

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to Audit and Governance Committee

**Date:** 26 November 2018

**Report of:** Head of Building Repairs and Maintenance Service

**Subject:** BUSINESS CONTINUITY

#### SUMMARY

Councils are required, by law, to maintain adequate business continuity arrangements to ensure their critical services are maintained during and following any disruption that impacts upon service delivery.

The Committee has received previous reports that provided updates on the work that has been undertaken, progress that has been made and the arrangements that are in place for responding to and managing any disruption. This report provides a further update for members of the work that has been undertaken.

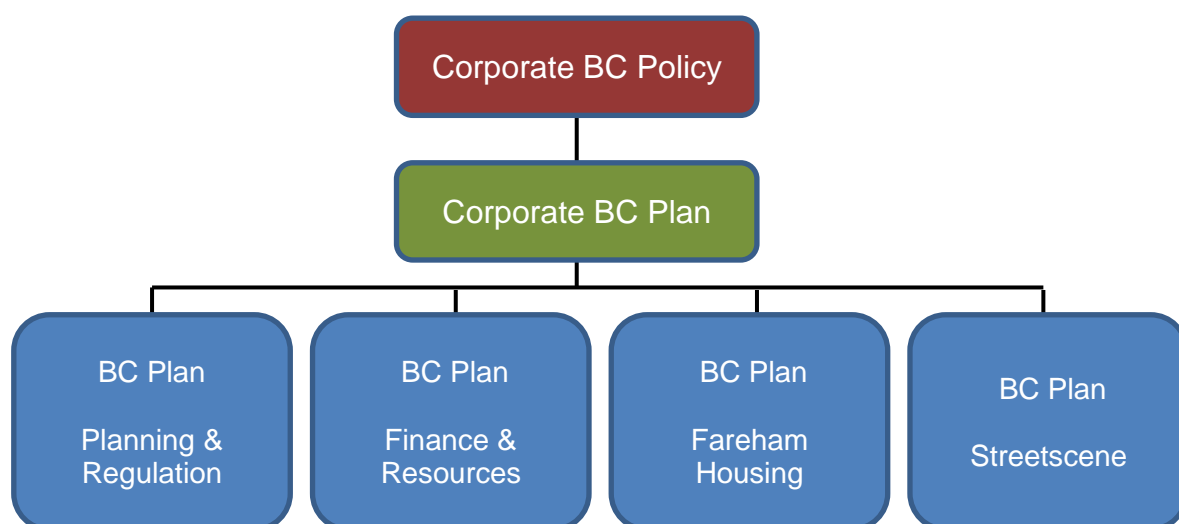
Part of this process has also involved a review of the Business Continuity Policy, which sets out the framework for the development, implementation, testing and review of the Council's Business Continuity Plans (BCP).

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the progress to date and the ongoing work that is being undertaken in the development and implementation of the Council's business continuity arrangements.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Business Continuity Management (BCM) is the strategic and tactical capability of an organisation to plan for and respond to incidents and business disruptions in order to continue business operations at an acceptable predefined level. Business continuity can be effective in dealing with both sudden 'rapid-onset' (e.g. fires) and gradual 'rising tide' (e.g. flu pandemic) incidents.
2. Fareham Borough Council (FBC) has a duty<sup>1</sup> to ensure that a Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) is in place comprising of Business Continuity Plans (BCP) within each Director's service areas which, in the event of any major disruption of day-to-day activity, will aid and inform service recovery.
3. FBC's current BC arrangements come in the form of the FBC BCM Policy and a large number of service/departmental BCPs. Recent organisational changes have resulted in the current suite of Business Continuity Plans becoming out-of-date and unmaintained as restructure and redesign has taken place across the organisation. The majority of service/departmental BCPs were last updated in late 2014 - early 2015.
4. A revised approach developed by the Head of Building Repairs and Maintenance Service and Emergency Preparedness, Resilience & Response Officers, who provide support to FBC through a Deed of Agreement (with Southampton City Council), is outlined below. The aim is to streamline the BC process, bringing it in line with current corporate structures and aligning the documentation closely to ISO22301 (the International Standard for BCM). See proposed BCM structure below.



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<sup>1</sup> [Civil Contingencies Act 2004 s.2 \(1\)\(c\)](#)

## **Corporate Business Continuity Policy**

5. The Corporate BC Policy defines the Business Continuity Management Programme strategy for FBC. It is a strategic document that sets out priorities, management structures, and roles and responsibilities to ensure an appropriate response to any disruption. The revised policy along with revised BC plans was presented to the Chief Executives Management Team in July 2018 and subsequently approved by them. This policy will be maintained and reviewed by the Emergency Planning Team on a three-yearly basis.

## **Corporate Business Continuity Plan**

6. The Corporate BC Plan defines FBC's response to a significant disruption to service delivery. This plan covers the high-level corporate response to an incident and gives an overview of the critical services for each Director's service areas. This plan will be maintained and reviewed by the Emergency Planning Team on a three-yearly basis or following an incident that requires changes to the plan to be made.

## **Business Continuity Plans**

7. BCPs will define the response to a significant disruptive event that impacts on day-to-day activities for each Director's service areas within the current corporate structure. This varies from the previous approach where there may have been multiple plans per directorate, covering the different departments. The maintenance of these plans varied in quality and currency across the organisation. With the Emergency Planning Team taking on the bulk of the work with regards to writing and maintaining plans, and significantly reducing the number of plans, this will ensure demands made upon Directors, Heads of Service and their managers are kept to a minimum. Each service area Head of Service will be asked to support the Emergency Planning Team with the updates to the plans relevant to their areas. This will also allow central management of and greater consistency of plans across the authority.

## **Implementation**

8. The Emergency Planning Team will gather all existing Business Continuity Plans and transfer the information within the new directorate-level template, updating where possible. Each Director their Heads of Service, and other managers within their teams will then be asked to participate in a workshop to work through the initial draft of their Business Continuity Plan (combining previous departmental plans where appropriate) where the Emergency Planning Team will ensure that the information within is correct, the Plan understood, and identifying areas where further information is required. The first draft of the plans and the workshops will be held at the end of November and beginning of December 2018.

9. The Emergency Planning Team will then produce a second draft BCP for each Head of Service; this will be presented to the Service Director for final amendment and sign-off. These plans will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis or following an incident that requires changes to the plan to be made. It is anticipated that these plans will be completed by March 2019.
10. The inclusion of local authorities in the CCA recognises the role they have to play, both in direct operational response and in support of the 'blue light' emergency services during emergencies, which impact on their communities.
11. The duty to plan for business continuity ensures that the authority can continue to provide its critical services when it is involved in an emergency response and also when any of those critical services are faced with a disruptive challenge, for example, a power cut affecting the Civic Offices.
12. The process of business continuity planning, in simple terms, involves the following steps:
  - Identify the risks faced, and the impacts of those risks;
  - Identify the critical services the authority provides; and
  - Make plans to ensure those critical services are resilient to the risks faced.
13. Good business continuity planning requires a detailed understanding of the services provided, and the resources required to deliver those services. It should therefore be viewed as a process which enhances everyday business, as well as one which provides emergency procedures.
14. Business Continuity is not a one-off process; it is an ongoing process which should account for changes to statutory responsibilities, service delivery, restructuring, and the risk assessment. The process needs to be reviewed and tested regularly to ensure plans are fit for purpose when activation is required.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

15. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report

## **CONCLUSION**

16. Following an update to each of the Director level BCPs, a test of the Corporate BC Plan will be carried out using a cyber threat scenario table-top exercise which will link to the planned Local Resilience Forum exercise (summer 2019).

17. To enable a consistent review of the BCPs it is proposed that a short workshop will be held with each Director their Heads of Service and relevant managers annually working through different scenarios to ensure all areas of the BCP are reviewed within the three-year cycle. This is proposed to begin in 2020.

## **APPENDICES – APPENDIX A – Corporate Business Continuity Policy**

### **APPENDIX B – Corporate Business Continuity Plan**

**Background Papers:** None

**Reference Papers:** None

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Kevin Wright. (Ext 4359)