

Health Authority

Police

Other Bodies/Individuals Service Leads for each priority service & Community Protection Directorate

FINAL DECISION NO

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

Further consideration by this Committee

To Council

To Cabinet .For approval.....

To an O & S Committee

To an Area Committee

Further Consultation

Audit and Standards Committee - 21 February 2006

Business Continuity Management

Report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development

Recommendation

Audit and Standards Committee is requested to:

1. Note the need for the development of robust business continuity management arrangements.
2. Note the approach adopted for the development of a business continuity management framework.
3. Note the priority services identified for which plans will be developed by 30 June 07.
4. Endorse the draft Business Continuity Management policy attached at Appendix A.
5. Recommend to Cabinet that they approve the draft policy.

1 Background

- 1.1 Over the years there have been a number of attempts to produce business continuity plans for the Council but only limited progress has been made because of the historical perception that the issue was unimportant and also lack of funding.
- 1.2 However, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 provides a renewed focus. This Act states that the Council is required to maintain business continuity plans to ensure that it can continue to provide its functions in the event of an emergency as far as reasonably practicable.
- 1.3 Additionally the CPA Use of Resources Assessment has introduced a new requirement for level 2 that: *"the council has a business continuity plan in place which is reviewed on a regular basis"*. However, this was not mandatory for the 2006 assessment.

The Corporate Assessment element for level 2 requires that the Council can demonstrate that *"its emergency procedures are fit for purpose and would*

allow the council to respond to emergencieswhile continuing to deliver critical public services”.

- 1.4 The Strategic Director of Performance and Development is responsible for ensuring that a sound business continuity framework is in place to ensure compliance with the CCA and CPA. This framework will introduce a robust approach to business continuity planning and will not only ensure the continued delivery of critical services during a service interruption but will also ensure that other key services have recovery plans for the ensuing period of disruption. The work entailed to achieve this will be led by the Strategic Risk Manager who joined the Internal Audit and Risk Management Service in December 2006.
- 1.5 The Strategic Director of Community Protection remains responsible for providing advice and assistance externally to businesses and voluntary organisations in relation to business continuity management, under the Civil Contingencies Act, and maintaining plans to respond to civil emergencies affecting the community, such as fires, floods etc.

2 Business Continuity Management Definition

- 2.1 Business Continuity Management is a planned process that helps manage the continuity of service delivery following an unexpected disruption to normal working.

3 Project Preparation

- 3.1 In the autumn of 2005 Zurich Municipal Risk Management (ZMRM) were engaged to assist the Council in laying the foundations for the business continuity project. A workshop was held involving senior managers from a number of departments. This led to the development of a list of services for which recovery should be prioritised following an interruption event (eg if they were denied access to their normal place of work, IT systems or staff). It also identified a number of risks that would cause service disruption if they materialised.
- 3.2 In April 2006 SDMT reviewed the output from the workshop and decided that:
 - The priority services and risks should be reviewed and updated to reflect the changes to the organisational structure that had taken place and the views of the new Heads of Service
 - The development of business continuity plans for priority services will be a key responsibility for Strategic Directors and Heads of Service.
 - Each Directorate must consider the need for business continuity plans for other services as part of its business planning process during 2006/7 and for 2007/8.

- 3.3 SDMT requested further work to refine the list of priority services. This was completed and a further report was agreed by SDMT in September 2006.

4 Project Commencement

- 4.1 Work has now commenced in developing plans for the priority services with two workshops held in December 2006 and January 2007. The work is being led by the Strategic Risk Manager.

- 4.2 The practical work undertaken with the Services Leads for each priority service in conjunction with the knowledge of an experienced internal resource has led to a minor revision in the list of priority services. The website has been identified as a resource upon which priority services are dependent. This will need to be managed separately along with other resource planning. Additionally, the Emergency Planning Unit has been included as a service that would need to be functioning within 24 hours to respond to a civil emergency in compliance with the CCA.

- 4.3 The revised list of priority services for which plans are being developed by 30 June 2006 are listed below:

- Fire Emergency Response
- Safeguarding Children/Family Support
- Emergency Duty Team (CYPF)
- Highways Network
- Customer Service Centre
- One Stop Shops
- Adult Residential Care
- Adult Home Care
- Waste Management
- Registration Service
- Trading Standards Regulatory Services (to be specified)
- Schools
- Emergency Planning Unit

5 Business Continuity Management Policy

- 5.1 A Business Continuity Management policy is required to demonstrate that the Council recognises the necessity for business continuity management and is committed to having an effective framework in place. It also sets out the need, purpose, scope, aims & benefits and key roles for effective implementation of the policy.

- 5.2 A first draft of such a policy has previously been circulated to the Corporate Risk Management Group and the Business Continuity Management Programme Board for comment and agreement. However, this draft has not yet been endorsed as a formal policy by Members.

- 5.3 Following the practical project work that has commenced this original draft has been reviewed and updated. However, the changes do not substantially alter the principles and content of the first draft. This revised draft has been discussed and agreed with the service leads for the priority services and the Community Protection Directorate during the second workshop.
- 5.4 The draft policy put forward to the Committee for consideration and agreement is attached at Appendix A.

6 Next Steps

The next steps in the project are as follows:

- i. Develop a BCM Strategy that outlines the principles of a business continuity framework and what the Council's approach is. The framework will effectively outline how the requirements of the BCM policy will be met.
- ii. Develop a Guide to Business Continuity Planning that will be a practical guide for services on business continuity management and method and tools required to develop business continuity plans at directorate and service level.
- iii. Lead the development of service continuity plans for the priority services to be in place by 30 June 2007.
- iv. Identify and resolve any cross cutting issues that affect the service planning in conjunction with the BCM Programme Board.
- v. Lead and direct the implementation of BCM across WCC with all plans in place by June 2008.

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