising, pipeline & COMAH planning, Out of Hours cover. Support North Wales Resilience Forum Task Groups by agreeing lead authority for specific Task Group attachment.

4.2 OPTION 2 **Pairing neighbouring authorities**

Develop three emergency planning units covering two local authorities each, East, Central and West.

Support North Wales Resilience Forum Task Groups by agreeing lead unit for specific Task Group attachment, and then Unit manager determines appropriate officer allocation.

Utilise a similar SLA as the existing Denbighshire & Flintshire arrangement covering Flintshire and Wrexham, Denbighshire and Conwy, Anglesey and Gwynedd.

Collaborative working between the three Units would be agreed by the managers, for example: each Unit could lead on one or two of the following activities, developing a specialism and establishing common good practice across NW.

- Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) & Major Accident Hazardous Pipelines (MAHP) and other industrial planning
- Emergency Exercising
- Gold, Silver and Bronze response to incidents
- Control Room operation and support staff
- Welfare, Rest Centre operation, Volunteer support and community resilience
- flooding and severe weather
- Mutual Aid and Cross Border arrangements
- Nuclear and pollution issues

The respective unit managers would agree specialist divisions to lead on generic work elements i.e. COMAH, MAHP, and Reservoirs etc, and also for representation on the appropriate LRF Task Groups. They would report to each of their executive management teams and attend management meetings and Member Scrutiny panels as required.

4.3 OPTION 3 **Two groups of three neighbouring counties**

Develop two emergency planning units covering three local authorities each, East and West.

Support North Wales Resilience Forum Task Groups by agreeing lead unit for specific Task Group attachment, and then Unit manager determines appropriate officer allocation.

Utilise a similar SLA as the existing Denbighshire & Flintshire arrangement covering Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham to the East, and Anglesey, Conwy and Gwynedd to the West.

Collaborative working between the two Units would be agreed by the managers, for example: each Unit could lead on one or two of the following activities, developing a specialism and establishing common good practice across NW.

Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) & Major Accident Hazardous Pipelines (MAHP) and other industrial planning
Emergency Exercising
Gold, Silver and Bronze response to incidents
Control Room operation and support staff
Welfare, Rest Centre operation, Volunteer support and community resilience
flooding and severe weather
Mutual Aid and Cross Border arrangements
Nuclear and pollution issues

The respective unit managers would agree specialist divisions to lead on generic work elements i.e. COMAH, MAHP, and Reservoirs etc, and also for representation on the appropriate LRF Task Groups. They would report to each of their executive management teams and attend management meetings and Member Scrutiny panels as required.

4.4 OPTION 4 **Single Regional Group with outposted officers in satellite Counties**

Develop a single North Wales Local Authority Regional unit with outpost officers covering either 1 or 2 local authority areas each, and incorporate the Partnership Team within the unit.

Support North Wales Resilience Forum Task Groups by agreeing lead officer, from within unit, for each Task Group.

The Regional Unit may have a manager and deputy covering all 6 local authorities providing reporting links to their executive management teams and attending management meetings and Member Scrutiny panels as required.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

Whilst four options are proposed as viable ways of delivering the service other methods i.e. external commissioning, were discounted as they were not realistic. Option 1 does not significantly develop the service, and option 4 may provide a service that is too remote for effective local control and Member reassurance. Options 2 and 3 provide an opportunity to modernise and improve the efficiency of the service whilst retaining a degree of local control and closer member engagement.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 That the Chief Executives receive the report and consider the options presented

6.2 That the Chief Executives determine the most appropriate option for the delivery of the service

6.3 That the Chief Executives determine the time frame for the implementation of the preferred option and determine the lead officer(s) to manage the implementation process

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Option 1 Maintain present arrangements	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Familiarity, existing knowledge retained locally<input type="checkbox"/> Easier day to day management within authorities<input type="checkbox"/> More local accountability and community engagement than options 2 to 4<input type="checkbox"/> CCA and other statutory duties aligned with delivering authority
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Disparity in capabilities between authorities<input type="checkbox"/> Minimal improvement in NW RF support<input type="checkbox"/> Considerable duplication of effort across all statutory duties<input type="checkbox"/> Smaller team is less resilient (i.e. sickness, holidays, out of hours etc.)<input type="checkbox"/> Less consistent arrangements with other responders with respect to the CCA duties

Option 2 Pairing of neighbouring authorities	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Based on an existing SLA model (Denbighshire & Flintshire)<input type="checkbox"/> Some LA services already working to this structure i.e. Conwy/Denbighshire Highways<input type="checkbox"/> Matches up with current NWP Business Units, West, Central & East<input type="checkbox"/> Improved resilience due to team size<input type="checkbox"/> More locally accountable than Options 3 & 4<input type="checkbox"/> Improved resilience due to increased team size<input type="checkbox"/> Cost saving
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Logistical issues i.e. ICT etc<input type="checkbox"/> More remote from the democratic process and accountability current service<input type="checkbox"/> Potential conflict of interests in wide area emergencies<input type="checkbox"/> Some duplication of effort remains<input type="checkbox"/> Cost of relocation of staff & accommodation

Option 3 Two groups of three neighbouring authorities	
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> More accountable than Option 4 providing local focus<input type="checkbox"/> Reduction in duplication of managers and support staff<input type="checkbox"/> Improved resilience due to team size<input type="checkbox"/> Improved focus of available resources<input type="checkbox"/> Denbighshire & Flintshire Joint Unit already in place<input type="checkbox"/> Reflects out-of-hours duty arrangements<input type="checkbox"/> Further Improved resilience due to increased team size<input type="checkbox"/> Cost savings

Weaknesses	<input type="checkbox"/> Logistical issues i.e. ICT etc <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of relocation of staff & accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Some duplication of effort remains <input type="checkbox"/> More remote from the democratic process and corporate accountability than current service <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability to local Members <input type="checkbox"/> Potential conflict of interests in wide area emergencies <input type="checkbox"/> Current emergency management structures are different between authorities
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Option 4 Single North Wales Unit with outposted staff	
Strengths	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to minimise duplication of managers and support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Focus of resources through central core team <input type="checkbox"/> Out posted staff will provide local focus <input type="checkbox"/> Cost savings <input type="checkbox"/> Further Improved resilience due to increased team size <input type="checkbox"/> More consistent arrangements with other responders with respect to CCA duties
Weaknesses	<input type="checkbox"/> Too remote from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The democratic process • Accountability to local Members • The Communities <input type="checkbox"/> Too remote from the Local Authorities that have the statutory responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability to local Members <input type="checkbox"/> Logistical issues i.e. ICT etc <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of relocation of large number of staff & accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Out posted staff may become remote and insular <input type="checkbox"/> Differing reporting protocols to managers and Members <input type="checkbox"/> Biased service delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of staff networking <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of corporate knowledge and expertise following loss of managers <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties in managing staff appraisals/sickness etc

OPERATING MODEL FOR NORTH WALES REGIONAL LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE

1.0 Operational Model

There will be one Civil Contingencies Team which will cover two separate groupings of local authorities in the East and West of the region and will be centred around two hubs – one in the East and one in the West. The Team will deliver the service as required by statute, regulations and direction.

1.1 Co-operation

The Team will deliver its services and Civil Protection duties collaboratively as far as is appropriate to ensure that the Local Authorities are effectively represented on the North Wales Resilience Forum to facilitate the effective delivery of those duties that need to be delivered in a multi-agency environment.

The Civil Contingencies Team will ensure the exchange of good practice amongst client authorities and provide the expertise to ensure that authorities are available to fulfill their functions in an effective and efficient manner.

1.2 Information Sharing

The Team will facilitate information sharing between the Local Authorities and enable information to be shared with the appropriate local partners within the area to ensure the effective performance of the civil protection duties placed on the Authorities.

1.3 Resilience Risk Assessment

The Team will take lead responsibility for assessing risks on resilience issues and will ensure that risk assessments for the Local Authorities have been completed. The risk assessments will identify the sources of risk, assess their likelihood and impacts, and rank them in terms of their overall risk, and supply this information for inclusion in the Community Risk Register. This will support the corporate risk register of the Local Authorities.

1.4 Emergency Planning

The Team will develop, validate and maintain arrangements that provide an effective framework to enable the Councils to manage risks, and mobilise staff and resources in relation to a wide range of possible scenarios.

1.5 Response Training

All plans and procedures will include provisions for carrying out training and exercising of staff, North Wales Resilience Forum partners and other responding agencies to effectively embed the arrangements within the culture of the Authorities.

1.6 Business Continuity Management

The Team will promote and support business continuity within individual services and corporately, to ensure that business continuity management is embedded and tested within each Authority.

1.7 Business Continuity Advice and Assistance to Businesses and the Voluntary Sector

The Team will provide the Local Authorities with a business continuity advice and assistance strategy for small and medium sized enterprises and the voluntary sector. They will engage with key external partners (e.g. business representative groups, business support organisations and other Category 1 responders) in the delivery process.

1.8 Communicating with the Public

The Team will develop relevant information and advice in support of community resilience. They will engage with local agencies and lead responders for warning, informing and advising the communities.

1.9 Emergency Response

The Team will provide 24/7 emergency arrangements to support the Local Authorities response to major emergencies impacting on the communities within North Wales.

1.10 Voluntary Sector

The Team will make appropriate arrangements for the engagement of all relevant Voluntary Agencies in support of the emergency response preparedness, and will ensure response training and exercising of those organisations occurs on a regular basis.

1.11 North Wales Resilience Forum

The Team will engage with the North Wales Resilience Forum and support the work streams as appropriate.

2.0 Support for the Operational Model

2.1 Delivery of the Emergency Planning Service

The proposed structure is contained in the attached structure diagram. The grading of posts will be subject to the job evaluation process at the host authority.

It will consist of a central team centred around two hubs who will be responsible for those functions which can be developed in common and need not be done at individual authority level.

The extension of the relevant plans and strategies will then be for the Manager and his or her deputy to ensure with the assistance of the liaison officers and the central team.

The key interface will be via the liaison officers which will be located at each authority.

To enable the operational model to deliver the service the Local Authorities will need to provide corporate support in managerial, financial and resourcing terms. There will be a requirement for one Local Authority to host the Team, providing management, accommodation, and the other usual support services and one local authority in the opposite sub region will need to provide accommodation and some support service for the other hub. Individual authorities will need to provide accommodation for liaison officers.

The remaining Local Authorities will be required to engage with the Team to meet their civil contingency needs. They will be required to accommodate an emergency planning presence by providing desk and ICT facilities.

2.1 Governance

Governance of the Team will be achieved through the executive arrangements agreed between the providing and commissioning Authorities.

Terms and conditions for the service together with any financial recharges for the North East and North West Teams will be laid out in a formal Service Level Agreement between the six Local Authorities.

Indicative Structure
(North Wales Local Authorities Civil Contingency Service)

