

CHAPTER 1: BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND POLICY

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1.1.0 Background

The Business Continuity Management (BCM) Strategy and Policy sets the framework for our BCM programme. It is vital to have top management buy-in to the implementation of the BCM programme and to make a public statement of intent, endorsed by the Chief Executive and Leader.

The main elements and purpose of the BCM Strategy and Policy are to:

1. appoint an executive with overall responsibility and accountability for BCM
2. gain buy-in to and get a strategic statement of support for BCM
3. identify other key roles and responsibilities
4. gain assurance that the BCM programme is aligned with the organisations strategic objectives.

The key outcomes

- gain strategic, top level management support for the whole BCM programme; signed off by the Chief Executive and Leader
- set the framework for compliance with best practice guidelines, produced by the British Standards Institute (BS 25999).

This document is structured as follows:

Section 1: Business Continuity Management Strategy

Appendix 1.A: Business Continuity Management Policy Statement

1.2.0 Section 1: Business Continuity Management Strategy

1.2.1 Introduction

This Business Continuity Strategy provides the framework within which Thanet District Council can comply with best practice guidelines, produced by the British Standards Institute (BS 25999), and which is consistent with corporate governance best practice. Business continuity plans will ensure that the organisation can continue to deliver a minimum level of service in its critical functions in the event of any disruption.

The Strategy requires senior managers to demonstrate that they have considered the need for business continuity planning to cover each functional process within their area of responsibility. The focal point for the production, coordination, validation and review of the council's business continuity activity strategy will be the Corporate Governance and Risk Officer.

Corporate business continuity is closely linked to corporate risk management and this Strategy should be read in conjunction with the council's Risk Management Strategy.

The basic principles¹ of the Business Continuity Strategy have been accepted by the Corporate Management Team, Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet.

1.2.2 Scope

This Strategy applies to all parts of the council as all areas play a key role in maintaining service delivery. The requirement to plan applies to activities identified as critical through the council's business continuity methodology and agreed by the Corporate Management Team, Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet.

[This includes the management of outsourced contracts, and requires those responsible for negotiating and managing them to ensure appropriate business continuity standards are included in contracts so that the service provider is able to deliver acceptable standards of service following a disruption to the organisation or the supplying company.]

1.2.3 Definition of Business Continuity Management (BCM)

Business continuity management (BCM) can be defined as:

'A holistic management process that identifies potential threats to an organisation and the impacts to business operations that those threats, if realised, might cause, and which provides a framework for building organisational resilience with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value creating activities.'

BS 25999 Business continuity management – Part 1: Code of Practice - British Standards Institute

It is therefore about the council preparing for a disaster, incident or event that could affect the delivery of services. The aim being that at all times key elements of service are maintained at an emergency level, and brought back up to an acceptable level as soon as possible.

¹ BS25999 Part 1: Code of Practice

1.2.4 Benefits of Business Continuity Management

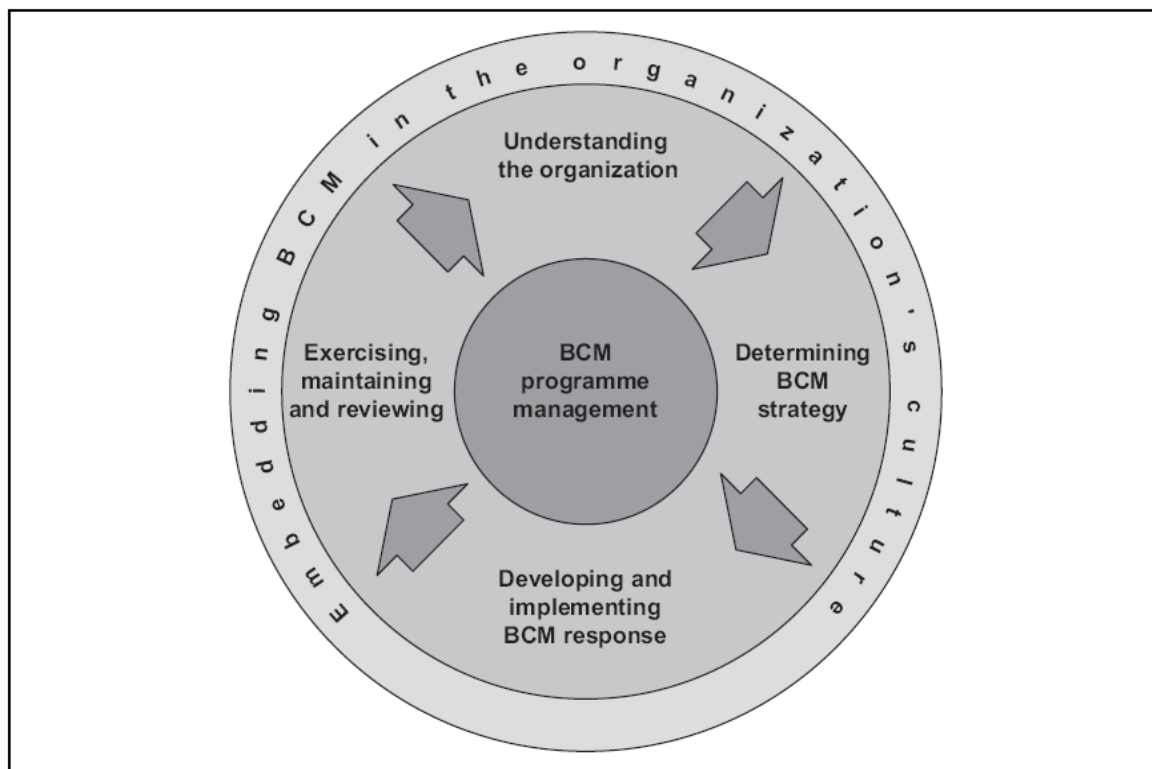
Effective business continuity management delivers a number of tangible and intangible benefits to individual services and to the council as a whole, including:

- a. develops a clearer understanding of how the council works (business process analysis)
- b. protects the council, ensuring that it can help others in an emergency (facilitated by the BCP)
- c. protects the reputation of the council (facilitated by the BCP)
- d. produces clear cost benefits (business impact analysis)
- e. facilitates legislative compliance and good corporate governance (implementation of BCP and subsequent management).

1.2.5 Delivering the Strategy – Methodology

The process being used within the council is based on the BCM model outlined in BS 25999 Business continuity management – Part 1: Code of Practice published by the British Standards Institute – see below.

Figure 1 The business continuity management lifecycle



This process involves the following activities:

a. BCM programme management

This includes:

- assigning responsibilities for implementing and maintaining the BCM programme within the council
- implementing business continuity in the council – including the design, build and implementation of the programme
- the ongoing management of business continuity – including regular review and updates of business continuity arrangements and plans.

b. Understanding the organisation

The use of business impact and risk assessments (see below) to identify critical deliverables, evaluate priorities and assess risks to service delivery.

- Business Impact Analysis (BIA) – identifying the critical processes and functions and assessing the impacts on the council if these were disrupted or lost. BIA is the crucial first stage in implementing BCM, and helps measure the impact disruptions on the organisation
- Risk assessment – once those critical processes and functions have been identified, a risk assessment can be conducted to identify the potential threats to these processes.

c. Determining BCM Strategy

The identification of alternative strategies to mitigate loss, and assessment of their potential effectiveness in maintaining the council's ability to deliver critical service functions.

The council's approach to determining BCM Strategies will involve:

- implementing appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring and/or reduce the potential effects of those incidents
- taking account of mitigation measures in place
- providing continuity for critical services during and following an incident
- taking account of services that have not been identified as critical.

d. Developing and implementing a BCM Response

Developing individual service responses to business continuity challenges and overarching Business Continuity Plan to underpin this.

This Business Continuity Plan ensures that actions are considered for:

- the immediate response to the incident

- interim solutions or maintaining an emergency level of service, leading on to
- reinstating full services.

e. Exercising, maintaining and reviewing

Ensuring that the business continuity plan is fit for purpose, kept up to date and quality assured. An exercise programme will enable the council to:

- demonstrate the extent to which strategies and plans are complete, current and accurate and
- identify opportunities for involvement.

f. Embedding BCM in the council's culture

The embedding of a continuity culture by raising awareness throughout the council and offering training to key staff on BCM issues.

This could also include:

- incorporating BCM in the staff induction process
- items in Governance Matters
- e-mail bulletins
- pages on TOM
- booklets and prompt cards
- staff development sessions.

1.2.6 Implementation Timetable

This process has been achieved through the following implementation timetable:

Date	Meeting / Workshop	Action	Attendees / Responsibility for action	Outcomes / next steps
02/06/09	Stage 1 – Initial policy meeting		Deputy CE / Director F&CS / CG&RO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book in stage 2 workshop
04/08/09	Stage 2 – Business impact analysis workshop		See sign in sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MCA's identified BC risks and threats identified Book in stage 3 workshop
03/09/09	Stage 3 – Business continuity strategies options analysis		See sign in sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery strategies prepared Preparation of IMP Book in stage 4 workshop
20/10/09 05/11/09	Stage 4 – Business continuity plans		See sign in sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCP completed for MCA's Book in stage 5 workshop
16/11/09	Report to Governance Group on reviewed process			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree report can go forward to Governance and Audit Committee
08/12/09	Report to Governance and Audit Committee on progress made			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note content of the report
19/01/10	Stage 5 – Business continuity plan testing		CMT and designated officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test undertaken and report produced on outcomes Chapters 1 – 4 document revised in line with test report recommendations
22/09/10	BC/EP launch		CE, CG&RO, EPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raised with staff
30/09/10	BC/EP drop in surgery		CG&RO, EPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raised with staff Questions answered Clearer knowledge of roles and responsibilities

Date	Meeting / Workshop	Action	Attendees / Responsibility for action	Outcomes / next steps
TBC	Report to Corporate Management Team with questions and actions to be resolved or agreed.		CMT, CG&RO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree the corporate process • Launch / Staff training • Identify review programme
13/01/11	Report to G & A to approve BCM Strategy and Policy		G & A, CG&RO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 published

1.2.7 Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility for the business continuity management within the council rests as follows:

- a. The council is responsible for maintaining plans to ensure that it can continue to perform its critical functions in the event of an emergency so far as reasonably practicable.
- b. Responsibility for the effective delivery of services remains with the respective managers who appoint a staff member to carry out regular and systematic reviews of their respective business continuity plans. Such reviews will be included as part of the risk management periodic review process.
- c. The Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) is the lead for business continuity within the council and is responsible for the:
 1. review and development of the council's Business Continuity Policy in line with industry best practice and the organisation's priorities
 2. monitoring standards and compliance with Policy
 3. provision of support and guidance to senior managers
 4. production of the organisation's overarching BCP using analysis and assessment work completed within individual service level business continuity plans.

1.2.8 Development of Plan

This plan has been prepared by the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate with assistance from key business support areas. The individual departmental based plans are the responsibility of the functional area planning for recovery.

1.2.9 Maintenance

Ensuring that the plan reflects ongoing changes within the business is crucial. This task includes updating the plan and revising this document to reflect updates; testing the updated plan; and training personnel. The Corporate Governance and Risk Officer is responsible for this comprehensive maintenance task.

Each Department is responsible for keeping its contact lists up to date and issuing off site documentation to new members of staff. Quarterly, the Corporate Governance and Risk Officer will ensure that the Plan undergoes a more formal review to confirm the incorporation of all changes since the prior quarter. Annually, the Corporate Governance and Risk Officer will initiate a complete review of the plan, which could result in major revisions to this document. These revisions will need to be then distributed to all authorised personnel, who exchange their old plans for the newly revised plans. At that time, the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) will provide an annual status report on continuity planning to Thanet District Council's Cabinet.

1.2.10 Testing

Testing the disaster recovery plan is an essential element of preparedness. A comprehensive exercise of Thanet District Council's continuity capabilities and support at the designated recovery facility needs to be performed on an annual basis.

1.2.11 Links with emergency planning

Local authorities at both county and district council level have a statutory requirement under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (as well as the Local Government Act of 1972 and the Local Government and Housing Act of 1989) to produce plans to deal with the effects of disasters and to train the people who would carry out these plans. Local authority senior managers therefore have a responsibility to see that these activities are carried out.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act, Thanet District Council (along with the emergency services, all local authorities, the NHS and the Environment Agency) is what is known as a 'Category 1 responder'.

As such Thanet District Council has a duty to:

- Assess the risk of an emergency occurring, for inclusion within a 'Community Risk Register'.
- Make, maintain and publish plans for the response to emergencies.
- Ensure that business continuity arrangements are in place to enable the council to continue to maintain normal levels of service provision in the event of an emergency.
- Maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public relating to an emergency.
- Co-operate with other Category 1 responders relative to these duties.
- Provide advice and assistance on business continuity to business and voluntary organisation within the district.

In the immediate aftermath of a disaster local authorities have a number of major concerns. These include support for the emergency services, support and care for the local and wider community, the use of resources to mitigate the effects of the emergency and co-ordination of the response by organisations other than the emergency services. As time goes on, and the emphasis switches to recovery, the local authority will take a leading role in rehabilitating the community and restoring the environment.

Because of this, Thanet District Council has developed a Major Emergency Plan which describes how the TDC response is structured and managed. It is supported by a number of functional plans which provide more detailed management advice for each particular aspect of the council's function, such as media management, temporary shelter and oil pollution.

A copy of the Thanet District Council Major Emergency Plan and all the functional plans can be found:

- On the emergency planning page on the intranet.
- In the storage cupboard within the District Emergency Centre (Austen Room, 2nd floor, Cecil Street offices, Margate).

1.2.12 Version History

Version	Date	Agreed by	Minute ref
V1.0	16/11/09 08/12/09	Governance Group Governance and Audit Committee	GOV06 50.
V1.1	TBC 13/01/11	Corporate Management Team Governance and Audit Committee	

Appendix 1.A: Business Continuity Management Policy Statement

- 1. The 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.
- 2. The business continuity plan will be based upon the following standards:
 - a. BS 25999 Business continuity management - Part 1: Code of Practice
 - b. Recognised standards of corporate governance.
- 3. Each service delivery process within the council is owned by a respective manager who will ensure that their part of the overall BCP meets a minimum acceptable standard of service delivery for critical processes.
- 4. Each senior manager will contribute to an annual review of the BCP with the assistance of the Corporate Governance and Risk Officer.
- 5. Contracts for goods and/or services deemed critical to business continuity will include a requirement for each nominated supplier to provide, for evaluation, a business continuity plan covering the goods and/or services provided. Every tender for business continuity critical goods and/or services will include business continuity as an element of the tender evaluation model.
- 6. All staff must be made aware of the plans that affect their service delivery areas and their role following invocation.
- 7. The council will implement a programme of BCP testing exercises including crisis management and workspace recovery tests.

Signed _____
Richard Samuel, Chief Executive

Date _____

Signed _____
Robert Bayford, Leader

Date _____