

**Decision Maker:** Executive & Resources PDS Committee

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012

**Decision Type:** Non-Urgent                      Non-Executive                      Non-Key

**Title:** Disaster Recovery Plans for London Borough of Bromley

**Contact Officer:** Stephen Lewis, Emergency Planning Manager  
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**Chief Officer:** Nigel Davies, Director of Environmental Services

**Ward:** n/a

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1. **Reason for report**

Members of the Executive & Resources PDS asked for a Report on the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery planning for Bromley Council.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 To note the details and make comment on the LBB business continuity and disaster recovery systems in place.

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### Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
  2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council.
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### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost n/a
  2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
  3. Budget head/performance centre: 113,670
  4. Total current budget for this head: £113,670
  5. Source of funding:
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### Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 2
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
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### Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory requirement.
  2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.
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### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 300,000
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### Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: n/a

### **3. COMMENTARY**

- 3.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 imposes a statutory obligation on the Council to have business continuity arrangements in place to ensure it can continue to deliver services in the event of an emergency/disruption.
- 3.2 The London Borough of Bromley has key organisational objectives to meet, based on statutory requirements. All are aimed at providing, maintaining and improving services to the community. Any failures perceived or otherwise will have a negative impact on both the community and the authority. It is therefore important that all reasonable measures are taken to mitigate any likelihood of business or service disruption.
- 3.3 The risk of disruption regarding the Civic Centre could vary in magnitude from catastrophic to trivial, and include; fire, extremes of climate, failure of utilities and accidental or malicious damage of assets or resources. Business Continuity Management (BCM) is the important constituent of 'Disaster Recovery' i.e. the overall process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is integrated within the corporate risk management strategy and in turn corporate governance.
- 3.4 In essence BCM is a flexible framework designed to ensure that as an organisation, in this case LBB, it can continue to operate its critical functions in the event of a wide range of disruptive challenges.
- 3.5 The BCM process within LBB is based on the British Standard 25999. It incorporates the BCM programme management of, understanding the organisation, determining BCM strategies, developing and implementing a BCM response and exercising, maintaining and reviewing the plans; whilst embedding a BCM culture within the authority.
- 3.6 The Council is currently undertaking a constant programme to embed business continuity into the organisation's culture, after which time the focus of business continuity will be managed by service and procedural policies. This report outlines progress to date, key issues and the next steps.
- 3.7 The whole process is overseen by the Corporate Business Continuity Group (CBCG) which has 'Terms of Reference' agreed by COE and is led at that level by the 'BCM Champion', Director of Environmental Services Nigel Davies. The CBCG is 'chaired' by the Head of Environmental Protection, Jim Mcgowan.

#### **Business Continuity Plan Status**

- 3.8 In September 2007, the Council implemented a new business continuity system which included the production and creation of new business continuity plans covering all departments, divisions and services of the Council.
- 3.9 Key priorities now include ensuring that services localise their plans and keep them up-to-date as well as undertaking exercises to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- 3.10 Since the inception of business continuity planning the Council has made significant progress each year with the assistance of both external and internal audit in this area, which whilst giving strong endorsement of policy and framework, has also given assurances to current capability.

- 3.11 All Council services have business continuity plans in place. Plans are generally based at service or divisional level only; however there are also overarching plans at directorate and corporate level.
- 3.12 In determining how to best mitigate an interruption to service delivery, the magnitude of the potential impact is measured against the likelihood that it will occur. Once these have been established, suitable continuity arrangements are identified and evaluated.



- 3.13 Three distinct tasks are associated with this process, namely:
- ✓ Business Impact Analysis (BIA)
  - ✓ Risk Assessment (RA), and
  - ✓ Business Continuity Plans (BCPs)
- 3.14 In undertaking the BIA the following points needed to be considered:
- ✓ Define the business process i.e. what is provided to whom, how, when, where and why
  - ✓ Identify potential points of failure
  - ✓ Determine the impacts of a disruption of service delivery
  - ✓ Set recovery objectives within predetermined time frames
  - ✓ Identify resources required to reach the recovery objectives
- 3.15 Risk Assessments are set against four main risk scenarios:
- ✓ Damage or denial of access to premises
  - ✓ Loss or damage to Information and Communication systems (e.g. computers, networks, landline phones, mobile phones etc.)
  - ✓ Non-availability of staff
  - ✓ Loss or damage to other key resources
  - ✓ Loss or disruption to the supply chain such as utilities, contractors or key suppliers
- 3.16 Service manager's deal with risk as a matter of course but risk assessment proves a formal, documented process to identify, evaluate and manage these risks. Agreed risk reduction measures would then be incorporated into BCPs.
- 3.17 When all tasks (above) have been completed BCP's to support the key services can be written.

- 3.18 Business Continuity Plan is the documentation of agreed procedures and information that is developed, and maintained in readiness for use in an emergency or service disruption – to better enable a service, department and / or the Council to continue delivering its critical activities and services. It is important to note that the plan should be accessible given a range of scenarios: it is advised that the BCP is stored both in hard copy and electronically, with at least one copy held off site for added resilience.
- 3.19 There is a standard template for the authority that should be used in all cases. Plans are owned by the Departments and Services and should be subject to regular review as part of the normal business planning process within the authority.

### **Testing and Exercising**

- 3.20 The Council cannot be confident in the business continuity plans and systems unless they are tested and evaluated regularly. The testing and exercising of all key plans in Bromley has been continuing in many areas on many levels. This testing can be effectively achieved through a series of discussions, table top exercises or live exercises. Individual plans are tested – either service continuity arrangements or functional support plans, or at the other end of the spectrum, a full scale organisational wide test can be undertaken. This will however, because of the resource implications and level of disruption to normal business, be a rare event.
- 3.21 There is also an ongoing level of training awareness of business continuity to service managers. The aim of which is to ensure that continuity planning is firmly embedded in the council and such implications are considered across all business activities.
- 3.22 A large scale business continuity exercise called ‘Exercise Coldplay’ was held in December 2008. Set against a national flu pandemic episode, it was a comprehensive large scale table top exercise involving significant representation from the seven council directorates with the Chief Officers Executive (COE) also in attendance.
- 3.23 Lessons learnt across all departments were collated into a factual report compiled by the Emergency Planning Department and this acted as the catalyst for a corporate, departmental and individual services action plan.
- 3.24 In November 2010 a table top exercise was held for managers from Resources Department. This was very well received and as in the previous exercise the single points of failure and learning points from it acted as vehicle for plans to be reviewed and updated.
- 3.25 In November 2011 another table top exercise was held with managers from Adult and Community Services on this occasion external consultants (BISCON) were brought in to write and lead on the tabletop exercise. A similar post exercise was submitted to ACS for action.
- 3.26 Work is now being undertaken with the same external consultants to carry out further annual exercise and an exercise with another department will take place later this year.
- 3.27 During 2011 under the heading of Risk Management, business continuity training has been incorporated into a teaching package for managers across the council. This has been seen as a significant step for those who manage risk within the council and more sessions are being planned for 2012/13.
- 3.28 This guidance has focused on developing business continuity arrangements for a single Service but any disruption large or small will, however, have some implications for the wider organisation.

- 3.29 Actions that need to be taken can be Corporate and need to be included within the BCP with notification, activation and escalation procedures needed, including an emergency response, crisis management, damage assessment and recovery measures / objectives.
- 3.30 The scale of the disruption measures outlined in 7.2 will require different level of response. Planning is now being undertaken in terms of impact assessment of failures and to look at their roles and responsibilities once plans have been activated to ensure, where possible, a rapid recovery.
- 3.31 **Minor incident /disruption**; response by individual service(s) areas, (Operational)  
**Significant incident /disruption**; response by Departmental Management Team, (Tactical)  
**Major incident / disruption**; response by Corporate Management Team (Strategic)
- 3.32 It will be the role of the Emergency Planning Unit to provide information and advice on the procedures that should be followed, should they be required

### **Key Dates / Conclusion**

- 3.33 The recent austerity measures set by Government and directed at local government has meant a great deal of reorganisation for Bromley Council in terms of structure and operating practices within the departmental structures. This in turn has brought difficult challenges to BCPs; the constant state of flux for many service areas has prevented the reassessment of BIAs and the necessary updating of BCPs.
- 3.34 This important area of work should very much be seen as work in progress and in addition to a new business plan, being launched in April 2012, the next headlines for business continuity outlined below.
- 3.35 The Olympics 2012 will inevitably bring transport and logistical disruption, even if everything runs to plan. Through the CBCG managers are being asked to re-examine their existing plans to see if they are still fit for purpose which includes looking at any supply chain that exists during the Olympic period.
- 3.36 The current steps in the Business Continuity Programme:
- **March – May 2012** – Review of existing plans across the council by Emergency Planning, integrating with the Tactical Overview;
  - **Summer / Autumn 2012** – New Business Continuity Plans produced for services taking into account organisational change. To also address changes to Tactical Overview
  - **Autumn 2012** – With the advent of ‘hot desking’, to look at possible alternative premises should any part of the Civic Centre or its facilities be rendered unfit for use. Produce Strategic Overview.
  - **Summer 2014** – Large scale exercise involving up to 150 members of staff testing all key business continuity plans in the Council.
- 3.37 Significant work has and continues to take place to improve the Council’s business continuity arrangements.
- 3.38 A new system is being implemented and the focus now is to ensure managers localise their plans and become more familiar with them by means of testing and exercising.

3.39 There is also a need to ensure that the Council is ready to face the challenges of future events, and an example of this is preparedness for the 2012 Olympics.

#### 4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Testing planned using External Consultants 'BISCON' at a cost of £2970

#### 5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Civil Contingencies Act requires all statutory bodies such as local authorities to have Business Continuity Plans in place.

#### 6 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Emergency Planning Unit is the lead department which feeds into the Corporate Business Continuity Group, representing all departments.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Policy Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	<p>LBB Business Continuity Policy*</p> <p>LBB Business Continuity Terms of Reference*</p> <p>Corporate Business Continuity Plan 2012*</p> <p>Exercise Cold Play – post exercise report</p> <p>Resources Table top – post exercise report</p> <p>ACS table top – post exercise report</p> <p>*All to reviewed at next Corporate BC Group Meeting April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012</p>