The Moray Council

Business Continuity Policy

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Contents

BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

This policy guides The Moray Council in addressing the principles of Business Continuity Management to ensure compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Business continuity plans are required to ensure the Council can continue to deliver a minimum level of its critical services in the event of any disruption. This policy provides the compliance framework for the Council.

The policy requires Directors and Heads of Service to demonstrate that they have considered the need for a business continuity plan for every service within their department. Plans must be written, published and tested for all critical services.

2. Aims

The Moray Council, Business Continuity Policy provides a structure through which:

- Critical services and their supporting activities/resources can be identified.

- Plans will be developed to ensure continuity of critical service delivery following disruption, which may arise from loss of facilities, personnel, IT and/or communications or failure within the supply and support chains.

- Activation of business continuity plans throughout the Council can be managed.

- Plans are subject to continuous review and validation through exercising and testing.

3. Objectives

Business continuity plans must, as a minimum, address the following:

- Staff safety, welfare and internal communications.

- Adherence to contractual and statutory obligations.

- Management of risk.

- Maintenance of customer and public confidence and the reputation of The Moray Council.

- The timely resumption of critical functions.

4. Scope

4.1 The Council business continuity plan is based on standards defined by BS25999 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Each Business Continuity plan will be prepared to meet recognised standards of corporate governance.

4.2 All departments within The Moray Council are required to apply the Business Continuity Management methodology defined by the Council, to identify critical services and functions. Business continuity plans will then be developed which will include identifying key activities/business processes and key staff within each service, as well as the minimum resourcing and staffing levels required, should there be an interruption in service.

4.3 All officers and staff, and those working voluntarily or under contract to the Council must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant Council policies and procedures.

4.4 This policy also applies to the management of all supply chains especially outsourced contracts. It requires those responsible for negotiating and managing contracts to ensure appropriate business continuity conditions are included in contracts, in order that the service provider is able to deliver acceptable levels of service following a disruption to the Council or the supplying company.

4.5 The Moray Council corporate business continuity plan and departmental plans will include a clear procedure for invoking the plan, identifying key players and their roles in conjunction with the Moray Council Emergency Planning Policy and Procedures.

4.6 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory duty upon The Moray Council to carry out the above, and provide advice and assistance to local voluntary organisations and businesses in relation to business continuity management in the event of emergencies.

4.7 Performance monitoring will be co-ordinated by the Business Continuity Officer and will focus on the following components:

- Scope – to ensure that all critical functions are identified.

- Validation – to verify the plans works and are fit for purpose.

- Training and exercising – to familiarise key staff with what is expected of them in a crisis and preparing them for crisis conditions.

5. Benefits

The policy provides a clear commitment to business continuity management. During normal business and at times of heightened activity effective business continuity will enable the Council to:

- Continue to provide critical services to the public in times of disruption.

- Make best use of personnel and other resources at times when both may be scarce.

- Reduce the period of disruption to the organisation and the communities served.

- Resume normal working more efficiently and effectively after a period of disruption.

- Comply with standards of corporate governance.

- Improve the resilience of the organisation's infrastructure to reduce the likelihood of disruption.

- Reduce the operational and financial impact of any disruption.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Chief Executive

- Main "sponsor" of Business Continuity Planning within the Council.

- Will prioritise recovery tasks, in consultation with CMT, if conflicts of needs are identified.

6.2 Corporate Management Team

- Will ensure all critical services develop continuity plans, crisis management plans and recovery teams.

- Provides appropriate strategic guidance and resources where required.

- Will ensure each service carries out an annual review of its business impact assessment (BIA) and business continuity plans. Corporate Management Team will monitor the review process annually, benchmark the results and provide support where necessary.

- Will ensure all officers and staff are made aware of the plans that affect their services and their role following activation.

6.3   Departmental Management Teams

- Each activity within the Council is owned by a designated department/service. The Director or Head of Service will ensure that plans capable of maintaining a minimum acceptable standard of delivery are in place for each critical service and supporting activities.

- Each service must exercise its business continuity plan at least once a year and make modifications where necessary to take account of the exercise results. As a minimum each Head of Service, in conjunction with the Business Continuity Officer, take responsibility for the annual exercising of the plan.

- Each service will ensure that actions to address issues identified through the Business Impact Analysis required to progress agreed Business Continuity Strategies, will be included in team plans or service improvement plans as appropriate.

- Each department will identify a Business Continuity representative for the corporate business continuity task group.

6.4   Crisis Management Teams

Services must decide the point at which the trigger to establish a Crisis Management Team occurs.   This will be documented in the Business Continuity Plan along with the invocation and escalation procedures.

In the event of a number of services being affected and/or a major service or establishment (such as Headquarters) being unavailable, a Corporate Emergency Management Team is likely to be established. This Team will be comprised of the Chief Executive, all Directors and those Heads of Services affected, and will assess and direct the response at Strategic level.

All services will be required to work in accordance with the strategies laid down by this Corporate Team.

6.5   Business Continuity Officer

The Business Continuity Officer is the professional lead for business continuity within the Council and will:

- Support and advise CMT on business continuity and progress issues arising.

- Provide support and guidance to managers on business continuity planning.

- Co-ordinate the completion of business impact analysis to help identify critical functions, recovery timescales and strategies.

- Identify business continuity requirements common to multiple services, including standby sites and ICT services. Work with appropriate services to meet the needs of these requirements.

- Work across all services to ensure interdependencies are recognised and a consistent approach is applied across the organisation.

- Establish standards and procedures for Business Continuity Management council wide.

- Review and develop the policy in line with industry best practice and the needs of the Council.

- Monitor standards and compliance, across the council, with the policy.

- Manage and report on development and testing of plans.

- Provide access to appropriate training.

- Provide source of expertise and internal consultancy on business continuity.

- Provide support to local commercial activities and voluntary services regarding the development of BCPs.

- In conjunction with the Risk Manager (Internal Audit), will provide professional support to improve the resilience of critical services and supporting activities identified by the departments/services.

7. The Moray Council Corporate Business Continuity Plan

7.1 The corporate Business Continuity Plan will ensure that all departments identify their key risks and develop effective back up and recovery strategies to mitigate or avoid the impact of disruptive events in order to be able to continue to provide their critical services, whilst responding to an emergency.

7.2 The corporate Business Continuity Plan will take into consideration risks identified through the corporate risk management strategy.

Risks identified through the business impact analysis process will be notified to departmental management teams for inclusion in risk registers at the appropriate level.

8. Compliance and Certification

8.1 Legal Basis

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 introduced a statutory requirement that essential services to the public be maintained during disruption. The Moray

Council as a Category One responder to emergencies is required to have in place business continuity management arrangements.

This policy document is based on the standards laid down by the British Standard Institute, specifically BS25999-1:2006 "Business continuity management – Part One: Code of Practice", and the Scottish Government guidance document "Preparing Scotland".

8.2   Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

This policy has been assessed as low risk.

8.3   Data Protection

Personal data processed in compliance with this policy will be managed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

With regard to information security the council is working towards alignment with the standards set out in ISO27000. This includes the development and review of information security policies, guidelines and procedures for the council, as well as implementing specific security related projects and raising staff awareness of issues that they face.

8.4   Freedom of Information

This policy is suitable for public disclosure. It will be published on the Moray Council internet site.

8.5   Confidentiality

This policy will not be considered confidential. The actual Business Continuity Plans and supporting documentation will be assessed on an individual basis for confidentiality purposes and managed accordingly.

8.6   Monitoring and Review

Business continuity management is essential if the Moray Council is to meet its obligations to provide critical services to the public and partner agencies during a period of disruption.

The business continuity process will ensure that the organisation understands its processes and will therefore help to ensure that best value is achieved in all areas.

This policy will be reviewed as needed and was last updated in November 2008.

9.   Links to Other Documents

9.1   Staff Guidance

A toolkit developed to guide staff through the Business Impact analysis templates. It is currently available through the Senior Managers portal or from the business continuity officer.   Further guidance documents will be developed to facilitate the production of Business Continuity Plans.

This policy and the toolkit will be made available on the intranet and employees will be made aware of Business Continuity Plans that are relevant to them.

9.2   Health and Safety Policy

The Council Health and Safety policy will be adhered to at all times to ensure staff are protected.

9.3   Corporate Communication Strategy

Work will also be undertaken to develop methods of communicating with employees in the event of a disruption.

9.4   Risk Management Policy

9.5   Emergency Planning and Procedures

9.6   The Moray Council Information Security Policy

9.7   Records Management Policy