

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.

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.

Work to review and update the Risk Management Strategy will be completed in the coming months. This review will also assess if risk is being managed effectively at all levels of the Council, and if there are clear linkages between all tiers of the organisation to ensure a holistic awareness of risk.

The review and update Business Continuity arrangements is ongoing, the key remaining areas of work are to finalise and publish the updated Business Continuity Strategy, and to complete Action Cards (step-by-step procedures to be followed to address service specific disruption) for the Council's most critical activities.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RESOLVE That

the report be noted and that Risk Management and Business Continuity arrangements will be reviewed and updated in the coming months to ensure that the implementation of both disciplines is sufficient to match the needs of the Council.

Reasons for Decision

Reason: The continuous development of Risk Management and Business Continuity is essential to ensure effective management and planning within the Council.

The Executive has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Background Papers: None.

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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. Risk Management and Business Continuity provides the framework through which the Council identifies, manages and mitigates its business and operational risks.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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 can result in 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.
- 2.2 To ensure that Risk Management arrangements remain up-to-date, work to review and update the Risk Management Strategy will be completed in the coming months. This review will also assess if risk is being managed effectively at all levels of the Council, and if there are clear linkages between all tiers of the organisation to ensure a holistic awareness of risk.

3.0 Business Continuity

- 3.1 The previous Risk Management and Business Continuity Report to the Executive, outlined the need for a review of the existing Business Continuity Management Strategy to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. Work to review and update Business Continuity arrangements is now well advanced. The most notable outcome of the initial round of work has been the implementation of an Alternative Premises Plan.
- 3.2 The Alternative Premises Plan enables the Council to relocate to the Leisure Centre should the Civic Offices be destroyed or inaccessible for any reason. The Council has a secondary data centre located at the Leisure Centre, which means that access to the Council's virtual network (enabling the use of the majority of day-to-day ICT provision including telephony, internet, applications and emails) can be initiated very quickly. This arrangement supports pre-defined numbers of staff to ensure the continuation of the Council's most critical services.
- 3.3 The Council's Business Continuity and Emergency Planning capabilities have been bolstered as a direct result of this project, and the ability to provide continuity of service for our most critical functions is now very resilient.

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- 3.4 The remaining work required to complete the Business Continuity review, is to finalise and publish the updated Business Continuity Strategy, and to complete Action Cards (step-by-step procedures to be followed to address disruption) for the Council's most critical activities.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 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. The ongoing review of both disciplines will also provide the opportunity to further align risk and business continuity principles with emergency planning and disaster recovery, to ensure that the Council can achieve a robust and joined up approach in all of these areas for the future.

5.0 Implications

Financial

- 5.1 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

- 5.2 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

- 5.3 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

- 5.4 As outlined in the report.

Sustainability

- 5.5 None arising from this report.

Equalities

- 5.6 None arising from this report.

Safeguarding

- 5.7 None arising from this report.

6.0 Consultations

- 6.1 None.

REPORT ENDS