DERBYSHIRE
County Council

Business

Continuity

Policy

Version 3.0

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Contents

Document control

This policy has been produced by Derbyshire County Council's Emergency Planning Division and is subject to annual review.

Version control

Version History				
Version	**Date**	**Detail**	**Author**	**Approver**
1.0	July 2015	New document	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Emergency Planning Manager
2.0	December 2016	Review and format changes	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Emergency Planning Manager
3.0	May 2018	Review and format changes	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Emergency Planning Manager

Foreword

Derbyshire County Council is one of the top performing councils in the country. In order to maintain our high standards it is important to plan how we can deal effectively when faced with any kind of service interruption.

Our business continuity plan provides a strategic framework around which staff can work to enable critical functions to be maintained, or quickly restored to minimise any effect on service delivery to the community.

The plan concentrates on services provided at our headquarters and looks at priority functions and minimum staffing levels so we can continue to provide critical services. Further work is being undertaken to look at services provided at other locations, partnership working and external suppliers.

We have an annual programme of training and exercises to ensure staff understand what their roles and responsibilities are, test the effectiveness of the plan and assist with future development.

Councillor Barry Lewis
Leader of the Council

1 Policy

1.1 Scope

Derbyshire County Council is committed to ensuring robust and effective business continuity management as a key mechanism to restore and deliver continuity of key services in the event of a disruption or emergency.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 placed a statutory duty on the council to ensure that it can:

- respond to an emergency
- continue to support emergency response partners
- continue to provide critical services to the public.

The business continuity plan provides the operational structure for responding to serious disruption, and can be summarised as follows:

- To have an operational document that sets out priorities, management structures and communications mechanisms to ensure an appropriate response to any disruption.

- The plan addresses the full range of the council's functions and service areas. Where appropriate, it considers the interdependencies of different organisations, mutual aid and partnership arrangements.

- Specific strategies have been produced to mitigate the effects of loss of infrastructure including buildings, communications, IT and staff.

- Departments will continue to prepare and maintain business continuity service area arrangements as appropriate.

1.2 Aim and objectives

The aim of the plan is:

- To anticipate risks, mitigate where possible and to have flexible and tested plans in place to minimise disruption when unplanned events significantly interrupt normal business.

The objectives are:

- To ensure the council can continue to exercise its critical functions in the event of an emergency.

- To identify the potential areas of vulnerability in council services.

- To determine overall priorities for recovery of functions if disruption takes place.

- To build on processes already in place for risk management, ensuring that all plans are integrated into the overall framework.

- To ensure all council departments are involved in the preparation of the plan, so that there is an effective and consistent response to service continuity.

- To undertake training and awareness programmes for staff, suppliers and partners as appropriate and carry out regular tests of the plan to validate the arrangements.

1.3   Methods and standards

The council's business continuity management arrangements currently meet the mandatory requirements within the Cabinet Office document "Expectations and Indicators of Good Practice Set for Category 1 and 2 Responders". It is also the intention to follow the outline of ISO 22301 in the future.

1.4   Responsibilities

The business continuity management process is designed to ensure it is a mainstream activity rather than simply an emergency response.

The head of paid service champions business continuity management across the authority, however the responsibility for business continuity does not rest solely with the head of paid service, but is shared by all staff.

Assistant directors have been identified as lead officers for business continuity, responsible for obtaining information and co-ordinating departmental actions, or identifying another officer to undertake the responsibility on their behalf. Information gathered is subject to peer review to seek a consistent approach to service prioritisation and a shared understanding of the overall needs.

1.5   Governance

This plan takes into consideration the community risk register to ensure business continuity reflects the current assessment of likelihood of adverse events. It is also reviewed annually to ensure that information on service area functions is kept up to date.

The plan will be reviewed when there are significant changes to accommodation, structural reorganisations within the council or if new duties or responsibilities are taken on, however it is the responsibility of lead officers within each service area to notify the emergency planning division of any significant changes that occur between updates.

In line with current legislation the plan will be comprehensively reviewed every four years in parallel with the community risk register, but this is intended as a maximum period and the plan will remain a central management activity linked to risk management.

Periodically and in line with the council's auditing policy, the business continuity plan may be audited by either the internal audit team or external auditors appointed by the council.

The plan has also been benchmarked against local authority business continuity plans in Derbyshire and peer review at strategic level to seek a consistent approach to service prioritisation and a shared understanding of the overall needs. The benchmarking could be enriched by extending to plans outside of Derbyshire, and this is proposed in the future.

1.6   Training and exercises

Training takes place regularly for those officers likely to be called on to lead or be part of the business continuity management and support teams.

Lessons learnt from training and exercises are used to determine any amendments or inclusions required when the plan is updated.