

Business Continuity Policy

June 2019

Contents	Reference	Page No
Business Continuity Management Policy	1.	4
Policy Statement	1.1	4
Purpose	1.2	4
Scope	1.3	4
Key Messages	2.	5
Aims and Objectives	2.1	5
Metrics to support the Objectives	2.2	5
Policy Principles	2.3	5
Policy Governance	3.	6
Conforming to policy	3.1	6
Review and Revision	3.2	7
Appendix A - External and internal reference documents		8

Version Control

Version number	Date	Approved by	Effective from
1	20/06/19	Cabinet	

Business Continuity Management Policy

1.1 Policy Statement

1.1.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a 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. Services are expected to have arrangements in place to ensure the effective identification, evaluation and management of priority activities for the Council to recover.

1.1.2 This policy sets out Sefton Council's commitment to the management of Business Continuity. By ensuring we have a Corporate 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.

1.1.3 The Strategic Leadership Board has overall accountability 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.

1.2 Purpose

1.2.1 Business Continuity is not an additional activity undertaken by the Local Authority it is a key component of a well-run organisation by ensuring priority activities continue to be delivered in a crisis. Business Continuity provides a structured process to return service delivery to usual working standards should the business be disrupted by:

- Loss of staff / people
- Loss of premises
- IT and information issues
- Suppliers and partners
- Civil Emergency Incident

1.3 Scope

1.3.1 Sefton Council's Business Continuity Management Programme encompasses all of our operations. This includes our outward facing service areas as well as corporate support functions such as HR, IT and Finance.

1.3.2 The Business Continuity Management Policy applies to the following stakeholders:

- All staff members;
- Contractors
- Delivery partners within our trusted supply chain.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 Sefton Council are committed to maintaining our business activities to a high standard and responding to any form of disruption in a structured way. To do this we have an overarching Business Continuity Framework in the form of a Corporate Plan, supported by Strategic, Tactical and Operational / Recovery plans to facilitate the return to business as usual as quickly as possible. The objectives to support the Business Continuity Management Programme (BCMP) creates a calendar of regular monitoring events, creating a picture of how the BCMP is performing and providing all the information required to exercise management control.

- Fully understand the organisation and develop a robust and enduring continuity response in critical areas and activities;
- Exercise and test continuity arrangements and plans to ensure suitability;
- Work with Agilisys to ensure IT disaster recovery arrangements are appropriate for the organisation;
- Provide appropriate training and awareness of the BCMP to further embed the continuity culture within the organisation;
- Maintain and continually improve the BCMP to ensure it remains current, appropriate, effective and aligned to industry standards and best practice;
- Manage existing and emerging external continuity considerations (in essence, understanding our suppliers);
- Review and maintain continuity-related risks and threats to the organisation.

2.2 Metrics to support the Implementation of Business Continuity

2.2.1 The metrics are the measurements by which performance of the BCMP to achieve the policy objectives is assessed. The Head of Corporate Resources is responsible to co-ordinate the collection on the performance of the metrics and present findings in a metrics dashboard for presentation within the annual Management Review. Any deficiencies in performance against the metrics will form part of the corrective action process for improvements to be made to the BCMP. The metrics are monitored quarterly, with a summary report produced for circulation to the Audit and Governance Committee.

2.2.2 The following table outlines the key metrics:

Metric:	How:	Outcome:
Business Continuity Manual and Business Continuity / Recovery Plans are reviewed to ensure up to date and fit for purpose.	Reviewed by Business Continuity Manual and Plan Owners twice a year.	Result of review — update as required. Evidence of review recorded on the Testing and Exercise Schedule.

Metric:	How:	Outcome:
Strategic and Tactical Exercises to ensure roles and responsibilities are understood and to demonstrate good management of an incident.	Desktop exercise twice per year.	Exercises documented with any improvements recorded on the BCMP Improvement Plan for implementation.
Business Recovery Plan Exercise and testing to demonstrate the organisation can recover key activities.	Exercise and testing to be carried out in line with documented procedure. Testing and exercising schedules provided to the Risk and Resilience team for monitoring to ensure completed.	Results recorded and improvements recorded on the BCMP Improvement Plan for implementation.
Call Cascade to test communicating with Strategic, tactical team members and Heads of Departments during an incident.	Full cascade to be tested twice a year.	Results recorded and improvements recorded on the BCMP Improvement Plan for implementation.
Business Continuity Management Risk Register and Business Impact Analysis Review to capture and manage the risks and impact on the business in relation to Business Continuity.	Review by Risk and Resilience Team with action owners quarterly.	Document outcome of review with action owners on the risk register and update the Business Impact Analysis as necessary.
Review Business Continuity arrangements with Council's key suppliers.	Supplier questionnaire sent to key suppliers annually.	Questionnaire and supporting information reviewed to ensure suitability to Sefton's requirements. Actions are managed through the BCMP Improvement Plan
All staff to complete the Council online Business Continuity training module	Online training module updated and released for completion on an annual basis.	Corporate Training monitors completion for compliance training, the results of which are included in the metrics dashboard

2.3 Policy Principles

2.3.1 Business Continuity Management is an on-going management and governance process and works on the *plan, do, check, act* principle. To achieve this we follow a management framework to ensure all aspects of the Business Continuity Life Cycle are accomplished.

2.3.2 The Business Continuity Management Programme considers and addresses the following which are detailed in our Business Continuity Plans:

- Conditions for activating plans — lie with identified individuals and specialists who have the delegated authority to invoke their plan to support the recovery of business during an incident.
- Emergency procedures — are in place with all sites for the safe evacuation of employee partners and alternative arrangements for the continuation of business.
- Fall back procedures — that support the maintenance of our key services and the identification of key personnel with specialist knowledge and security clearance.
- Temporary operating procedures — identifying which tasks are key and have alternative operating disciplines pending completion of recovery and return to business as usual.
- Resumption of normal operating procedures — which explain how we return to business as usual following an incident.
- Maintenance schedule for plans and tests — specifies how and when plans will be tested.
- Awareness and education — a continual process of raising awareness across the whole business and additional education for personnel with Business Continuity responsibilities.
- Roles and responsibilities — identify who has the appropriate delegated authority, and what actions they need to take during an incident.
- Critical assets and resources — identified specialists, documented plans, processes and procedures and their availability to support crisis management. Back-up copies of plans and procedures should be kept both on and off site and available in paper and electronic format.

3. Policy Governance

3.1 Conforming to policy

3.1.1 The Council's compliance with the policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Risk and Audit Team and will provide quarterly assurance to the Audit and Governance Committee. Identified non-conformity will be reviewed and any corrective actions implemented or escalated in accordance with standard business processes.

3.1.2 The governance for this policy is outlined using a RACI matrix.

Responsible	Those responsible for the development, maintenance and implementation of this policy.	Head of Corporate Resources Chief internal Auditor Senior Finance Manager
Accountable	Individuals that are accountable for the implementation and performance of this policy.	Heads of Service
Consulted	Groups or individuals that must be involved during policy development and review	Heads of Service
Informed	Groups or individuals that must be informed about this policy after publication and amendments.	All staff

3.2 Review and Revision

3.2.1 This policy is subject to the following review schedule:

- **Implementation Review:** Six months following any initial release or change / amendment
- **Performance Review:** Annually (Twelve months following last release)

Appendix A – Internal and External reference documents

External Documents

1. BS ISO 22301:2014 Societal Security — Business Continuity Management Programmes — Requirements
2. Business Continuity Institute Good Practice Guidelines 2018 Global Edition

Sefton Documents

1. Sefton Business Continuity Manual.