



BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Locations of where document is held and referenced	Interlink

Intended audience	Communication process for the policy
Elected members	Audit & Risk Panel reports.
Directors	CMT reports and quarterly risk and audit update meetings with the Head of AGRS. (NB Directors are responsible for ensuring that BC Plans are communicated to all relevant staff)
Operational Directors / Heads of Service (for critical services)	Email
BCM Champions	Regular, BCM training / information sessions Email
Staff in critical services	Team meetings / BC exercises

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Business Continuity Management (BCM) is about having appropriate BCM Systems (BCMS) in place to identify the critical services that are delivered by the Council and plan how to maintain these in the event of an incident¹.
- 1.2 BCMS provides the framework for building resilience and capability for an effective response, enabling the Council to continue to deliver critical services in the event of an incident.
- 1.3 The BCM policy contributes to the risk, control and governance framework of the Council and represents best practice as set out in the Northern Ireland Civil Contingencies Framework² and is consistent with the requirements of the ISO 22301.
- 1.4 Section 12 of the Council’s Emergency Plan specifies when the Council will activate an emergency planning response to business continuity incidents.
- 1.5 This document outlines the Council’s policy and requirements for BCMS.
- 1.6 A high level overview of the Council’s BCMS is given below:



Source: BS ISO 22313:2014 – ISO BCM LIFECYCLE

¹ Incident - A situation that might be or could lead to a disruption, loss, emergency or crisis.

² Civil Contingency Act in the UK placed a regulatory requirement on local councils to carry out BCM, in Northern Ireland it was adopted as best practice by the Secretary of State in November 2005.

OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of this Policy are:

- To ensure that the Council's capability to respond effectively to an incident is maximised.
- To communicate effectively with our internal and external interested parties during an incident and to continue to provide critical services to these parties, in the event of an incident.
- To ensure the frequency/impact of potential incidents is reduced to an acceptable level and an effective BCMS is developed, maintained and exercised throughout the Council.
- To ensure compliance with appropriate governance and regulatory obligations, and relevant external standards and good practices adopted by Belfast City Council in relation to Business Continuity.
- To ensure that BCM solutions are in place should key internal / external suppliers and / or outsource providers suffer an incident, or there is an unexpected termination of a relevant agreement.

SCOPE

3.1 This Policy applies to all Departments in Belfast City Council.

POLICY

4.1 In the event of an incident resulting in a reduced capacity to deliver all services, Belfast City Council will focus on the delivery of critical services.

4.2 The criteria for determining whether a service is 'critical' is set out at appendix B.

4.3 The current list of critical services is set out at appendix C.

4.4 All Departments must ensure that they have an effective BCMS which will:

- enable their critical services to respond effectively to an incident

- reduce the frequency and impact of potential incidents occurring to an acceptable level and
 - manage the impacts, recovery and restoration of critical services should an incident occur, until normal operations are resumed.
- 4.5 Business continuity management systems should be regularly reviewed, updated and exercised to provide a level of assurance that the Council has the capability and solutions to respond in a timely and appropriate manner to any incident.
- 4.6 All Departments must comply with this Policy. Roles and responsibilities are set out at Appendix A.

COMPETENCE & AWARENESS

- 5.1 The Council is committed to providing the necessary training and awareness activities to ensure that required staff develop and maintain the relevant competencies to fulfil their roles set out at Appendix A.
- 5.2 The BCM policy shall be made available to all staff, the policy can be found on the interlink site.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF BCMS

- 6.1 At regular intervals, a performance evaluation will be undertaken of the Council's BCMS, to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. The performance evaluation will be undertaken by an independent expert appointed by AGRS and will be reported to the Audit Assurance Board and Audit & Risk Panel.

POLICY REVIEW PROCESS

- 7.1 The Council's Business Continuity Management Policy is subject to strict version control and will be reviewed by AGRS regularly, in line with the Council's needs.

REPORTING

- 8.1 The Corporate Management Team, the Audit Assurance Board and the Audit & Risk Panel will receive regular reports on compliance with the Council's BCM policy.

FUNDING

- 9.1 All resources required for Departmental BCM contingency measures will be funded from existing departmental budgets. Directors should ensure sufficient funds are available.
- 9.2 BCM training and miscellaneous expenditure associated with the support, oversight and monitoring of the BCM policy and framework will be funded from the AGRS budget.
- 9.3 In exceptional circumstances requests for funding contingency measures will be referred to the Deputy Chief Executive / Strategic Director of Finance and Resources.

APPENDIX A - BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Audit & Risk Panel and Audit Assurance Board should:

- a) Provide leadership and ongoing commitment to implementation of the BCM policy.
- b) Review and approve the BCM policy.
- c) Monitor compliance with the BCM policy.
- d) At appropriate intervals, receive assurance on continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's BCMS.

CMT should:

- a) Provide leadership and ongoing commitment to implementation of the BCMS policy.
- b) Review the BCMS policy and recommend for approval by the Audit & Risk Panel.
- c) Receive regular reports on and monitor compliance with the BCM policy and to consider whether there is a need for further action.

Deputy Chief Executive / Strategic Director of Finance and Resources should:

- a) Provide leadership and ongoing commitment to implementation of the BCM policy.
- b) Review the BCM policy and recommend for consideration by CMT.
- c) Monitor compliance with the BCM policy, taking action where appropriate.
- d) Ensure that at appropriate intervals, a performance evaluation is undertaken of the Council's BCMS, to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness.

Directors should:

- a) Ensure that there are clearly defined and documented roles and responsibilities for BCMS within their Department. This includes the appointment of BCM champion(s).
- b) Ensure that BCM is a quarterly standing agenda item at Department Management Team Meetings.
- c) Consider supply chain continuity for critical services.

- d) Ensure that processes are in place to:
- Identify critical services
 - Consider BCMS in relation to the development of any strategic business projects
 - Complete Business Impact Analysis (BIA) reviews
 - Produce and update BC strategies.
- e) Where relevant, prepare an appropriate Business Continuity Plan (BCP).
- f) Where formal BCP's are produced, ensure that:
- Plans are commensurate with the size and complexity of the processes
 - Plans are based upon: 'Worst case' scenario
 - Plans are communicated to all relevant staff
 - Plans include the requirement to communicate with internal and external interested parties during an incident (who, what, when, how) following agreed protocols
 - Plans undergo a thorough review at least annually, with Directors reviewing and approving the ["BC Plan Review" template](#) before it is submitted to AGRS for monitoring purposes.
- g) Maintain and exercise the BCP, ensuring that:
- there is a suitable exercise programme in place that, over a period of time, leads to objective assurance that the BCP will work as anticipated when required
 - the scope of the BC exercises gives meaningful assurance on the ability to continue to deliver the critical service in the event of an incident
 - an aspect of the plan is exercised annually, based upon a suitable scenario, this should be consistent with the complexity of the plan and follow the exercise programme for the critical service
 - the scope of the exercise is captured in the ["BC Exercise Planning" template](#) and reviewed and approved by the HOS / Director in advance of the exercise before submitting it to AGRS for monitoring purposes
 - the results of the exercise are captured in the ["BC Exercise Report" template](#) which is reviewed and approved by the HOS / Director before it is submitted to

AGRS for monitoring purposes. All actions arising from the BC exercise should be recorded and allocated an action owner and timescale for delivery with appropriate debrief carried out.

- h) Following an incident, ensuring that a [“BC Plan Invocation Report” template](#) is completed, reviewed and approved by the HOS / Director before submitting it to AGRS for monitoring purposes.
- i) Review and update BCMS arrangements
- j) Directors should ensure sufficient funds are available for required BCMS contingency measures
- k) Directors should consider BCMS requirements in relation to any major changes to service provision.

AGRS should:

- a) Assist management in implementing BCMS within Belfast City Council, through update of the BCM policy, provision of guidance and templates as appropriate
- b) Ensure BCM policy complies with regulations and is consistent with best practice
- c) Monitor and report on compliance with the BCM policy
- d) Chair and facilitate meetings of the BCM Champions
- e) Identify BCM champions training needs and source and organise relevant training as required.
- f) Report on compliance with the policy quarterly to CMT, the Audit Assurance Board and Audit & Risk Panel
- g) Provide advice to BCM champions on the design and delivery of an appropriate exercise programme
- h) Ensure that there is sufficient liaison and involvement with ‘specialist’ teams and their plans including Digital Services, accommodation and emergency planning
- i) To organise periodic independent performance evaluations of the Councils BCMS to provide assurance that it is adequate and effective.

The BCM Champions should:

- a) Adhere to BCM policy and framework
- b) Promote understanding and awareness of BCMS and give advice to management, where required, on issues relating to the implementation and the delivery of BCMS within the critical service
- c) Ensure that training and support needs are identified and discussed at their PDP meetings and with AGRS where appropriate
- d) Attend BCM champion meetings as requested and contribute towards implementing any actions arising
- e) Ensure that Business Continuity plans are up to date, reviewed annually and signed off by the Director, completing the [“BC Plan Review” template](#) to evidence the plan review and submitting to AGRS for monitoring purposes
- f) Ensure that a suitable exercise programme is in place that, over a period of time, leads to objective assurance that the BCP will work as anticipated when required
- g) Ensure that the scope of the exercise is captured in the [“BC Exercise Planning” template](#) and reviewed and approved by the HOS / Director in advance of the exercise and submitting to AGRS for monitoring purposes
- h) Ensure that an appropriate exercise of the BC plan is undertaken at least annually, completing the [“BC Exercise Report” template](#) to record the exercise and submitting the BC Exercise Report to the HOS / Director for sign off and to AGRS for monitoring purposes
- i) Following an incident, completing the [“BC Plan Invocation Report” template](#), for review and sign off by the Director and submitting to AGRS for monitoring purposes
- j) Ensure that all key BCMS documents for the critical service are saved to the BCM shared drive
- k) Provide updates on BCMS issues / developments at their Service and Departmental Team Meetings, as required.

Staff working in Critical Services should:

- a) Familiarise themselves with the BC Plan for the critical service.
- b) Participate in BC plan exercises when requested.
- c) Contact their BCM champion with any queries related to the BC plan.

APPENDIX B – PRIORITISATION CRITERIA FOR CRITICAL SERVICES

1	Civil Protection Capability
	The failure to deliver the service would significantly affect the Council's ability to respond to an emergency and take effective action to reduce, control or mitigate the effects of the emergency.
2	Effect of an Emergency on the City
	Following the occurrence of an emergency in the city there will be pressure on the service to increase its level and quantum of service beyond standard day to day service levels to maintain its delivery and mitigate the effects of the emergency.
3	Impact on Human Welfare
	The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect on individuals to whom the Council owes a duty of care or other individual vulnerable persons in the community. Such effect includes the ability for individuals to access medical care, food and water, accommodation and other social care support which they would be unable to access independently.
4	Impact on the Environment
	The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect on the environment or a significant risk of damage to the environment with medium to long term or even permanent damage if left unchecked and which if possible to clean up would involve significant costs to rectify.
5	Impact on Security and Safety
	The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect on the security and safety of citizens. The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect to the functioning of the community. For example resulting in citizens being unable to go about their day to day business without fear of perceived injury or risk of actual injury.
6	Reputation
	The failure to provide the service could have a significant negative effect on the reputation of the Council as a provider of key services to citizens.
7	Dependency
	The service provided is a key dependency of a Level 1 service, without which the Level 1 service would be unable to carry out its duties.

APPENDIX C – THE COUNCIL’S CRITICAL SERVICES FOR BCMS PURPOSES

	Critical Service	Nature of critical service
1	City Protection Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Control and Prevention of Legionnaires Disease. ▪ Emergency Response ▪ Port Health – Infectious Disease Control ▪ Scientific services ▪ Port Health – Imported Food Control ▪ Business Support - Communication ▪ Food Safety - Investigation of Food Poisoning ▪ Food and Product Hazard Warnings ▪ Responding to dog attacks and suspected cases of rabies ▪ Pest control
2	Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain operations at Waste Transfer Station ▪ Ensure continuity of landfill provision ▪ Maintain operations at Recycling Centres & CA sites ▪ Waste Collection
3	Building Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respond to dangerous structures
4	Cleansing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street Cleansing and Customer Contact Centre
5	Fleet management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintenance of fleet equipment ▪ Break downs and accidents
6	Civic headquarters (telephone, security etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telephony (to transfer to the Customer Hub April 2021) ▪ Reception ▪ Security Officers ▪ Security Control Room ▪ Staff/Member Catering ▪ Building Cleaning
7	Bereavement Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crematorium and funeral services ▪ Issuing of cremated remains to Funeral Directors & the public ▪ Disposal of cremated remains (burying & scattering) ▪ Burials
8	Zoo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animal care (including feed provision / veterinary care / keeper care) ▪ Safety (dangerous structures / safety of staff / visitors / public)
9	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employee Services

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial Control ▪ CTU – Accounts Payable
10	H&S	<p><u>Health & Safety Team:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practical advice to relevant staff to allow them to continuing essential duties as safely as possible ▪ Dynamic Risk Assessments ▪ Ensuring that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Council continues to comply with relevant H&S legislation
11	Digital Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Network connectivity and services to all sites where possible ▪ VOIP ▪ Server availability ▪ Internal email ▪ External connectivity to ISP ▪ External email ▪ Digital Services service desk
12	BDM&CP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Registration of Deaths, Births and Still births ▪ Notice and Registration of Marriages and Civil Partnerships ▪ Performance of Marriages and Civil Partnerships ▪ Production of certificates on request.
13	Democratic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting civic dignitaries to provide leadership in an emergency ▪ Provision of advice and guidance to elected Members and Departments ▪ Communicating with elected Members ▪ Provision of administrative support to any scheduled emergency meetings of the Council or its Committees
14	HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of corporate HR advice <p><u>Employee Relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide practical advice to relevant staff on employee relations issues that will assist in ensuring essential services are maintained ▪ To assist in consultations where job functions may change and/or policies may need to be applied/amended ▪ To provide practical advice and support on terms and conditions, employment law, etc so as to ensure essential services can be maintained

		<p><u>Employee Resourcing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide practical advice and support to relevant sections to ensure, so far as is practicable, that employee levels are maintained at a level that facilitates the delivery of essential service <p><u>Learning and Development:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure, so far as is practicable, that any essential training and development is maintained ▪ To assist, so far as is reasonably practicable, in the provision of any additional training that may be required to ensure essential services are maintained. ▪ To ensure any attachments working with BCC are adequately catered for during any relevant incidents, including the option to return to parent organisations if necessary <p><u>Occupational Health:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To advise on any relevant health issues <p><u>Employee Counselling:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide trauma support to staff if applicable ▪ To provide general counselling support to staff as required
15	Corporate Communications	Corporate Communications provides a key support function to the above critical services. The classification of Corporate Communication as a critical service is under review.
16	Property Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of Emergency / Callout / Reactive Work Requests ▪ Procurement and management of essential stores items
17	Customer Hub (operational from April 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initially, the Hub will manage all customer contact for cleansing / waste and calls that would have been received through the main switchboard and corporate complaints numbers.

Note:

Leisure centres and community centres are crucial in supporting the Council's response to an emergency, through their use as emergency rest centres, which is co-ordinated between the Emergency Planning Unit, City & Neighbourhood Services Community Services and GLL. However the delivery of day to day services at community centres is not classed as a critical service for the Council's BCMS purposes and GLL are responsible for business continuity management at the leisure centres.

APPENDIX D – BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT TEMPLATES

BC Plan Review Report



BC Plan Review
Report.docx

BC Exercise Planning Report



Planning
Report.doc

BC Exercise Report



Exercise Report.doc

BC Plan Invocation Report



Invocation
Report.docx