

## Regulatory and Audit Committee

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**Title:** Business Continuity Management Update

**Date:** 12 November 2018

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### Summary

As part of an annual assessment of Business Continuity Management (BCM) arrangements, this paper outlines the assessed current status of BCM in the Council and provides details of the Councils review of BCM.

#### Recommendation

**That the Regulatory and Audit Committee NOTE the current assessment of Business Continuity Management (BCM) within the Authority and to support the review of the Councils BCM processes and procedures.**

### Supporting information

Annual reports on the state of BCM Assurance within the Authority have been provided to the Regulatory and Audit Committee since 2016, initiated by a 2015 internal audit report. The last report came to the Committee in August 17. Since then, there has been a further internal audit of BCM (Dec 17 / Jan 18).

## Current State of BCM in BCC

The current assessment (as at Nov18)

Key to RAG rating

Business Unit	Red	Amber	Green	
Resources	0	7	4	BCM documentation not received, insufficient information or out of date.
CS	2	7	3	BCM documentation received but requiring further work
CHASC	0	3	9	BCM documentation received, assessed as effective, staff trained and exercised.
TEE	0	0	10	

The two business continuity plans currently rated as red are related to Educational Psychology and Children's Social Care due to no updated plans being received for 2018.

The Resilience Team are working in collaboration with Children's Services to change the way they operate their BCP's in order to streamline the process. As a result, Children's Services are undertaking a complete review of all their Business Continuity Management to ensure that they all dovetail.

It should be noted that Adult Social Care (ASC) Services have not been independently assessed by the BCC BCM Professional Lead but have been assessed by the ASC Resilience Team. ASC has a separate ASC Resilience Team who currently coordinates the BCM arrangements of the ASC Service, assess the levels of BCM assurance and monitor the external assurance of service providers in relation to BCM.

The BCC Resilience Team Professional Lead would normally assess all documents (as with other Services) and provide that assessment as part of this dashboard. In light of the competence of the ASC Resilience Team provided through training, qualifications (Dip BCM) and experience, the ASC Resilience Team have self-assessed their internal BCM Assurance.

### Update on Internal Audit - Dec 17 / Jan 18

The internal audit report made three recommendations – two Medium priorities and one High. The identified Medium priorities were for Contract Managers to receive training and for Services to complete their BCM documentation. The High priority was in relation to External Provider Assurance.

#### External Provider Assurance

The Contract Management Application (CMA) has been updated in September 18 with a mechanism to allow the monitoring of BCM by contract managers. This will be enhanced shortly by allowing contract managers to record their assessment of the providers' BCM arrangements.

#### Contract Managers Training

Regular training dates are advertised on the corporate learning hub and all BCM leads are advised to liaise with contract managers and ensure they are appropriately trained. Once trained, the contract managers will be better placed to make an assessment of BCM documentation to update the CMA.

## **Completion of BCM documentation**

In accordance with the BCM Policy, Financial Regulations and the Operating Framework, Services are required to have effective BCM arrangements in place. Assurance of these is required under the Assurance and Risk Strategy.

To support Business Units with Business Continuity Management, the Resilience Team has recruited an additional FTE on a contracted basis to focus on supporting Services / Teams develop their BCM arrangements. This position will be funded from Sep 18 until 31 Mar 2020.

To support Service Areas, we are scoping opportunities to digitise the BCM process. Resources are currently looking into a comparison with other Authorities as well as the possibility of a procured BCM software solution.

## **Why digitising our Business Continuity Management is a Necessity.**

Today, a growing number of potential threats, such as cyberattacks, hacking, and natural disasters, have made effective business continuity management more important than ever before. We are in the process of considering ways we can improve our business continuity management and administration.

Our current process is time consuming, regardless of status; the Business Continuity Plans are all reviewed by the service and re-assessed by the Resilience Team every year. Our organisation requires accessible, agile, effective, and highly responsive business continuity plans. Digitising our plans will enable our officers to access the information they need much faster and more reliably. It will also make the administration process far more efficient, effective and less time consuming.

We should embrace digital plans, as they will enable our teams to access the information they need at the touch of a button, it will also provide at a glance real time issues that need to be resolved, checked and responded to.

## **Emergency Alerts**

We are in the exploration stage of testing a prototype for alerting all staff via text notifying them if there is a live major incident. A workshop with colleagues will be arranged to understand their needs. This would include for example texting employees to notify if there was an office closure.

## **Next Steps: BCM Review**

It was highlighted by Executive Directors that they wanted assurance around the Business Continuity Management process as there was often discrepancies between Business Unit understanding and the reporting presented.

The main challenge on initial discovery was that the Business Continuity Management Process is perceived by Business Units as a very timely, over complicated process and there is difficulty in understanding how to complete the required documentation to achieve a Green status.

The review is currently underway and the main activities currently in progress are:

- Key stakeholder interviews with Business Units.
- Benchmarking with Local Authorities.
- Market Research on digital solutions e.g. Clearview.

The review will be completed by Jan 19, with implementation of approved recommendations by end of March 2019.

### **Legal implications**

As outlined in the BCM Policy, it is a statutory duty under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) for the County Council to be able to continue its critical activities, defined in the BCC BCM programme as 'Mission Critical Activities' in the event of a disruption to routine services, even if the Authority is responding to an emergency and even if the critical activity has been contracted out to another provider.

### **Other implications / issues**

As covered under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) noted above. Statutory duties are all considered as at least critical activities under the BCM Programme. Further analysis is required to determine whether they are 'Mission' Critical.

### **Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views (if relevant)**

Not applicable.