Audit and Governance Committee

Date:	30th November 2021
Title:	Annual Business Continuity Management update
Cabinet Member(s):	N/A
Contact officer:	Lloyd Jeffries – Service Director Business Operations
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Ward(s) affected:	N/A
Recommendations:	To note the current status of Business Continuity Management (BCM) and Business Continuity Plans (BCP) across the Council.
	To note the lead responsibility for Business Continuity Management will, subject to the CCU consultation outcome, be transferring to Business Assurance in December 2021.

1. Executive summary

1.1 Business Continuity Management is the capability of an organisation to continue the delivery of its priority activities within acceptable time frames and to predefined levels during a disruption affecting the Council. For Buckinghamshire Council, as a 'Category One Responder' under the Civil Contingencies Act, there is a statutory duty to have both Business Continuity Plans and Emergency Plans in place, with staff trained and exercised to respond.

1.2 Within the Council's BCM process Directorates undertake a Business Impact Analysis to understand and mitigate the impact to the organisation of losing specified activities over given timeframes in order to identify which activities

should be considered Priority Activities and while doing so confirming key continuity / recovery timeframes.

1.3   To ensure robust BCM, the Council needs to ensure that all Teams and Services have effective Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) in place.

1.4   The Covid 19 pandemic has been a thorough test of the Council's BCM and Emergency Response processes and it has demonstrated the organisational ability to respond and the resilience to do so over an extended period of time.

1.5   There were some excellent examples of response work carried out by officers across the council over the last year, showing teams and individuals were able to be flexible and adaptable to take on different and urgent roles to help people, and critically are willing to do so again.

1.6   The Council has summarised its response to COVID-19 2020 – 2021:

https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s19756/Appendix%201%20for%20Covid-19%20Update%20Report.pdf

https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s19757/Appendix%202%20for%20Covid-19%20Update%20Report.pdf

1.7   The next year for the Council continues to be critical, delivering on post COVID-19 recovery, ever challenging budgets, and unitary transformation. This paper sets out the Councils preparedness should it be faced with a large-scale emergency response and/ or a number of smaller and/ or local incidents.

2.   Content of report

Status of Business Continuity Management (BCM)

2.1   The Council's BCM process is delivered through robust Business Continuity Plans and these are built through a process that reflects Service and Team capability to respond to specific environmental events e.g. a pandemic, loss of power and to particular Service risks e.g. failure of a Social Care provider. It is the responsibility of each Service to determine the number of plans that it requires.

2.2   The plans are maintained by the Service but are also scrutinised by the Civil Contingencies Unit to ensure that they address the risks.

2.3   Currently the plans are paper based however there is a process underway to migrate these onto ClearView which is a specialist BCM platform which will provide enhanced reporting; dependency mapping and quality assurance.

2.4   BCPs have been transferred from the legacy Councils and combined as relevant. Where new Teams were formed then BCPs have been written. The process of Service Reviews will also impact BCPs and these will need to be reviewed once Service functions and structures are agreed. Practically this will mean that Services may need to work flexibly, and in particular across Teams, in the event that a BCM event occurs. The Covid 19 pandemic has proven that the Council has the capability and resilience to do this.

Current status of Service Area Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) as of November 2021.

2.5   The table below provides a status summary of Business Continuity Management (BCM) delivery in the Council. It provides an overview of the corporate planning in place that supports BCM. Across the 6 Directorates there are 92 Business Continuity Plans (BCP).

Green - complete	84% (76 BCP's)
Amber – Work in progress	16% (16 BCP's)
Red – No BCP in place	0% (0 BCP's)

2.6   Amber BCPs are as follows:

- Adults Social Care - 8 plans require review following the ASC restructure
- DCE – 1
- Communities – 3
- PG&S – 4

2.7   Each Service has mitigations in place whilst the full BCPs are developed by using legacy BCPs. A more detailed commentary by Directorate is set out below.

2.8   **DCE - of the 6 BCPs** required, **1 is Amber** in the Policy and Communications Team. This is a work in progress and reflects the Service review as they expand the Communications BCP into an all-Service BCP.

2.9   **Resources** - of the **7 BCPs** all are Green. Resources has also been involved in the pilot to test and upload BCPs in Clearview®. All but Finance have successfully completed their upload, this is expected to be achieved by the end of the calendar year.

2.10   **Communities Directorate** – **of the 13 BCPs**, Communities have 3 identified BCPs in progress. An update provided by the Communities BCM lead is that all the below service areas are working on their BCP's. The current position for those BCPs that are Amber is as follows:

- ▪ Leisure - *BCP in development*
- ▪ Green Spaces / Grounds Maintenance - *BCP in development*
- ▪ South Bucks Golf Course & Farnham Park Playing Fields - *BCP in development*

2.11   **Planning, Growth and Sustainability** – **of the 16 BCPs**, the following 4 BCP's are still in progress and reflect Service Reviews underway and/or interim Service or management structures in place. An update provided by the PGS BCM lead is that all the below service areas are working on their BCP's. The current position being:-

- Regeneration and Property Projects. *BCP in development.*
- Facilities Management (Walton Street) and Facilities Management (Wycombe). *The service area is being merged and BCP is in development.*
- Strategic Asset Management. *BCP is in development*

2.12   **Adults and Health** – **of the 18 BCPs**, 8 are a work in progress and reflect the new teams following the ASC restructure. ASC is next in line for migration to Clearview and theses new BCPs will be input directly into Clearview. An update provided by the Adults and Health BCM lead is that all the below service areas are working on their BCP's and hope to achieve a 1st draft of any new BCP's by the **10th December**. The current position being:

- Discharge. *The current BCP is not an accurate reflection of the service due to a re-structure and is being reviewed.*
- Long Term and Reviews (N & E Teams) and Long Term and Reviews (S & C Teams). *These services have been merged into one new team as part of a re-structure.*
- Day Centre Management. *The Day Centres have incident management plans, but an overarching BCP is being developed*
- Home Independence previously called Re-ablement. *This is a new team following the Service Review.*
- Occupational Therapy. *A review is underway as to whether a BCP is required for this service.*

- Adult Safeguarding and Early Resolution. *This is a new team following the Service Review.*
- Business and Governance Service. *A review is underway as to whether a BCP is required for this service*

2.13 **Children's Services** Directorate – all <u>**32 identified BCPs**</u> are in place. Several Teams were included on Clearview® in the initial pilot. There will be a pause in Clearview roll-out while OFSTED visit the Council.

2.14 **Clearview** - Work is now fully underway to transfer BCPs into the corporate BCM system, Clearview. Our priority is to transfer all completed BCPs into Clearview so users can fully utilise all the benefits of the system including improved reporting and dashboard features.

2.15 The roll out of Clearview is being project managed by the Business Management Function, Resources, with support of the CCU. The team will support the named BCP Co-ordinators to input the plans into Clearview before handing the accountability for the management of these plans back to the Service Areas as owners.

2.16 The next phase will be to develop the system to ensure we fully benefit from all the features that the system has to offer.

The relationship between Business Continuity and Risk Management

2.17 As part of the CCU Service Review it is proposed that the corporate responsibility for BCM is moved to Business Assurance with the Corporate Finance Service.

2.18 Business Assurance is an ideal service area for BCM to find a new and improved home due to its general audit, oversight, risk, and crisis focus. There are many mutually beneficial areas of interest, cross cutting themes and general specialisation within that service area that lend themselves to a good fit. This will be helpful towards building the desired culture and embedding into business as usual and enable it to grow.

2.19 The move will increase the visibility and reach of business continuity across the organisation, enable it to be untangled from externally focussed emergency resilience, thereby making it simpler and for it to gain greater corporate ownership. Improvements can be built on the already strong relationships between business assurance and Directorates.   While business continuity management and risk

management are separate processes, they are interrelated: one task with the organisation cannot be carried out without the other.

2.20   With the introduction of the ClearView system, it is anticipated that a great deal of the ongoing BCM function will be automated, allowing service areas to create and maintain their Business Continuity Plans within this software.

2.21   The Council already uses a service area champions style approach to Business Continuity Planning and with the move to Business Assurance this model is expected to continue in combination with the Risk champion role. Currently this consists of officers nominated as BCM leads within each service area.

2.22   The CCU as part of its place-based emergency response responsibilities has recently undertaken a flooding emergency response exercise. Once the BCM function has been transferred to Business Assurance then an exercise will need to take place for internal Business Continuity service failure matters.

2.23   Over the last year in addition to the Pandemic the Council has managed a number of Council Incidents covering a range of matters. In each case the Council has used its Incident Management process by invoking an Incident Management Meeting chaired by the relevant Corporate and Service Director with the relevant Services. This process has ensured that there is tight governance to be able to respond to the incidents as they developed through to conclusion.

2.24   As part of the move to Business Assurance there will be a routine lessons learned process to ensure that organisational learning is captured.

3.   Other options considered

3.1   N/A

4.   Legal and financial implications

4.1   N/A

5.   Corporate implications

5.1   N/A

6.   Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

6.1   N/A

7.   Communication, engagement & further consultation

7.1   N/A

8.   Next steps and review

8.1   The next annual report is due in November 2022.

9.   Background papers

9.1   None

10.   Your questions and views (for key decisions)

10.1   None