

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Title/Subject Matter:** Scoping Report for Business Continuity Planning  
**Meeting/Date:** Corporate Governance Committee 8 June 2016  
**Executive Portfolio:** Cllr Cawley, Organisation and Customer Services  
**Report by:** Adrian Dobbyne, Corporate Team Manager  
**Ward(s) affected:** All

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**Executive Summary:**

To follow up on the work from a Business Analyst in reviewing our Business Continuity Plans and in their suggestions on what is required to bring our plans up to date and fit for purpose. The report outlines the background to the recommendations that the Corporate Team undertakes this updating of the Plans, the level they go to and the templates to be used. This further builds on a suggestion on when a test of the plans should be undertaken and the timing of an audit of our Business Continuity arrangements.

**Recommendation(s):**

Members are asked to comment on the report indicating the proposed way to develop Business Continuity Planning at Huntingdonshire District Council.

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This is to outline the current position regarding Business Continuity Planning at Huntingdonshire District Council and the proposed way forward to develop the Plans to meet the needs of the organisation.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Business Continuity Planning (BCP) was developed with up to date plans based on a standard template for all Services, Officers with defined roles (e.g. Lead Officers, Service Business Continuity Co-ordinators) and support mechanism in place such as single Intranet site and contact details in 2012 to 2014. Following a reorganisation of the Council, from 2014 the Plans no longer aligned to the new structure and responsibilities for BCP have not been updated. Also, some Officers who had lead responsibilities have also left the organisation.
- 2.2 In addition to these Plans, there are also some scenario plans, which detail activities to consider in the event of specific incidents e.g. adverse weather, fuel shortages and telephony downtime. There is still some validity with them and they do contain some useful information, especially where the actions and mitigations are transferable.
- 2.3 In January 2016, Internal Audit were due to carry out an audit on business continuity. This was postponed for 12 months to enable the organisation to review the arrangements for business continuity and to carry out an annual exercise to test the robustness of the plans, since the Audit would merely confirm what was already known.
- 2.4 In the autumn of 2015, a Business Analyst reviewed the Plans and this highlighted in particular that although plans were not aligned to the current structure of the organisation, they were still usable; it just requires managers to occasionally use several plans. The review also showed that there may be too many plans with duplicate actions.
- 2.5 The review also concluded that a revision to the template would be needed to help overcome various levels of duplication and inconsistencies.
- 2.6 Finally, the review did consider how we manage and record the plans, such as use of the Intranet, hard copies, electronic accessibility, version control and how revisions can be more easily managed.

## **3. OPTIONS ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 Option A would be to do nothing. The Plans as they currently exist have a lot of information but they need to be used with other plans and pieced together and some of the information is out of date anyway. This is a big risk for reasons outlined below in Section 4.1.
- 3.2 Option B is to update the plans but in a proportionate way. It is suggested that the Corporate Team Manager be tasked to follow up on the recommendations from the review by the Business Analyst and look to do the following:
- Prepare a new Template for the Business Continuity Plan
  - Consider having one organisational Plan with appendices that provide additional information per Service where relevant
  - Review roles and responsibilities and confirm these to all concerned
  - Review the management of the plans and the mechanism of storage and accessibility

- Organise for an annual test of the new Plan
- Schedule an audit for early 2017 by Internal Audit, after the Plans have been updated and the test carried out
- To undertake a review of the various scenario plans (e.g. adverse weather, fuel shortages) in place

#### **4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS**

- 4.1 There is a key risk that if our plans are not maintained and fit for purpose, we are not able to manage effectively any scenario that calls into play our business continuity arrangements. Although the current plans can be used with adaptability and application from Managers, the risk is that this would slow up any response and so limit our effectiveness. To put into context though, our use of the Plans and the particular scenario plans have not been called into action for at least two years, although there would have been ongoing business as usual aspects to several mitigating actions.

#### **5. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 5.1 It is proposed to complete the first set of actions listed in 3.2 by November 2016, with the audit scheduled for early 2017 and then the scenario plans to follow.

#### **6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 This links to the Corporate Plan Strategic Priority of “Becoming a More Efficient and Effective Council.

#### **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The resource required at the first stage is for the Corporate Team Manager to prioritise this work for himself and a member of his team to assist. Future resource requirements will involve the Heads of Service to be responsible for updating relevant templates and in participating in a test of the Plan. Finally Internal Audit will need to undertake (as planned) an audit.

#### **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no other implications to consider.

#### **9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 9.1 That this is the best use of our resources to make amendments to the Business Continuity Plans at the levels suggested to keep the plans relevant and fit for purpose.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None applicable

#### **CONTACT OFFICER**

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