

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING

Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee – 21 October 2014

Report of Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services

Status: For approval

Also considered by Cabinet - 13 November

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report provides an update to the Advisory Committee on the current Business Continuity Plan. The revised plan incorporates recommendations from a recent audit and provides a framework for the organisation to continue delivery of services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident.

This will improve the Council's resilience against the disruption of its ability to achieve its key objectives, and improve its ability to recover from any such disruption while protecting welfare and safety.

A Business Continuity Strategy is included within the revised Business Continuity Management Plan and is reproduced within this report.

This report supports the Key Aim of Safe Communities; Healthy Environment; sustainable economy and effective management of Council resources.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. R Hogarth

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Recommendation to Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee:

That the Advisory Committee recommend to Cabinet that the revised Business Continuity Plan and Strategy be approved.

Recommendation to Cabinet: That it be resolved that the revised Business Continuity Plan and Strategy be approved

Introduction and Background

- 1 Members last considered a report on business continuity at the Performance and Governance Committee on 19 February 2008. Since that time the arrangements for the Council fulfilling its statutory duties with regard to business continuity have changed considerably.

- 2 Following a budget saving agreed in 2010, the post of a dedicated Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Officer was deleted from the establishment and responsibility for the function was absorbed into the Building Control team with a greater emphasis on corporate responsibility and greater resilience in knowledge and response being spread over a number of Officers rather than through one dedicated Officer.
- 3 An internal audit of the Business Continuity Plan was undertaken prior to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games and recommendations made, however, due to the unique demand of this period and the District being a host Authority to the Paralympic Road Cycling Event, bespoke PAN Kent Multi agency plans were put in place for this event.
- 4 The key recommendations were to review the business continuity plan to:
 - Reflect the new management organisational arrangements.
 - Review currency of critical functions and priorities.
 - Remove references to the Major Emergency Plan and incorporate relevant information within the Business Continuity Management Plan to create a stand alone document.
 - Provide additional information on exercising, maintaining and reviewing of the plan.
 - Creation of a glossary of terms
 - Incorporation of a Business Continuity Management strategy.

Statutory Responsibilities

- 5 The Council has statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to have business continuity arrangements in place to ensure that they can continue to provide their critical functions in the event of a disruptive challenge.
- 6 This type of event could also require an emergency planning response to the community; as such there are appropriate links with the Emergency Plan and with its supporting documentation.

Business Continuity Management Plan

- 7 The revised business continuity plan follows the principles of BS 25999 (ISO 22301) and is the ongoing management and governance process supported by management and appropriately resourced, to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to identify the impact of potential losses, maintain viable recovery strategies and plans, and to ensure continuity of service, through training, exercising, maintenance and review.
- 8 A Business Impact Assessment for each service function of the Council (as outlined in the Business Continuity Management Strategy), has been undertaken

which involved gathering information from each Service Manager on the level of criticality of each of their functions.

- 9 Each function was classed into one of four categories ranging from functions that must be operational within 24 hours, to those which could be left for over 7 days. For any function under seven days, minimum levels of staff, resources, IT and critical suppliers were identified. This information is compiled into the Business Impact Analysis.
- 10 Once implemented, staff will receive training on the plan, their function and role in any given scenario and recovery procedures before completing a table top exercise of the plan involving key staff and services.
- 11 The Business Impact Assessments and Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis, or, after any business continuity incident.

Key Components

- 12 The revised draft (Version 11.0) of the Business Continuity Management Plan is attached as an appendix to this report. The key features of the plan are:
 - A business continuity management strategy, see extract below.
 - Alerting procedures, which are very similar to those in the Major Emergency Framework Document
 - Guidance on possible incident management structures. The exact structure required will be incident dependant, but it should be a clear structure for efficient command and control. For consistency the same concept is used as in the Major Emergency Framework Document
 - A section on pre-identified roles and responsibilities. This includes damage assessment, salvage, personnel issues and media relations. It also outlines mutual aid that may be available from other Kent local authorities
 - Incident management guidance for the different incident consequences (derived from the analysis of the impact assessments), including denial of premises, denial of IT and paper record systems, denial of staff, denial of utilities and denial of supplies and services
 - Guidance for the recovery phase
 - Guidance on function prioritisation, derived from the business impact analysis
 - As a denial of premises event will probably lead to a substantial extension of home-working, agreed guidance on the human resources implications of this
 - Schedules of premises, equipment, vehicles, agents, contractors that may be required

Business Continuity Management Strategy

13. The objective of Business Continuity Management is to allow the Council to continue to provide its critical functions, and as many non-critical functions as possible, in the event of an unexpected disruption.
14. This will improve the Council's resilience against the disruption of its ability to achieve its key objectives, and improve its ability to recover from any such disruption while protecting welfare and safety.
15. To achieve this objective, the guidance and processes shown in national standards (BS 25999 – ISO 22301) will be used and having regard to good practice elsewhere.
16. There is a generally accepted cycle to this process:
 - Understanding the organisation
 - Determine BCM Strategy
 - Develop and implement BCM response
 - Exercise, maintain and review plans
17. With overarching programme management. For the business continuity process to be as effective as possible there is a need to embed business continuity management into the organisation's culture.
18. Understanding the organisation includes identifying the functions that the Council undertakes and compiling a Business Impact Analysis on each of those functions. It also includes the identification of the hazards that could cause a business disruption and undertake a Business Risk Assessment on those hazards.
19. The Business Impact Analysis and the Business Risk Assessment provide the information to compile a Business Continuity Plan. The aim of the Business Continuity Plan is to provide a framework in which to manage the response of the Council to an event which is likely to seriously obstruct it in the performance of its functions.
20. The objective of the plan is to enable the Council to exercise its functions in the event of an emergency, so far as is reasonably practicable.
21. Not all functions need be kept operating at normal levels. The plan should facilitate functions being at an acceptable level of operation within acceptable timeframe.
22. There is also a need to train staff. This should include general awareness training for managers and staff groups and specific training for 'key players' identified in the plans. This should assist in the embedding of Business Continuity into the organisation's culture.
23. There will be a need for ongoing management and maintenance of the Business Continuity capability and documentation.

Key Implications

Financial

The Council has a small budget for Business Continuity and Civil protection (£33,000) which is largely salary allocations for key staff responsibilities. In the event of invoking business continuity procedures and actions funding would need to be found from Partner Agencies, or from Council reserves, depending on the nature of the response.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The Council has statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingency Act 2004 to prepare and maintain a Business Continuity Plan. Failure to have a plan in could potentially lead to critical services not being delivered in the event of a major incident.

Equality Impacts

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:		
Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	No	
c. What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

Conclusions

Background Papers: Business Impact Assessments
[SDC Major Emergency Plan](#)

Appendix Business Continuity Management Plan

Richard Wilson
Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services