

ANNEX D

DRAFT - FOR CONSIDERATION (10/12/2019)

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A STRATEGIC REVIEW OF NI CIVIL CONTINGENCIES AND EMERGENCY PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

BACKGROUND

1. The Civil Contingencies Policy Branch (NI) and EU Exit C3 Project with the recently established NICS central operations room known as the NI Hub, form a temporary Division that has been established within The Executive Office's Executive Support Group. It was envisaged that the Division would be in place for a period of 6 – 9 months, with effect from September 2019, depending on EU Exit developments.
2. Over the past 3 months the focus for the Division has been to:
 - (i) participate in the Government's Operation Yellowhammer and to prepare NICS through participation in local and national exercises to test NICS preparedness;
 - (ii) review and refine the NICS arrangements to ensure that the NICS (in partnership with the NIO) and Northern Ireland as a region, has Full Operational Capability and is ready to deploy, if necessary, an NICS operational response to the Government's Reasonable Worst Case Scenario (RWCS), should the UK leave the EU without a Deal;
 - (iii) manage and resolve a legacy of complex management issues, and in particular addressing a lack of sufficient investment in staff resource;
 - (iv) address governance arrangements in relation to CCPB (NI) and C3 Project including The NI Hub;
 - (v) prepare this current Phase of the C3 Project for project closure by end January 2020;

- (vi) work with PwC to develop the Futures Report, highlighting areas to be improved to establish a NICS Civil Contingencies and Emergency Planning Centre of Excellence, modernised and updated, fit for the future;
 - (vii) Review, revise and re-focus the work programme for the coming year;
 - (viii) Put in place plans to integrate the NI Hub and its supporting infrastructure and operating procedures into the mainstream CCPB (NI);
and
 - (ix) Leading the handover of the C3 Project including the NI Hub civil contingencies operating room to CCPB (NI).
3. The Division is now engaged in planning a transition work programme incorporating:
- (i) CCPN (NI) maintaining business as usual and managing the work put on hold due to EU Exit C3 Project;
 - (ii) Maintaining 'at readiness', local and national exercises including preparing for IOC and FOC in January 2020;
 - (iii) C3 Legacy/transition report and project closure;
 - (iv) A response to the PwC Futures Report;
 - (v) A strategic review of civil contingency arrangements for NI, taking account of the relevant recommendations in the Futures Report and which is intended to look more widely at how CCPB (NI) might play a role in promoting and improving risk management across the NICS.
4. These Terms of Reference are specifically to take forward the strategic review identified at 3 (v) above.

Aim

5. The aim of the strategic review is to examine the civil contingencies arrangements for the NICS and wider public sector and ensure they are resilient and fit for purpose for the future.
6. The review will:
 - build on the lessons learnt from the local and national Yellowhammer contingency exercises;
 - examine best practices elsewhere to enhance risk management and resilience arrangements; and
 - ensure appropriate skills and career and training pathways are in place.

Objectives

7. The key objectives for the Strategic Review are to:
 - I. Examine existing civil contingency and emergency planning arrangements in Northern Ireland with a view to enhancing partnerships and improving structures;
 - II. Implement, as appropriate, the recommendations of the PwC Futures Report, and based on the Lessons Learnt from Yellow Hammer, EU Brexit Planning and national exercises;
 - III. Look more widely at the potential role for CCPB (NI) in promoting and improving risk management across the NICS;
 - IV. Examine the potential for the NICS to move from focusing on planning for, and managing, traditional 'shocks,' such as flooding, infrastructure failure and cyber-attack, to cover horizon-scanning and early identification of potential cumulative risks; and

- V. Examine the potential support required for a future Executive (or Direct Rule Ministers) to have the capability to plan for, and manage a wider range of contingencies.

External Support

- (vi) A key lesson for the NICS from the national Yellowhammer operation, was that the area of contingencies, emergency response and planning has evolved over the past years. An ambitious strategic review of this nature would benefit from support and challenge from external advice and expertise.
- (vii) There is an opportunity to explore building on the current Cabinet Office EU Exit planning Programme to engage external expertise to support TEO, to take forward the review. The use of external consultancy expertise would be considered as a final phase of the C3 project to capitalise on the significant investment across the NICS to date.

Estimated Resource Requirement

8. The review will be led by the Director EU Exit planning and C3 Project. A dedicated Programme Management Office, reporting to the Director, will support managing the wider programme of work at 3(iv) above to respond to the Futures Report recommendations. The PMO will consist of 1 X G7, 1 X DP, 1XSO and 1XAO, and will form the project team with external advisers to support the Review of civil contingencies. The PMO posts already are in place and are currently funded from the current C3 funding and will need to be filled to progress the review.
- (viii) An estimated cost to engage external support as outlined at x above is up to £120 k for a period of three months' work.

Role of Strategic Review Project Team

The Review Project Team will:

- Examine current arrangements
- Undertake desk research
- Examine Best Practice elsewhere
- Develop proposals
- Test proposals
- Build consensus
- Develop plans for implementation
- Follow good practice for project Governance and Risk Management.

Reporting and Timescale

The Review will commence [XXX 2020] and is expected to produce a report on the outcome with recommendations by xxxx. **[DN: this is dependent on the resource position].**

The Director and project team will provide regular progress updates to the Deputy Secretary, Executive Support Group during this period.

10 December 2019