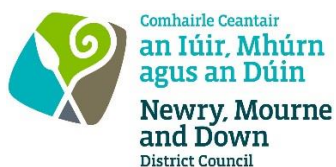


## Policy title: Business Continuity Policy



### Policy Control

<b>Policy reference:</b>	CS47
<b>Title of Policy:</b>	Business Continuity Policy
<b>Version:</b>	1
<b>Directorate / Departmental ownership:</b>	Corporate Services/ Safety, Health and Emergency Planning
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Kelly McNiff
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## **1. Title of Policy**

Business Continuity Policy

## **2. Statement**

Newry Mourne and Down District Council (NMD) recognises that it provides services to the community and works in partnership with others in order to deliver the corporate priorities that we have identified. It is vital that we, as a Council are able to ensure that our most critical services and functions are maintained and resources protected to at least a reasonable level during incidents and disruptions. This will assist the Council in becoming more resilient and will also help in maintaining our reputation both to the community we serve and to the many people, visitors and businesses that are attracted to NMD in order to live, work or visit.

The policy requires Directors and Heads of Service to demonstrate that they have considered the need for a business continuity plan for every service within their department. Plans must be written, published and tested for all critical services.

## **3. Aims**

Newry Mourne and Down District Council's Business Continuity Policy provides a structure through which:

- Critical services and their supporting activities/resources can be identified.
- Plans will be developed to ensure continuity of critical service delivery following disruption, which may arise from loss of facilities, personnel, IT and/or communications or failure within the supply and support chains.
- Activation of business continuity plans throughout the Council can be managed.
- Plans are subject to continuous review and validation through exercising and testing.

## **4. Objectives**

Business continuity plans must, as a minimum address the following:

- Staff safety, welfare and internal communications.
- Adherence to contractual and statutory obligations.
- Management of risk.
- Maintenance of customer and public confidence and the reputation of the Council.
- The timely resumption of critical functions.

## **5. Scope**

- 5.1 The Council business continuity plan is based on standards defined by ISO 22301, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Business Continuity Institute. Each Business Continuity plan will be prepared to meet recognised standards of corporate governance.



5.3 Figure 1: Business Continuity Institute Model

All departments within NMD are required to identify critical services and functions. Business continuity plans will then be developed which will include identifying key activities/business processes and key staff within each service, as well as the minimum resourcing and staffing levels required, should there be an interruption in service.

5.4

All officers and those working voluntarily or under contract to the Council must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant Council policies and procedures.

5.5

This policy also applies to the management of all supply chains especially outsourced contracts. It requires those responsible for negotiating and managing contracts to ensure appropriate business continuity conditions are included in contracts, in order that the service provider is able to deliver acceptable levels of service following a disruption to the Council or the supplying company.

5.6

NMD's corporate business continuity plan and service unit plans will include a clear procedure for invoking the plan, identifying key personnel and their roles in conjunction with the Council's Emergency Planning Policy and Procedures.

5.7

Performance monitoring will be co-ordinated by the Safety, Health and Emergency Planning Section and will focus on the following components:

- Scope – to ensure that all critical functions are identified.
- Validation – to verify the plans works and are fit for purpose.
- Training and exercising – to familiarise key staff with what is expected of them in a crisis and preparing them for crisis conditions.

## 6. Related policies and legislation

NMDDC – Emergency Plan

## 7. Department and Officer responsible

Directorate / Department	<b>Corporate Services/ Safety, Health and Emergency Planning</b>
Officer(s) responsible for developing the policy	<b>Kelly McNiff</b>

## 8. Policy approval process

Meeting	Date
Strategy, Policy and Resources Committee	17 August 2023
Monthly Council Meeting	4 September 2023

## 9. Review Date

The policy will be reviewed in line with the Council's agreed policy review cycle i.e. every 4 years (as per Council's Equality Scheme commitment 4.31), or sooner to ensure it remains reflective of legislative developments and Council structure.

## 10. Roles & Responsibilities

### 10.1 Chief Executive

- Strategic owner of the corporate business continuity planning arrangements.
- Participate in tests and exercises.
- Activate the Business Continuity Plans, as applicable.
- Chair Emergency Management Team (EMT) during an emergency.
- Liaise with appropriate Elected Members.

### 10.2 Directors

- Ensure a Business Impact Analysis, Business Continuity Plan – Maintaining Critical Functions and Critical Contacts Register is effectively completed by their departments to address the services delivered by their department.
- Regularly review their Departmental BCPs to ensure the necessary contingency arrangements are appropriately developed to provide back up to normal service delivery.
- Chair Emergency Management Team in the absence of the Chief Executive.
- Participate in tests and exercises
- If required, take on the role of plan owner.

### 10.3 Assistant Directors & identified 'Key' Heads of Service/ Managers

- Complete a Departmental Business Impact Analysis (BIA) and identify critical areas within their service unit.
- Develop necessary contingency strategies and document within their

Departmental Business Continuity Plan – Maintaining Critical Functions/ Recovery of Non-Critical Services document, appropriate to their service unit areas of responsibility.

- Compile related databases of service providers, customers and staff contact details (Departmental Critical Contacts Register).
- Ensure correct out of hours contact numbers are kept for staff.
- Consider access arrangements for the above in the event of an emergency (digital & hard copies) of necessary documentation/ contacts.
- Regularly review all business continuity documentation on a regular basis and post incident, as they are 'live' documents.
- Ensure staff are familiar with the contingency arrangements in place relevant to their area of service delivery.

#### 11.4 Safety Health & Emergency Planning Section

- Develop and maintain the NMD Business Continuity Policy and associated documentation to allow all stakeholders to participate effectively and appropriately in the response to an emergency/ incident.
- Coordinate and facilitate the NMD EPIG and delivery of associated actions, as applicable.
- Ensure management are aware of the plan.
- Provide advice and assistance on development and testing of plans, as applicable.
- Assist the Chief Executive in business continuity activities.

#### 11.5 Emergency Planning Implementation Group (EPIG)

The NMD EPIG comprises of senior managers across all Council Departments and activated in the event of an emergency/ incident. This existing mechanism will be used to promote and embed Business Continuity Management (BCM) principles with 'Business Continuity Planning' a standing agenda item.

#### 11.6 All Staff

- Be involved in training and awareness training sessions.
- Ensure they are familiar with the contingency arrangements in place relevant to their area of service delivery.

### **12. Business Continuity Plans**

There are 14 Departmental Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) withing NMD, which following the hierarchy of the Council's structure below. Other 'Key' Heads of Service/ Managers outside of the named directorates must consider and apply same, as relevant (eg. Democratic Services, Planning & Performance, personal assistants).

Departmental BCPs are to include the following documents:

- a) Business Impact Assessment (BIA)
- b) Maintaining Critical Functions
- c) Recovery of Non-critical Services
- d) Critical Contacts Register

The Departmental Business Continuity Plans will ensure that all departments identify their key risks and develop effective backup and recovery strategies to mitigate or avoid the impact of disruptive events in order to be able to continue to provide their critical functions/ services, whilst responding to an emergency.

All Business Continuity Plan's will take into consideration risks identified through the risk management strategy/ business impact analysis and are to remain 'live' documents.

### **13. Compliance**

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 introduced a statutory requirement that essential services to the public be maintained during disruption. The Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 Article 29 provides powers to the Council to prepare plans for Civil Emergencies.

### **14. Procedures and arrangements for monitoring the implementation and impact of the policy (Monitoring & Review)**

Business continuity management is essential if the Council is to meet its obligations to provide critical functions/services to the public and partner agencies during a period of disruption.

All Council Business Continuity Plan's will be reviewed in the following circumstances:

- structural, procedural or systems changes within the Council that would significantly affect the management of a major disruption to critical functions/ services;
- external changes that would significantly affect the management of major disruption to the Council's identified critical functions/ services;
- new regulations/ guidance;
- recommended changes following testing/ exercises;
- recommended changes following a major disruption or activation of this plan; and
- any other significant factors.

### **15. Equality Screening**

The policy has been screened and the outcome is that it not be subject to an EQIA (with no mitigating measures required).

### **16. Rural Needs Impact Assessment**

The policy has been rural needs impact assessed.

Appendix 1 – Organisational Chart

