

27 January 2015

Audit and Scrutiny

Business Continuity Progress Report

Report of: Ashley Culverwell, Head of Borough Health, Safety and Localism

Wards Affected: All

This report is: Public

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the work being undertaken to ensure that Brentwood Borough Council has sufficient business continuity arrangements in place which will activate in whole or part if critical infrastructure is lost within the short or long term. Business continuity arrangements are essential if the Council is to remain functional in the maintenance of its services to the public and other stakeholders.
- 1.2 The Business Continuity function was audited on 14th March 2014. The measures being put in place will ensure that all recommendations made in that report are suitably actioned.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Members agree the work which has been undertaken to date and progress on outstanding matters.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 This report stems from the decision made by Audit and Scrutiny Committee on 26 October 2014 that a report on ICT and Business Continuity was required for consideration. The work being undertaken presently by Borough Health, Safety and Localism and presented in this report will meet the requirements set by the Audit and the obligations imposed by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This will result in a recognisable improvement in overall resilience.
- 3.2 With regard to the remit of ICT progress continues on both the technical infrastructure and officer facing services in supporting modern ways of working. As the New Ways of Working initiative started ICT began

projects to modernise systems an technical architecture with the continuing aim of delivering the "Right information, at the Right time, to the Right People". Business continuity is considered while developing and implementing new system and technical infrastructure. The New Ways of Working projects have created many projects that have and will, improve current services. ICT are developing, alongside these changes, systems and services that will provide IT resilience and Business Continuity services that Council Services will be able to use to support their needs. An example of this is the provision of secure remote access of authorised Officers, so that Officers desktops can be accessed from remote locations. By providing this service to allow working flexibility, it also enables the Service to consider using this approach in business continuity situation. These projects and initiatives are part of an ICT long term work programme that is currently being developed so that technology, current projects and resources can be aligned for successful implementation. The aforementioned improvements are part of an overarching strategy to position the Council so that it can take advantage of emerging and maturing cloud services, whether this be private, community or commercial. In doing so the facilitation of Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery is embedded in the nature of the service provision.

- 3.3 Members were advised at Audit Committee on 25th September 2012 of the then updated Council's Business Continuity Strategy and Policy. These were approved at that meeting. Members were also advised of those documents being further updated and approved by Audit Committee on 11th March 2014. The Business Continuity over-arching Recovery Plan and Service Recovery Plans in development sit alongside those documents and will enable the Council to demonstrate continuity across all its Services.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The audit in 2014 identified a number of key areas necessary for improvement so as to meet the Councils' legal obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. As a consequence of the audit a detailed workplan with timescales (summarised at Appendix A) has been produced outlining all works necessary as well as those already completed. The work within that plan is already underway. To ensure that procedures are up to date and reflective of current staffing many of the previous procedures have been revised. Although this slowed initial progress the work now underway will put the Council in a much securer position with final completion planned for end of March 2015.
- 4.2 An over-arching Council-wide Business Continuity Recovery Plan has been produced and is attached for reference (Appendix B). Each Service is expected to have its own Business Continuity Recovery Plan sitting

beneath this and a template has been produced for Heads to import their own departmental details and arrangements (refer to Appendix C). An example already produced for Borough Health, Safety and Localism is at Appendix D. All Services now have 'Battleboxes' and these are being filled with all necessary documents and other information that would be required in a contingency situation to retain priority functions. Once all services have populated their Battleboxes they will be audited periodically to ensure their contents remain up to date.

- 4.3 As part of the workplan, all managers are to receive training on how to operate during a contingency situation and how best to use their resources. Six-monthly managers meetings are also to be set in place as an opportunity to discuss and review existing plans so that they remain up to date and reflective of current arrangements.
- 4.4 Finally there will be an exercise arranged for Gold Command in March 2015 to test contingency, and this will at the same time involve opening a rest centre with trained volunteers.
- 4.5 All actions in respect of the delivery of Council Services will be completed by 31st March 2015 apart from the improvements to ICT systems which will be finalised by 31st July 2015.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are asked to agree the actions within the workplan together with the timescales indicated in order to ensure recovery systems are in place to maintain essential Council services.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Both the over-arching Business Continuity Plan and Service template have been circulated to all Heads of Service for comment before being presented to this Committee.

7. References to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 This aligns with the priorities; 'More modern and effective customer services that meet at least 80% of customer needs at the first point of contact' and 'A new way of working for the council, improving service delivery and reducing the 'back office' and unnecessary bureaucracy'.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

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- 8.1 There are no additional costs in implementing the Business Continuity Workplan than have already been budgeted.

Legal Implications

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- 8.2 The Legal Officer has been consulted and is in agreement with the legal information and references provided in these reports.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

- 8.3 There are no corporate health and safety or asset management implications. There are no equality/diversity or risk management implications

9. Background Papers (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

- 9.1 None

10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A	2014/15 Business Continuity Workplan Summary
Appendix B	Over-arching Brentwood Borough Council Business Continuity Recovery Plan
Appendix C	Business Continuity Recovery Plan Template for all Services
Appendix D	Business Continuity Recovery Plan for Borough Health, Safety and Localism

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