

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. Emergency Planning relates to how the council prepares and responds to risks and emergencies.
4. 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.
5. The term 'resilience' covers both emergency planning and business continuity work streams.
6. The need for the council to have resilience arrangements remains essential.
7. 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

Policies and Strategies

8. The Councils **Resilience, Emergency Planning (EP) and Business Continuity (BC) Policy** was reviewed and signed off in October 2023 (review schedule is 3 yearly). 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.
9. 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 regards to Resilience.
10. Under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 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
11. Business Continuity Management (BCM) 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 (BCM) good practice, it is also a requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004, which made it a statutory duty of all Category 1 responders (which includes local authorities) to have in place business continuity plans (BCPs).
12. To help comply with the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA), 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.

Key plans and documents

13. Underpinning the Resilience, Emergency Planning (EP) and Business Continuity (BC) Policy are the following key plans and documents:
 - The Major Incident Response Plan (MIRP), Specific Emergency Plans and Incident Response Plan: contacts (IRP) are maintained on the council's Resilience and Emergencies Team Microsoft Teams site: 'The Emergencies Handbook'. 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 (IRP) details internal and external key contacts and supporting documents for strategic, tactical and operational officers. The Emergencies Handbook includes functionality for the notification of any changes in the key contacts.

- Over 80 Business Continuity Plans (reviewed 2023) covering the council's critical services. The Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) 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.
 - All services within LCC are currently undertaking a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) exercise, that informs which of their Critical Functions are of a level of risk warranting a Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The new Business Continuity Plan (BCP) template does not ask a service area of a critical function to explore mitigating measures for each risk area (as outlined above), but rather takes into consideration all risk and threat possibilities with the plan outlining measures required to ensure its continuance. This is explained further at points 26, 55 and 56. During this transitional phase the previous 84 Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) remain in place, until a new plan is produced.
 - These arrangements take into consideration the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA), published by the Cabinet Office. The National Security Risk Assessment is the government's principal tool for identifying, assessing and comparing the most significant acute risks to the UK. The Assessment is produced using a rigorous and well-tested methodology, based on international best practice. 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 (NRR), sets out 89 of the most serious risks that would have a significant impact on the UK's safety, security or critical systems. The Assessment is also used to inform the more local West Yorkshire Community Risk Register (WYCRR), and together these inform the review and update of the council's corporate risks on City and Council Resilience (LCC01 and LCC02) arrangements.
14. The Major Incident Response Plan (MIRP), Incident Response Plans (IRP), specific emergency plans and Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) are held in electronic form on The Emergencies Handbook 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 plans are held in the event of an incident involving loss of data or power, at key locations and by each of the Emergency Planning Officers.

Roles and responsibilities

15. The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 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).

16. The council's Resilience and Emergencies Team lead on the co-ordination of the authority's emergency planning and business continuity functions.
17. 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'.
18. Business Continuity Plans are owned and maintained by the respective critical services within the five council directorates. The Resilience and Emergencies Team 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, 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.
19. 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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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

Entity	Roles and responsibilities
	<p>can provide challenge on the arrangements to manage specific risks and reviews the Resilience, EP & BCM Policy.</p> <p>The Committee approves the Annual Governance Statement which incorporates arrangements in relation to emergency planning and business continuity.</p>
Elected Members	<p>All Elected Members have a responsibility to understand the council's emergency planning and business continuity management arrangements and the risks facing the authority.</p> <p>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. Regular training is delivered to Elected Members on Civil protection and Emergency Preparedness.</p>
Council staff	
Corporate Leadership Team ¹	<p>The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) has responsibility for ensuring that there are appropriate arrangements in place to manage emergencies or disruptions, both those within their respective directorates and with a cross-cutting or wider impact.</p> <p>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 specific plans within the Emergencies Handbook.</p> <p>CLT members make up the Strategic level of the council's response structure and offer direction to staff at Tactical and Operational levels.</p>
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

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
	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.
Directorate Management Teams (including Senior Managers)	<p>Directorate Management Teams² responsibilities include ensuring that the resilience arrangements are in place within their services.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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.

Entity	Roles and responsibilities
	Staff may be required to participate in exercising and testing resilience plans relevant to their service area.

20. 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 Emergency Services Interoperability Principles. 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 (SCG)	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 (TCG)	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 (SPOC)	The Emergency Planning Officers act as a SPOC for each directorate, for all Resilience matters. The single points of contacts ensure that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data protection requirements are obtained for all contacts listed • amendments are made in the Emergencies Handbook 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.

Role	Responsibilities
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.
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.

Democratic Oversight

21. 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.
22. 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.
23. In addition to the democratic accountability, further oversight is provided via this annual report on the 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

Guidance and information

24. The main source of Emergency Planning information and guidance within the council is the Emergencies Handbook. 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 response management page are all contained within this site.

25. 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.
26. The main source of Business Continuity guidance and information within the council are the Emergency Planning Officers in the Resilience and Emergencies Team. Following the audit and review of the Business Continuity Management process and all Business Continuity Plans (reported in the Nov 2023 CGAC report) which concluded in December 2023, the team have reviewed the toolkit previously located on Insite. In early 2024 the new toolkit was launched and emailed to more than 300 teams in LCC to commence a thorough review of all critical functions. The new toolkit comprises Business Impact Analysis (with guidance) and Business Continuity Plan template, which now include a summary of the relevant information contained in the Community Risk Register and Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The completion of a Business Impact Analysis (BIA) automatically populates the content of the first draft Business Continuity Plan for the service to expand and finalise. The template documents are stored locally to the Resilience and Emergencies Team. The Business Continuity Management page on Insite has been reviewed to provide up to date information on the process and signpost to the Resilience and Emergencies team to support.
27. The Emergencies Handbook site is used to house and administer the Incident Response Plans and Business Continuity Plans. 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.
28. 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.
29. 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 819 subscribers to this service. The Resilience and Emergencies Team also maintain the [@leedsemergency](#) X (formerly twitter) account which currently has 7,934 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.
30. 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 249) 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.
31. Gov.delivery is also the platform used to issue 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 are issued by RET. There are currently 568 subscribers to this service.

Training and Exercises: Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Management (BCM)

32. An elected members training package was developed in 2023 and delivered at a session in May 2024 for newly elected members, covering the role of elected members in civil emergencies. This training session included practical learning in the form of table-top exercise about emergency response and building community resilience.
33. Business Continuity Management training has not been delivered in 2024, however the Resilience and Emergencies Team have communicated with all services to deliver advice on the new BCM model (explained at point 26).
34. Resilience and Emergency Planning and Intelligence and Policy delivered a Heatwave webinar to Commissioned Services of Adults Social Care over two dates in June 2024.

Emergency Plan exercises

35. The Local Resilience Forum 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 Local Resilience Forum have facilitated, with representatives from Leeds City Council taking part, the following:
- MACE (Multi-Agency Capability Event) (5th June): An exhibition of all Category 1 and 2 responders capabilities at Wetherby Racecourse, to enhance knowledge and awareness of multi-agency resources
 - FCP/TCG/SCG Training (13th May and 10th June): Table-top led discussions and exercises to enhance knowledge and awareness for responding at a Forward Control Point (FCP), and working within a Tactical Control Group (TCG) and Strategic Coordination Group (SCG)
 - CPD Event (12th July): A strategic level event offering professional development with the focus on operational response during a Heatwave and Water Safety during hot periods
 - Strategic Exercise (26th September): Looking at response to Heatwave and Wildfires
 - Unilever COMAH Exercise, Red October (9th October): A tactical and operational level exercise to test the response plan to an incident at the Top Tier COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) site in Leeds
 - Midnight Belle (20th September): A live play exercise on 17th September followed by the table-top exercise testing the response to a Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) at Leeds Train Station
 - Exercise Solacium (15th October): A table-top discussion to explore the current approach and identify areas of learning for responding to incidents affecting Vulnerable Persons
36. The Resilience and Emergencies Team have facilitated table-top exercising and training with Rest Centre Volunteers over four dates in April and May 2024. The objective of these sessions was to build knowledge and awareness to aid the successful running of a Reception

Centre following an incident requiring an evacuation. This exercise also contributed to the successful achievement of Leeds City Council maintaining their Gold Pawprint Award from the RSPCA for the council's provisions of welfare to companion animals in an emergency.

37. All Emergency Planning Officers have attended formal training at the Emergency Planning College, and are certified to undertake the role.

38. 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.

Leadership

39. 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.

40. 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 resilience matters from the Resilience and Emergencies Team.

Effectively Embed

Stakeholder engagement

41. Key internal emergency planning and business continuity stakeholders have been identified (see roles and responsibilities table at points 19 and 20 above) and are recorded across in a series of documents and reports:

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

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

43. 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, MET Office, Environment Agency and Health partners. Leeds City Council is represented at West Yorkshire Resilience Forum by:

- Interim Chief Executive Officer, Co-chair of the West Yorkshire Resilience Forum

- 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.

44. 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 28 and 29 above).
45. At quarterly Directorate Leadership Team meetings the Resilience and Emergencies Team report on progress with the Business Continuity Management review, as well as key points of feedback from WYRF sub group meetings.
46. 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.
47. 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
48. 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.

Clear systems and processes in place

49. Systems for emergency planning and business continuity are well established across the council and are very much “business as usual” within services.

50. The Incident Response Plan and specific Emergency Plans on the council's Emergencies Handbook are maintained by the RET. 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

General

51. 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

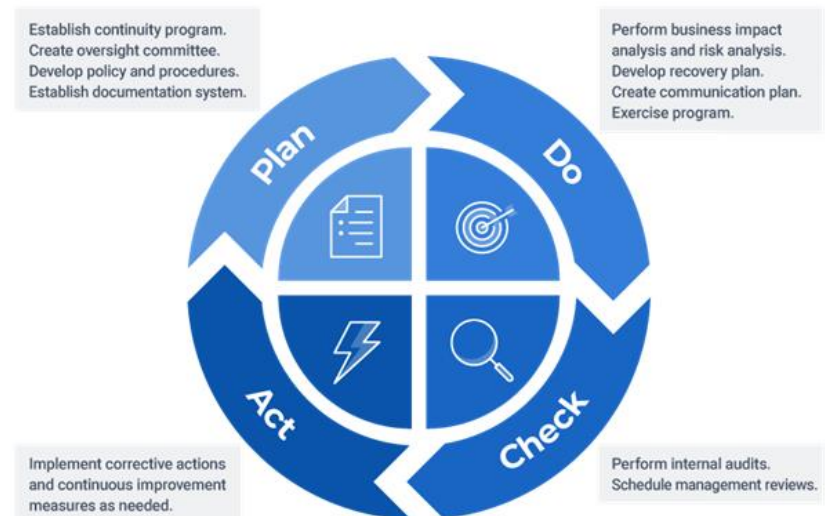


Diagram 2

52. 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

53. '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

54. 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.

55. The Resilience and Emergencies Team undertook an audit of all Business Continuity Plans in late 2023. The outcomes of this audit led to the Business Continuity Management model being reviewed and a new toolkit developed. The Resilience and Emergencies Team are currently meeting with over 200 teams to undertake an up to date Business Impact Analysis which assists in identifying critical functions and measuring the impact of key risks on those functions which informs the need for a Business Continuity Plan.

56. A breakdown of the work to date is as follows:

Directorate	Assessed - No BCP required	Assessed – BCP required	Work ongoing
Childrens & Families	2	2	27
Adults & Health	12	5	7
City Development	1	5	55
Communities Housing & Environments	5	10	40
Strategy & Resources	4	9	27

57. Business Continuity Key Contacts are working with the Resilience and Emergencies Team to review the BCPs with a target completion date early 2025. Annual review schedule will re-commence in April 2026.

58. Following the completion of assessing critical functions and creating Business Continuity Plans, the Resilience & Emergencies Team will be identifying areas of interdependency across all LCC services. Integrated Digital Services (IDS) will use the interdependencies list to inform their suite of Major Incident Plans to ensure all critical functions have support mechanisms embedded. All common risk areas will

be compiled within a new Corporate Business Continuity Plan to support all services, regardless of criticality, with issues such as building access and maintenance, communications, common IT issues, severe weather and staff shortages.

Risks identified and mitigated

59. The risks facing the UK are identified and assessed by the Cabinet Office and communicated via the National Security Risk Assessment. The West Yorkshire Resilience Forum produces a more local West Yorkshire Community Risk Register, and together these inform the review and update of the council's corporate risks.
60. The Resilience and Emergencies Team ensure there are plans in place to respond to the risks: the specific emergency plans on the Emergencies Handbook. The Business Continuity Management model is also mindful of the high and very high risks that could disrupt services.
61. Additionally, every quarter the Local Resilience Forum requests all partner organisations to submit their top three resilience risks, with the results of the submissions fed back for information, circulation and action.

Escalation process in place and used appropriately

62. The West Yorkshire Resilience Forum provides an opportunity to escalate, communicate and discuss resilience risks and threats of a regional nature.

Benchmarking

63. 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

Legislation and Guidance

64. 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.

Fit for purpose

65. 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.

Survey of Internal Control

66. In Spring 2024 the council undertook its annual Survey of Internal Control to provide assurance in relation to all key systems of internal control by seeking an assessment from operational managers as to whether the arrangements underpinning the Corporate Governance Code and Framework are working as intended.
67. There was a small increase to responses to the 2024 survey; 138 compared to 120 in 2023. The responses to the 2 questions asked in the survey about Business Continuity arrangements were:
- 89% of responders thought the Business Continuity plans developed for their service were 'well embedded' or 'fairly embedded'.
 - 86% of responders thought the arrangements for monitoring, testing and review of the Business Continuity plans were 'well embedded' or 'fairly embedded'.
 - 10% of responders thought the Business Continuity plans developed for their service were 'not embedded or 'don't know'.
 - 13% of responders thought the arrangements for monitoring, testing and review of the Business Continuity plans were 'not embedded or 'don't know'.
68. The results are encouraging overall. They show that a high number of officers have an awareness of the Business Continuity Management approach for the Authority. Those completing the survey who selected 'don't know' or 'not embedded' may well be those service areas that have not completed the new Business Impact Analysis document, with this being an ongoing project for 2024.

Opportunities for Improvement

69. A summary of the areas where further work is to be completed during the next twelve months is as follows:
- Creation of the new Corporate Business Continuity Plan detailing common risk areas and their mitigations, assisting Critical Functions Business Continuity Plans to be solely focussed on service specific issues,
 - Completion of assessing all 200+ services critical functions and identifying areas of interdependency with other service areas. This will be raised with those services that are dependent on, to enable them to include mitigations within their Business Continuity Plans. Integrated Digital Services (IDS) will be able to use this information to personalise their suite of Major Incident plans for the critical functions of LCC.