NORTH **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SHADOW AUTHORITY**

SHADOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY25th MARCH 2021

Report Title	Business Continuity Management Policy & Strategy
Report Authors	Laura Hannam, Senior Resilience Officer laura.hannam@kettering.gov.uk Jenny Walker, Environmental Protection Manager jenny.walker@east-northmaptonshire.gov.uk

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Business Continuity Management Policy and Strategy

1.   Purpose of Report

1.1   To seek approval of the North Northamptonshire Business Continuity Management Policy and Strategy attached to this report in Appendix A.

1.2   To note the areas that require further review and implementation post vesting day.

2.   Executive Summary

2.1   This report sets out the progress made in relation to drafting the North Northamptonshire Business Continuity Policy and Strategy document and highlights key areas that need to be considered post vesting day to update and support the policy and strategy document.

2.2   Emergency planning as a function is to sit with North Northamptonshire and the service is to be hosted by the North to the West. Whilst this document has been developed through the Emergency Planning Group, it is important to recognise that Business Continuity is a corporate function that is specific to each organisation and as such this document has been written for North Northamptonshire. West Northamptonshire are going to use this document as the foundation for their business continuity work programme although may take a different view and stance of the contents and priorities set out in the document.

3.   Recommendations

3.1   It is recommended that the Shadow Executive Committee:

   a) Approves the North Northamptonshire Council Business Continuity Management Policy and Strategy document as provided in Appendix A to this report.

   b) Notes the areas within the policy that require further action and incorporation post vesting day.

3.2   (Reason for Recommendations – To accord with legislation or the policy of the Shadow Authority)

4.   Report Background

4.1   The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) places a statutory duty on the council to have in place business continuity plans to ensure that prioritised services and activities can continue to be performed as far as is reasonably practicable in the event of an emergency or disruption and to fully recover all services to normality as soon as possible.

4.2   In order to achieve this, it is required that the authority has clear procedures in place for:
   - invoking the business continuity plans
   - training and exercising staff involved in the plan, ensuring this is undertaken periodically
   - maintaining and reviewing the business continuity plans to ensure that details are kept up to date
   - promoting business continuity management to commercial and voluntary organisations

4.3   A key requirement is to ensure the authority assesses both internal and external risks when developing and reviewing the business continuity (BC) arrangements.

4.4   The Policy and Strategy document provided in Appendix A follows the Business Continuity Institute's Good Practice Guidelines and is presented in two parts. Firstly, the Policy section outlines why there is a requirement to deliver BC functions and the Strategy section identifies how the BC service will be delivered to provide organisational resilience. Included in the document is a definition of BC, aims, objectives and scope of BC management. It also sets outs the generic roles and responsibilities for various functions of the plan within the authority and the governance of BC.

4.5   Details are also set out regarding the creation of the BC Plans which directly sit underneath the Policy. The overarching Corporate BC Plan and service specific BC Plans have not been developed at this time and will not be in place before vesting day. In order to develop the detailed plans for the organisation, a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) process needs to be undertaken for each directorate. The BIAs will identify the time frames, resources and capabilities

necessary to continue to deliver these services and activities following a disruption, details of which will be used to develop specific plans.

4.6 The BC Policy and the subsequent plans reach every single area of the organisation. As such, input and assessment is required from each service area to highlight key risks and activities but to also identify required disaster recovery processes such as ICT Disaster Recovery Plans to ensure the key services can be maintained.

4.7 As a result of the complexity for assessing each area, the development of Business Continuity Plans is a key area of work post vesting day and where we must recognise that the North and West may differ in terms of risk/activities and recovery mechanisms.

5. Issues and Choices

5.1 The BC Policy and Strategy has been developed for the North Northamptonshire Council. Consideration needs to be given to whether the West Northamptonshire Council are satisfied with the content and the lead taken in this area by the North.

5.2 The Policy and Strategy document includes a list of business continuity priorities which have been pulled from the existing district and borough councils and a list provided by Northamptonshire County Council. This list can be used as a basis for the work programme, however, a Business Impact Analysis process will determine a comprehensive list for the new authority which will be subject to approval by the Corporate Leadership Team.

5.3 The Business Continuity Plans which will follow this policy document will need developing post vesting day. It may be deemed appropriate that both councils at this stage utilise the overarching policy document as set out in Appendix A with the aim of developing separate business continuity plans which will contain the details of prioritised functions alongside what action should be taken in each area following a disruptive event.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

6.1.1 The development of this policy and the subsequent required plans does have significant implications on both staff resourcing and potentially financial resources.

6.1.2 The review and assessment of prioritised functions and the consideration of resources provided is resource intensive by staff and due to current unitary reform and potential further transformational work, changes to the services and how they are delivered may not be fully known until post vesting day and may require a number of different reviews before the final plans are in place.

6.1.3 The Business Continuity plan process may highlight weaknesses in the disaster recovery mechanisms in place for the authorities that could require further

investment to ensure they meet the required needs. Any requirements at this level should be brought back to a further committee for approval.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 It is a legal requirement for the Business Continuity Strategy and Policy to be in place and must be pre vesting day. In order to ensure the organisation is effective during a disruptive event the subsequent detailed plans must be generated and tested.

6.3 Risk

6.3.1 A key risk for the new organisation post vesting day is the development of the business continuity plans that sit underneath the policy. The scale of work required to effectively assess the organisations prioritised functions and the determination of the processes to be followed during an incident cannot be underestimated and may require several reviews.

6.3.2 Failure to undertake this work effectively and creating the necessary plans not only is a reputational risk for the organisation but would also result in failing to meet legal requirements for the provision of key services.

6.4 Consultation

6.4.1 This policy is an internal document that does not require external consultation at this stage. Business continuity is a consideration for any contract that is in place from the authorities and will be in place within existing contracts that will be novated to the new authorities.

6.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

6.5.1 This report has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

6.6 Environmental Impact

6.6.1 There is no environmental impact arising from this report.

6.7 Community Impact

6.7.1 Business continuity is vital to ensure our communities are protected as much as possible from a business continuity impact event affecting the services they receive from the authority. Where an incident affects the provision of these, the business continuity policy and supporting plans must aim to reduce these as much as possible, put into place alternatives and return to business as usual as quickly as possible.

6.8 Equalities

6.8.1 As the policy is an internal document an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

7.   Background Papers

7.1   Historic North Northamptonshire Safety and Resilience Partnership (NNSRP)
Business Continuity and Recovery Documents
Historic Northamptonshire County Council Business Continuity Documents
Borough Council of Wellingborough Corporate Business Continuity
Management Strategy and Policy
North Northamptonshire Safety and Resilience Partnership (NNSRP)
Emergency Plan and Emergency Response Plan