



AUDIT COMMITTEE - 5TH MARCH 2014

SUBJECT: BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on business continuity management arrangements within the Council and to seek approval for a Business Continuity Action Plan

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The further development of the Council's Business Continuity arrangements remains in the Annual Governance Statement for 2012/13. Business Continuity arrangements are in place for a range of services across the Council, but an organisation wide process offers assurance that all key services have arrangements in place and enables a consistent assessment of risks and service priorities. A Business Continuity Management process has been implemented across the Council and an Action Plan is appended setting out milestones for completion.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Business Continuity Management is a process which supports the delivery of all services and strategies across the organisation.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 requires Local Authorities to put business continuity management arrangements in place. Business Continuity Management is the process that manages the risks to the smooth running of an organisation or delivery of a service. It ensures that the organisation can continue in the event of a disruption. Whilst business continuity and emergency planning are usually separate processes within an organisation, an emergency or major incident may trigger a business continuity issue.
- 4.2 Business Continuity arrangements are in place for a range of services across the Council and in addition much work has been done in relation to flu pandemic planning considering business continuity arrangements for all services in the event of unavailability of significant numbers of staff. Appendix 1 details the plans that currently exist for individual services. It had been identified previously in the Annual Governance Statement that Business Continuity exists in most front line service areas and IT but that there was no consistent approach and this had therefore been identified as an area for improvement. The further development of the Council's Business Continuity arrangements remain in the Annual Governance Statement for 2012/13 to ensure that improvements continue to be made and monitored through the Audit Committee process.

- 4.3 An organisation wide process offers assurance that all key services have arrangements in place that are subject to ongoing review and enables a consistent assessment of risks and service priorities. A Business Continuity Management Strategy and Policy Statement have been adopted and template documents to assist with the Business Continuity Management process have been introduced.
- 4.4 The business continuity management process requires services to undertake a Business Impact Analysis in the first instance. This involves the identification of critical services and functions and an assessment of the impacts on the Council if these were disrupted or lost. It includes consideration of the length of time over which a disruption could be managed and the resources required. A risk assessment is then conducted to identify the potential threats to these critical services.
- 4.5 In accordance with our Business Continuity Management Strategy services will identify actions to mitigate loss, and to support effectiveness in maintaining the council's ability to deliver critical service functions. This involves:
- implementing appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring and/or reduce the potential effects of those incidents
 - taking account of mitigation measures in place
 - providing continuity for critical services during and following an incident
 - taking account of services that have not been identified as critical.
- 4.6 The above Business Continuity Management process has been piloted in Catering Services, a large service consisting of over 800 staff operation across more than 100 sites. The pilot phase has resulted in some amendments to the template documents in use, but the process is otherwise considered to be fit for purpose. Business Impact Analysis has been undertaken across the Environment Directorate with services now undertaking the risk assessment phase. The Education and Corporate Services Directorates are in the process of completing a Business Impact Analysis, with the Social Services Directorate also commencing this phase in February 2014.
- 4.7 Business Continuity Action Plan is at Appendix 2 for the Committee's consideration. It is envisaged that all services will have developed their Business Continuity Management Strategies by November 2014. This will allow a corporate view to be taken of relative service priorities and risks in order to finalise our Business Continuity Arrangements. This is important to ensure consistent and for priorities to be determined where there may be a competing demand for resources (premises, staff, IT, vehicles, for example) in the event of a business disruption.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no potential equalities implications of this report and its recommendations on groups or individuals who fall under the categories identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, however having sound business continuity management arrangements in place in the event of any disruption ensures that the most vulnerable in society are not without the services they need at such a time.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Business Continuity Planning will be undertaken within existing resources and therefore there are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The resourcing of measures to mitigate the likelihood or impact of a business disruption will need to be considered on a case by case basis as appropriate.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications arising directly from this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The report has been sent to the consultees listed below and there are no consultation responses that have not been reflected within the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the Committee:

- i) note the progress that has been made to date in relation to Business Continuity Management; and
- ii) note the Business Continuity Action Plan at Appendix 2

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To advise the Committee in relation to Business Continuity Management within the Council and to seek agreement for the proposed way forward.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Author: Rob Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection
Consultees: Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services
Sheryl Andrews, Senior Emergency Planning Officer
Ceri Edwards, Environmental Health Manager
Gail Williams, Monitoring Officer
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager
Sian Phillips, HR Manager
David A. Thomas Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)

Background Papers: None

Appendices:
Appendix 1 of 2 Existing Business Continuity Plans
Appendix 2 of 2 Business Continuity Action Plan