

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Progress Report on Business Continuity Planning
Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Committee 22 March 2017
Executive Portfolio: Cllr Cawley, Organisation and Customer Services
Report by: Adrian Dobbyne, Corporate Team Manager
Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The revision to the Business Continuity Plans was completed in January 2017 and a new Plan issued. At SMT our new approach to business continuity management was outlined and endorsed. The Plan is being tested by Internal Audit. A revision to the Plan is scheduled April / May 2017.

Recommendation(s):

Members are asked to comment on the report indicating the progress made in revising the Business Continuity Plans.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This is to outline the progress made on updating our Business Continuity Planning at Huntingdonshire District Council.

2. BACKGROUND / UPDATE

- 2.1 Corporate Governance Committee received a report on 7 June 2016 and agreed the following actions with regards Business Continuity Planning (BCP)

- 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

In December 2016, Corporate Governance Committee received a progress update.

- 2.2 A new template has been used and a completely new Business Continuity Plan has been issued in January 2017. Although it covered similar areas to our previous template, it did change the emphasis in a few places. For example, there are more details on what is required to restore services such as staffing levels, locations, resources, data and therefore the dependencies, to be clear on how we can be up and running after a disruption to services provision. It will also enable a clearer set of priorities to be made to avoid duplications. A key aspect of the new Plan was to really challenge some assumptions made in the Plan, so that the Senior Management Team (SMT) are absolutely clear that they are priority activities within the correct timescales needed for restoration of services. If it is not a priority, then it is not in the Plan.
- 2.3 There is one organisational wide Plan, which confirms all the priority activities to be reinstated in specific timescales and includes a set of generic actions to mitigate hazards / risks that apply in most cases to all Services. This follows the principle that the actions to mitigate against the loss of people, IT, accommodation, utilities etc. are generally common across all Services and any specific activity needing further actions can be held within teams. We may still hold a specific additional Plan for Customer Services as it looks as if they would be best supported by their own unique Plan.
- 2.4 There has been a revision to the roles and responsibilities and in most cases, the approach has been to specify job roles that have a responsibility rather than the detailed list of names of Officers in the previous Plan. This encourages a more flexible approach to managing business continuity, where the role can signpost where to look for support so that if the post holder is not available, other Officers can step in.
- 2.5 The previous management arrangements for the Plan were cumbersome and our SharePoint site on our Intranet where Plans and supporting documentation were kept was populated with loads of documents. A more controlled

management of the Plan has been introduced and a significant clear up of the data on the Intranet undertaken.

2.6 Internal Audit are carrying out an audit on the Business Continuity Plan in March / April 2017. This will take the form of a series of tests to check many of the assumptions of the Plan.

2.7 In 2017/18, we will undertake a desk top scenario planning exercise of the Plan. This will follow the Plan being updated following the outcomes based on the findings of the tests by Internal Audit.

3. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

3.1 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.

4. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 It is expected that a revision to the Plan will follow in April / May 2017 following the outcome of the testing by Internal Audit.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

5.1 This links to the Corporate Plan Strategic Priority of "Becoming a More Efficient and Effective Council".

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The resources required the next stages are for Internal Audit to test the Plan and the Corporate Team Manager to reflect on those outcomes and update the Plan.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no other implications to consider.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

8.1 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

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