

Business Continuity Policy

Version 4.0

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Version control

Version History				
Version	Date	Detail	Author	Approver
1.0	January 2016	New document	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Executive Director (Resources)
1.1	August 2016	Change of council leader	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Executive Director (Resources)
2.0	May 2018	Review	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Executive Director (Resources)
3.0	August 2019	Review of document and change of council leader	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Executive Director (Resources)
4.0	June 2021	Review of document and change of council leader	Senior Emergency Planning Officer	Executive Director (Resources)

Foreword

This Business Continuity Policy supports the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the council's Corporate Business Continuity Plan and Corporate Improvement Plan 2020-2023.

The importance of council services improving community well-being, make it essential to plan in advance how we intend to respond to events that may prevent us from operating efficiently and effectively.

It would be easy to concentrate on what may be perceived to be a major crisis such as terrorism, influenza pandemic or a fuel shortage. But we also have a duty to look ahead to less newsworthy but predictable problems, such as severe weather or the loss of power, water or communications. We must be able to continue providing core services even when things go wrong.

Risk assessments have been carried out nationally, regionally and locally to measure the likelihood and impact of external hazards and threats. As an emergency planning authority, we need to ensure we have done everything necessary to prepare our services for these risks.

This Business Continuity Policy provides the strategic framework for our Corporate Business Continuity Plan around which we can work to enable our most important services to be restored as quickly as possible in the event of a disruption. In this way the confidence of local people and organisations will be retained in the face of any problems that may arise.

It is important that this process, as well as risk management, is integrated into the core activities of the council. This will continue to be promoted through the programme of training and exercises to test our Corporate Business Continuity Plan.

Business continuity planning is now not only a statutory duty, it is also a sound practice that the council must promote among the business and voluntary sectors in the borough.

Councillor Kevin Buttery
Leader of the Council

Sylvia Delahay
Executive Director (Resources)

1 Policy

1.1 Scope

Amber Valley Borough 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 Corporate 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.
- To address 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.
- To have specific strategies in place to mitigate the effects of loss of infrastructure including buildings, communications, IT and staff.
- To prepare and maintain business continuity service area arrangements where appropriate.

1.2 Strategic business continuity management aim and objectives

Aim

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.

Objectives

- 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 service areas 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 executive director (resources) champions business continuity management across the authority, however the responsibility for business continuity does not rest solely with the executive director (resources) but is shared by all staff.

Service managers have been identified as lead officers for business continuity, responsible for obtaining information and co-ordinating service area 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

The Corporate Business Continuity Plan took effect from 2006 and is reviewed annually against the community risk register to ensure business continuity reflects the current assessment of likelihood of adverse events.

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 officer of any significant changes that occur between updates.

In line with current legislation the corporate 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 Corporate Business Continuity Plan may be audited by either the internal audit team or external auditors appointed by the council.

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.