Introduction

1. This report provides the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee with assurances relating to the adequacy of the emergency planning and business continuity management controls currently in place in the council; that they are up to date, fit for purpose, embedded and routinely applied.

2. The information in this appendix is based around a 'cycle of internal control framework' which consists of five aspects, seen in the diagram opposite.

3. The council's risks arise from a variety of sources, some of which are out of our direct control, whilst others stem from changes in government policy and the shifting needs and make-up of our communities. Such changes bring uncertainties that can pose threats that need addressing but also bring opportunities to exploit. Appendix 1 of this report looks at these risk areas in more detail.

4. Emergency Planning relates to how the council prepares and responds to risks and emergencies.

Define and Document

Clearly Communicate

Cycle of Internal Control

Review and Refine

Meaningfully Monitor

Effectively Embed

5. Business Continuity Management is a process that helps manage risks to the smooth running of an organisation or delivery of a service, ensuring continuity of critical functions in the event of a disruption, and effective recovery afterwards.

6. The term resilience covers both emergency planning and business continuity work streams.

7. The term risk and resilience covers all at point 6 in addition to Corporate Risk Management processes.

8. The need for the council to have strong emergency planning and business continuity management arrangements remains essential.

9. Through the arrangements outlined in this report, the council seeks to further embed an effective resilience culture across its values, and in the behaviour of all its staff and elected members. This responsibility extends to managing risks and how we respond to them with our

key partner organisations to ensure they are aware of and are compliant with our Resilience, Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Policy.

Define and Document

10. Policies and Strategies

11. The Councils **Resilience, Emergency Planning (EP) and Business Continuity (BC) Policy** has been reviewed and signed off in October 2023. The policy is a framework for resilience and emergency response and preparedness work, outlining the legislative duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and how Leeds City Council works to meet those duties.

12. The Resilience, EP and BC Policy considered the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the NHS Core Standards for Emergency Planning Resilience and Response (EPRR) and NHS England business continuity management framework with regard Resilience.

13. Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, an 'emergency' is defined as:

- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom

- an event or situation which threatens serious damage to the environment of a place in the United Kingdom, or

- war, or terrorism, which threatens serious damage to the security of the United Kingdom

14. Business Continuity Management is a process that helps an organisation to continue to provide its critical or prioritised services or functions in the event of an incident or disruption. The council recognises the benefits of having efficient and effective business continuity management arrangements in place. Not only is Business Continuity Management good practice, but it is also a requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which made it a statutory duty of all Category 1 responders (which includes local authorities) to have in place business continuity plans.

15. To help comply with the Civil Contingencies Act, the council uses guidance contained within BS ISO 22301:2012 'Business Continuity Management Systems', which specifies the requirements to implement, maintain and improve a management system to protect against, reduce the likelihood of the occurrence of, prepare for, respond to and recover from disruptions when they arise.

16. Key plans and documents

17. Underpinning the Resilience, Emergency Planning (EP) and Business Continuity (BC) Policy are the following key plans and documents:

- The Specific Emergency Plans and Incident Response Plan are maintained on the council's Resilience and Emergencies Team Microsoft Teams site. These specific emergency plans outline the authority's response to an identified risk occurring and the

measures put in place to mitigate the impact on those people affected. The Incident Response Plan details internal and external key contacts and supporting documents for strategic and operational officers. The Teams site includes functionality for the notification of any changes in the key contacts.

- Over 80 Business Continuity Plans covering the council's critical services. The Business Continuity Plans are documented procedures that guide services to respond, recover, resume and restore continuity of the services and functions in the event of an emergency or disruptive incident. The key areas included within the plans cover loss or disruption to: staff resources; buildings and work environment; information communications technology; data; and suppliers and contractors.

- These arrangements take into consideration the National Security Risk Assessment, published by the Cabinet Office. The National Security Risk Assessment identifies and assesses the most serious risks facing the UK and is used to determine the common consequences of these risks occurring. The Assessment is produced using a rigorous and tested methodology that incorporates best practice to provide a common framework for understanding risk. The National Security Risk Assessment supports operational risk management, planning and responses in all tiers of the UK resilience system and also serves as a framework for strategic risk management decision making. The most recent edition, published in May 2023, contains risks covering aspects such as terrorism, cyber-attack, major social care provider failure and various types of adverse weather. The public facing version of this document, The National Risk Register is available [here](). The Assessment is also used to inform the more local West Yorkshire Community Risk Register, and together these inform the review and update of the council's corporate risks on City and Council Resilience (LCC01 and LCC02) arrangements.

18. The Incident Response Plans and Business Continuity Plans are held in electronic form on the Resilience and Emergencies Team Microsoft Teams site which provides a central location for the documents so they can be quickly accessed in the event of a disruptive incident. An additional copy of each plan is held on the externally hosted Resilience Direct site, which can be accessed if the council network becomes unavailable. Physical copies of all of these plans are held in the event of an incident involving loss of data or power.

19. Roles and responsibilities

20. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 imposes a clear set of roles and responsibilities on those organisations with a role to play in preparing for and responding to emergencies. The Act requires all Category 1 responders to maintain plans to ensure they can continue to exercise their functions in the event of an emergency so far as is reasonably practicable (Business Continuity Management). The maintenance of plans to prevent emergencies and reduce, control and mitigate the effects of an emergency, should it occur, are also Category 1 responder duties under The Act (Emergency Preparedness).

21. The council's Resilience and Emergencies Team lead on the co-ordination of the authority's emergency planning and business continuity functions.

22. Emergency Planning responsibilities include: maintaining the council's Resilience, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Management Policy, maintaining emergency plans, warning and informing businesses and residents of Leeds of ongoing or expected

incidents, development and delivery of training and exercises to ensure emergency arrangements are validated. The Resilience and Emergencies Team provide emergency planning capacity "24/7" so that emergencies can be responded to at all times including 'out of hours'.

23. Business Continuity Plans are owned and maintained by the respective critical services within the five council directorates. The Resilience and Emergencies Teams Business Continuity Management responsibilities are: providing guidance and support to service managers across the council on matters such as the development of new business continuity plans and their annual review and update and facilitating exercises with services to test their plans. Business Continuity Management guidance and advice can also be provided to external organisations if requested.

24. The main roles and responsibilities for Emergency Planning and Business Continuity within the council, as documented in the Resilience, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Policy, are:

Entity	Roles and responsibilities
Elected Members	
Executive Board, Council Leader and Deputy Leader	Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the council has effective emergency planning and business continuity management arrangements lies with the Executive Board. Executive Board receives an annual update on this work from the Director of Strategy & Resources. Responsibility for ensuring that the council has effective risk and business continuity management arrangements lies with the Leader of the council, and the Deputy Leader, Executive Member for Resources has responsibility for emergency planning arrangements. These responsibilities have been delegated to the Director of Strategy & Resources. As with all executive delegations to officers, the portfolio holders may require, or the director may choose, to refer a matter to the Executive Board.
Corporate Governance and Audit Committee	The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing the adequacy of the council's governance arrangements. The Committee receives an annual assurance report on our emergency planning and business continuity management arrangements from the Director of Strategy & Resources and uses this to monitor, review and scrutinise these arrangements and their implementation. Furthermore, the Committee can provide challenge on the arrangements to manage specific risks and reviews the Resilience, EP & BCM Policy. The Committee approves the Annual Governance Statement which incorporates arrangements in relation to emergency planning and business continuity.

Entity	Roles and responsibilities
Elected Members	All Elected Members have a responsibility to understand the council's emergency planning and business continuity management arrangements and the risks facing the authority.
	Elected Members' awareness of civil protection and emergency preparedness arrangements contributes to the successful outcomes of an emergency incident and ultimately, the return to normality. A Council Yearbook is provided to all Elected Members which outlines contact information, communication flows and what to expect in an emergency. Two training sessions have been delivered in Autumn 2023 to Elected Members to embed knowledge of their roles and responsibilities in civil emergencies.
Council staff	
Corporate Leadership Team[1]	The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) has responsibility for ensuring that there are appropriate arrangements in place to manage risks, emergencies or disruptions, both those within their respective directorates and with a cross-cutting or wider impact.
	Members of CLT are collectively responsible for ensuring that all strategic risks are effectively managed by reviewing the corporate risk register each quarter, whilst individual directors take ownership of specific risks.
	CLT is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the council has effective and appropriate arrangements in place at a corporate level to manage emergencies or disruptions which affect multiple services. They are responsible for the strategic management of incidents with a cross-cutting or wider impact. This may necessitate managing an incident which affects both the community and the council's ability to deliver its own services simultaneously and may require the activation of the Incident Response Plan.
	CLT members make up the Strategic level of the council's response structure (see in the table at point 31) and offer direction to staff at Tactical and Operational levels.
The Director of Strategy & Resources	The Director of Strategy & Resources has specific responsibility for providing assurances to the Executive Board and the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee on the adequacy of our risk management arrangements. In addition, the Director of Strategy & Resources holds delegated authority to approve changes to the Resilience, EP & BC Policy on behalf of the Executive Board.

[1] Corporate Leadership Team consists of the council's Chief Executive and Directors, supported by Chief Officers with statutory roles including the Director of Public Health, Chief Financial Officer (Section 151) and City Solicitor.

Entity	Roles and responsibilities
Directorate Management Teams (including Senior Managers)	Directorate Management Teams[2] includes ensuring that the resilience arrangements are in place within their services. Responsible for ensuring that critical services or functions within the directorate are identified and that suitable arrangements are developed, implemented and maintained to plan for and respond to emergencies and disruptions. Develop Business Continuity Plans and ensure they are fully implemented including staff awareness of their business continuity roles and responsibilities. Ensure annual reviews are completed and that Business Continuity Plans are maintained to reflect current practice. Ensure that testing and exercising of Business Continuity Plans and Incident Response Plans is carried out robustly and that any findings are acted upon in the spirit of continual improvement. Where necessary, some directorates have service teams that meet to discuss and review business continuity management and emergency planning matters at a more operational level. Any significant matters arising from the service teams meetings are escalated to the Directorate Management Team for further discussion and action.
Strategy and Performance Service	Central responsibility for Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Management falls under the Strategy and Performance (Resilience and Emergencies Team).
All staff	All staff have a duty to consider the risks to the achievement of their day-to-day objectives and the council's outcomes and priorities. They should also ensure that any risks which they cannot manage or that have a wider impact are escalated to their managers. Staff have a responsibility to obtain a basic level of business continuity and emergency planning/response awareness through briefings and training. This extends to understanding their roles and responsibilities during an emergency or incident. Staff may be required to participate in exercising and testing resilience plans relevant to their service area.

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[2] Directorate Management Teams consist of the relevant Director and Chief Officers and meet regularly to discuss issues affecting the directorate and its services. Other staff e.g., Heads of Service may be required to attend DMTs for specific items.

25. The general roles required for emergency planning and business continuity are seen in the table below:

Role	Responsibilities
Emergency Planning	
The council operates a command structure which is in line with JESIP: the joint doctrine of interoperability framework. Historically the council used a "Gold, Silver and Bronze" structure for the different response levels, which has recently been replaced with "Strategic, Tactical and Operational" as seen below	
Strategic level co-ordinating group	Considers the emergency in its wider context and determines long term impacts and risks; defines and communicates overarching strategy and objectives for the response
Tactical level co-ordinating group	Jointly conduct the overall management of the incident; determining priorities for allocating available resources and seeking additional resources if required, planning and coordinating tasks, assessing risks and uses this to inform tasking of operational commanders
Operational level – responder organisations	Implements the tactical plan, commands the single organisation response and co-ordinates actions
Single points of contact	Governance Managers within each directorate act as single points of contact for key officers listed within Business Continuity Plans and the Incident Response Plan. The single points of contacts ensure that • data protection requirements are obtained for all contacts listed • amendments are made in the Resilience and Emergencies Microsoft Teams site to ensure that key contact details remain up to date
Key stakeholders	All contacts listed within the Incident Response Plan are identified as being key stakeholders. These operational level officers would activate the tactical level response that their service or team can offer to support the overall incident management.
Business Continuity Management	
Business Continuity Plan Owner	The person responsible for the Business Continuity Plan and who will activate it should a disruptive event occur. The Plan Owner is usually Chief Officer or Head of Service.

Role	Responsibilities
Business Continuity Plan Key Contact	The Key Contact has responsibility for the day-to-day administration of the Business Continuity Plan including its annual review and update. There may be more than one Key Contact for each plan.

26. Democratic Oversight

27. The corporate risk register continues to house those risks of significant, cross-cutting importance that require the attention of the council's most senior managers and elected members. LCC01(City Resilience) and LCC02 (Council Resilience) are the risks which relate directly to Resilience. The joint risk owners of these risks are the Director of Strategy & Resources, Chief Officer Strategy & Performance and Head of Corporate Support who are accountable for their management. The Executive Board as a whole retains ultimate responsibility. Full details of the CLT and Democratic accountability for the corporate risks can be seen in Table 1 of the Annual Corporate Risk and Resilience Report to Executive Board (agenda item 9).

28. The Annual Corporate Risk and Resilience Report to Executive Board includes summary assurances for all corporate risks rated as 'High' or 'Very High'. The assurances include details of what the risks are, the main controls in place to manage them, any further work required and signposting to additional relevant information and reports. The Annual Corporate Risk and Resilience Report is also provided to the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board.

29. In addition to the democratic accountability, further oversight is provided via this annual report on the Risk and Resilience arrangements to the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee. From this report, the Committee gains assurance that the arrangements are fit for purpose, up to date and routinely complied with.

Clearly Communicate

30. Guidance and information

31. The main source of Emergency Planning information and guidance within the council is the Resilience and Emergencies Teams site. Membership of this site is determined by stakeholder role, if a person or job role has a role and/or responsibility in any Incident Response Plan activation. The Incident Response Plan and Specific Emergency Plans, training documents, supporting documents and link to incident management page are all contained within this site.

32. The Resilience and emergency planning INSITE and Leeds.gov Emergencies page contain more generic information on Emergency Planning, the latter including information on risks, how to prepare for an emergency and flooding.

33. The main source of Business Continuity guidance and information within the council is the [Business Continuity Management toolkit](), seen on InSite. The toolkit comprises the Resilience, EP and BC Policy, guidance and templates for completing Business Continuity Plans, and links to sources of relevant information such as the Community Risk Register. Information on Business Continuity Management is also available externally on Leeds.gov as part of information on 'how to prepare your business for an emergency'.

34. The internal Resilience and Emergencies Teams site is used to house and administer the Incident Response Plans and Business Continuity Plans and the Risk and Resilience Reports for Directorate Management Teams. The Business Continuity Management section of the site includes guidance on how to complete a Business Continuity Plan for a service and a blank template ready to be populated.

35. The email addresses businesscontinuity@leeds.gov.uk and Emergency.planning@leeds.gov.uk are available for staff, Elected Members and the public to get in touch with the council regarding emergency planning and business continuity matters.

36. Leeds Alert is an alert network managed by the Resilience and Emergencies Team for businesses and organisations across the city. . Leeds Alert is a free of charge service in which recipients will receive an email outlining hazards and threats facing the city e.g. severe weather, road closures, industrial action, demonstrations etc. There are currently 729 subscribers to this service. The Resilience and Emergencies Team also maintain the [@leedsemergency]() X (formerly twitter) account which currently has 8,162 followers, which warns and informs in the same way as Leeds Alert. The email addresses, Leeds Alert and the X account are publicised on the [Prepare your business for an emergency]() page on the council's Leeds.gov website.

37. The Resilience and Emergencies Team have responsibility for issuing internal Severe Weather Warnings. The platform Gov.delivery is utilised to create bulletins to advise of MET Office and Environment Agency warnings of an impending weather incident. Subscribers (currently totalling 262) to this service receive a tailored message for Leeds, advising of the possible impacts locally and also actions already taken by services. These bulletins link to the authority's Severe Weather Plan and also Business Continuity Plans.

38. Gov.delivery is also the platform used to issue out Air Quality alerts. The Long-term Air pollution alert process is a sustainable method of informing the Leeds workforce, members of the public and those more vulnerable to high or very high levels of air pollution. This distribution list is maintained by the Authorities Public Health Team, but warnings issued by RET. There are currently 265 subscribers to this service.

39. Training and Exercises: Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Management

40. This year RET have delivered training to West Yorkshire Police newly appointed Inspectors on the Council's role and support available in the event of an emergency. This was delivered to approx. 50 officers over two sessions in the Summer.

41. An elected members training package was developed for 2023 and delivered at two sessions in Autumn, covering the role of elected members in civil emergencies. This training session included practical learning in the form of table-top exercising on the subject of emergency response and building community resilience. We also delivered induction training in May to newly elected members.

42. Business Continuity Management training has not been delivered in 2023 due to plan owners being requested to complete impact assessments for the risk of National Power Outage and the RET undertaking a comprehensive confidence audit of all authority plans. This is explained further at point 88.

43. Emergency Plan exercises

44. The Local Resilience Forum (see point 51 below) leads on, and facilitates, a comprehensive exercise programme to test the various plans and arrangements to deal with disruptive incidents and emergencies. This year the LRF have facilitated, with representatives from Leeds City Council taking part, the following:

- Exercise Lukla (8th March): LBA exercise looking at the management of an aircraft accident and fuel spillage
- Exercise Mighty Oak (28 – 30th March); national exercise looking at the risks and impacts of a National Power Outage
- Gold Symposium (12th July): A strategic level event offering professional development with the focus on operational response during a National Power Outage
- Emergency Services Roadshow (29th July): an event hosted at Roundhay Park welcoming all Category 1 and 2 responders to showcase their services and spread the warning and informing message to members of the public attending from West Yorkshire.
- Strategic Exercise (27th September): Looking at recovery following a National Power Outage
- Exercise Spring Ten (12th October): Live Exercise in an arena setting to test the response and strategic management of a marauding terrorist incident
- Fuel Exercise (24th October): Table-top exercise with a focus on response to a national fuel crisis

45. RET have facilitated a live exercise, Exercise Ripario (13th September), which looked at the establishment and successful running of a Reception Centre following an incident requiring an evacuation. This exercise also contributed to the successful achievement of the authority obtaining a Gold Pawprint Award from the RSPCA for the council's provisions of welfare to companion animals in an emergency.

46. Learning from these exercises is documented and reflected in the work of the Local Resilience Forum and feeds into the Service Plan of the Resilience and Emergencies Team.

47. Business Continuity Network Event

48. On 9th November we re-launched the BC Network, which is a professional forum of local businesses coming together to learn and share best practice for Business Continuity. The event had a focus on Martyns Law and welcomed guest speakers from Counter Terrorism, First Direct Arena, Community Safety and Highways. The event was publicised through Leeds Alert, BACIL (Businesses Against Crime In Leeds) and Economic Development with the Key Accounts Manager. The event was a 'sell out', with 120 people attending.

Leadership

49. The Resilience, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Policy is endorsed by both the Leader, Deputy Leader and Director of Strategy and Resources demonstrating the 'tone from the top' about the important role that Resilience plays within the council.

50. As detailed in the roles and responsibilities section of this report, members of Executive Board and the Corporate Leadership Team receive reports during the year, and they can request updates on specific EP and BC matters from the Resilience and Emergencies Team or relevant directorate leads.

Effectively Embed

51. Stakeholder engagement

52. Key internal emergency planning and business continuity stakeholders have been identified (see roles and responsibilities table at point 23 above) and are recorded across in a series of documents and reports:

- Resilience, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Policy
- Resilience & Emergencies Teams Site
- Incident Response Plans
- Business Continuity Plans

53. Stakeholder engagement is via a range of methods that demonstrate both a 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approach:

54. External stakeholders are mainly those who attend the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum, West Yorkshire Prepared, which has responsibility for co-ordinating the actions and arrangements between responding services to prepare for and respond to civil emergencies when they occur. Stakeholders include representatives from West Yorkshire local authorities, West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Yorkshire Ambulance Service, the British Transport Police, the Military, Utilities and Health partners. Leeds City Council is represented at WYRF by:

- Director of Strategy & Resources, Co-chair of the WYRF
- Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager, Chair of the Mass Fatalities sub-group
- Intelligence and Policy Manager, Deputy Chair of the Risk and Capabilities sub-group
- Emergency Planning Officers, members of all other sub-groups
- Communications & Marketing Team, Communications Officers 6-weekly meeting

The Local Resilience Forum meetings take place quarterly supplemented by regular exercises to test the plans.

55. Other external stakeholders include members of the public and businesses, with which the council has a duty to warn and inform of ongoing or expected incidents (see point 33 in Clearly Communicate above).

56. At quarterly Directorate Leadership Team meetings the Resilience and Emergencies Team report on feedback from the WYRF, exercises and incidents that have taken place or occurred and the learning from them to incorporate into plans, update on plan developments and a review of the directorates Business Continuity Plans status (due for review, updated or over-due a review).

57. Internal stakeholders are regularly reviewed and updated to keep track of changes due to staff turnover. Additionally, the Resilience and Emergencies Teams site includes functionality to inform the site owners of any changes to the owners and key contacts for the plans i.e. new starters and leavers. The movers and leavers form with the Business Administration Service also captures details of stakeholders and prompts line managers to inform the Resilience & Emergencies Team.

58. Meetings take place (usually weekly) between the Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager and the Intelligence and Policy Manager to review and discuss work including:

- Organisational resilience preparedness
- Items to include in the routine risk and resilience reports to directorates, committees and boards
- Exercising and testing the organisations plans
- Consideration of information cascaded to the council e.g. updates to the National Risk Register

59. Directorate Management and service team meetings provide the main opportunities to discuss risk and resilience aspects relevant to their areas such as new and emerging threats, feedback from the Local Resilience Forum, consideration of lessons learned from exercises and the external and internal testing of incident response and business continuity plans.

60. The Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager is a member of ALARM[3]. Through actively participating in Continuing Professional Development, such as attending seminars and conferences hosted by ALARM, the Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager can keep informed of developments in resilience matters.

61. Clear systems and processes in place

62. Systems for emergency planning and business continuity are well established across the council, supported by reporting timetables, and are very much "business as usual" within services. Details of the timetables are made available to staff via the Resilience and Emergencies Teams site.

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[3] ALARM is a risk management organisation that develops industry leading best practice for those managing risk and insurance

63. The Incident Response Plan and specific Emergency Plans on the council's Resilience and Emergencies Microsoft Teams site are maintained by the RET with assistance from Directorate Governance Managers. The Teams site has a 'notification alert' button, that members can use to advise of contact number or personnel changes that need to be reflected in the plans. Changes are required to be reflected in the system within 48 business hours of notification.

Meaningfully Monitor

64. General

65. The need to monitor and update risks and plans is a key part of the emergency planning and business continuity process, illustrated in Diagram 1 (four phases of emergency management) and Diagram 2 (business continuity process) below:
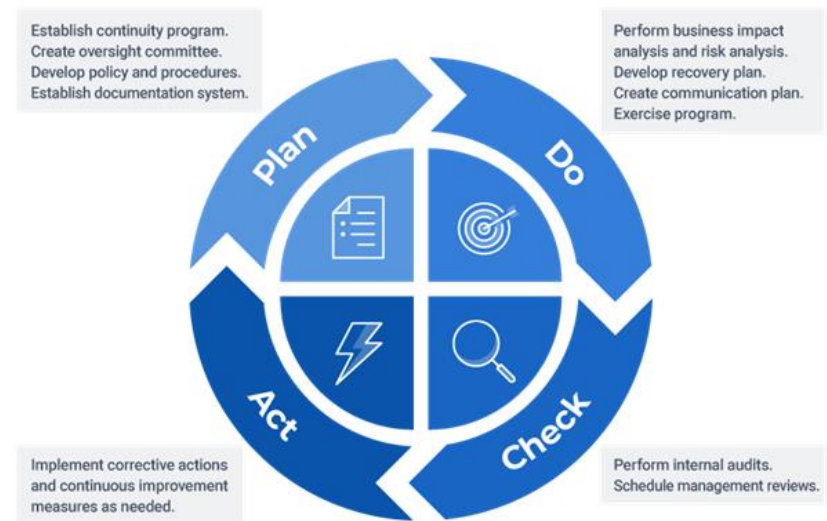

Diagram 1

Diagram 2

66. Routine reporting takes place on emergency planning and business continuity matters as follows:

- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity updates are reported to each Directorate Management Team on a quarterly basis
- Members of the Resilience and Emergencies Team attend meetings to present the report and answer questions on their content

67. 'Being open, honest and trusted' is one of the Council Values and this includes the reporting and constructive discussion of risk and resilience at all levels. Decisions are required to be made with proper consideration of risks, including:

- new risks and threats identified are raised and reported to the relevant level for consideration

- when risks are increasing in significance, or showing other early warning indicators, they are escalated to the correct level to enable decisions about how to manage/mitigate them to be made

- lessons learned from significant control failures and 'near misses' are identified and discussed

- services and directorates are able to raise matters about areas where improvement is required and report the actions being taken so that a collective discussion can take place to identify any further solutions

68. The standard to which the council aligns development of business continuity is BS EN ISO 22301: 2019 'Business Continuity Management Systems Requirements'. The standard specifies the structure and requirements for implementing and maintaining a business continuity management system. The standard (paragraph 9.1) 'Monitoring, Measurement, Analysis and Evaluation' sets out guidelines to assist organisations.

69. The Resilience and Emergencies Team are currently undertaking an audit of all critical services Business Continuity Plans. Part of this process will highlight all interdependencies services have with other services, in order for all BCPs to cohesively ensure that continuity also in the future.

70. BCP Key contacts are reminded to review and update their plans in April/May, with details of any changes e.g. to the roles and responsibilities, contact details and amendments to how the service would deal with the different types of disruptive incidents.

71. Risks identified and mitigated

72. The council's Corporate Risk Register contains a range of strategic, cross-cutting risks including a number linked to emergency planning and business continuity management: 'City Resilience', 'Council Resilience', 'Major cyber-incident' and 'Major Flooding'. The details in the Risk Management System include existing controls in place to mitigate against the risks and any further actions required. It is noted that the corporate risks include those of a non-resilience nature.

73. New risks are identified from a variety of internal and external sources including Directorate Management Team meetings, Corporate Leadership Team, from conversations with services, through horizon scanning, and via the Local Resilience Forum.

74. Through membership of the ALARM, the Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager is able to attend seminars and networking events at which new and emerging risks are discussed.

75. Development of the business continuity plans considers risk, identifying the threats and hazards that might impact a critical service or function and the arrangements to avoid, mitigate and recover should such risks occur.

76. Additionally, every quarter the Local Resilience Forum requests all partner organisations submit their top three resilience risks, with the results of the submissions fed back for information, circulation and action.

77. Escalation process in place and used appropriately

78. The West Yorkshire Resilience Forum provides an opportunity to escalate, communicate and discuss resilience risks and threats of a regional nature. An example of a risk currently being reviewed by the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum is the threat of a national power outage.

79. <u>Benchmarking</u>

80. The opportunity to identify and share incidents of note, lessons learned and good practice between the other West Yorkshire Local Authorities and other partner organisations is facilitated via the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum.

Review and Refine

81. <u>Legislation and Guidance</u>

82. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 recently underwent a [post implementation review (2022).](#) The findings found that whilst the principles in The Act remain broadly effective, two main recommendations were made; to enhance accountability for multi-agency preparedness activities and to update the statutory and non-statutory UK guidance that accompanies The Act. The Resilience and Emergencies Team await further guidance and will make changes, where required, once published.

83. <u>Fit for purpose</u>

84. The Resilience, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Policy has been recently refreshed, mainly to reflect council terminology, and was considered and signed off at Corporate Leadership Team on 31st October 2023.

85. A successful recruitment exercise was completed for the Project Support Officer within the Resilience and Emergencies Team, with the postholder being in position since April 2023. This has achieved the goal in allowing the Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager to focus on attending the Health Protection Board and other health forums with support from an Emergency Planning Officer (EPO). The EPO also now has more capacity to work collaboratively with Health colleagues on updating the Pandemic and Outbreak emergency plans.

86. A formal Internal Audit was undertaken on the Business Continuity Management functions commencing in 2022 with the final report being produced October 2023. The Executive Summary of this audit included: There are policies and procedures in place to effectively manage Business Continuity Arrangements and support is provided to directorates across the council where appropriate.

87. Some weaknesses were found as part of the BCM Audit, and recommendations made as follows:

- IDS and RET to collaborate to review the Major Incident process for IDS

It has previously been identified that there are many interdependencies from all of the critical services with IDS, resulting in IDS being named as a core responder. The Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager has met with IDS colleagues and agreed that this recommendation will be reviewed following the process of audit for all other plans. We will be provided with an up-to-date picture of interdependency which will enable IDS to take proportionate and informed decisions when updating procedures for responding to requests for support from critical services.

88. Other recommendations were made as part of the Internal Audit, of which had already been highlighted as an area for improvement by the Resilience and Emergencies Team Manager. These were incorporated into processes before the final report was published in October, as follows:

- The RET have altered the approach, as outlined at point 42, and are undertaking an audit process in 2023 of all critical service plans. An objective of this process is to advise areas to improve on within the plans. Feedback will be reported to services in January 2024 for their plan review to incorporate recommendations in their April plan update.

- It is anticipated that an outcome from this review will be that a proportion of Business Impact Analysis for council services will need to be undertaken or repeated to ensure that BCPs are in place for all current critical services. It will be fed back in the January reports to all services if this is felt to be a requirement, and any new services will be captured through communication links with Directorate Leadership Teams.

- Within the template audit report, RET have included standard text to feedback a consistent message to all critical services about work flows and management during power outage and loss.

- Plans had previously not followed a programme for review and update, with all plans having different review schedules. All plans have been updated in 2023 and have agreed to an annual review period, which will be undertaken in April/May each year. The first occurrence of this schedule will be in 2024, if there are plans overdue review by the end of May then this will be chased by the dedicated Directorate Emergency Planning Officer, if by June this has still not been undertaken then the Directorate Leadership Team will be made aware and it highlighted as a risk.