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Leeds CITY COUNCIL

Report of Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive

Report to Corporate Governance & Audit Committee

Date: 10th July 2013

Subject: Update regarding progress with the development of Business Continuity Plans for LCC's most critical services.

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	☐ Yes	☒ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	☐ Yes	☒ No

Summary of main issues

1. This report provides an update regarding progress made towards completing the outstanding the Business Continuity Plans for LCC's most critical services as requested by the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee at the 22 April 2013 meeting.

   Having Business Continuity Plans in place for the most critical services will ensure that LCC is meeting its statutory duties required under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 by having in place arrangements to be able to continue to deliver critical aspects of day to day functions in the event of an emergency or disruptive incident.

2. Of the 67 Business Continuity Plans required (previously 64 reported in April) there are currently 39 plans in place (previously 27 reported in April).

   Progress is on-going with the development of a further 26 Business Continuity Plans leaving just 2 service areas failing to be engaged with the process.

Recommendations

1   Purpose of this report

1.1   To provide an update to the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee on the progress made towards completing the outstanding Business Continuity Plans for LCC's most critical services (since the previous meeting held 22 April 2013).

2   Background information

2.1   The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 made it a statutory duty of all Councils to have in place arrangements to be able to continue to deliver critical aspects of their day to day functions in the event of an emergency if the impact on the community is to be kept to a minimum.

2.2   For LCC to achieve and maintain compliance with the statutory duty, a centrally managed BCM Programme has been established. The BCM Programme provides a structured approach and hands-on support to directorates using good practice guidance aligned with the British Standard BS 25999 to support development of the required Business Continuity Plans.

2.3   Business Continuity Plans are developed and maintained in readiness for use during a disruptive incident and provide managers and officers with solutions in the event of loss of staff, loss of buildings and accommodation, loss of ICT, loss of or disruption to key suppliers and partners and loss of any other key requirements such as vehicles and specialist plant and machinery identified as essential to supporting critical services.

2.4   LCC has identified 67 services as being most critical i.e. those services which require recovery from disruption in less than 24 hours, a comparison with other Core Cities has identified similar numbers of critical services.

2.5   Critical services without plans in place, is potentially exposing some of LCC's *most* critical service areas to resilience issues in the event of a disruptive incident occurring.

       The importance of this is recognised by CLT through the identification and on-going management of Corporate Risk LCC2 - Council Resilience, a risk "unlikely to ever go away" for which CLT requires quarterly assurances.

3   Main Issues/Progress since the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee Meeting (22 April 2013)

3.6   Since the last report, the number of LCC services assessed as being most critical has increased by 3 from the 64 previously reported to the Committee in April to a total of 67.

       Of the 67 service areas requiring Business Continuity Plans, 39 (58%) now have Business Continuity Plans in place. This is an increase of 12 Business Continuity Plans completed to that reported to the Committee on 22 April.

3.7 Progress with development of a further 26 Business Continuity Plans continues. However in some cases, an inconsistent level of management engagement with the process is prolonging development. A further 2 service areas are not engaged with the process despite several reminders being issued.

3.8 The BCM Programmes strategy to supporting managers with the development of Business Continuity Plans is a direct 'hands-on' approach. The BCM Programme Manager completes the required Business Continuity Plan template which is informed by information captured at a meeting (1 hour duration max) with the manager(s) responsible for the service. The manager's role beyond the initial meeting is to simply review and revise the initial draft Business Continuity Plan. It is the review and revision of the draft Business Continuity Plan where a lack of manager response is being experienced despite several reminders being issued.

3.9 In order to expedite progress, the BCM Programme Manager continues to issue reminders to the manager's responsible and also by reporting progress into the Directorate Emergency Management Groups on a regular basis.

3.10 Since the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee Meeting (22 April), the BCM Programme Manager has discussed the concerns raised with various service managers, which has contributed to the completion of a further 12 Business Continuity Plans.

A target date of end of September 2013 for the completion of all outstanding Business Continuity Plans has been set and communicated to the managers responsible.

3.11 The British Standard BS 25999 notes that *"creating and embedding BCM within an organisation can be lengthy and difficult process which might encounter a level of resistance that was not anticipated"*. Although just 58% of LCC's most critical services currently have Business Continuity Plans in place, the support of the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee and the Director of Resources will help to accelerate the progress currently being made towards achieving a more resilient council.

3.12 In addition to LCC Business Continuity Plans, the BCM Programme is also incorporating support to schools and commissioned services through the assessment of Business Continuity Plans and provision of guidance and awareness workshops. This incorporates new public health structures including Clinical Commissioning Groups and providers. During the next quarter it will be necessary to map any new critical services resultant from the transfer of public health.

4   Corporate Considerations

4.1   Consultation and Engagement

The BCM Toolkit (templates and guidance) has been shared with the Emergency Planning College and Core Cities for peer review purposes. Positive feedback was received providing confidence in the adequacy and completeness of the toolkit.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 All published templates and guidance have been assessed by the Equality & Diversity Team to check that due regard has been given and that the templates meet Plain English requirements.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The Council Business Continuity Policy sets out the requirements placed upon services across the Council. The Policy is due for its initial review in September and will involve practitioner engagement to drive a 'less is more' approach in line with the Best Council Plan.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 No implications.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 A failure to deliver critical services may result in a risk to the health and well-being of service users or a failure to comply with our legal responsibilities. Robust business continuity arrangements will help to reduce the likelihood of litigation against the Council for failing to meet its responsibilities.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The 'Corporate Risk LCC2 – Council Resilience' is one of six 'standing risks' on the Corporate Risk Register "unlikely to ever go away" for which CLT requires quarterly assurances on how the risk is being mitigated and managed. The implementation of Business Continuity Plans for LCC's most critical service areas will underpin the required assurances relating to the mitigation and management of this risk.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Since the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee Meeting (22 April) progress has been made with the completion of a further 12 Business Continuity Plans.

5.2 The development of a further 28 Business Continuity Plans is required of which progress is currently being made with 26 leaving just 2 service areas currently not engaged with the process.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Committee to note that progress with the development of Business Continuity Plans for LCC's most critical services is being made with all directorates in order to meet the statutory duties required of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

A target date of end of September 2013 for the completion of all outstanding Business Continuity Plans for the most critical services has been set and communicated to the managers responsible.

6.2   The Committee to note this report for information and receive further updates as required.

7   Background documents[1]

7.1   None.