ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

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1.0 Introduction

Business Continuity has been defined as:

'the capability of an organisation to continue the delivery of products and services within acceptable timeframes at predefined capacity during a disruption'. (Business Continuity Institute, Good Practice Guidelines 2018). This is the definition the organisation will use.

Business Continuity Management (BCM) is about ensuring that there are *suitable* and *proportionate* processes in place to identify which of the services delivered by an organisation are deemed to be 'critical' and plan how to be in a position to continue to deliver these in the event of disruption.

It is essential that Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council is able to ensure BCM so that our most critical services are maintained and that resources are protected to at least a reasonable level during incidents and disruptions. This will assist the Council in becoming more resilient and will also help with maintaining our reputation and customer satisfaction.

This Business Continuity Policy provides a strategic framework around which staff can work to enable critical services to be maintained or restored to minimise effect on service delivery.

The Policy concentrates on critical services provided by Council, priority functions and minimum staffing levels so we can continue to deliver these. Failure to have business continuity plans in place may result in disruption to critical services, negative publicity and financial losses. Plans should be written and tested for every critical service.

The policy draws on the principles and approaches as set out in International Standards ISO 22301 along with the <u>Business Continuity Institute (BCI) GPG (Good Practice Guidelines)</u>

By having Business Continuity Plans this will ensure that departments identify their key risks and develop effective backup and recovery strategies to mitigate or avoid the impact of disruptive events to be able to continue to provide their critical services.

2.0 Aim/Purpose

The aim of this **Policy** is to:

- Enable the Council's Senior Leadership Team to make informed decisions in relation to critical services during periods of disruption.
- Define how Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council will approach business continuity, how it will be structured and resourced.
- Enable the organisation to be aware of when to implement the Business Continuity arrangements

This Policy will be supported by a *Business Continuity Management Framework* which contains guidance and templates to help assist departments, with the development of their business continuity plans.

3.0 Scope

This Policy enables Council to prevent or mitigate the severity of potential disruption to 'critical' services within the resources available. All Departments must comply with this Policy. Roles and responsibilities are set out in section 5.0.

This Policy also applies to the management of all contracts, including 3rd party 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.

The Policy does not cover day-to-day events or minor disruptions that do not require corporate coordination and can be managed within normal business procedures. However, departments are encouraged for the purpose of best practice and excellent customer care to carry out Business Impact Analysis and produce an action plan for implementation.

4.0 Policy Detail

In the event of an incident resulting in a reduced capacity to deliver all services, Council will focus on the delivery of critical services.

The criteria to review when considering and determining whether a service is `critical' is set out at Appendix 1.

The current list of critical services will be maintained as part of the Business Continuity Management Framework (BCMF) documentation.

All Departments must ensure that they have an effective Business Continuity Plan. (BCP). The BCP 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 services.

An effective Business Continuity Plan will:

- enable Council's critical services to respond effectively to an incident
- reduce the frequency and impact of potential incidents occurring to an acceptable level, and
- manage the impacts, recovery and restoration of critical services should an incident occur, until normal operations are resumed.

Appendix A provides criteria for identifying critical services.

The current list of critical services will be maintained for Business Continuity Management Framework (BCMF) documentation.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

An ICT Business Continuity Plan and IT Disaster Recovery Plan have been developed and are managed by the ICT Team. These documents include details of the structure and makeup of the network are therefore restricted documents. The information contained within the ICT Business Continuity Plan and IT Disaster Recovery Plan will link with other Departmental and Service Business Continuity plans, and therefore all services need to

be aware and work with the ICT Services Manager to ensure awareness and implementation of the plans as and when required.

4.1 The Business Continuity Management Framework (BCMF)

The objective of the BCMF is to prepare for, provide and maintain controls and capabilities for managing the Council's overall ability to continue to operate during disruptions.

The detail of the Business Continuity Management Framework (BCMF) is contained within a separate document which will be kept updated as required.

It is based on the following 9 Good Practice Principles:

- 1. Define the scope of the BCMF (the scope is defined as above in this Policy)
- 2. Establish a Business Continuity Policy- as per this Policy.
- 3. Determine the objectives of the BCMF
- 4. Determine how the objectives of the BCMF will be met
- 5. Develop detailed operational processes and associated roles and responsibilities
- 6. Validate & Exercise the BCMF
- 7. Establish high-level governance of the BCMF
- 8. Ensure the Council has a culture that supports the BCMF
- 9. Establish how the BCMF will be monitored, reviewed, and continually improved over time

4.2 Summary of BCMF

There are essentially 4 stages to the Business Continuity Management Framework as shown below:



Impact Analysis	Recovery Strategies	Business Continuity Plan Development	Testing & Maintenance
During this stage you will assess potential impacts that could harm your services or functions or service delivery and create a Business Impact Analysis (BIA). Review the BIA with senior management and key interna stakeholders (ICT for example) to ensure validity.	Identify and document all resource requirements based on BIA's completed in the previous step. Delivery a plausible recovery strategy, based on the needs of the services/functions and BIA, and document and implement as required	Develop the framework for the Business Continuity Plan, establish and organise the recovery teams and develop a plan of relocation in the event of disruption or disaster. Create a thorough Business Continuity Plans and IT Disaster Recovery Plan and record all in an accessible format for all required to be aware of them. Gain Director approval upon completion.	Create a Test Plan and subsequent exercises that can be performed by the services or functions to ensure that the business continuity plan works successfully. Update the BCO as needed based on the tests and exercises.

4.3 Business Continuity Plans

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.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities (in relation to identified critical services)

By embracing Business Continuity, Senior Managers and Members will enable Council to improve our Business Continuity culture underpinning the BCMF over time.

We want to embrace Business Continuity rather than simply try to mandate or enforce compliance on service managers by embedding it into service delivery management.

Mangers will need to be supported to embrace Business Continuity not just as a result of policy and procedures but also education, awareness, and a greater understanding of the reason why the Council needs protection from operational disruptions.

Time demands and overall commitment from personnel will only be met once the workforce truly believes that Business Continuity must be up-to-date and operational to protect the Council and its stakeholders and customers.

The Governance, Resources & Strategy Committee

- Provide leadership and ongoing commitment to implementation of the Business Continuity Policy.
- Review and approve the Business Continuity Policy.

The Performance & Audit Committee

- Monitor compliance with the Business Continuity Management Framework.
- At appropriate intervals, receive assurance on continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's BCMF.

Executive Management Team (EMT)

- EMT are the Strategic owners of the Business Continuity Management Framework
- Commit to the implementation of the Policy and Business Continuity Plans.
- Embrace Business Continuity to improve the Business Continuity culture across directorates
- Ensure Business Impact Assessments and Business Continuity Plans are effectively completed and developed for their service areas.
- Oversee the implementation of Business Continuity Plans (BCP) and provision of appropriate resources.
- Liaise with Elected Members
- Participate in tests and exercises.
- On 6 monthly basis (aligned to business plan progress), regularly review their BCPs to ensure the necessary contingency arrangements are appropriately developed.
- If required, take on the role of BCP owner.

Heads of Departments

- Develop a business continuity plan bespoke to their area of responsibility with their teams
- Ensure their teams are aware of the Policy and Plans.
- Ensure completion of Business Impact Analysis for their Department.
- Implementation Business Continuity Plans when required.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Plans and participate in tests and exercises.

Strategy & Performance Department: Performance Team

- Raise awareness of the Business Continuity Policy and liaise with departments to implement
- Develop, review and embed the Business Continuity Management Framework
- Review Departmental Business Continuity Plans and Impact Analysis to ensure they are current and aligned with Business Plans and Risk Registers
- Provide advice and assistance on development and testing of business continuity plans and business Impact analyses.
- Co-ordinate and schedule cyclical reviews of business continuity arrangements and reporting on the same
- Perform periodic reviews and tests of established Business Continuity Plans and reporting findings to management
- Make recommendations for improvements
- Provide/ facilitate provision of training on Business Continuity and Risk Management across departments and projects.

All Staff working in Critical Services should

- 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.
- Contact their Head of Department/Manager or Strategy & Performance Dept: Business Continuity & Risk Officer with any queries related to the BC plan.

APPENDIX 1 – CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION WHEN AGREEING CRITICAL SERVICES

How do we determine what is a Critical Service? (*In no particular order)

1	Public Protection Capability
	The failure to deliver the service would significantly affect the Council's ability to
	respond to an emergency and take effective action to reduce, control or mitigate the
	effects of the emergency. Example: Building Control's response to Dangerous
	Buildings
2	Impact of an Incident on the Borough
	Following the occurrence of an incident there will be pressure on the service to
	increase its level and importance of service beyond standard day to day service
	levels to maintain its delivery and mitigate the effects of the emergency. Example
	Council providing support and recovery after flooding incident
3	Impact on Customer Wellbeing/Human Welfare
	The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect on individuals to
	whom the Council owes a duty of care or other individual vulnerable persons in the
	community. Example: Council's provision of regulatory services e.g Environmental
	Health in response to an incident
4	Detrimental Impact on the Environment
7	The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect on the environment
	or a significant risk of damage to the environment with medium to long term or even
	permanent damage if left unchecked and which, if possible, to clean up would involve
	significant costs to rectify. Example: Council's provision of regulatory services e.g
	Environmental Health /Environmental Services
_	
5	Concerns for Security and Safety
	The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect on the security and
	safety of citizens. The failure to provide the service would have a significant effect to the functioning of the community. For example, resulting in citizens being unable to
	go about their day-to-day business without fear of perceived injury or risk of actual
	injury. Example: Provision of ICT services
6	Reputational Damage
	The failure to provide the service could have a significant negative effect on the
	reputation of the Council as a provider of key services. Example potential Impact of
	Industrial Action on services.
7	Dependency
	The service provided is a key dependency of an identified critical service, without
	which the critical service would be unable to carry out its duties. Example Provision
	of ICT services/ finance services/payroll/legal

APPENDIX 3 - EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

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Policy Title: Business Continuity Policy

Brief Description of Policy (please attach copy if available). Please state if it is a new, existing or amended policy.

The Business Continuity Policy provides a strategic framework around which staff can work to enable critical functions to be maintained, or quickly restored to minimise any effect on service delivery standards

Intended aims/outcomes. What is the policy trying to achieve?

The aim of the policy is to:

- enable the Council's Senior Management Team to make informed strategic decisions in relation to critical services during periods significant disruptions.
- It will define how Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council will approach business continuity, how it will be structured and resourced.
- It will enable the organisation to be aware of when to trigger the Business Continuity Plans.

Policy Framework

Has the policy been developed in response to statutory requirements, legal advice or on the basis of any other professional advice? Does this affect the discretion available to The Council to amend the policy?

The policy draws on principles and approaches as set out in International Standards ISO 22301 along with the <u>Business Continuity Institute (BCI) GPG (Good Practice Guidelines)</u>

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the policy? If so, please outline.

This policy will have a positive effect on all stakeholders, customers and service users of the Council, including the nine section 75 categories. Where there is an impact on Customer Wellbeing/Human Welfare the Council will be required to provide support to the more vulnerable in society. These may include older people, those with disabilities for example.

Who initiated or wrote the policy (if The Council decision, please state). Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

Who initiated or wrote the policy?	Denise Girvan,			Performance			
	Improvement Manager						
Who is responsible for implementation?	All	persons	involved	in	the	delivery	of
	Council services.						

Are there any factors which might contribute to or detract from the implementation of the policy (e.g. financial, legislative, other)?

This Policy enables Council to prevent or mitigate the severity of potential disruption to 'critical' services within the resources available.

As part of the implementation of the business continuity policy, Council Officers must give due consideration to financial/resource implications associated with the implementation of business continuity arrangements.

Main stakeholders in relation to the policy

Please list main stakeholders affected by the policy (e.g. staff, customers, other statutory bodies, community or voluntary sector, private sector)

Staff, customers, statutory partners, community and voluntary sector, private sector, residents, visitors, and all other stakeholders.

Are there any other policies with a bearing on this policy? If so, please identify them and how they impact on this policy.

Risk Management Policy and associated risk registers.

Emergency Plan

Customer Care Strategy

Business Continuity Plans

Available Evidence

The Council should ensure that its screening decisions are informed by relevant data. What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories. For up to date S75 Borough Statistics

Section 75 category	Evidence
Religious belief	N/A
Political opinion	N/A
Racial group	N/A
Age	N/A
Marital status	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A
Men and women generally	N/A
Disability	N/A
Dependants	N/A

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information gathered above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories in relation to this particular policy/decision?

Section 75 category	Needs, experiences and priorities
Religious belief	N/A
Political opinion	N/A
Racial group	N/A
Age	Where service delivery impacts on customer wellbeing/human welfare the Council will be required to provide support to the more vulnerable in society. These may include older people.
Marital status	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A
Men and women generally	N/A
Disability	Where service delivery impacts on customer wellbeing/human welfare the Council will be required to provide support to the more vulnerable in society. These may include disabled people.
Dependants	Where service delivery impacts on customer wellbeing/human welfare the Council will be required to provide support to the more vulnerable in society. These may include people with dependants.

Screening Questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy for each of the Section 75 categories?

Category	Policy Impact	Level of impact
		(Major/minor/none)
Religious belief	None	
Political opinion	None	
Racial group	None	
Age	Minor	Positive
Marital status	None	
Sexual orientation	None	
Men and women generally	None	
Disability	Minor	Positive
Dependants	Minor	Positive

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories?

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		This policy is a general statement about the Council's commitment to business continuity to critical service delivery.
Political opinion		
Racial group		
Age		
Marital status		
Sexual orientation		
Men and women generally		
Disability		
Dependants		

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?

Category	Details of Policy Impact	Level	of	impact
		(major/mi	nor/none)	
Religious belief	None	None		
Political opinion	None	None		
Racial group	None	None		

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Category	If yes, provide details	If no, provide reasons
Religious belief		This policy is a general statement about the Council's commitment to business continuity to critical service delivery.
Political opinion		
Racial group		

Multiple Identity

Generally speaking, people fall into more than one Section 75 category (for example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; young lesbian, gay and bisexual people). Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant s75 categories concerned.

N/A		

Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006

Is there an opportunity for the policy to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?

Where service delivery impacts on customer wellbeing/human welfare the Council will be required to provide support to the more vulnerable in society. These may include older people, disabled people and people with dependants for example.
Is there an opportunity for the policy to encourage participation by disabled people in public life?
Screening Decision
A: NO IMPACT IDENTIFIED ON ANY CATEGORY – EQIA UNNECESSARY
Please identify reasons for this below
This policy outlines the Council's commitment to ensuring business continuity to critical services. It will not negatively impact on any of the section 75 categories. Where service delivery impacts on customer wellbeing/human welfare the Council will be required to provide support to the more vulnerable in society. These may include older, disabled and people with dependants. Each department will develop their own business continuity plans and where possible will ensure that there will not be any barriers to access for the section 75 groups.
B: MINOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA NOT CONSIDERED NECESSARY AS IMPACT CAN BE ELIMINATED OR MITIGATED
Where the impact is likely to be minor, you should consider if the policy can be mitigated, or an alternative policy introduced. If so, an EQIA may not be considered necessary. You must indicate the reasons for this decision below, together with details of measures to mitigate the adverse impact or the alternative policy proposed.
N/A
C: MAJOR IMPACT IDENTIFIED – EQIA REQUIRED
If the decision is to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.
N/A

Timetabling and Prioritising

If the policy has been screened in for equality impact assessment, please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3 with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Policy Criterion Rating (1-3)

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations Social need Effect on people's daily lives

The total rating score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the Council in timetabling its EQIAs.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities? If yes, please give details.

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Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help the authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy. It is recommended that where a policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced to mitigate adverse impact, monitoring be undertaken on a broader basis to identify any impact (positive or adverse).

Further information on monitoring is available in the Equality Commission's guidance on monitoring (www.equalityni.org).

Identify how the impact of the policy is to be monitored

V /A

Approval and Authorisation

A copy of the screening form for each policy screened should be signed off by the senior manager responsible for that policy. The screening recommendation should be reported to the relevant Committee/The Council when the policy is submitted for approval.

Screened by	Position/Job title	Date	
Denise Girvan	Improvement Manager, Strategy & Performance	06/08/2024	
Approved by	Position/Job Title	Date	
Martina McNulty	Head of Department, Strategy & Performance	12/08/2024	

Please forward a copy of the completed policy and form to:

Equality@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

who will ensure these are made available on the Council's website.

The above officer is also responsible for issuing reports on a quarterly basis on those policies "screened out for EQIA". This allows stakeholders who disagree with this recommendation to submit their views. In the event of any stakeholder disagreeing with the decision to screen out any policy, the screening exercise will be reviewed.

APPENDIX 4 - RURAL NEEDS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (RNIA)

SECTION 1	
Defining the activity subject to Se	ection 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016
1A. Name of Public Authority: Arm	nagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough The Council
•	ich describes the activity being undertaken ject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs
Business Continuity Policy	
1C Please indicate which catego	ory the activity specified in Section 1B above relates
to:	
Developing a	Policy
Adopting a	
Implementing a	
Revising a	
Designing a Public Service	
Delivering a Public Service	
•	e (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service the category indicated in Section 1C above

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

The aim of the policy is to:

Business Continuity Policy

- enable the Council's Senior Management Team to make informed strategic decisions in relation to critical services during periods significant disruptions.
- It will define how Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council will approach business continuity, how it will be structured and resourced.
- It will enable the organisation to be aware of when to trigger the Business Continuity Plans
- It will enable other key officers to provide the tactical and operational response to incidents.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using	in respect of the Policy,
Strategy, Plan or Public Service?	
Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition	
Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below)	
A definition of 'rural' is not applicable	\boxtimes
Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used	
Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.	
Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.	
This policy outlines the Council's commitment to ensuring bus services and will not negatively impact on people in rural area	,
SECTION 2 Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Pu	ıblic Service
2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impeople in rural areas?	pact on
Yes □ No □ If response i 2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Se people in rural areas.	s No go to 2E rvice is likely to impact on
2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to areas <i>differently</i> from people in urban areas, please explain he people in rural areas differently.	

	indicate whicl ervice is likely				Policy, Strategy, Plan
Rural Busin	•	to primi	arity impact of	11.	П
Rural Touris					П
Rural Housi					П
	ployment in Ru	ıral Arac	ne.		
	or Training in R or Mobile Com			٨٠٥٥	
•	Services or Infra			eas	
	ocial Care Serv	vices in	Rural Areas		
Poverty in F					
Deprivation	in Rural Areas	;			
Rural Crime	or Community	/ Safety			
Rural Devel	lopment				
Agri-Enviror	nment				
Other (Plea	se state)				
	explain why t beople in rural		cy, Strategy, I	Plan or Public Sei	vice is NOT likely to
	the Social and			Persons in Rural	Areas d economic needs of
		•	•	•	or Public Service?
Yes		No		If response is No	go to 3E
					on sources were used eds of people in rural
Consultation	n with Rural St	akehold	ers	П	
	n with Other or				
Published S		341 1104ti	0.10		
Research P					
	•				
•	Questionnaires	•			
Other Public		tion Oss			
	ods or Informatails in Question			П	

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.
3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?
If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.
3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?
SECTION 4 Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas
4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.
SECTION 5 Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service
5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?
Yes □ No □ If response is No go to 5C
5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

If the response to Section 5A was YES go to 6A.							
5C. Please explain why the development, adoptolicy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the been influenced by the rural needs identified.							
SECTION 6 Documenting and Recording							
6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Authority and relevant information on the Section paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.							
I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained,	and relevant inforn	nation co	ompiled.				
Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by	: Denise Girva	an					
Position:	Improvemen	ıt Manaç	ger				
Department / Directorate:	Strategy	&	Performance				
Department D							
Signature:	Denise Girvan						
Date:	06/08/2024						
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Martina McN	lulty					
Position:	Head of Department: Strategy &						
Performance							
Department / Directorate: Strategy & Performance							
Department D							
Signature:	Hartina 4	Jerem	iod				
Date:	12/08/2024						