

West Sussex County Council

Business Continuity and Resilience Policy

V4.0

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Dear Colleagues,

Recent events, both internationally and closer to home, have highlighted the importance of planning for adverse events such as terrorism, industrial accident, fire, loss of Council offices, illness of employees, or severe weather to name but a few. When these events occur there is a strong likelihood that each Directorate and Business Unit may well be called upon implement its own Business Continuity plans and/or to provide resources to help manage the crisis, support affected people and communities, and assist with the recovery. Aside from the moral obligation the County Council also has a legal duty to ensure that it has in place robust Business Continuity and Resilience (BCR) plans that fulfil its statutory obligations.

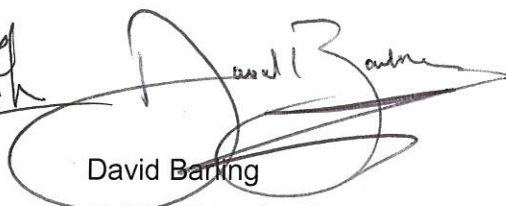
This Policy lays out the County Council's commitment to ensure that Directorates and Business Units within the County Council have the required plans in place, and that all Council Employees understand that they have a role to play in implementing those plans. The Policy also articulates the duties of Directors, Business Unit Leaders and the Councils Resilience and Emergencies Team in delivering, testing and reviewing those plans.

All of us assign a high priority to ensuring the Council is resilient and able to operate during an incident and more importantly support and assist the communities that we serve. This can only be achieved by the regular review, maintenance and engagement with the issue of Business Continuity and Resilience. We encourage all Council employees to seek out, read and understand their Business Continuity and Resilience Plans and raise concerns or issues either directly with ourselves or via your Line Managers.

Signed:



Louise Goldsmith
Leader



David Barling
Cabinet Member for
Residents Services



Nathan Elvery
Chief Executive

Dated: 26th October 2016

Vision Statement

We will ensure that we have in place robust Business Continuity and Resilience (BCR) Plans that ensure we are resilient and able to deliver critical services during adverse events **and** support residents and communities within the West Sussex Area.

Guiding Principles

This Policy is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

- Business Continuity ensures that Directorates and employees can continue to deliver critical services when adverse events impact on us e.g. loss of building, employee illness, loss of IT systems.
- Resilience is the ability to deliver critical services to the residents and communities of West Sussex during adverse events e.g. flooding, industrial accident.
- The issue of BCR is owned by the relevant Director and Business Unit leader supported by advice from the Council Resilience and Emergencies Team (RET).

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to;

1. Clearly identify where responsibility for BCR plans resides.
2. Highlight key BCR documents.
3. Outline the role of the RET and how it can support and advise Directorates in developing BCR plans.
4. State the roles and responsibilities of key personnel involved in BCR within West Sussex County Council.
5. State how the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) will assess Directorate and Business Unit progress and maintenance of Business Continuity and Resilience Plans.

Responsibility

The development and implementation of effective and robust BCR plans requires the participation of council employees at all levels however responsibility for delivery and maintenance rests with Directors.

Keys documents

Aside from this document there are a two other key documents which employees should be aware of and if conducting any duty role be fully conversant with;

1. Sussex Resilience Forum Sussex Emergency Response and Recovery (SERR) Policy and Procedure.
2. West Sussex Corporate Response and Recovery Plan.

These documents can be accessed via Resilience Direct ([Resilience Direct Login](#)) and detail key strategic process and procedures utilising best practice and following Government guidelines and are the basis upon which Directorate and Business Unit BCR plans should be developed.

Resilience & Emergencies Team (RET)

The RET is a small team comprising 9 staff based in Chichester F&RS HQ. Its roles and tasks are, in order of priority;

1. Provide 24 hour emergency advice to Directorates and Duty Personnel.
2. In the event of a major incident activate the Council Emergency Centre (CEC).
3. Provide Liaison Officers to Strategic Coordination Groups (SCGs) and Gold, Silver and Bronze Command if established and required.
4. Support the Chair of the WSCC Strategic Recovery Group.
5. Advise WSCC Cabinet and ELT during a major incident.
6. Advise and assist Directorates on the development and maintenance of BCR Plans.
7. Advise and assist Directorates in promoting and developing resilient communities within West Sussex.
8. Facilitate the delivery of BCR training to WSCC personnel involved in BCR planning.
9. Provide ELT with assurance that Directorate BCR Plans are in place and maintained through the design and delivery of Exercises.
10. Develop collaborative working relationships and liaison with County Council services, relevant Agencies and organisations.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive

1. The Chief Executive will ensure that;
 - a. The ELT is fully conversant with this Policy and adheres to it.
 - b. The Council is fulfilling its statutory obligations under relevant legislation such as the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
 - c. BCR planning features on ELT meetings at least bi-annually.

Executive Directors and Directors

1. Executive Directors and Directors are to;
 - a. Ensure that each Directorate has an appointed BCR Coordinator and that this role is reflected in the individuals Personal Development Record. Directors are to ensure that the sufficient time is allocated to the individual in order to carry out their duties.
 - b. Where required appoint BCR Leaders in Business Units to support BCR Champions.
 - c. Review their Business Impact Analysis (BIA) annually except where significant structural or change of Executive Director, Director or Business Unit leader has taken place in which case an immediate BIA review is to be conducted.
 - d. Ensure that BCR plans are in place and maintained.
 - e. Exercise all BCR plans at least once every 2 years with support from the RET.

Directorate BCR Coordinators

1. Directorate BCR Coordinators are to act as the focal point for BCR related matters within their Directorate.
2. They are to ensure that their responsibilities are accurately included in their PDR and assessed by the Director.
3. They are to ensure they have completed the requisite training provided by the Resilience and Emergencies Team (RET).
4. Specifically Directorate BCR Coordinators are to;
 - a. Ensure that each Directorate has conducted a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) and that it is approved and signed by the Director.
 - b. Utilise the BIA to design and develop Business Continuity Plans for their own Directorate
 - c. Support Service/Business Unit BCR Leaders in the production of Service/Business Unit specific BCR plans.
 - d. Liaise with their appointed RET Advisor.
 - e. Ensure that all Service/Business Unit BCR Leaders, as well as themselves, have completed BCR Training.

Business Unit/Service BCR Leaders

1. BC Leaders are to act as the focal point for BCR related matters in their Business Unit or Service.
2. They are to ensure that their role and responsibilities are accurately included in their PDR.
3. They are to ensure they have completed the requisite training provided by the Resilience and Emergencies Team (RET).
4. Specifically BCR Leaders are to;
 - a. Support Directorate BCR Coordinators in conducting BIA within their Service/Business Unit.
 - b. Develop Business Continuity plans that ensure their Service/Business Unit is able to deliver critical services (in line with the BIA) in the event of incident e.g. loss of IT, loss of offices, illness of staff etc.
 - c. Develop Resilience Plans that ensure their Business Unit is able to support the Council Emergency Centre in the event of a major incident e.g. flooding, adverse weather.

- d. Develop, in conjunction with their BCR Coordinator and Directorate RET Advisor an Exercise programme that ensures plans are tested at least once every 2 years.
- e. Ensure new employees read this policy and aware of their role in BCR.
- f. Submit bids for BCR training to their BC Coordinator.
- g. Ensure Service/Business Unit BCRs, including Emergency Communication Plans, are maintained

Council Employees

All council employees are to ensure that they have read this policy and understand their role in any Business unit BCR plans.

Head of the Resilience & Emergencies Team (RET)

1. The Head of RET is responsible for advising the Council, Elected Members and Chief Executive on all issues relating to BCR.
2. The Head of RET will ensure that the Council meets all its statutory legal obligations.
3. The Head of RET will;
 - a. Ensure that the RET provides an on-call 24/7 emergency advice service to Directorates and WSCC employees.
 - b. Provide Quarterly updates to the Chief Executive on Directorate BCR planning and maintenance, policy and key BCR risks affecting the Council.
 - c. Appoint a RET Advisor to each Directorate to act as a source of advice and support to Directors and BCR Coordinators.
 - d. Provide assurance on all Directorate and Business Unit BCR Plans through a programmed set of exercises.
 - e. Maintain the WSCC Business Corporate Response and Recovery Plan.
 - f. In conjunction with the Communities Directorate facilitate and support the delivery and development of resilient and safer communities and volunteer organisations.
 - g. Ensure CLT, BCR Coordinators and BCR Leaders receive training in BCR.
 - h. Manage the Council Emergency Centre (CEC) if activated, and advise and assist the Chief Executive in coordinating the WSCC response to adverse events.
 - i. Co-ordinate and deliver training to CLT and all Directorate BCR Coordinators and Service BCR Leaders.

Assurance

The RET, in consultation with Directors and BCR Coordinators, will organise and conduct a program to test Directorate and Business Unit BCR plans. This will be a progressive assurance process involving simple Table Top Exercises through to complex protracted multi-Directorate Exercises involving external organisations and agencies.

Consultation with Unions and Staff Representatives

The Council has a duty to consult with staff on any matters that affect health, safety and welfare at work. In areas where this policy and supporting corporate guides, plans, and procedures impact on health, safety and welfare there will be full consultation conducted within the normal service unit arrangements. Corporately, consultation will be carried out with recognised union or staff representatives where practicable.

Reviewing the Policy

This Policy will be reviewed a minimum of every three years, unless an event takes place requiring a review e.g. new legal requirements, non-statutory guidance from central government and relevant Standards or a change in Chief Executive.

