

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

JUNE 2017

BUSINESS CONTINUITY – UPDATE REPORT

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To provide an overview of the current Business Continuity (BC) arrangements for North Yorkshire County Council and to provide continued high assurance for the management of risk within directorates and service areas.

2 Background

2.1 A comprehensive review of NYCC Business Continuity (BC) took place during 2014. Following the review, an updated methodology was introduced in order to prioritise the business continuity needs of each individual service area. This review considered the recommendations of the internal audit of October 2013 and ensured a consistent and corporate approach to BC planning across the organisation during any disruption to our provision of critical services.

The NYCC Resilience and Emergencies Team (R&ET) responded to the internal audit recommendations and service area manager feedback, to focus on reducing bureaucracy by working together with service managers to migrate existing business continuity plans into a consistent corporate document format consisting of:

Business Impact Analysis (BIA) - The Business Impact Analysis looks at **critical business functions** and quantifies the impact a loss of those functions may have.

An Incident Management Plan (IMP) - The Incident Management Plan helps a service area to plan a process to respond to and **work around** a range of possible impacts on their critical services.

2.3 These documents are now held centrally on the NYCC BC share-point site for ease of access allowing both practitioners and senior management to make informed business continuity decisions during any disruption of identified critical services.

3 Corporate Business Continuity Policy and Strategy

3.1 Business Continuity (BC) and any disruption to provision of NYCC services are now corporately addressed through a consistent assessment considering loss of staff, equipment and technology, buildings and key suppliers. These considerations are addressed through pre-planning and mitigation measures identified in service area BC plans.

3.2 Each directorate has continued to work with the R&ET to utilise planning training and exercising focused to ensure staff know what to do and when to do it during any disruptive incident.

3.3 To ensure conformity, specific officers have been designated to review service area BC arrangements and a reporting regime put in place. Every directorate now has a designated BC champion to oversee their business continuity and to represent their directorate at the Corporate Risk Management Group (CRMG) in support of managers producing BC plans for any directorate **critical services**.

3.4 The Corporate Director (Strategic Resources) continues to have overall responsibility for BC within NYCC, with the BC function co-ordinated and supported by the R&ET. The Leader of the Council, Cllr. Carl Les, continues to hold the executive portfolio for resilience, emergency planning and business continuity.

3.5 Directorates are required to provide a BC RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status update to the CRMG every quarter. This process allows directorate BC champions to inform their directors on the current status of their directorate BC plans who can, in turn, confirm their satisfaction in their annual statements of assurance.

4 Corporate Business Continuity Plan

4.1 A Corporate NYCC Business Continuity Plan is now in place, ratified by NYCC Management Board and introduced to ensure a consistent and coordinated response across the organisation during any major or significant disruption. This plan has recently been used to good effect during the fracking protests, the cyber-attacks and flooding incidents impacting on NYCC. The provision of a structured framework for communication and management of information across all directorates during any disruption allows informed strategic management decisions to be made across the organisation to identify priorities in the restoration of critical services.

4.2 The Corporate BC Plan has evolved and organisational learning has been taken from recent incidents impacting on NYCC including utility failures, the Selby recycling fires in 2014 and 2015, the Winter storms and flooding in 2015/16 and lessons learnt from the Tour de France and very successful Tour de Yorkshire races.

4.3 Some service areas such as Technology and Change and the Customer Service Centre have very specific recovery requirements during any critical service disruption. As such they have additional plans to ensure they can support response to wider disruption across NYCC. These service areas however, still provide corporate Incident Management Plans to allow informed strategic and corporate BC decision making during service disruption.

4.4 Designated officers within the R&ET continue to provide on-going support for directorate BC champions and their staff within each directorate. The R&ET officers work with the directorates to ensure that service areas have the knowledge and support to meet their BC responsibilities and that an annual work-plan including exercises is completed within an agreed time-scale.

4.5 It is acknowledged that BC planning is an on-going process and that the R&ET and directorates will continue to work together within the identified structures to ensure robust, well-planned and exercised BC arrangements are in place to provide the required assurance across the organisation.

4.6 This continued development and the progress made was acknowledged by the Veritau audit team in January 2017 which stated that the current arrangements for business continuity within NYCC are deemed to provide **Substantial Assurance**.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Audit Committee to note the current business continuity, planning and resilience arrangements within North Yorkshire County Council and the Management Board endorsement of the NYCC Corporate Business Continuity Plan.

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