SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Audit Committee   **DATE:** 10th November 2011

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WARD(S):   **All**

PORTFOLIO: Finance & Strategy – Leader of the Council Councillor Rob
Anderson

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan Update

1   Purpose of Report

This report provides an update summary of the progress to date in developing
SBC's Business Continuity Plan for the period up to October 2011 following
recommendations contained in the report from Internal Audit.

2   Recommendation

That the Audit Committee notes the progress made to date and further activities to
be concluded within the Business Continuity Action Plan (Appendix 1)

3   Community Strategy Priorities–

The activities of the Business Continuity Action Planning

- **Celebrating Diversity, Enabling inclusion**
- **Adding years to Life and Life to years**
- **Being Safe, Feeling Safe**
- **A Cleaner, Greener place to live, Work and Play**
- **Prosperity for All**

4   Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications within this report. The Business Continuity
Planning project will be delivered within existing budgets

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
That the Audit Committee notes the progress made to date and further activities to be concluded within the Business Continuity Action Plan	Failure to act on recommendations within the BCP Audit Report	Corporate Working Group Established Development of a robust action plan and maintenance of BCP going forward
	Insufficent internal	Each Directorate asked to

	resources allocated to deliver project in a timely fashion	provide a staff and a suitable deputy to support the project

(c) <u>Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications</u>

The BCP process is being carried out across the Council to comply with the Civil Contingencies Act, 2004 and general requirements for support to statutory duties of the Council in adult or education services for instance. In it is a requirement of the Act that the Council can respond to major emergencies as and when required.

Section 3 Local Government Act 1999 places the Council under a duty to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Measures to improve business continuity and risk management are consistent with the duty.

There are no implications on the Human Rights Act and no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

(d) <u>Equalities Impact Assessment</u>

As a major corporate project the supporting BCP Action Plan will have been or will be subject to Equalities Impacts Assessments as part of their development, led by the appropriate project manager.

(e) <u>Workforce</u>

Resources required from each Directorate to support the project. Business Continuity Training workshops will be established to ensure staff involved are familiar with the BCP process going forward.

5   **Supporting Information**

Background

An internal audit report on Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in 2010 identified a number of areas for potential improvement in Slough Borough Councils existing BCP arrangements.

It was recommended within the audit report that a corporate wide, project sponsored by Corporate Management Team (CMT) be commissioned to address the areas of improvement identified in the Audit Report.

To ensure that appropriate action is taken a corporate wide project/working Group has been established with the purpose of reviewing the recommendations within th Audit Report and develop an action plan that addresses the recommendations and improve current practices and to implement improvements as appropriate.

Individual departments currently are responsible for their own Business Continuity arrangements. However, it would be good practice for these arrangements to be collated together in a consistent format to construct a Corporate Business Continuity Plan.

The creation of a Corporate Business Continuity Plan will enable to Council to fully identify the corporate requirements for Disaster Recovery and will enable appropriate arrangements with third parties to be reviewed.

The publication and communication of a Corporate Business Continuity Plan will increase awareness with staff of their responsibility and should ensure more effective implementation of the plans if ever required.

Objectives

The Corporate BCP project group will meet the following objectives:

- To enable an effective development and maintenance of business continuity plans and improve governance arrangements.

- To ensure that the Council has fit and robust business continuity and disaster recovery plans which will ensure the Council can fulfil its statutory obligations and can be invoked as needed.

The project will focus on:

- Management commitment to the development and maintenance of business continuity plans
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities for Business Continuity Working Group members
- Identify issues that require CMT consideration
- Identify possible funding implications
- Review current departmental Business Continuity Plans
- Review previous Business Impact Analysis data
- Consideration of utilisation of KPMG approach to establishing Business Impact Analysis and Business Continuity Plans
- Risk analysis of Departmental and Corporate arrangements
- Priorities for recovery to be established at both departmental and authority level
- Business recovery plans to be established and maintained and updated as appropriate
- To identify requirements for Disaster Recovery Plans
- To review existing disaster recovery arrangements in line with new requirements
- Officers with specific identified responsibilities for business continuity and disaster recovery to be trained as appropriate
- Development of a mechanism for business recovery and disaster recovery plans to be regularly tested
- Review arrangements with third party suppliers and obtain assurances with regard to Business Continuity
- Respond to any identified weaknesses as a result of the latest audit report
- To instigate processes for ongoing monitoring and revision of Business Continuity Plans
- To instigate processes for communication of Business Continuity Plans to staff and relevant third parties.

Scope

All Council Directorates are within scope.

Scope of the project will include developing the following areas –

- Business Continuity Planning
- Roles & responsibilities of staff
- Business Continuity training
- Infrastructure Assessment
- Risk Analysis
- Review of arrangements with third parties
- Priorities for recovery
- Testing of Business Continuity Plans

Deliverables

The key deliverables are

- A Corporate Business Continuity Plan incorporating all departmental Business Continuity Plans.

- Identification of requirements for interaction with third parties to ensure effective Disaster Recovery

- Publication and communication to staff of the Corporate Business Continuity Plan.

Business Benefits

- The key business benefit is that the Council will be able to have confidence that its Business Continuity Planning will be robust and effective if ever needed to be implemented.

6   **Comments of Other Committees**

No other Committees or Panels have been consulted in producing this report

7   **Conclusion**

The BCP Action Plan developed by the corporate Working Group will ensure that the recommendations contained in the Audit Report are implemented and that robust governance arrangements are put in place to ensure that the BCP is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

8   **Appendices Attached**

   Appendix 1

9   **Background Papers**

None

Appendix 1

Slough Borough Council Business Continuity Action Plan 2011/12

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
1	At the time of the audit it was identified that there are no regular meetings held to discuss Business Continuity.	Where the Council lacks a formal Working Group to champion business continuity there is a risk that interested parties are unaware of Business Continuity Planning (BCP) issues that may be critical to the operations of the Council. Moreover, it will also be difficult to co-ordinate an efficient business continuity process which may result in a staff resources being wasted and financial loss being incurred. Risk Category: Medium	A Business Continuity Working Group should be established comprising of management from across the organisation. The function of this group should establish the direction of the program, identify tools to be used, establish metrics, and report to senior management on BCP progress. Management Comment: Business continuity Group established. With representation from all Directorates plus, IT rep, HR, rep, Comms rep, Facilities rep and The Emergency Planning Officer. Terms of reference and action plan agreed. Meetings to be held monthly. Responsibility: Corporate Management Team. R. Parkin is CMT representative Timescale: June 2011 - **completed**

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
2	At the time of the audit, it was identified that there was no responsible Officer assigned to provide oversight of Business Continuity at the Council.	Where responsibility has not been formally delegated to co-ordinate Business Continuity, there is a risk that there may be incomplete or outstanding Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) impacting on the efficiency and effectiveness of responses to events and assurances over the robustness of business critical services/functions to continue to operate. Risk Category: Medium	A Chair from the Business Continuity Working Group should be nominated to develop the programme. The assigned Officer will then be able to monitor the completion of BCPs and ensure that the content is of a satisfactory quality. Management Comment: Roger Parkin Director of Customer & Transactional Services elected as Chair and CMT rep Responsibility: Business Continuity Working Group Timescale: June 2011 - **completed**

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
3	At the time of the audit, it was identified that several Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) did not meet the quality requirements, as required by checks conducted by the Risk and Insurance Officer, and were yet to be amended.	If BCPs are not consistent across Service Units, there is a risk that current BCP arrangements do not reflect the Council's operational circumstances. In the event of a disaster, there may not have been sufficient plans made to cover critical Council's services leading to potential delays and/or loss of services with reputational damage incurred. Risk Category: Medium	The Business Continuity Working Group should make a decision on the standard of BCPs produced and hence amend the current BCP template as appropriate. Each service should have their own BCP which reflects their unique individual requirements relevant to the office space or building occupied and staffing but be produced in a format that is consistent with the rest of the organisation. Management Comment: Agreed -part of the action plan Responsibility: Business Continuity Working Group Chair Timescale: July 2011 - **completed**

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
4	At the time of the audit, it was identified that there was no Corporate Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in place.	Without a corporate BCP, there is a risk that no strategic procedures will be outlined to promptly take action in response to an unforeseen event. Inappropriate actions may ultimately lead to service disruption with reputational and financial loss being incurred. Risk Category: Medium	The Business Continuity Working Group should ensure that a Corporate BCP is produced and monitor progress against this objective. This should outline the recovery arrangements with external suppliers; initial responses to be taken in the event of an emergency; procedures to enable timely determination of the extent of problems; instructions set out regarding the engagement of any outside providers and procedures to ensure that employees are kept up to date with the status of the event. There should also be procedures in place to ensure that the plan is regularly reviewed, maintained and approved by an appropriate Officer. Workshops to be organised to ensure BCP is carried out in a consistent manner. Management Comment: It proposed to produce a draft corporate BCP to be presented to CMT for approval Responsibility: Corporate Management Team Timescale: Dec 2011 - **ongoing**

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
5	At the time of the audit, it was identified that BCPs were not available to staff on the intranet.	If BCP policies and procedures are not made available to staff via the intranet, there is a risk that staff will be unaware of their roles and responsibilities and the appropriate actions to be taken during an unforeseen event. This may exacerbate the problems facing the Council and lead to potential reputational and financial loss being incurred. Risk Category: Medium	The Chair of the Business Continuity Working Group should confirm that up to date and completed BCPs are made available to staff on the intranet. Progress against this should be regularly monitored. Management Comment: The Group should consider if there is any confidential information that may be contained within BCP's and decide what information can be made available on the intranet. Responsibility: Chair of Business Continuity Working Group Timescale: Monthly - On going as part of the normal working of the group

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
6	At the time of the audit, it was identified that there was no master list of key contacts available with regards to BCP.	Without a secured BCP contact list, there is a risk that the required individuals may not be contactable during a critical time of the event. This may prolong the duration of non activity in response to an event leading to potential reputational loss incurred. Risk Category: Medium	A master list of key contacts and their telephone numbers should be maintained. This should be held electronically and a hardcopy stored in a secure location. Management Comment: The listing of key contacts and their phone numbers from each department can be part of the Corporate BCP. Working group Members requested to review and address issues by next meeting Responsibility: BCP working group Timescale: August 2011 – **completed**
7	At the time of the audit, it was identified that there was no specific infrastructure assessment conducted as part of the current BCP process.	Without an appropriate infrastructure assessment to evaluate the technical perspective of the organisation at a point in time, there is a risk that the Council will not be aware of issues that may affect its technologies and processes. Facilities may be adversely affected resulting in potential reputational and financial loss being incurred. Risk Category: Medium	We recommend the Business Continuity Working Group identify and discuss work to be completed as part of the BCP infrastructure assessment. Management Comment: Agreed Responsibility: Business Continuity Working Group Chair Timescale: August 2011 – **not delivered due to office moves**

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
8	At the time of the audit, it was identified that a Business Impact Analysis had been completed but had not been fully implemented as part of the current BCP process.	Without a business impact/risk assessment and the identification of minimum resource requirements, it may not be possible to enable a timely recovery following an incident. Emergency planning officers may not be aware of key assets and staff required in certain events. Risk Category: Medium	The Business Continuity Working Group should review the work done on Business Impact/Risk Assessments to ensure that it is still fit for purpose. This work should develop a clear picture of what components (people, process, and/or technology) of the operation are critical to it carrying out its mission and to identify how long it can do without or work-around those components if they are to become unavailable. Management Comment: Current BIA's to be reviewed and amended as appropriate by each Directorate lead and taken to each SMT for approval Responsibility: Business Continuity Working Group Timescale: Sept 2011 – **completed**
9	At the time of the audit, it was identified that there were no documented recovery procedures outlining the priorities for recovery for the current BCPs.	If there are no specific recovery procedures in place, there is a risk that the correct level of attention is not given to essential services. Moreover, if business recovery sites have not been identified, services may be disrupted until the original site affected is recovered or another suitable site has been found. This may result in reputational and financial loss being incurred. Risk Category: Medium	The Business Continuity Working Group should identify and discuss recovery priorities and recovery sites as part of the BCP process. Management Comment: Agreed Facilities team to carry out assessments of suitable sites. Responsibility: Business Continuity Working Group Chair Timescale: Oct 2011 - **completed**

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
10	At the time of the audit, it was identified that no BCP specific training had been provided to key staff.	If key individuals have not been provided with Business Continuity training, there is a risk that those responsible for developing; maintaining and invoking the plan are unable to do so effectively. Furthermore, there is a risk that plans are not robust due to unfamiliarity with key business continuity issues not being identified and addressed. Risk Category: Medium	The Risk and Insurance Officer should liaise with Chartis (AIG) with regards to the provision of BCP training and report this to the Business Continuity Working Group. Management Comment: Agreed Responsibility: Insurance and Risk Officer Timescale: Nov 2011
11	At the time of the audit, it was identified that there had been no BCP testing undertaken.	Where BCPs are not regularly tested with feedback reported, there is a risk that lessons will not be learnt with continuous improvement incurred. If BCPs are not updated reflecting the outcome of tests, there is a risk that BCPs will be ineffective. Risk Category: Medium	The Chair of the Business Continuity Working Group should report to CMT in respect of a BCP testing schedule involving potential scenarios and the possible implications. The outcome of tests successes or failures should be fully documented and used by those in management to modify their BCPs accordingly. Management Comment: BC is now a gold project on the CMT project programme. Therefore reports will be produced monthly to CMT Responsibility: Business Continuity Working Group Chair Timescale: monthly

Rec	Finding	Risk to your business	Agreed recommendations and timescale
12	At the time of audit it was identified that there were outstanding BCPs to be obtained from some of the Councils external providers. At the time of audit it was identified that it was not a requirement for procurement to obtain BCPs from new suppliers.	If the Councils key suppliers are not identified and they do not provide their BCPs there is a risk that critical services provided externally to the Council may be disrupted during an unforeseen event. This may lead to reputational and financial loss being incurred. Risk Category: Medium	The Business Continuity Working Group identifies and discusses the key suppliers to the Council to ensure that they have provided BCPs. As part of the new suppliers process, critical new suppliers should be required to provide the Council with their BCPs as part of the procurement process. Management Comment: Part of the proposed action plan and tasked to the group Responsibility: Business Continuity Working Group Chair in coordination with Assistant Director Commissioning, Procurement and Shared Services Timescale: Dec 2011