

# Business Continuity

## ***Introduction into Business Continuity Management***

Business Continuity Management is about identifying those services that the Council cannot afford to lose (in terms of vulnerable residents, financial loss, loss of reputation) and planning how to maintain those services if an incident or major disruption should occur.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 the Council has a responsibility to; *“maintain plans to ensure that they can continue to perform their functions in the event of an emergency, so far as is reasonably practicable”*.

Business continuity is not about managing the emergency, this is covered under emergency planning, but is concerned with the delivery of critical functions immediately following an emergency or disruption.

## ***Identification of Critical Functions***

A Council-wide Business Impact Assessment has been undertaken to identify critical functions, however subsequent changes to service areas and activities will require each service area to reconsider their critical functions before developing Business Continuity Plans. A copy of the output from the initial Business Impact Assessment is included in Appendix B of the Risk and Business Continuity Management Handbook.

The first step in the process is to identify which functions are critical to the Council i.e. those that need to be up and running within a short period of time immediately following an incident. This stage helps to identify which services/activities need to have a Business Continuity Plan developed.

It can be undertaken as a workshop or as part of a team meeting. The outputs from this stage need to be recorded. Using a table can be a useful way of recording the outcomes. See Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

<b>SERVICE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>IMPACT OF NOT DELIVERING THE SERVICE</b>	<b>LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED (0-24 HRS, 1-3 DAYS, 3-7 DAYS, MORE THAN 1 WEEK)</b>	<b>TYPE OF RESOURCES REQUIRED (PEOPLE, TRANSPORT, PREMISES)</b>	<b>LEVEL OF RESOURCES REQUIRED (6 PEOPLE, 4 WORK AREAS WITH PC'S)</b>

**Task 1** - List all the services your service area/team delivers.

**Task 2** - Consider the impacts on all service stakeholders of not delivering that service, the extent and severity of the impact.

- Considering what is provided to whom, how, when, where and why.

**Task 3** - Identify how quickly each service needs to be up and running again in order to limit significant impacts on stakeholders.

- **Remember** – *we are not looking to resume all services to their normal operating standards.*
- For consistency please use the following timings:
  - 0 – 24 hours - Critical Function 1 (CF1)
  - 1 – 3 days - Critical Function 2 (CF2)
  - 3 – 7 days - Critical Function 3 (CF3)
  - > 1 week – not a Critical Function (NCF)

*Those services falling within the Critical Function classifications above are the key services that need a Business Continuity Plan in place and are the services that should be focused on in the remaining stages of the process.*

**Task 4** - Consider the type and level of resources required to maintain the critical activities within the timescales specified above i.e. premises, people, technology, communications, suppliers, information, transportation. Table 2 provides a useful series of questions to be used as a prompt.

**Table 2 – Questions to consider when quantifying the resources you require to maintain your critical activities.**

<p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the optimum number of staff you require to carry out your critical service?</li> <li>• What is the minimum staffing level with which you could provide some sort of service?</li> <li>• What skills/level of expertise is required to undertake these activities?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What IT is essential to carry out your critical activities?</li> <li>• What systems and means of voice and data communication are required to carry out your critical activities?</li> </ul> <p><b>Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What information is essential to carry out your critical activities?</li> <li>• How is this information stored?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Premises</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What locations do your critical activities operate from?</li> <li>• What alternative premises do you have?</li> <li>• What plant, machinery and other facilities are essential to carry out your critical activities?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Suppliers and Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are your priority suppliers/partners whom you depend on to undertake your critical activities?</li> <li>• Do you tender key services out to another organisation, to whom, for what?</li> <li>• Do you have any reciprocal arrangements with other organisations?</li> </ul>

HM Government, Business Continuity Management Toolkit.

## ***Risk and Impact Identification***

To help us understand where we should focus our risk management activities, it is important for us to understand the type of risks that could occur, how probable they are and what the impact and disruption could be on your services.

The risk and impact identification stage in this process may have already been undertaken as part of your routine risk identification and management activities, please refer to section 2.4 of the Risk Management Strategy. However, detailed below are a few helpful points to consider.

- The Community Risk Register found on the following link is a useful document when considering the risks facing the authority.

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Safety/EP/community.htm>

- When considering the type of risk that could affect your services e.g. flood, flu pandemic, fire and the impact that risk could have, bear in mind that most risks will result in one or more of the following impacts to your service:

- Loss of staff
- Loss of premises
- Loss of utilities (water, gas, electricity)
- Loss of systems IT, telecommunications
- Loss of transport
- Loss of key supplier

- As with any risk management process, you now need to decide how the risk should be managed i.e.:

- Treat (manage it)
- Tolerate (live with it)
- Transfer (insure it or get a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to manage it)
- Terminate (change, suspend or terminate a service)

Decide what action should be taken and develop a strategy for meeting the recovery time as defined above. Please see Table 3 to assist in developing a strategy.

**Table 3 – Tactics you could adopt to protect your resources.**

<p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory of staff skills not utilised within their existing roles – to enable redeployment.</li> <li>• Process mapping and documentation – to allow staff to undertake roles with which they are unfamiliar.</li> <li>• Multi-skill training of each individual.</li> <li>• Cross training of skills across a number of individuals.</li> <li>• Succession planning.</li> <li>• Use of third party support, backed by contractual agreements.</li> <li>• Geographical separation of individuals with core skills can reduce the likelihood of losing all those capable of undertaking a specific role.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Premises</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relocation of staff to other accommodation owned by NBC.</li> <li>• Displacement of staff performing less urgent business processes with staff performing a higher priority activity. Care must be taken when using this option that backlogs of the less urgent work do not become unmanageable.</li> <li>• Remote working – this can be working from home or working from other locations.</li> <li>• Use premises provided by other organisations.</li> <li>• Alternative sources of plant, machinery and other equipment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining the same technology at different locations that will not be affected by the same business disruption.</li> <li>• Holding older equipment as emergency replacement or spares.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Suppliers and Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storage of additional supplies at another location.</li> <li>• Dual or multi-sourcing of materials.</li> <li>• Identification of alternative suppliers.</li> <li>• Encouraging or requiring suppliers/partners to have a validated business continuity capability.</li> <li>• Significant penalty clauses on supply contracts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure data is backed up and it is kept off site.</li> <li>• Essential documentation is stored securely (e.g. fire proof safe).</li> <li>• Copies of essential documentation are kept elsewhere.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanisms in place to provide information to stakeholders.</li> <li>• Arrangements to ensure vulnerable groups are accommodated.</li> </ul>

HM Government, Business Continuity Management Toolkit.

## ***Business Continuity Plan***

Develop a Business Continuity Plan for each Critical Function that sets out how you will deliver the strategy above. Decide whether your plans should be developed by Service or Critical Function. Start with the most critical services first i.e. those defined as a CF1 or CF2.

Standard components of a Business Continuity Plan. Please use the NBC template.

- Document control – distribution list, version control
  - Document owner and maintainer.
  - Purpose and scope – relationship to other plans, services to be included.
  - Plan invocation – set out who has the responsibility to invoke the plan, circumstances for invocation.
  - Roles and responsibilities – individuals with a role in the implementation of the plan.
  - Location from which an incident will be managed.
  - Communication arrangements – plans for communicating with staff, stakeholders.
  - Set out critical activities and recovery times
  - Resource requirements and arrangements
  - Contact details – for all key stakeholders and staff involved in the plan.
- A Business Continuity Plan should be short and simple; if the information is not required during the immediate response then it should not be included in the plan.

## ***Testing and exercising***

A Business Continuity Plan cannot be considered reliable until it has been exercised and tested. Valuable lessons will be learnt during an exercise drill that can be recorded as lessons learnt and changes incorporated within the plan. Exercises can be discussion or desktop based or a live exercise.

Assistance and support with testing and exercising Business Continuity Plans is available from the Risk and Business Continuity Manager.

A schedule of routine testing and review of Business Continuity Plans will be developed as part of the Strategy Action Plan.





## **Northampton Borough Council**

### ***(Insert service/department)* Business Continuity Plan**

***(Template)***

**Version:**  
**Approved By:**  
**File name:**  
**Document Owner:**

## Contents Page



## 1. Document Control

*(document owner and maintainer)*

### Distribution List

Name	Location Of Plan

### Record of Amendments

Date	Version number	Detail of amendment/revision	Amended/revised by

## 2. Purpose and Scope

*Relationship to other plans, services to be included, brief description of services.*

### 3. Plan Invocation/Activation

*Who has the responsibility to invoke the plan, circumstances for invocation.  
Activation checklist.*

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

*Details of individuals with a specific role in plan and details of the role.*

Name	Role/Tasks

## **5. Location from which the incident will be managed.**

*Details of location. Address, Contact name, telephone number.*

## **6. Communication Arrangements**

*Plans for communicating with staff and stakeholders, standard messages.*

## 7. Critical Functions and Recovery Times

*Agreed critical functions.*

<b>Critical Function 1 - Brief Description</b>	<b>Impact on NBC if service not delivered</b>	<b>Recovery time</b>

<b>Critical Function 2 - Brief Description</b>	<b>Impact on NBC if service not delivered</b>	<b>Recovery time</b>

<b>Critical Function 3 - Brief Description</b>	<b>Impact on NBC if service not delivered</b>	<b>Recovery time</b>

## 8. Resource Requirements for Critical Functions

(Minimum requirements to achieve recovery time for critical functions).

### Critical Function 1s

<b>Function Description</b>	
<b>Staff</b>	<i>Number of staff, knowledge and skills required.</i>
<b>Accommodation</b>	<i>Desk space. Home working etc.</i>
<b>Agreed Alternative Accommodation Arrangements</b>	<i>Address, contact name and telephone number.</i>
<b>Systems (IT and comms)</b>	<i>Back up/recovery processes. Network connection, telephone access etc.</i>
<b>Hard Data</b>	<i>Files, paperwork.</i>
<b>Other</b>	

### Critical Function 2s

<b>Function Description</b>	
<b>Staff</b>	<i>Number of staff, knowledge and skills required.</i>
<b>Accommodation</b>	<i>Desk space. Home working etc.</i>
<b>Agreed Alternative Accommodation Arrangements</b>	<i>Address, contact name and telephone number.</i>
<b>Systems (IT and comms)</b>	<i>Back up/recovery processes. Network connection, telephone access etc.</i>
<b>Hard Data</b>	<i>Files, paperwork.</i>
<b>Other</b>	

### Critical Function 3s

<b>Function Description</b>	
<b>Staff</b>	<i>Number of staff, knowledge and skills required.</i>
<b>Accommodation</b>	<i>Desk space. Home working etc.</i>
<b>Agreed Alternative Accommodation Arrangements</b>	<i>Address, contact name and telephone number.</i>
<b>Systems (IT and comms)</b>	<i>Back up/recovery processes. Network connection, telephone access etc.</i>
<b>Hard Data</b>	<i>Files, paperwork.</i>
<b>Other</b>	

## 9. Contact Details

*For all key stakeholders and staff involved in the plan.*

### Staff

Name	Job Title	Contact Details	Home location/walk to work?

### Stakeholder

Name	Role	Contact Details

### Other Useful Contacts

Name	Role	Contact Details