

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	20 June 2019
Subject:	Business Continuity Policy		
Report of:	Head of Corporate Resources	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

In the event of a major incident such as a fire resulting in the loss of access to a building, loss of ICT or pandemic flu it is good practice for organisations to have in place plans to ensure that services can continue to be provided. In the case of local authorities, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places an additional statutory requirement for Local Authorities to put in place a Business Continuity Management Programme.

The Council has existing business continuity arrangements to ensure the continued delivery of its priority activities to protect its vulnerable residents in the event of an emergency.

This policy sets out Sefton's approach to implementing effective business continuity arrangements across all service areas by enhancing the activity on business continuity which will ensure the timely recovery of priority services in the event of an incident.

Recommendation:

That the Council's proposed Business Continuity Policy be approved.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To provide leadership, clear direction and priority for the Council it is proposed that a Business Continuity Policy setting out the Council's approach and commitment is presented to the Cabinet for approval.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

None considered

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no additional revenue costs associated with the approval of the Policy.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no capital costs associated with the approval of the Policy.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):
There are no resource implications
Legal Implications:
There are no legal implications
Equality Implications:
There are no equality implications.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: The adoption of the Policy will help to ensure that services can continue to be provided to vulnerable residents of Sefton in the event of a business continuity incident.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Effective business continuity arrangements will assist in facilitating the development of confident and resilient communities.
Commission, broker and provide core services: Effective business continuity arrangements both internally and with external suppliers will help to ensure that services provided to vulnerable residents will continue to be provided in the event of a major incident.
Place – leadership and influencer: n/a
Drivers of change and reform: n/a
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: n/a
Greater income for social investment: n/a
Cleaner Greener: n/a

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD 5621/19) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 4745/19) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Business Continuity Policy

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In the event of a major incident such as a fire resulting in the loss of access to a building, loss of ICT or pandemic flu it is good practice for organisations to have in place plans to ensure that services can continue to be provided. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places an additional statutory requirement for Local Authorities to put in place a Business Continuity Management Programme to ensure the Council can deliver its priority activities in the event of an emergency. The Council's constitution states that services are expected to have arrangements in place to ensure the effective identification, evaluation and management of priority activities for the Council to recover.
- 1.2 The Council's existing business continuity arrangements were identified as requiring to be refreshed to reflect the new operating arrangements that have been in place since December 2018. The planned review of the existing business continuity arrangements includes a new comprehensive Business Impact Analysis (BIA) exercise and the defining of Business Continuity Plans (BCP) across all service areas populated with data from the completed BIAs.
- 1.3 As part of the policy framework for business continuity, a Business Continuity Policy and Business Continuity Strategy have been developed to provide guidance and

support the implementation of a refreshed business continuity model across the Council.

2. Revised Policy

2.1 The Policy (provided at Appendix A) sets out Sefton Council's commitment to the management of Business Continuity by ensuring we have a Corporate Business Continuity Plan supported by Strategic, Tactical and Operational Recovery plans. This will enable the Council to respond to any incident or disruption and maintain our ability to continue to deliver priority activities and meet our contractual, legislative and regulatory obligations.

2.2 The Policy sets out the activities to ensure this policy is effectively implemented throughout the Council. To achieve this goal, we will:

- Maintain a Business Continuity Management Programme that broadly aligns to the requirements of ISO 22301 and the Business Continuity Institute Good Practice Guide 2018;
- Establish Business Continuity objectives and targets, processes and procedures relevant to managing risk and improving organisational resilience;
- Ensure that the Business Continuity Management Programme is subject to on-going appraisal against this policy evidenced by a structured testing regime;
- Maintain and improve Business Continuity Management Programme arrangements through preventive and corrective actions; and ensure that the Business Continuity Management Programme and associated policy, standards, procedures and plans are embedded into the day-to-day activities and culture of the business.

2.3 The proposed Policy provides a strong foundation to implement a revised enhanced business continuity model across the organisation.

3. Current and proposed activity to embed business continuity

3.1 The Risk and Resilience Team has devised with colleagues from Learning and Development an e-learning course focused on providing general awareness on business continuity that is to be rolled out to all staff. A second classroom based course is currently being designed to be delivered to managers who will be involved in responding to a business continuity incident.

3.2 The Risk and Audit Team has completed successfully within the original target time of 30th April 2019 the BIA exercise with teams across all the service areas within the Council. This exercise will inform the completion of BCPs. The format of the Sefton BCP template to be used across the Council has been devised and signed off.

3.3 The current focus of the Risk and Resilience Team, in the roll out of the Council Business Continuity Strategy, is the completion of the Business Continuity Plans across all Services by the 31st August 2019.

4. Progress on business continuity activity across Sefton

4.1 Progress on the embedding of the business continuity framework is reported to the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Business Continuity Policy should be approved.