

Report to: Executive Board – Monday 12th December 2005

Avian flu & contingency planning for influenza pandemic

Report of: Strategy & Review Business Manager	WARDS AFFECTED All
Report Author: Julia Woodman, Scrutiny Officer	
Lead Member Responsible: Cllr Alex Hollingsworth	
Scrutiny Committee Responsibility: Oxford City Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee	
Key Decision: No	
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To request that the Executive Board examine the issue of business continuity planning for a possible influenza pandemic, following the model adopted by Oxfordshire County Council.	

1. Background

The above recommendation was made by Oxford City Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee at its meeting on 17th November.

The Committee received a joint presentation from the Oxford City Director for Public Health and a representative from the Health Protection Team outlining the different conditions of winter flu, bird flu and the pandemic flu.

An overview of Public Health emergency planning was also provided.

The second phase of the meeting consisted of short presentations by emergency planning representatives from Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford Radcliffe Hospital Trust and Oxford City Council.

2. Planning arrangements for Oxfordshire and Oxford City

The Director of Public Health stated that overall Oxfordshire was well prepared. Any response would be a multi – agency response based around standard emergency planning structures.

A representative from the Emergency Planning Unit (Oxfordshire County Council) stated that a key question was how to keep critical services running with depleted staff. Local Authorities would need to develop business continuity plans. The officer stated that it was essential to have Director level buy-in to the process and would require a dedicated business continuity manager. The County Council had followed this process.

The Emergency Planning Officer at Oxford City Council stated that the Business Systems Unit of Oxford City Council had been given the task of business continuity planning. However the Officer indicated that discussions were in the early stages and that concrete contingency planning in critical service areas such as refuse collection had not taken place. The Officer highlighted the need for senior managers to take the issue forward and ensure buy-in across all service areas.

Members supported these concerns and endorsed the model that had been adopted by Oxfordshire County Council.