



Business Continuity Policy

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Key Information

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1 Introduction

All organisations can suffer disruptions and business continuity at its simplest is about how they cope with the disruption. Business continuity is defined as the capability of an organisation to continue delivery of products or services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident. This is particularly important for Brentwood Borough Council as we provide a large range of services to the public and disruption to service provision will directly affect the residents within the borough.

Brentwood Borough Council is committed to ensuring robust and effective business continuity management as a key mechanism to restore and deliver continuity of key services in the event of a disruption or emergency.

The capability for delivery of these services must be safeguarded, to the extent that agreed critical services continue to be delivered regardless of any interruption to the normal day to day working of the Council. This capability must also be sufficiently resilient to allow provision of critical services in emergency situations.

The Council's business continuity management strategy and framework will apply best practice as contained within the Business Continuity Institutes Good Practice Guidelines and the International Standard for Business Continuity ISO 22301 for the identification, evaluation and mitigation of key risks that could disrupt the delivery of critical services. The adoption and integration of an effective and transparent corporate approach to proactive business continuity management throughout the organisation will help to promote a culture of resilience to underpin the continuous delivery of services.

Brentwood Borough Council will achieve these aims by implementing a business continuity management strategy and supporting framework that meets the statutory requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and local requirements.

2 Policy Statement / Vision

Brentwood Borough Council recognises the importance of effective identification and management of all key strategic and operational risks. It also recognises the importance of ensuring continued delivery of critical services to the community, even during a period of disruption, or in the event of an emergency situation.

The Council has statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 in relation to business continuity planning, which require the Council to:

- Maintain plans to ensure that they can continue to exercise its critical functions in the event of an emergency as far as reasonably practicable.
- Include within the business continuity plan arrangements for exercises, for the purpose of ensuring the plan is effective, and arrangements for the provision of training to those involved in implementing the plan.
- Review its business continuity plan and keep up to date.

- Have regard to assessment of both internal and external risks when developing and reviewing its business continuity plan.
- Have a clear procedure for invoking the business continuity plan.
- Publish aspects of the business continuity plan insofar as making this information available is necessary or desirable for the purposes of dealing with emergencies.
- Promote business continuity management to local businesses.

Business continuity management is an all-inclusive process that must cover all areas of the Council. It is a management process that helps manage the risks, ensuring it can continue to operate to the extent required in the event of a disruption. These risks could be from a number of sources however the result will be one of the following; loss of staff, denial of access, loss of information technology or telecommunications, loss of supplier or contractor.

Business continuity management must be a continuous process that will assist the Council to anticipate, prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from disruptions, whatever their source and whatever aspect of the business they affect.

This document, and the related strategy, will form the cornerstone to permanently establish and embed business continuity management, to ensure that the Council can continue to operate and deliver essential services to the community.

In this regard all elected Members and every employee of the Council have both a responsibility for, and a contribution to make in terms of business continuity management.

3 Context

This policy aims to ensure that the Council complies with its statutory duties for business continuity management this will be achieved by a continuous process that:

- Continually reassesses the implications to service delivery of a business interruption.
- Identifies alternative methods to enable continuity of service.
- Develop Corporate and Service level plans for use in the event of an incident.
- Enhance the effectiveness of plans by regular review and exercise.
- Promotion of business continuity to local business.

The adoption of a robust business continuity management policy will positively affect every person and organisation that comes into contact with Brentwood Borough Council. The policy will cover all Business Continuity activity at Brentwood Borough Council and therefore there will be no business continuity exclusions.

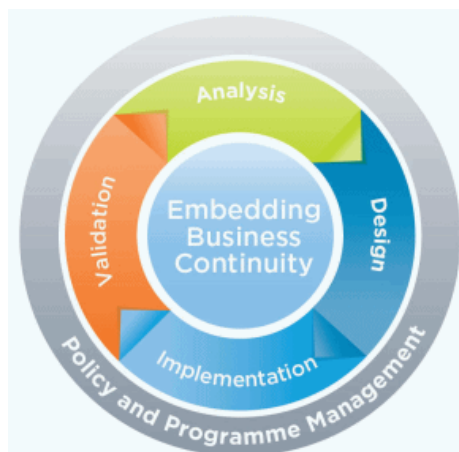
National – The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 delivers a single framework for civil protection in the UK. Part One of the Act outlines a set of statutory duties and the roles and responsibilities for those involved in emergency preparation and response at a local level. Local Authorities are clearly identified as a Category 1 Responder and as such have a number of statutory duties including these specifically relating to business continuity:

- Put in place business continuity management arrangements.
- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (local authorities only).

Although not formal legislation there are two internationally recognised guidance documents that are universally used in designing business continuity management processes:

- Business Continuity Institutes Good Practice Guidelines. These are based on worldwide knowledge for good business continuity practice encompassing both academic and practitioner thinking.
- International Standard for Business Continuity ISO 22301. This is the international standard for business continuity management systems. Organisations can become certified to ISO 22301 however unless required it is more common to align the business continuity management systems to it.

Local – The business continuity management lifecycle (shown below) shows the stages of activity that an organisation moves through and continuously repeats to improve their resilience to disruptions. The business continuity policy acts as the cornerstone for the successful delivery of a business continuity management system and forms the outer ring of the lifecycle.



Business Continuity Management Lifecycle (BCI 2015)

Following an external review, the Council is putting in place a business continuity management system, including the ongoing development of plans and a regime of exercising these. Current activities within the business continuity management lifecycle are:

- **Policy & Programme Management**

The programme is managed by the Risk & Insurance Officer and is underpinned by this policy document.

- **Analysis & Design**

There is a strategy and a corporate business continuity plan in place. These documents will be regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate to ensure consistency across them.

- **Implementation & Validation**

- During 2018/19 all services in the council will be taken through a business impact assessment to understand their critical activities and mitigating actions. These business impact assessments will then be utilised to create individual service plans. The corporate business continuity plan will be table top exercised.
- During 2019/20 all individual service plans will be table top exercised to test them and look for improvements which can be made. A review of the corporate business continuity plan will be completed.
- Moving into 2020/21 the business continuity policy and strategy documents will be reviewed. A robust check and challenge of all service level plans will be completed. The corporate business continuity plan will be table top exercised.

- **Embedded Business Continuity**

- Due to the ongoing nature of the lifecycle there is good management engagement towards business continuity within the council. This is further enhanced because some services are using the principles on a daily basis to deliver an uninterrupted service to the boroughs residents.
- The Risk & Insurance Officer uses a number of ways to outreach with messages to local business to prompt them into thinking about business continuity and the plans they have in place. These messages are focused on recent events and sign post the readers to helpful information to make their businesses more resilient.

4 Outcomes and Priorities

Outcomes – Improve resilience throughout the organisation by having robust business continuity management processes in place.

Priorities – Continuous program of planning, reviewing and exercising of all service plans.

5 Links to other Corporate Policies or Partner documents

The business continuity management process should be an integral part of day to day business being applied to and linked with all aspects of the Council's services, policies and procedures.

Partners should be encouraged in turn to have robust plans in place.