

Report for: Cabinet – 16 September 2025

Item number: 17

Title: Business Continuity Policy

Report authorised by : Taryn Eves, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

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Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Business Continuity is the capability of an organisation to continue the delivery of its services within acceptable time frames at predefined capacity during a disruption. It is therefore crucial to minimising adverse effects of an emergency on our residents.
- 1.2 This report proposes a new Business Continuity Policy for Haringey, as a key part of the council's emergency planning arrangements.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1 Haringey is committed to fixing the basics. A key strand of this is how we plan for emergencies. We have to be sure that we can keep our local public services going in a crisis – adapting what we do and how we do it, communicating the right information quickly and effectively, and so on.
- 2.2 We need to futureproof too for the kind of crises that are likely to hit in the years to come. Cyberattacks are coming more and more often. Climate change is bringing extreme heat more regularly. We have to adapt and we have to be resilient.
- 2.3 The policy changes here set us on that course.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the Business Continuity Policy.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory duty on the council to have business continuity plans in place to be able to maintain its essential functions in an emergency.
- 4.2 These duties are reflected in the Resilience Standards for London, in which all London boroughs report on the adequacy of their emergency planning and resilience arrangements. Business Continuity Management is a key pillar of these standards.
- 4.3 Having a clear policy is a requirement under the relevant international standard ISO22301 Business Continuity Management and therefore represents good practice.
- 4.4 The policy sets a clear framework for how the council will carry out its statutory duties in preparing business continuity plans, and assuring that they are fit for purpose. It therefore provides assurance for our residents that the council is making suitable arrangements to maintain its essential services during an emergency.
- 4.5 This completes an action in the Business Continuity Management Improvement Plan developed from the Business Continuity Audit in 2023.
- 4.6 This is a key decision as although it is not likely to result in the local authority incurring expenditure, it introduces a policy that affects all wards and all council services.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 Do Nothing. This is not recommended. Without this policy the Council will not meet a key requirement of the Mazars audit and subsequent BC Improvement Plan. There will also be a lack of clarity around both the corporate and service level Business Continuity plans in terms of requirements, processes, roles, responsibilities, governance and assurance of the programme.
- 5.2 It would also negatively affect the level of assurance the Council would report via the Resilience Standards for London. This is the assurance framework administered by London Councils, by which London local authorities provide assurance on their readiness to deal with major emergencies.
- 5.3 Without the policy, it may be less easy to maintain effective business continuity plans and arrangements. If the council subsequently suffered from a prolonged, difficult business continuity incident, the lack of an up-to-date policy would leave the council exposed to severe adverse criticism.

6. Background information

6.1 Policy background

- 6.1.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 requires local authorities, and many other public bodies, to maintain plans to continue their essential functions in the event of an emergency.

- 6.1.2 The Business Continuity Policy is a key cornerstone of effective business continuity management and is a requirement for organisations under both the ISO2230 and BCI Good Practice Guidelines. It provides a statement of how an organisation will carry out its business continuity activities, in a manner that is appropriate for the organisations' context.
- 6.1.3 A Business Continuity audit was undertaken by Mazars in March 2023 with the outcome of 'Limited Assurance' on the Council's Corporate Business Continuity Programme and associated documents and tools.
- 6.1.4 In response to these audit findings, the Emergency Planning & Resilience (EP&R) team, under the direction of the Business Continuity Programme Manager has put in place an action plan to address the audit findings and bring Haringey's Business Continuity system in line with industry best practice.
- 6.1.5 The major recommendation was that the updated policy should include the following:
- Details on the lessons learned process;
 - Details on the frequency of BCP reporting and scenario planning discussions; and
 - Reference to the location of relevant procedural guidance, e.g., bomb warning/inward evacuation procedures.

6.2 How the policy was developed

- 6.2.1 The previous joint Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Policy has been utilised to create a distinct stand-alone Business Continuity Policy.
- 6.2.2 All Council services were engaged in the development of the policy. The Policy was approved by Resilience and Emergency Planning Assurance Board in July 2024 and then ratified by CLT in March 2025.
- 6.2.3 Through the development work, close consideration has been given to a wide range of scenarios that could disrupt Council services, including past events. This includes:
- Cyber attacks and IT service disruption
 - Severe weather events and climate change
 - Disruption caused by terrorist attacks or similar adverse events
 - Power cuts and other supply interruptions.

6.3 Scope and purpose of the policy

- 6.3.1 The purpose of the policy is to provide a management framework to reduce the impact of a business disruption or disaster, enabling essential services to continue to be delivered to local residents and businesses.
- 6.3.2 The document sets out:
- Objectives, aims and scope of the Corporate BC system and programme and the guidance that underpins it

- Responsibilities of services, including specific guidance for key support services such as Digital, Facilities Management and the BC expectations of 3rd party suppliers
- Governance of the BC programme and assurance functions
- Roles and responsibilities of staff at all organisational levels
- Plans, procedures and documents and the expectation for their use of and ownership by staff and service areas
- Types of incidents and the incident response levels e.g. routine, Critical and Major
- Audit and review process and schedules
- Continuous organisational development and how the system will be monitored, reviewed, and developed as part of BAU, also in response to and following incidents
- Training and Exercising needs analysis for all staff and plans

6.4 Implementation of the policy

- 6.4.1 Following Cabinet approval this Policy will become a cornerstone of Haringey's Business Continuity Management framework. Implementation will be overseen through the Resilience and Emergency Planning Board.
- 6.4.2 The processes and requirements set out in the Policy will be incorporated into the Haringey Corporate Business Continuity Plan and Service Level Plans on an ongoing basis. The information set out within the policy and these plans will then become the basis of the BC training and exercising programme due to be delivered to service areas in Q1 and 2 2025.
- 6.4.3 An annual report on progress will be provided to Audit Committee.

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High level Strategic outcomes'

- 7.1 The policy supports the CDP outcome "resident experience and enabling success" by enabling council services to become more resilient to disruption.
- 7.2 The policy also supports the CDP outcome "responding to the climate emergency"

8. Carbon and Climate Change

- 8.1 Implementation of this policy will not impact the council's carbon emissions or energy use.

- 8.2 The policy supports services to better prepare for the impacts of climate change, and provides a framework for ensuring we are able to continue to deliver critical services to residents in severe weather incidents.

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Director of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

9.1 Finance

The Business Continuity Policy is not expected to incur direct costs. However, indirect financial implications may arise from staff time, training, digital infrastructure, and supplier assurance activities. These are anticipated to be managed within existing budgets. Any future financial commitments will follow standard budget planning and approval processes.

9.2 Procurement

Strategic Procurement note the contents of this report and confirm there are no procurement related reasons preventing Cabinet from approving the recommendations stated in paragraph 3 above.

9.3 Director of Legal & Governance

The Director of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

The Council has responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to plan for and respond to emergencies and to have in place a business continuity plan in order to reduce the risk of service disruptions.

Haringey Council Business Continuity Policy it is intended to provide the organisation with assurance that the council is meeting its Civil Contingencies Act obligations and has been developed in line with industry standards.

9.4 Equality

- 9.4.1 The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

- 9.4.2 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex

and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

9.4.3 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

9.4.4 Although this Policy is general in scope, the Council acknowledges that residents with Protected Characteristics are disproportionately affected by emergency situations, as they may often lack access to the resources and networks that provide resilience. The policy contributes to the resilience of more vulnerable residents, by providing a framework to ensure that disruption to critical public services is minimised in an emergency.

9.4.5 It is not anticipated that this decision will have any specific disproportionate impact either negative or positive on individuals with protected characteristics. Therefore, it is likely to have a neutral impact on equalities in Haringey.

10. Use of Appendices

Appendix A - Business Continuity Policy

11. Background papers

ISO2230 and
BCI Good Practice Guidelines