

**REVIEW OF BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING; ACTION PLAN PROGRESS**

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**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide a progress report on completing the action plan incorporated as **Annex 1** in the report by Internal Audit, 'Review of Business Continuity' (December 2011).
- 1.2 To provide a general overview of progress in completing the project plan for Business Continuity Planning.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Audit Committee confirms that all actions required by the report by Internal Audit, 'Review of Business Continuity' (December 2011) have now been closed, as detailed in **Annex 1**.
- 2.1 That the Audit Committee notes the status of the project, as reflected in the project team progress report detailed at **Annex 2** and described in section 4 below.
- 2.2 That the Committee requests a further update report for its meeting in December 2012 to confirm that arrangements for annual updating of recovery plans are in place, in addition to other actions listed in section 5 below.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 During 2008 and 2009, the Council initiated a programme to develop and establish Business Continuity Management within the Council, to ensure that 'critical' activities can be recovered quickly following any major incident which causes disruption of normal business. A critical activity has been defined as '*any activity which MUST be delivered following an unexpected event...*'
- 3.2 In December 2011 an internal audit report identified a list of twelve actions to be addressed relating to the existing Business Continuity Planning arrangements; including;
- The scope, content and regular review of recovery plans
  - A review of the critical activities for each service
  - A requirement to engage with stakeholders and local communities
- 3.3 A project officer was appointed on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012, to deliver these actions as well as other objectives detailed in the project initiation document and subsequently in the project implementation plan.

## 4. PROJECT PROGRESS

- 4.1 A project team with representation from each department together with staff from Civil Contingencies and IT have now achieved many of the scheduled milestones, including:-
- Establishing a Sharepoint site (linked to Civil Contingencies) to provide a document library and to facilitate collaborative working
  - Mapping the Council's services from the 2008 structure to the current structure (to ensure that all critical activities are incorporated)
  - Developing and completing impact assessments to provide a robust ranking of critical activities (**Annex 3**) which has already been applied in recent corporate planning e.g. potential threat to fuel supplies
  - Redesigning the recovery plan template to provide a more comprehensive and rigorous model which addresses concerns identified in the 2011 audit report and incorporates a section for quality checks (see **Annex 4**) and developing a separate recovery plan template for loss of a school (**Annex 5**)
  - Producing first drafts of recovery plans for all critical activities
  - Engaging with community groups and stakeholders to inform the content of the recovery plan templates
  - Benchmarking with ten other Councils across Scotland in relation to critical activities and recovery plans.
- 4.2 Late submission of some recovery plans has led to delays in other linked elements of the project plan e.g. collating the data required for stakeholder consultation and preparing action plans linked to the main recovery plans.
- 4.3 The recovery plans for Adult Care services, linked to four different critical activities, were not completed on schedule. However additional resources were applied to address this issue and to date (21<sup>st</sup> June), first drafts for 47 of the 49 plans have now been submitted. A further update will be provided when this report is presented at committee.
- 4.4 Despite these obstacles the project team has been able to address all of the recommended actions from the December 2011 audit report. A summary of how these issues have been resolved is noted in the final column of the table in **Annex 1**, although a more detailed explanation can be provided at the Audit Committee meeting.

## 5. FUTURE ISSUES

- 5.1 The project team will offer support to colleagues in Adult Care to assist in completing the remaining recovery plans.

- 5.2** Actions plans to support the core recovery plans are being drafted and are expected to be completed within the overall timescale of the project. However it may not be possible to include all Adult Care activities, subject to completion of those recovery plans.
- 5.3** Although the recovery plan for a High school has been agreed in principle, further consultation with Head Teachers is on-going to add further detail to the template. An equivalent template for a Primary school will be progressed, following this model.
- 5.4** The results from benchmarking, stakeholder and community consultation will be incorporated in the recovery plan template as appropriate and will also be shared with officers leading other relevant initiatives e.g. community resilience project. A summary of the benchmarking results is attached at **Annex 6**.
- 5.5** Once all additional information has been added and final quality checks are completed then the recovery plans will be submitted to relevant Heads of Service for approval.
- 5.6** The final version of project documents are currently loaded to a Sharepoint site shared with the Civil Contingencies Unit. Part of the project plan is to explore options for a flexible, robust database and this work has now started.
- 5.7** Project materials, including benchmarking and consultation results will be shared with officers involved in linked corporate initiatives, including Civil Contingencies and Community Resilience.
- 5.8** When all recovery plans have been completed a system of regular review and revision will be incorporated within the Pyramid performance management tool to ensure that plans remain current (initial discussions underway).

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1** The issues raised in the report by internal audit have been effectively addressed and should meet the expectations of the Audit Committee.
- 6.2** The revised list of critical activities now provides a more focussed and practical mechanism for prioritising resources in recovering essential service provision following an emergency incident.
- 6.3** Resourcing issues continue to impact on some aspects of the project and although key objectives are expected to be met within the overall timescale, the quality of plans for some services may not meet the desired standard.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Policy</b> : Supports Council policy on Business Continuity Planning
<b>Financial</b> : None
<b>Equal Opportunities</b> : Addressed through consultation and benchmarking
<b>Personnel</b> : None

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