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Audit & Governance Committee
Wednesday, 22 April 2015

ADDENDA 2

8. **Annual Governance Statement - Actions** (Pages 1 - 2)

Additional information about progress on each element of the Business Continuity 'Action' for 2014/15 in Annex 1 is attached.

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AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 22 APRIL 2015

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT - ACTIONS

Additional information about progress on each element of the Business Continuity 'Action' for 2014/15 in Annex 1

A) Good progress is being made in business continuity (BC). A new Business Continuity and Resilience Officer joined the organisation in July 2014. They have completed a review of the existing business continuity arrangements and have introduced a new framework, the *Good Practice Guide (GPG)*, to move the organisation to a fully integrated business continuity management system (BCMS). The review also completed a gap analysis of existing arrangements, highlighted the need for integration and synchronisation between directorates, and identified external stakeholders to increase the resilience of the Council in contracting/commissioning. Work has been undertaken and continues to assure BC in procurement activity and the agile working and estates rationalisation programmes.

B) This review is conducted against the *GPG*, which has been consulted with directorate and service leads and adopted as the Council's BC standard. The result is a new suite of guidance, training and toolkit based on the *GPG*. This new model is being trained to directorate leads and key stakeholders, and will be rolled out through 2015 as part of the new Emergency Planning and Business Continuity training programme. Appropriate training on *GPG* is now available to staff and information is being offered through new intranet webpages. Briefings are being provided to management teams. Training and exercise opportunities are available to teams and key services using table-top scenario-based exercises and the Fire & Rescue Service Incident Command Development suite.
This item is an on-going element in the BC lifecycle wherein training and information is continually made available, refreshed and audited as part of embedding BC culture in the organisation. It can be identified going forward in the 2015/16 actions as Action 4.

C) Working with the Business Continuity Steering Group (BCSG), options to centralise BC documentation have been explored, e.g. E&E directorate trialled the use of Sharepoint for directorate plan-holding. Software solutions for the BCMS have also been examined by the Corporate Lead; however industry specifications do not match Council requirements, do not readily integrate into corporate ICT, and are not cost effective. BC information and documentation will continue to be centrally monitored and updated through the priority registers maintained by each directorate and managed centrally by the Corporate Lead. Registers and plan-holding arrangements were identified in the review carried out, and workshops are scheduled to facilitate improvements here.

This item is an on-going element in the BC lifecycle. New solutions will always be entertained where the design/cost/efficiency equation can be met.

D) Again working with the BCSG, BC plans and priority registers have been reviewed and updated. Amendments have been made to manage organisational change and also incidents that demonstrate risk, e.g. immediately following the fire at SODC Crowmarsh offices, OCC plans were checked to ensure contingency sites were viable and realistic. The Corporate Lead is engaging with the estates rationalisation programme on embedding BC into this process, and agile working solutions are challenged in the directorate scenario exercises. Introducing a strong horizon-scan element which good BC practice offers has already improved our ability to manage resilience proactively from the BCSG.
This item is an on-going element in the BC lifecycle. Plan maintenance and updating to reflect change (organisational/environmental/market) is a core component of the audit/review function of the BCMS.

E) Greater assurance and improved awareness has been achieved around contracting, commissioning and outsourcing activities. This was identified as a critical area in the review undertaken by the new Corporate Lead and work is well underway to tackle this. BC has been included with risk management in procurement training offered to contract managers. Business Continuity and Resilience was presented at the Care Providers Conference in January 2015 which engaged the care provider community in BC requirements that OCC has as the commissioning body, and this area is a particular focus of attention working with SCS and Zurich, and bringing utility providers on-board.
This item has been realigned as Action 1 in the 2015/16 AGS to provide more tangible objectives for the forthcoming year.

F) The process for plan sign-off has been assured through the BCSG, and awareness of the need for planning, communication of plans and planning assumptions, and integration/synchronisation of BC arrangements to avoid single points of failure has been a key element of BC work up to the end of FY2014/15 and will continue with the roll out of the new *GPG*-based framework.