

# Salisbury City Recovery update

19 April 2018

# Baroness Jane Scott of Bybrook OBE

## Leader Wiltshire Council



# This evening's panel

- Baroness Jane Scott - Leader Wiltshire Council
- Alistair Cunningham - Chair of Recovery Co-ordination Group
- Tracy Daszkiewicz - Director of Public Health
- Ian Boyd – Chief Scientist, Dept for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Sarah Hendry – Director, Dept for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Paul Mills – Deputy Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police





# What we will cover this evening

- Overview
- Health assessment
- Objectives of decontamination
- Decontamination process
- The sites
- Activity at the sites
- Timeframe
- The overall recovery programme
- Your questions



# Overview

- Key sites have now been released from the Police investigation so the clean up work can now begin.
- Different sites will have different levels of contamination. In some places this is likely to be high, but our assessment is that it will be low for most sites. Our work will effectively remove the remaining traces of contamination from all sites involved.
- Our priority is making these sites safe so they can be returned to use and Salisbury can get back to normal.
- This work will get all sites potentially affected by the nerve agent back to public use.
- During the work, all potentially contaminated sites will remain secured.

# Overview

- Work to clean each site will involve a process of testing, removal of items potentially contaminated, chemical cleaning and retesting.
- Sites will not be released back into use until test results and the work undertaken has been reviewed and approved by the government's decontamination scientific advisory committee.
- The work is expected to take a number of months, but public service sites will be prioritised.

# Health Assessment

- Public Health England have continued to assess the public health risk throughout the incident.
- Clear advice remains that the risk to the general public is low.
- Scientific assessment has identified areas of potential contamination, which have been cordoned off, removing any threat for residents or visitors.
- It's important to note and reassuring to others that no further cases of illness have been reported since the incident occurred on Sunday 4th March.

# Novichok contamination

- We have clear scientific understanding of how the agent works and is spread, the likely level of contamination at each site is known
- Nerve agents work by binding to an enzyme that is crucial to normal nerve transmission
- In this instance direct contact is required for a person to be poisoned. Only a small proportion of the material is transferred with each contact
- The substance is greatly reduced after secondary and tertiary transfer – like a finger print ink test
- This class of nerve agent does not produce significant vapour or gas
- The substance can only move between sites by direct transfer from a contaminated person or item



# Objectives for decontamination

- The work will make the contaminated areas safe and will return Salisbury back to normal
- Specifically it will eliminate any residual traces of the agent to remove risk further
- The work will differ by site as we address the contamination levels there - some locations have high levels of contamination, although our assessment is that it is very low for most.
- Our work will eliminate any potential future exposure

# Decontamination

- Our approach is based on the best scientific evidence and advice to ensure all decontamination is carried out in a thorough and careful way
- The work is being planned and overseen by DEFRA based on expert advice from:
  - Public Health England
  - Ministry of Defence
  - Dept for Health and Social Care
  - Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory
  - Home Office
- Barriers are going up in some sites this evening to ensure that all clean up work can be carried out
- We cannot do all the sites at the same time – this work takes careful planning

# Decontamination

- Detailed information gathered during the investigation, alongside the clear scientific understanding of how the agent works and is spread, means that we know the likely level of contamination at each site is known
- The decontamination work will involve a process of testing, removal of items which could be contaminated and that might harbour residual amounts of the agent, chemical cleaning and retesting
- After each site has been cleaned up, sampling will be carried out by expert teams again to ensure the sites are safe to released
- And only after a committee of experts have assessed the work and that sampling, will sites be released back to public use

# The sites

## **Public service sites**

- Bourne Hill
- Salisbury Ambulance Station
- Amesbury Ambulance Station

## **Local business sites**

- Maltings Park
- Mill pub
- Zizzi restaurant
- Ashley Wood Car Recovery Centre

## **Residential sites**

- Mr Skripal's house
- Police officer's house

# Activity at the sites

- Barriers are going up this evening – you will start to see those as you leave this meeting
- Expert teams will be wearing the appropriate clothing and equipment, such as specialist suits and boots
- Any items that might harbour residual amounts of the agent will be removed and safely destroyed
- Work areas will be set up for the storage of waste and to allow workers space to store equipment
- Sites will then be chemically cleaned and washed down
- This work is highly specialised and will be carried out to the highest standard and ensure all sites are safe

# Timeframe

- We will be starting work in the coming days
- It will take some months before all sites are decontaminated and returned to normal use
- In the next few weeks work will start at the police station site, ambulance stations at Amesbury and Salisbury, and the Maltings Park and are expected to be returned to public use as soon as possible
- The Mill pub and Zizzi restaurant will follow immediately afterwards
- We will keep the local community as updated throughout the work



# Bourne Hill

- Bourne Hill offices (the new extension) home to Wiltshire Council services, and the police station, will close to staff and public from tomorrow - Friday 20 April - at 4:00 pm
- For a period up to 8 weeks
- This will enable the clean up work in the two potentially contaminated locations in the new building to be carried out
- The old building – The Registry office is not affected and will remain open
- Both the police and council services will be relocated locally – this will be well publicised
- A first point of contact to access council services will be the registration offices

# Police – Bournehill and Scenes

## **Scenes:**

- Police presence in the city will continue at the cordoned sites and when hoardings have been erected
- Use of National Barrier Asset
- We are also exploring a mixed economy approach to scene guarding
- Other police business continues as usual – mutual aid
- Support by the community; particularly at Christie Miller Road

## **Bournehill:**

- CPT – 5 Rivers
- CID – Alderbury / Wilton
- Front desk will relocate to Salisbury Library
- Limited or no operational impact

# Recovery support

- The Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) made up of local and national agencies is overseeing the recovery to return Salisbury to normal
- Government announced £1m to support businesses and tourism
- The money agreed by the Government's Ministerial Recovery Group - set up to ensure resource and support is provided to help Salisbury recover
- Hardship Fund for businesses affected – up to £100,000 available from Swindon and Wiltshire Local Economic Partnership - plus match funding from BEIS
- We are looking at free car parking - evidence of use and impact on the local economy
- Regular updates on what's happening through meetings and information

# Information and updates

- To keep updated on the recovery programme news and information please visit:
- Dedicated webpage – [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/salisbury](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/salisbury)
- The page offers up-to-date information and advice for visitors, residents and businesses
- Social media reach around 87,000
- Digital portal for businesses to receive and share information  
- <https://growthhub.swlep.co.uk/topics/supporting-Salisbury>
- You can also find out more detail on the health advice and the Government's response to the incident on the Gov.UK page <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/novichok-nerve-agent-use-in-salisbury-uk-government-response>
- Community meetings available through livestream and the website – last week's meeting viewed by more than 17,000



# Your questions over to you...

