

## **RISK MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY ANNUAL REPORT**

### **Executive Summary**

Risk Management and Business Continuity Management are the two main disciplines through which the Council identifies, manages and mitigates its business and operational risks. An annual report is submitted to the Executive to outline any activities or issues that have occurred.

Risk Management is the process whereby the organisation methodically identifies and manages the threats and opportunities that might exist within a Council activity. Business Continuity sets out to enhance the strategic and tactical capability of the organisation to plan for incidents and business disruptions in order to continue operations at an acceptable pre-defined level.

Service plan risks have been updated since the last annual report. Corporate strategic risks have also been reviewed and updated by CMG. The risks that have been identified have been logged, owners have been allocated, and progress to mitigate each risk has been recorded.

The Council adopted a Business Continuity Management Strategy in 2006 and it has been in place ever since. The last report to the Executive outlined the need for a review of the existing strategy to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. Work to review and update Business Continuity arrangements is now well advanced.

The focus of work for the last 6 months has been on implementing an Alternative Premises Plan. It has long been an ambition of the Council to have alternative premises to relocate to, should the Civic Offices be destroyed or inaccessible for any reason. Alternative premises, with full access to ICT, will provide robust resilience for the Council and further bolster our Business Continuity and Emergency Planning capabilities. After analysis of possible options, it was determined that the Leisure Centre would be the most appropriate location to serve as backup premises. Work to install the necessary equipment to ensure that the Leisure Centre is in a permanent state of readiness is almost complete, with testing and sign-off due to be finalised imminently.

### **Recommendations**

The Executive is requested to:

#### **RESOLVE That**

the report be noted and that Risk Management processes remain sound and that work is ongoing to update Business Continuity arrangements within the Council.

### **Reasons for Decision**

Reason: The continuous development of the Council's Risk Management Strategy and Business Continuity Management Plan is essential to ensure the security of services to citizens.

The Executive has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.
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**Background Papers:** None.

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# Risk Management and Business Continuity Annual Report

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on Risk and Business Continuity Management arrangements that are in place within the Council. The status of both of these functions is reported on an annual basis.
- 1.2 The Risk Management and Business Continuity Strategies provide the framework, through which the Council identifies, manages and mitigates its business and operational risks. The key elements of this framework are designed to:
  - ensure that Risk Management and the adoption of Business Continuity becomes part of the culture of the whole organisation;
  - manage risk in accordance with best practice;
  - prevent injury and damage and reduce the cost of risk;
  - consider legal compliance as a minimum standard; and
  - anticipate and respond to changing social, economic, environmental and legislative requirements.
- 1.3 Risk Management is the process whereby the organisation methodically identifies and manages the threats and opportunities that might exist within a Council activity. Business Continuity sets out to enhance the strategic and tactical capability of the organisation to plan for incidents and business disruptions, in order to continue business operations at an acceptable pre-defined level.
- 1.4 Risk Management and Business Continuity Planning are not one off activities. They are part of a continuous process that runs throughout the Council's activities, taking into account all aspects such as projects as well as day-to-day work that is undertaken. It must be integrated into the culture of the Council with an effective strategy and led from the top.
- 1.5 The functional responsibility for corporate Risk Management and Business Continuity rests with the Corporate Management Group (CMG). The Business Improvement Team is accountable for overall delivery and review. All Senior Managers are responsible, with guidance and support from Business Improvement, for ensuring appropriate risk and business continuity arrangements are deployed in their functions, services and areas of responsibility.

## 2.0 Risk Management

- 2.1 Risk can be defined as the combination of the probability of an event and its consequences. In any organisation there is the potential for events and consequences that either provides opportunities for benefits or threats to success. Over the past year, Business Improvement and Senior Managers have worked together to update Service Plan risks. Corporate Strategic Risks have also been reviewed and updated by CMG. The risks that have been identified have been logged, owners have been allocated and progress to mitigate each risk has been recorded.

## 3.0 Business Continuity

- 3.1 The Council adopted a Business Continuity Management Strategy and Policy in 2006 and it has been in place ever since. The 2016 Risk Management and Business Continuity Report to the Executive, outlined the need for a review of the existing strategy to ensure that it remains as fit for purpose as possible. Work to review and update Business Continuity arrangements is now well advanced. The focus of work for the last 6 months has been on implementing an Alternative Premises Plan.

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### **4.0 Delivery of an Alternative Premises Plan**

4.1 It has long been an ambition of the Council to have alternative premises to relocate to, should the Civic Offices be destroyed or inaccessible for any reason. Any such location would need to be large enough to support pre-defined numbers of staff to ensure the continuation of the Council's most critical services.

4.2 After analysis of possible options, it was determined that the Upper Gallery at the Leisure Centre would be the most appropriate location to relocate to should the need arise. The main benefits of using the Upper Gallery in the Leisure Centre include:

- The Council has a Secondary Data Centre located at the Leisure Centre. This installation provides a mirrored data centre environment that can serve as a backup should the primary data centre at Export House be compromised. It can provide access to the Council's virtual network, thereby enabling use of the majority of day-to-day ICT provision, including telephony, Internet, applications and emails;
- The Upper Gallery is located in a self-contained position within the Leisure Centre which means that it is relatively out of the way and use of it would have a limited impact on Freedom Leisure operations and other users' of the facilities;
- Depending on the severity of the incident, there would be scope to expand operations through the use of other areas of the Leisure Centre;
- Large numbers of tables/chairs are stored on site and could be quickly deployed in an emergency situation if required;
- The reception area at the front entrance of the Leisure Centre could be used alongside Freedom Leisure for Council enquiries if need be;
- Ample parking is available for staff and customers;
- Key facilities such as toilets, showers, on site café providing food/drink etc. are already in place;

The Leisure Centre is within walking distance of the town centre.

4.3 Over the last 6 months, work has been underway to plan and install the necessary equipment to ensure that the Upper Gallery is in a permanent state of readiness, should relocation be necessary. The project is almost complete, with testing and sign-off due to be finalised imminently. Regular drills will be scheduled to test relocation procedures and equipment on an ongoing basis.

4.4 The Council's Business Continuity and Emergency Planning capabilities will be bolstered as a direct result of this project, and the ability to provide continuity of service for our most critical functions will be far more resilient.

### **5.0 Conclusions**

5.1 The application of Risk Management and Business Continuity Management remains a priority for the Council. Good progress has been made in updating Business Continuity arrangements, the recent focus being on relocation options. This continuing work will also provide the opportunity to further align risk and business continuity principles with emergency planning, to ensure that the Council can achieve a robust and joined up approach in all of these areas for the future.

**6.0 Implications**

Financial

- 6.1 The cost of the secondary data centre was covered by Investment Programme budgets. No additional implications arise specifically from the report but any proposals to further improve or enhance resilience may have cost implications and these would be identified in any such proposal.

Human Resource/Training and Development

- 6.2 Work continues to make staff aware of the arrangements and train those with specific responsibilities. This will be an on-going requirement to reflect staff turnover and changes.

Community Safety

- 6.3 There are no specific environmental or sustainability issues arising as a consequence of this report. Business Continuity is a key contributor to community safety in ensuring critical services are maintained but there are no issues arising specifically from this report.

Risk Management

- 6.4 As outlined in the report.

Sustainability

- 6.5 None arising from this report.

Equalities

- 6.6 None arising from this report.

Safeguarding

- 6.7 None arising from this report.

**7.0 Consultations**

- 7.1 None.

REPORT ENDS