

West Lothian Council

Business Continuity Management Policy & Strategy

1. POLICY

1.1. Policy Context

1.1.2. Definition

Business Continuity Management is a process that identifies potential threats to the organisation and the effect they might have on the service if they are realized. It provides a framework for creating and sustaining organisational resilience by setting out how the interests of those who rely on its service, of those who provide the service and of the organisation itself can all be safeguarded.

1.1.3. Best Practice and Legal Requirements

This document is intended to set out the broad principles being adopted by the council to ensure that its governance arrangements for business continuity management are in line with best practice based on British Standards and in compliance with civil contingencies legislation.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 imposes a clear set of roles and responsibilities on the council to deal with an emergency. It also requires the council to put in place business continuity management arrangements and plans to control and reduce the effect that severe disruption may cause to its services.

This policy and strategy aim to help the council to recover from an event that may seriously disrupt the council's essential services, its ability to deliver the Corporate Plan and the objectives of the Outcome Agreement.

1.2. Policy Statement

1.2.1 West Lothian Council will ensure that its governance arrangements for business continuity management are:

- a. In line with best practice based on the British Standards BS25999 Business Continuity Management and BS ISO/IEC 27001:2005 Information Security Standards.
- b. In compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

1.2.2. The council will take all reasonable steps to ensure it can continue to provide essential services during an emergency or period of severe disruption by:

- planning and prioritising its response
- mobilising its resources
- working to reduce the severity of the impact on its functions
- ensuring that suppliers of critical goods and services have business continuity management plans in place to cover the delivery of those goods and services.
- ensuring that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the preparation, maintenance and testing of the plans and their roles in the event of invocation of a plan
- communicating with stakeholders.

with the aim of returning to normal working as quickly as possible.

2. STRATEGY

2.1. Strategy Overview

To meet the policy requirements, the Council will set out a strategy providing responses to a service interruption at Strategic, Tactical and Service levels and prioritise its responses to ensure that the safety of persons is paramount.

The council recognises that an event causing disruption to council services may be a Major Incident as defined in the West Lothian Council Major Incident Plan and it will ensure that business continuity plans and business continuity management teams will work in conjunction with the Major Incident plan and the Crisis Management, Co-ordination and Response Teams. A diagram of the relationship between Business Continuity Management and the Major Incident Plan is shown in Appendix A.

2.2.Strategy Components

2.2.1. Essential Services

As part of the council's prioritised response to ensure that its legal obligations are met, business continuity plans will be developed and maintained for all essential services. Essential Services have been identified and prioritised in order as those activities that:

1. Relate to health and safety of persons
2. Carry a statutory responsibility
3. Control finance and governance or are business critical to the council

2.2.2. Business Impact

Council Services will analyse the effect and period of time it may take to recover from major disruption and develop plans to deal with it. The Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy will inform this analysis.

2.2.3. Business Continuity Plan and Team structures.

A diagram of Business Continuity Team structures is set out in Appendix B.

Key elements that transcend service boundaries will be identified and a Strategic Business Continuity Plan and Team will be put in place to address:

- Strategic co-ordination
- Executive decisions
- High level communication

Tactical Business Continuity Plans and Teams will be put in place to address:

- Emergency measures
- Safety of people
- Staffing issues, including industrial action
- Alternate site and facility arrangements
- Systems and Information Technology
- Other resource shortages
- Business recovery

Services will develop Operational Business Continuity plans and put in place Operational Business Continuity Teams to act on the plans in the event of disruption to their service.

2.2.3. Communication

The Council will maintain a strategy to keep the public, staff, members and other stakeholders informed of delays or changes to the service that disruption might cause.

Copies of business continuity plans will be held at approved off site locations and the location of the plans clearly communicated to business continuity team members.

Services will be provided with current copies of the Strategic and Tactical plans.

The preferred call out arrangement for staff will be via council telephone, or council mobile telephone. Where staff volunteer to provide personal mobile telephone or other contact information, contact details will be held with appropriate security.

2.2.4. Working with partners

The Council will work with its partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors to maintain its service after disruption.

2.2.5 Annual plan

The Director of Development and Environmental Services will present an annual work plan to the Corporate Management Team, the Partnership and Resources Policy Development Scrutiny Panel and the Council Executive relating to the action required to ensure that the council meets its obligations under this policy and strategy.

2.2.6. Review

The Council will review its Business Continuity Policy and Strategy at least once in every administrative term.

The Council will review its Strategic and Tactical Business Continuity Plans at least every 12 months to ensure they remain relevant to current circumstances and to legislation and good practice.

Services will review their own Operational Business Continuity Plans at least every 12 months to ensure they remain relevant to current circumstances and to legislation and good practice. Plans will be approved by the service management team and signed off by the service manager and Head of Service.

2.2.7. Reporting

Services will pass their Operational Business Continuity Plans after approval by the Head of Service to the Risk & Insurance Manager to inform the Strategic and Tactical planning arrangements.

The Director of Development and Environmental Services will report annually to the Corporate Management Team, the Partnership and Resources Policy Development Scrutiny Panel and the Council Executive on the status of the council's business continuity management arrangements and present the annual work plan for approval.

Heads of Service will report to their service PDSP to satisfy the panel on the status of their operational service business continuity planning arrangements, including review, training and testing.

2.2.8. Training

The Council will maintain awareness of business continuity management through:

- regular training of staff, partners and elected members
- developing the means to evaluate the effectiveness of training

- continual improvement of training material
- staff being made aware of how they contribute to recovery of the service.

2.2.9. Testing

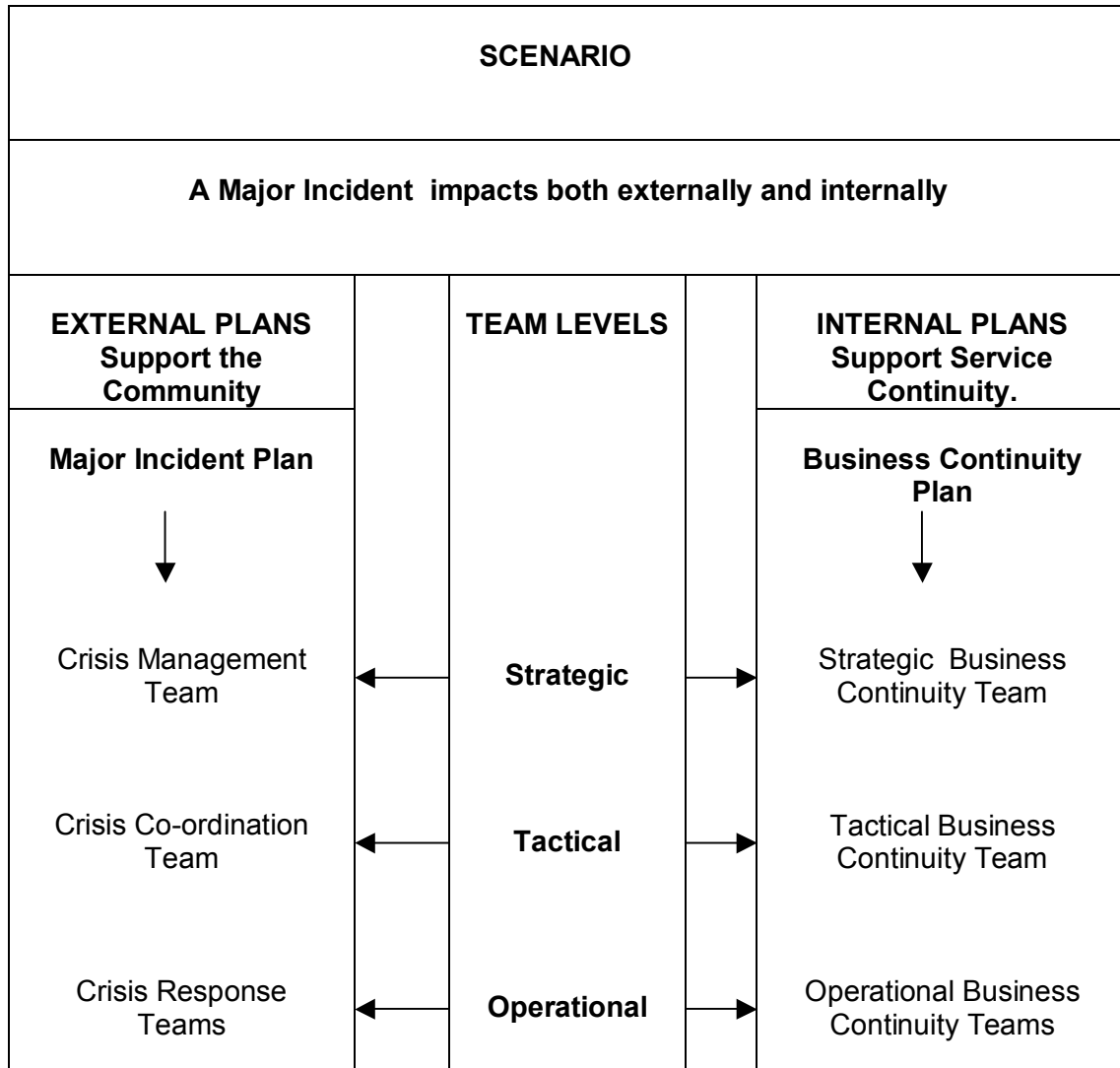
The Council will test the effectiveness of its business continuity plans by:

- developing exercises that are consistent with the scope of the plans and prioritised by areas of risk.
- ensuring that exercises are carried out at planned intervals.
- carrying out a range of different exercises that taken together validate the business continuity plans.
- defining the aims and objectives of each exercise.
- carrying out a post exercise review to see what lessons have been learned.

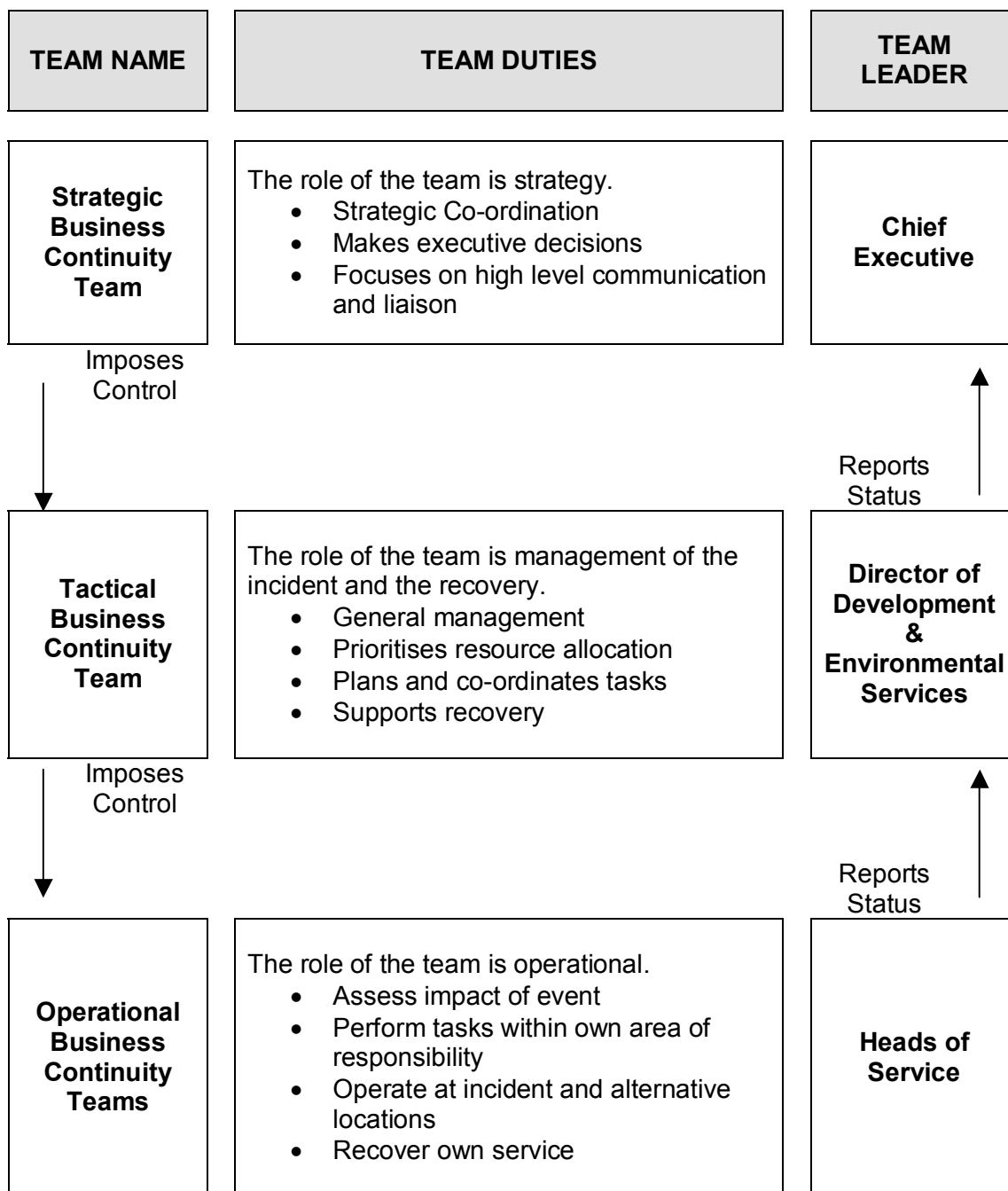
2.2.11. Management Responsibilities.

Management responsibilities to ensure that business continues to work effectively as far as is practicable when the council is faced with disruption to its service are set out in Appendix C.

Relationship between Business Continuity Management and the Major Incident Plan



Business Continuity Management Team Structures



Management Responsibilities

The Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team are responsible for ensuring that business continuity works effectively as far as practicable when the Council is faced with disruption to its service. They may choose to delegate functions to those with particular responsibilities or skills, as shown below, but overall responsibility and accountability remains with them.

However, to the extent they can, all members of staff have responsibility to maintain the service to the public. In addition, those elected members who are members of the Council Executive carry specific defined responsibilities in the terms of this policy and strategy.

The specific responsibilities relating to each staff post and to elected members are as below.

2. Chief Executive
 - Leads the Strategic Business Continuity Team and approves all press statements on behalf of the council.
 - Liaises with elected members.
3. Strategic Business Continuity Team
 - Will normally be the Chief Executive and Directors plus the Head of Finance who will manage the policy on recovery and devise the long-term strategy to ensure that the recovery is in line with the interest of the council.
 - Directs the Tactical Recovery Team
4. Director of Development and Environmental Services.
 - Leads the Tactical Business Continuity Team.
 - Presents the annual work plan for the forthcoming year and reports on the progress with the annual work plan for the current year by 31 March each year to the Corporate Management Team, the Partnership and Resources Policy Development Scrutiny Panel and the Council Executive.
5. Directors
 - Deputise for the Chief Executive on rota
 - Lead the Tactical Business Continuity Team on rota in the absence of the Director of Development and Environmental Services.
6. Tactical Business Continuity Team
 - Reports to the Strategic Business Continuity Team.
 - Takes responsibility for managing the emergency and recovery actions following an incident to ensure that key service activities are restored in order of criticality and in line with strategic requirements.
 - Liaises with Operational Teams to achieve this end
7. Heads of Service
 - Lead their own Operation Business Continuity Team, comply with the business continuity management policy and strategy, maintain effective service operational business continuity plans and report annually to their PDSP on the status of the service's business continuity management arrangements.
8. Operational Business Continuity teams.

- Report to the Tactical Business Continuity Team.
 - Assess the impact on the affected service area. Manage the recovery of the specific service with the support of the Tactical Business Continuity Team.
9. Head of Finance
- Has specific responsibility for risk management and leads the Risk Management Steering Group.
 - Is part of the Strategic Business Continuity Team and the Tactical Business Continuity Team responsible for financial control and liaison with Operational Business Continuity Teams.
10. Head of Property Services
- Is part of the Tactical Business Continuity Team with responsibility for facilities management, the provision of alternative sites and the recovery of existing property.
11. Committee Services Manager
- Provides administrative support staff to the Tactical Business Continuity Team
12. Corporate Communications Manager
- Supports all teams and deals with all communication with the media.
13. Emergency Planning Officer
- Is part of the Tactical Business Continuity Team with responsibility for the site incident emergency response.
14. Human Resources Manager
- Is part of the Tactical Business Continuity Team with responsibility for staffing issues
15. Information Technology Manager.
- Is part of the Tactical Business Continuity Team with responsibility for Information technology and communications technology recovery.
16. Risk and Insurance Manager
- Is part of the Tactical Business Continuity Team with responsibility for insurance claims management.
 - Co-ordinates information received from Operational Business Continuity Plans to inform the preparation of Strategic and Tactical Business Continuity plans.
17. Internal Auditors
- Carry out systems based audits and identify and report on any weaknesses found. This includes any weaknesses found in any service in following the Business Continuity Management Policy and Strategy as part of such audit.
18. Partnership and Resources Policy Development Scrutiny Panel
- Receives an annual report from the Director of Development and Environmental Services, practices oversight of the work area and identifies any matter requiring further clarification.
19. The Council Executive

- Receives an annual report from the Director of Development and Environmental Services, practices oversight of the work area, identifies any matter requiring further scrutiny and approves the annual work plan.