Audit & Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 31 May 2018

Report Title: Annual Risk Management Report

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Paul Findlow, Corporate Policy & Legal Services Portfolio Holder

Author: Joanne Butler, Business Governance & Risk Manager

Senior Officer: Daniel Dickinson, Acting Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

1.0 Introduction and Policy Context

1.1 This is the annual report on Risk Management to the Audit and Governance Committee. The Audit and Governance Committee has a key role in providing an oversight of the effectiveness and embedding of risk management processes, and in testing and seeking assurance about the effectiveness of control and governance arrangements. In order to form an opinion on these arrangements, it needs to establish how key risks are identified, evaluated and managed, and the rigour and comprehensiveness of the review process. This report records the work for the year in reviewing the development, maintenance and implementation of the Council's risk management framework, including monitoring and reporting arrangements. The report covers the financial year from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and includes any significant issues up to the date of the preparation of the report.

2.0 Background

2.1 Risk management is central to good governance and effective strategic management. Cheshire East Council is publicly accountable and must be able to demonstrate effective management of the kinds of risks which threaten the achievement of its strategic objectives, the effectiveness of its operations, the reliability of its financial reporting, and the security and value of its assets. Risk Management provides a structured, consistent and continuous process across the whole of Cheshire East Council for identifying, assessing, deciding on responses to, and reporting on opportunities and threats that affect the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives and outcomes.

3.0 Briefing Information

3.1 Being able to demonstrate effective systems for managing risks is a critical step in producing supportable statements of internal control for annual reporting purposes. The benefit of a strong risk management framework from a governance viewpoint is that it gives a greater level of confidence that management have properly and adequately fulfilled their responsibility in operating an effective system of internal control. This in turn gives confidence to both members and staff to support a higher appetite for risk, at a time when major change is necessary and desirable.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is requested to **consider and review** the annual report on risk management which is for information and discussion.

4.2 Part of the work on risk management this year includes a review of the Risk Management Policy Statement, Strategy and Framework. Although the risk strategy and framework remained fit for a purpose a number of amendments have been made to strengthen the Risk Management Policy Statement, with an inclusion of a Risk Appetite Statement. The Audit and Governance Committee is requested to **approve** the updated Risk Management Policy and Appetite Statement (*as attached at Annex A*), for **onward ratification** by Cabinet.

4.3 One of the specialist areas of risk management is business continuity; part of the work on business continuity this year has included drafting a Business Continuity Policy Statement and Strategy. The Audit and Governance Committee is requested to **approve** the Business Continuity Policy Statement and Strategy (*as attached at Annex B*), for **onward ratification** by Cabinet.

5.0 Risk Report

5.1 Cheshire East Council is required to ensure that it maintains a sound system of internal control. As part of the work on risk management, the following key principles of effective risk management have been applied.

Effective risk management:

- covers all risks - governance, management, quality, reputation and financial, however it is focused on the most important key risks
- produces a balanced portfolio of risk exposure
- is based on a clearly articulated policy and approach
- requires regular monitoring and review, giving rise to action where appropriate
- needs to be managed by an identified individual and involve the demonstrable commitment of senior officers and members
- is integrated into normal business processes and aligned to the strategic corporate objectives of the Council

5.2 During the year, the Risk Management Policy Statement, Strategy and Framework were reviewed. The outcome of the review was that although the risk strategy and framework remained fit for a purpose a number of amendments have been made to strengthen the Risk Management Policy Statement, with an inclusion of a Risk Appetite Statement (*as attached at Annex A to this report).* The amendments were as follows:-

- the policy has a foreword from Cllr Paul Findlow as Portfolio Holder for risk management outlining the attitude of the Council to risk management
- there are 2 main overarching risk management and internal control objectives
- an overarching risk appetite statement for the Council

- a section on how risk capacity is determined has been included within the risk appetite section
- a section specifically about risk tolerance and thresholds in relation to value has also been included, this section is to encourage costing of risks and contingency for major areas of activity

5.3   Key Corporate Risks – Threats and Opportunities

At the majority of meetings during the year, the Audit and Governance Committee received a risk management update from the Acting Director of Legal Services and the Business Governance and Risk Manager, including an overview of the key corporate risks, corresponding risk ratings and the direction of travel of risks.

5.4   During the year, the Corporate Leadership Team considered and discussed the Council's key corporate risks to ensure that risks were assessed consistently across the Council and to monitor the implementation of actions to mitigate the risks to acceptable levels. A number of risks were added to and removed from the key corporate risk register during the year.

5.5   The Audit and Governance Committee also received a short risk briefing during the year from the Risk Manager for the following risk:-

- Opportunity Risk - EU Exit, Single Market and Local Growth

5.6   Operational and Decision Making Risks

During the year operational risks have been managed and monitored via risk registers within Team Plans and Directorates. Monthly highlight reports, identifying key risks and risk management actions have been prepared for programmes and projects and monitored via programme and project board meetings. Individual risk assessment sections have been included on business cases and included in decision reports to Cabinet prior to each decision.

5.7   Specialist Risk Areas – Insurance

During the year the Corporate Insurance Team requested review support from the Council's insurers on Motor Fleet Management, Managing Building Risk and Tree Risk Management. The aim of the reports, whilst providing a useful communication tool between the insurance team and the services themselves, was to provide a focus for service managers to address any improvements that may be evident in their processes and procedures. The improvements in risk assessment and awareness should contribute to a reduction in the volume of successful claims made against the authority, thereby improving the financial position of the Council.

5.8   Specialist Risk Areas – Business Continuity

The Council recognises the importance of having effective business continuity management arrangements to ensure the effective identification, evaluation

and management of business critical services. In order to achieve this, a Business Continuity Policy Statement and Strategy has been drafted (*as attached at Annex B*) and the Audit and Governance Committee is requested to consider and approve this for onward ratification by Cabinet.

5.9   During the year the Business Governance and Risk Manager led an initial session with colleagues from ICT and Cheshire West and Chester Council to begin work on compiling a playbook and Cyber Threat Response Plan. This work is ongoing with exercises planned to test resilience and improve existing business continuity plans. The next phase of business continuity work is exploring the potential for embedding business continuity planning into the business planning cycle, as well as the development of a Corporate Cheshire East Business Continuity Plan. The purpose of this plan will be to identify measures that would be taken in the event of a major cross service business interruption e.g. loss of a corporate building or loss of information technology services. A Senior Crisis Management Team will be established to determine priorities should the authority be unable to deliver all of its critical functions at once.

5.10   The Council has a Major Emergency Response Plan which includes contract-provided services fundamental to any corporate emergency response. In a major emergency, services could be deprived of certain staff that will be required in the Council's Major Emergency Control Centre or in an external liaison or functional capacity. An emergency response may be prolonged and will certainly place heavy demands on all staff involved. The Council will therefore need to maintain "service delivery as normal" as far as possible. In recognition of this, Terms of Reference for a Joint Business Continuity and Emergency Planning Liaison Group have been drafted, and membership of the Group is being established.   The purpose of this group is to ensure there is an overarching view of the two sets of arrangements and to provide guidance and support in the development and maintenance of the Council's resilience.

5.11   During the year the Business Governance and Risk Manager also provided Business Continuity Training for a number of local businesses.

5.12   <u>Specialist Risk Areas – Health & Safety</u>
Regular reports on Health & Safety matters are reported through the Council's Staffing Committee. The Health & Safety Team have delivered a number of training courses to Council staff over the last year including Leading and Managing Safely courses, these courses all help to improve risk assessment and awareness.

6.0   Implications

6.1 **Policy Implications**

Risk management is integral to the overall management of the authority and, therefore, considerations regarding key policy implications and their effective implementation are considered within departmental risk registers and as part of the risk management framework. This report includes an updated Risk Management Policy and Appetite Statement, and a Business Continuity Policy Statement and Strategy, both of which are for consideration by Audit and Governance Committee on route for approval by Cabinet.

6.2 **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications in relation to this report. However, a risk around financial resilience is included as a corporate risk and general reserves are focused on the Council's potential exposure to risk. In addition, where a particular area has been identified as specific risk or investment opportunity, then an amount will be earmarked for that specific purpose as part of the Council's Financial Strategy process. The Council and its public sector partners are confronted with growing demand in particular in health and social care needs, this is in combination with severe resource constraints. There is considerable interest in the potential of innovation in service delivery and partnership working to help address such challenges and this may require an increased risk appetite which in turn may lead to increased financial risk.

6.3 **Legal Implications**

This report is aimed at addressing the requirement that the Council achieves its strategic aims and operates its business, under general principles of good governance and that it identifies risks which threaten its ability to be legally compliant and operate within the confines of the legislative framework.

6.4 **Human Resource Implications**

Human resource implications in relation to this report include:-

- the need for training on risk management and business continuity to improve skills and knowledge for staff to fulfil their responsibilities
- the need for managers to lead through a combination of positive attitude and behaviours towards risk management and business continuity

It is recognised that a corporate risk around employee engagement and retention is included on the corporate risk register, as is a risk around capacity and demand.

6.5 **Risk Management Implications**

This report relates to overall risk management; the Audit and Governance Committee should be made aware of the most significant risks facing the Council and be assured that the risk management framework is operating effectively. The content of this report seeks to achieve the following risk objectives:-

Key Risk Objectives
That Cheshire East Council properly develops, implements and demonstrates an effective risk management framework
That Cheshire East Council applies its risk management policy consistently across the Council
That Cheshire East Council recognises risks and makes correct decisions to tolerate, treat, transfer or terminate threats or to exploit, share, enhance or ignore opportunities

RISK MANAGEMENT
POLICY AND APPETITE STATEMENT
2018-2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	**Foreword and Attitude to Risk Management by Cllr Paul Findlow, Corporate Policy and Legal Services Portfolio Holder**

1.1   This risk management policy and appetite statement forms part of Cheshire East Council's internal control and corporate governance arrangements. This policy, and the adoption of the overall risk process, including allocating appropriate resources to risk management, is owned by the Acting Director of Legal Services with delegated authority from the Chief Executive. The purpose of this policy is to clearly outline the council's commitment to risk management, describe the objectives of risk management and provide a framework for embedding risk management across the organisation, with defined roles and responsibilities and a structured process. Effective risk management is not about eliminating or avoiding risk, indeed with active risk management we may decide to take more risks on an informed basis to innovate as effectively and cost efficiently as possible as we continue to transform and achieve our ambition. Through the implementation and embedding of an effective risk management framework, and ensuring an appropriate risk appetite for Cheshire East Council, we will ensure that it is better placed to manage its performance, achieve its corporate objectives and provide an enhanced level of service and outcomes to the community.

Cheshire East Council

Risk Management Policy and Appetite Statement

2.0	**Managing risk is part of good governance and good business management**

2.1   As the Council looks towards 2020, even over this relatively short period of time, there will be a host of factors which influence the nature of the Council's relationships with its residents, businesses, communities, neighbouring authorities, and other key partners. These factors challenge the Council to continually review its systems and approaches, and to experiment with new ideas allowing mixed and flexible use of its resources. In this constantly evolving environment, with a need to continually adapt internal organisation to meet legal requirements, economic challenges, urban changes, demographic and social changes, managers and decision makers will face risk.

2.2   Consideration and response to existing and new threats, and the ability to recognise and seize new opportunities, is fundamental to achieving the Council's desired corporate objectives and outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2017-2020. Underlying this is a commitment from the Council to transparency and good governance. Decisions of the Council are evidence based and subject to appropriate challenge, this encompasses having high standards of governance. Effective risk management is a key principle of corporate governance and a key contributor to a sound control environment.

2.3   A risk is an expression of uncertainty and can be a threat or an opportunity. A threat is a possible future event or action which will adversely affect the Council's ability to achieve its

stated objectives and to successfully deliver approved strategies. An opportunity is an event or action that will enhance the Council's ability to achieve its objectives and deliver approved strategies. Risk is part of everything we do. Managing risk improves the way we deliver our business. It is acknowledged that some risks will always exist and will never be eliminated but through risk identification we anticipate eventualities and it helps us to respond to changes in need.

2.4   There are two principal objectives detailed below which outline the Council's approach to risk management and internal control:

       2.4.1   Objective 1: Risk Governance and Culture: Embed risk management into the ethos, culture, policies and practices of the council so that risk management is an integral part of the council's decision making, management and governance practices.

       2.4.2   Risk management plays a key role in helping us achieve our corporate objectives and outcomes. It helps ensure decision-making is better informed; precious resources are used efficiently and it helps us to avoid unwelcome surprises. Good risk management should be an integral part of everyday business, including performance management, business planning and assurance activity.

       2.4.3   **Objective 2: Risk Management Arrangements:** Ensure the council successfully manages risks and opportunities at all levels – strategic, operational, programme, project and partnership so that it increases the probability of achieving its objectives and outcomes.

       2.4.4   Accountability for business delivery brings with it responsibility for identifying, assessing, owning, managing and communicating key risks to that delivery. This requires the collaborative effort of our Members, all our staff and our key partners.

2.5   This Statement sets out Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team's commitment to managing risks effectively across the Council, and the standard of risk management we expect across the Council. It seeks to demonstrate the explicit commitment to effective risk management from the top of our organisation and is inclusive to the rest of the organisation. The Policy Statement aims to sets the right tone for the organisation and to increase the likelihood that the management of risk will be given appropriate consideration.

3.0   Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team will ensure we have an environment that will allow well managed risk taking to excel

3.1   We will:

- Lead by example with a combination of positive attitudes, behaviours and activities to create an environment where consideration of risk is part of everything we do
- encourage innovation and considered risk-taking, and in doing so improve delivery of services and secure better value for money for our residents

- promote open, honest and collaborative discussions about our risks and encourage a culture where our staff feel comfortable in escalating risks and concerns
- communicate clear messages, ensuring everyone understand the role they have to play in identifying and managing the key risks and opportunities we face in the successful delivery of our business objectives
- create a no-blame risk environment to support the effective management of risk
- engender a continuous improvement mind-set towards the way we manage risk, learning lessons along the way.

4.0   Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team will ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil their risk management responsibilities

4.1   We will support risk management by:

- ensuring all managers have a good understanding and awareness of risk management to enable them to fulfil their duties
- equipping our staff with the tools, skills and time they need to fulfil their risk management responsibilities for example through the provision of training, guidance, templates, and by allowing time on meeting agendas for risk discussion
- encouraging and supporting staff in the identification and discussion of risk in their everyday business; and pro-actively dealing with risks that come to their attention
- ensuring that key risks are visible; are owned at the right level of the organisation; and are actively addressed

5.0   Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team are committed to the consistent application and embedding of the agreed risk management behaviours and approach across the Council.

5.1   We will:

- lead by example in taking ownership and being accountable for Corporate and Directorate level risks, ensuring that effective and proportionate action is taken to mitigate those risks
- implement a standard approach to risk management throughout Cheshire East Council
- integrate the management of risk into our business processes including finance, planning, performance management, key decision-making processes, project and programme management and major change initiatives.

6.0	**Cheshire East Council Risk Appetite Statement**

6.1   Understanding and setting a clear risk appetite level is essential to achieving an effective risk management framework and should be done before managers consider how to treat risks.   Establishing and articulating the risk appetite level helps to ensure that consideration in the way management, Cabinet and Council respond to risk is consistent and that there is a shared vision for managing risk. There are risks for which the Council is custodian on behalf of the public and the environment, where risk appetite may be very low, and there may be risks with choices about investment in projects, research and delivery roles, where risk taking may be encouraged.

6.2   This risk appetite statement sets out how Cheshire East Council balances threats and opportunities in pursuit of achieving its objectives. The statement forms a key element of the Council's assurance and governance framework and is set by Cabinet. Breaches of risk appetite, or tensions arising from its implementation will be dealt with by the Cabinet and may reflect a need to review the risk appetite statement. In determining the statement, it is recognised that risk appetite is subject to change and needs to flex in line with the organisation's strategic environment and business conditions; and as such the statement will be reviewed on a regular basis.

6.3   The Council distinguishes between those risks which are operational in nature and as such are within our control (such as Employee Engagement and Retention) and those external risk factors (such as exiting the European Union) which are not directly within our control but which nevertheless must be identified and considered to address those risks we can influence or contingency plans we need to make.

6.4   Overarching Risk Appetite Statement

6.4.1   Cheshire East Council recognises that in pursuit of its objectives and outcomes it may choose to accept an increased degree of risk. The council will establish and articulate risk appetite for the differing areas of its business. Where the council chooses to accept an increased level of risk it will do so, subject always to ensuring that the potential benefits and threats are fully understood before developments are authorised, that it has sufficient risk capacity and that sensible measures to mitigate risk are established.

6.4.2   The Council is **not averse** to taking risks; our approach is based on judgement and the circumstances of each potential action, and an assessment of its impact. This means we will not seek to intervene in all risk situations, rather we prioritise in terms of the risk, cost and perceived benefits in a consistent and transparent way, choosing the most appropriate course of action from our risk management tools. In determining the risk appetite for an activity we take account of anticipated outcomes and benefits, internal and external drivers for the activity, risk exposure, and the Council's risk capability and capacity to manage risk. This includes key questions around financial and reputation capability; sufficiency of infrastructure, knowledge, people and skills; and political and stakeholders views.

6.4.3   Statutory / External Regulatory: The public sector is undergoing reform, involving new legal frameworks, the creation of new delivery models, and new entities for the Council to engage with. We are regulated and we are also regulators. We are **averse** to risks to our

statutory obligations and to our objectives relating to those we regulate that must meet standards required by law. We have an **open** appetite for taking well managed risks where innovative and change creates opportunities for discernible benefits and clear improvement in our ability to achieve our objectives.

6.4.4 <u>Operational</u>: In acknowledgement of the maturity of our multiple service areas, we maintain a **cautious** risk appetite towards sustaining appropriate operational processes, systems and controls to support delivery but adopt a more **open** appetite for the development and enhancement of these systems. As the Council looks to set a Commercial Strategy and detailed commercial objectives these will be risk assessed and a risk appetite defined.

6.4.5 We are heavily reliant upon information and data to be able to operate as an effective Council and therefore have a **minimalist** appetite for risks to information and data objectives. The accidental or deliberate wrongful disclosure of sensitive or restricted information has the potential to erode trust, damage our reputation and ultimately prevent us from being able to function.

6.4.6 <u>Countering Fraud and Corruption</u>: We are **averse** to the risks of internal fraud and corruption and will maintain appropriately robust controls and sanctions to maximise prevention, detection and deterrence of this type of act or behaviour.

6.4.7 <u>Legal</u>: Where we are working with relatively untested legislation we are willing to adopt an **open** risk appetite to achieve our statutory objectives and to determine the extent of the Council's powers and our jurisdiction. We retain an **averse** risk appetite to behaving in an illegal, unreasonable or irrational way or any other way which would likely give rise to a successful judicial review.

6.4.8 <u>Reputational</u>: We rely on our reputation in order to secure the engagement of our key stakeholders, businesses, partners, communities and residents. The support of these parties is essential to achieving the Council's Corporate Plan and our objectives and we have a strong commitment to being seen as a responsible, efficient and effective organisation and retain an overall **cautious** risk appetite with regard to our reputation. We are however prepared to take a stance which may be opposed to some of our audience where we believe it is necessary for the achievement of one or all of our statutory objectives.

6.5 Risk Capacity
The Council's risk capacity is determined through understanding the following areas:-
- Reputation – can the council withstand pressures as they arise as a result of the activity
- Financial – is there sufficient financial contingency for the activity
- Political – what political tolerance is there for any adverse risk events materialising
- Infrastructure –is there sufficient infrastructure to manage risk
- People – is there sufficient trained and skilled individuals
- Knowledge - is sufficient knowledge available to the council

6.6   Risk Tolerance and Thresholds

6.6.1   Tolerance levels will be established for organisational activities at different levels across the Council and a risk contingency will be determined and defined for different business areas. Access to contingency has to be approved by the budget holder or the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services. Where analysis indicates that the returns or outcomes will deviate by more than acceptable limits these will have to be referred as soon as the deviation is forecast. This includes forecasts that may enhance objectives as well as those that may erode objectives.

6.7   Definitions

Appetite	Description
Hungry / High Risk Appetite 5	Eager to be innovative and choose activities that focus on maximising opportunities to achieve objectives (with additional benefits and goals) and offering potentially very high reward, even if these activities carry a very high residual risk that may result in reputation damage, financial loss or exposure.
Open / Moderate Risk Appetite 4	Willing to undertake activities seeking to achieve a balance between a high likelihood of successful delivery and a high degree of reward and value for money. Activities themselves may potentially carry, or contribute to, a high degree of residual risk.
Cautious / Modest Risk Appetite 3	Willing to accept / tolerate a degree of risk in certain circumstances when selecting which activities to undertake to achieve key objectives, deliverables or initiatives, where we have identified scope to achieve significant reward and/or opportunity. Activities undertaken may carry a high degree of inherent risk that is deemed controllable to a large extent.
Minimalist / Low Risk Appetite 2	Preference to undertake activities considered to be very safe in the achievement of key deliverables or initiatives. Activities will only be taken where they have a low degree of inherent risk. The associated potential for reward / pursuit of opportunity is not a key driver in selecting activities.
Averse / Zero Risk Appetite 1	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty in achievement of key deliverables or initiatives is paramount. The Council is not willing to accept risks under any circumstances and activities undertaken will only be those considered to carry virtually no inherent risk.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY POLICY STATEMENT

Cheshire East Council's Corporate Plan sets out the Councils' corporate objectives, priorities and outcomes. In this regard the Council recognises it has a duty of care to its stakeholders, residents, employees, members and partners. It is therefore essential that the Council protects and preserves its ability to provide services and achieve its long-term strategic goals.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to maintain plans for the continuation of services in the event of an emergency, so far as is reasonably practicable. Therefore, the Council is committed to ensuring it can deliver continuity and restore key services as efficiently as possible in the event of a disruption, such as fire, flood, staff absence, power and communication failure.

In order to achieve this, the Council recognises the importance of having effective business continuity management arrangements to ensure the effective identification, evaluation and management of business critical services.

This policy has the full support of the Council's Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team. As such, they see effective business continuity management as part of our responsibility to deliver an effective service to the residents of Cheshire East.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY STRATEGY

1.0   Introduction

1.1   The Council's has adopted a Business Continuity policy statement, strategy and framework to ensure a focused and structure approach to business continuity arrangements. The policy statement sets out the rationale and mandate for business continuity and the strategy aims to set the priorities for business continuity.

1.2   The main purpose of Business Continuity Management is to ensure continuity of service delivery following an unexpected disruption to normal working. This document defines how the Council will plan for maintaining continuity of service delivery in the event of serious interruption or disruption. Further details are embodied in the Business Continuity Management Framework.

1.3   The policy statement, strategy and framework have the full support of Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team.

2.0   What do we mean by "Business Continuity"?

2.1   **Business Continuity**
        The capability to continue delivery of products or services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident.

2.2 **Business Continuity Management**
A holistic management process that identifies potential threats to an organisation and the impacts to business operations those threats, if realised, might cause, and which provides a framework for building organisational resilience with the capability of an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value-creating activities. *(Source: ISO 22301:2012)*

2.3 **Business Continuity Plan**
A plan that when activated provides for the orderly cost-effective continuity of an organisation's essential services, programs and operations if and when a disruption occurs. Plans may be for use at the operational level (Service Plans) or at a strategic level (The Corporate Business Continuity Plan).

2.4 **Critical Activity**
An activity, the continuity of which, an organisation needs to ensure, in order to meet its business objectives. Activities can be categorised into the following:

Priority:	Activity must be restored by:
1 – Critical	0 – 24 hours
2 - Serious	2 – 5 days
3 – Non Urgent	Can be suspended up to 14 days

2.5 **Business Impact Analysis**
The process of analysing activities, and the effect that a business disruption may have upon them. The Business Impact Analysis identifies consequences of an incident in terms of loss of operations or services, revenue loss, confidence/reputation, and the expected length of the interruption.

3 .0 Principles of Business Continuity Management
3.1 Business Continuity Management should:
- Use a risk based approach to strike the right balance between increasing resilience and tying up resources
- Identify and prioritise the business critical activities with the aim of responding to an incident and ensuring all critical activities are up and running to an acceptable level within 24 hours
- Ensure arrangements can integrate with the Council's Major Emergency Response Plan for external incidents, but be capable of operating as a stand-alone process for those incidents that affect the Council
- Ensure business continuity plans are in place for all services and are regularly tested to give assurance as to their effectiveness and to incorporate lessons learned from their application
- Help to ensure the Council complies with its duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and with current best practice.

4.0   What are the real benefits of Business Continuity Management?

4.1   Effective Business Continuity Management will:

- Ensure the Council can maintain its business critical activities in the event of disruption
- Ensure the welfare, safety and security of staff, their environment and members of the public who use those services

5.0   What do we want to achieve with Business Continuity?

5.1   To embed the business continuity culture within the Council in order to:

- Comply with legislation
- Improve resilience against disruption to services and;
- Minimise costs in the event of a disruption
- Ensure effective business continuity arrangements are in place in the event of a disruption

6.0   Business Continuity priorities over the next 12 months;

6.1   In order to develop and embed effective business continuity management arrangements across the Council, the following actions are priorities for the next 12 months;

6.2   Development of a business continuity framework underpinning the policy statement and strategy that clarifies;

- how the Council's Senior Managers and elected members intend to manage business continuity – being explicit about what needs to be accomplished, how, by when, and who is responsible for what, recognising that embedding the business continuity culture and strong controls in the daily and regular business of the Council is an iterative process.
- the scope of the business continuity management activity in the Council – being explicit about how all services plan for continuity of business in the event of a disruption.
- how the Council will identify its critical activities and ensure business continuity plans are developed for these areas
- a consistent approach to the development of business continuity plans and ensuring the plans are shared with the appropriate people and can be easily accessed in the event of disruption.
- Identify 'business continuity champions', who will be responsible for co-ordinating and communicating the directorate's business continuity planning arrangements.

6.3   These will be achieved by:

- The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) having primary responsibility for ensuring that the Council's business continuity management framework is fit for purpose and operates as intended.
- CLT providing leadership and direction to the employees in respect of business continuity management.

- Heads of service and service managers taking ownership, responsibility and accountability for business continuity in their own area of activity in accordance with the requirements of the framework.
- Establishing a centralised business continuity framework with the Business Governance and Risk Manager monitoring and facilitating the implementation of effective business continuity management
- Reporting the relevant BC information up and down the organisation
- Review the current business continuity planning template to ensure it is fit for purpose
- The introduction of a quality review and testing regime of business critical business continuity plans.
- The Business Governance and Risk Manager will objectively examine, evaluate and report on the adequacy of the Council's business continuity management arrangements
- Encouraging the Council's ASDV's, key external providers and partners to adopt robust business continuity management processes
- Ensuring appropriate guidance is readily available to staff on business continuity planning and devising a training programme to suit the needs of staff involved with business continuity.