

**IMPLEMENTATION EXECUTIVE
10 DECEMBER 2008**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR
WILTSHIRE COUNCIL****Executive Summary**

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) sets out the Council's responsibilities for emergency planning and business continuity management which include *"maintaining plans for the purpose of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that if an emergency occurs the person or body is able to continue to perform his or its functions"*. To meet its responsibilities under the CCA, to continue the delivery of critical customer services and to achieve the Council's corporate goals in the event of a disruption of normal operations, the Council requires adequate Business Continuity Management (BCM) Plans.

In order to ensure that the authority complies with the CCA and has adequate arrangements to cover the transition period for the new Council and beyond, the Emergency Planning Unit is:

- (i) Maintaining current BCM arrangements with the co-operation of the BCM Officers from the District Councils;
- (ii) Running a BCM pilot phase with Department of Resources (DoR) to test arrangements for training and planning purposes and to enable lessons to be learned prior to the roll-out of the main BCM programme; and
- (iii) Running a BCM programme throughout the new authority and ensuring that it complies with the CCA, the requirements of British Standard BS 25999: Business Continuity Management and corporate goals and policies.

Proposal

That the Implementation Executive notes the Business Continuity Management programme and endorses the action being taken by officers to implement the BCM process for the new authority.

Reason for Proposal

To draw the BCM programme to the attention of the Implementation Executive and to invite the Executive to endorse the actions being taken by the Emergency Planning Unit to implement the BCM programme.

GEORGE BATTEN

Corporate Director (Designate)
Transport, Environment and Leisure

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**BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR
WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**

Purpose of the Report

1. To:
 - (i) Draw the business continuity management (BCM) arrangements for Wiltshire Council to the attention of the Implementation Executive;
 - (ii) Invite the Executive to endorse the actions being taken by the Emergency Planning Unit to implement the Wiltshire Council Business Continuity Management Programme.

Background

2. In order to ensure that Wiltshire Council complies with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA), it is necessary for the authority to have firm BCM arrangements in place to enable it to deliver its critical services during emergency situations.
3. Reviews of the CCA have indicated that it will become a requirement of the Act in the future that the BCM arrangements established by local authorities should comply with the requirements of British Standard BS 25999: Business Continuity Management. The BCM plans for the County and District Councils do not meet this standard. Therefore a programme has been developed to implement a complete overhaul of the BCM process, from planning and implementation to validation and embedding BCM within the service planning culture of the new authority.
4. The BCM project is divided into two distinct phases. The pilot phase commenced on the 19 November 2008 with the Department of Resources, and will be complete by March 2009. Following a review of the outcomes of the pilot phase and a benchmarking period the main project should run from May 2009 to December 2009.
5. The existing BCM arrangements of the County and District Councils will be kept under review whilst the project is in progress and, where necessary, adjustments made as part of the interim transitional arrangements. This work is being undertaken by the Emergency Planning Unit (EPU) in conjunction with District Council BCM officers.

Responsibilities

6. In its role as a Category 1 Responder, as defined by the CCA, the Council's responsibilities include *"maintaining plans for the purpose of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that if an emergency occurs the person or body is able to continue to perform his or its functions"*. To meet its responsibilities under the CCA, to continue the delivery of critical customer services and to achieve the Council's corporate goals in the event of a disruption of normal operations, the Council requires adequate BCM plans.
7. The responsibility for overseeing the planning, testing and delivering of the new arrangements rests with the EPU supported by the individual service representatives who form the Business Continuity (BC) Steering Group which is in turn supported by the BC Technical Working Group.
8. The responsibility for carrying out the Business Impact Analysis for a service and writing the BCM plans rests ultimately with each Corporate Director, but is delegated to individual Team Leaders within each service area.

Main Considerations for the Council

9. The Audit Commission recommended actions to improve the proposed BCM activities of the County Council highlighting specific areas where changes should be made. These have been adopted to form the basis of the process for delivering the BCM arrangements for Wiltshire Council.

Governance

10. A clear governance strategy must be in place which links not only strategic management with operational levels but also links BCM into the risk management and service planning functions.
11. A revised BCM Policy document with a new long term governance structure is at present being considered by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). The BC Steering Group reports to the Corporate Risk Management Group (CRMG) which in turn presents issues to the CLT as and when necessary. A copy of the governance structure is attached (**Appendix 1**). A full reporting process linked to roles and responsibilities is outlined in the policy document.
12. Vulnerability of critical resources will be regarded on different levels.
 - (i) At the section level, Section Co-ordinators, as defined in the BCM Policy, will be encouraged to conduct risk assessments for their critical resources as part of the Business Impact Analysis to identify single points of failure and avoid reliance on them in their response strategies.
 - (ii) At the departmental and corporate level, the BC Steering Group will discuss threats and concerns and refer them to the appropriate Risk Management Group.

13. The BC Steering Group will report performance in their quarterly highlight report to the CRMG. The BC Steering Group will supervise a risk-based exercise programme, which will include structured debriefs and the identification of actions as a result of lessons learned.

Recovery Strategies

14. A number of key issues are being addressed with regard to the strategies employed within the overall BCM system. A Technical Working Group has been formed with representation from all services. The Group would have a special role if a BCM plan was invoked. It develops procedures to support service restoration and provides advice on realistic expectations for recovery strategies.
15. A skills matrix is being developed for the SAP system and the information contained in this will support the BCM arrangements. More information regarding this area of work will be available in the future. It has been identified that a detailed skills audit would assist the work of the one Council workstreams and the EPU intends to link this to the development of BCM plans.

Legal

16. There are no direct legal implications for failing to implement a sound BCM process. However, it should be noted that if the authority failed to provide a critical service and the health or wellbeing of the public was put at risk as a result, there is the risk that legal action would be taken against the authority by those affected.

Risk Assessment

17. Within this context the main risk to which the authority is exposed is the failure to implement a comprehensive BCM system and therefore to comply with the CCA. Such a failure may leave the authority open to intervention from central Government. However, the likelihood of an event occurring which leads to failure to deliver critical services and the impact upon the community should also be identified within the risk assessment process.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

18. No specific recommendations or implications arise from this report.

Financial Implications

19. The £8,500 costs of the training which is being provided for the individual service representatives during the pilot phase have been provided by the Corporate Programme Office. A bid for a further contribution of £17,500 for training for the main BCM programme has been submitted to the Corporate Programme Office and will be reviewed in February 2009. The costs of officer time in writing, developing and exercising the plans rests with the individual service areas.

Reasons for the Proposal

20. To draw the BCM programme to the attention of the Implementation Executive and to invite the Executive to endorse the actions being taken by the EPU to implement the BCM programme.

Conclusion

21. Development of sound BCM principles should be regarded as a standard service planning practice throughout the authority. Embedding this into the culture of the organisation will ensure that the authority meets its statutory obligations under the CCA. It should also ensure that critical services will continue to be delivered to the most vulnerable people within the community during difficult circumstances which could be experienced when major incidents occur.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied in the preparation of this Report:

None.

Appendix 1 – Governance Structure