Kent County Council

Corporate Business Continuity Plan

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KCC Corporate Business Continuity Plan

1. Introduction

Kent County Council (KCC) is defined as a Category 1 Responder within the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and has a duty to maintain the ability to deliver its most critical services during an emergency or significant business disruption.

KCC meet this requirement by maintaining Business Continuity Plans at Corporate and Service levels.

2. Purpose

This Plan provides staff, partners and other interested parties with KCC's Corporate Business Continuity (BC) arrangements, underpinned by supporting service level BC plans.

The aim of the plan is to provide the clear actions to deliver the Council's corporate response to and management of a significant business disruption.

This is achieved through the following objectives

- Outline the key roles and responsibilities.
- Describe the plan activation process
- Describe the incident management structure
- Provide clear checklists for action

3. Scope

The Plan covers disruptions to service provision that require a coordinated corporate level response across directorates, services and business units.

The Plan **does not** cover day-to-day events or disruptions that do not require corporate coordination and can be dealt with within a business unit's normal business procedures.

The Plan is referred to within the KCC Emergency Response Framework (ERF) In an emergency resulting in an increased demand for service, the Corporate BC Plan may be activated in support of the ERF.

4. Business Impact Assessment

This Plan assumes that a significant business disruption will impact on critical services in one or more of the following ways:

- Loss of key staff or significant numbers of staff;
- Loss of premises;
- · Loss of ICT or other key resources; and
- Loss of a key supplier.

KCC has completed Business Impact Assessments as a service level.

This data will allow KCC to prioritise actions in response to a significant disruption to critical services.

6. Plan Activation

This Plan will be activated where:

Potential/ actual disruption to service provision requires a co-ordinated response across services and business units

Or where:

Normal business processes or individual service BCPs are inadequate for response

- Emergency Response Framework (ERF)
- Loss of major supplier / contractor / service provider

7. Incident Management Team

The Duty Director will coordinate the Council's response to a significant disruption to business continuity.¹

When the decision has been made to invoke the Plan, the Duty Director will ensure notification of appropriate senior managers (CMT) and Members and establish an **Incident Management Team** appropriate to the level of response required.

In the first instance, the Cross Directorate Resilience Forum will provide the initial membership for an Incident Management Team this ensures that the following functions are represented:

- Duty Director (chair)
- Directorate Resilience Group Chairs
- Marketing and Resident Experience
- Resilience and Emergency Planning Service
- Other specific teams depending on the nature of the disruption / incident

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Duty Director

The Duty Director is accountable for the co-ordination of KCC's response to an emergency or significant business disruption to critical services and responsibilities include;

 Providing an initial situation report and subsequent timely updates to Corporate Management Team, Elected Members and Press Office;

¹ Exceptions can be made to this approach where appropriate, for example, the response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, required the Director of Public Health to coordinate the Council's response.

- Setting the strategy for the response to an emergency or significant business disruption to critical services;
- Sign off and oversee the Strategic Strategy if one had been developed for the incident (template can be found at appendix A3);
- Ensuring that the response is adequately resourced by the required services;
- Determining whether mutual aid is required;
- Deciding when it is appropriate to hand over to the recovery phase and stand down the response;
- Take on the Recovery Director role or hand over to the Duty Director fulfilling this role when the response is stood down; and
- Contributing to the debrief process following an incident to identify lessons learned.

Assistant Director - Contest and SOC

 For a terrorism incident, the Assistant Director Contest and Serious Organised Crime has a responsibility to act as the strategic lead for KCC during a counter terror response. As part of local / national multi-agency counter terrorism planning, there are established escalation routes and information pathways that include the Assistant Director Contest and SOC, and their input will be required either as the lead or support to the on-call Duty Director on behalf of KCC.

Duty Emergency Planning Officer

- The Duty Emergency Planning Officer will alert the Duty Director to an emergency and provide sufficient information and support to the Duty Director to enable them to assess the KCC resources required to command and control the organisation's response.
- The DEPO (or suitable Resilience and Emergency Planning Service (REPS)
 representative) will continue to provide emergency planning tactical advice to
 the Duty Director for the duration of the incident and assist managing the KCC
 co-ordination during the response and recovery.
- The DEPO (or suitable REPS representative) can mobilise the County Emergency Centre (CEC) for response if required;
- All DEPO have access to an internal KCC, and multi-agency KMRF contacts directory containing in and out of hours details for services across KCC, and multi-agency partners. The DEPO can contact relevant services or partners on behalf of KCC.
- The DEPO will liaise with the relevant multi-agency partners and multi-agency command and control structure, if required and relevant to the incident; and
- Oversee and contribute to the debrief process following an incident to identify lessons learned.

The CDRF regularly brings staff together from across KCC to ensure emergency planning and business continuity information is shared to improve the resilience of The Council. If an incident occurs, or the Corporate Business Continuity Plan is activated, extraordinary meetings of the CDRF can be established, and responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the response on behalf of KCC;
- Support the Duty Director in the development of the Strategic Strategy if one has been created for the incident (template at appendix A4);
- Delivering a tactical plan to support the aim of the strategy for response (template at appendix A5);
- Establishing the impact of the emergency or incident on KCC Services;
- Identifying other services that may need to be involved or further groups that need to be activated in response;
- Communicating situation reports to the Duty Director;
- Individuals will provide specific advice / raise issues on behalf of the service they are representing, and relay information back to their service as required; and
- Contributing to the debrief process following an incident to identify lessons learned.

Membership of this group can depend on the nature of the incident but invites are likely to be extended to the following teams and services:

Duty Director	Resilience & Emergency Planning Service
Directorate Resilience Group Chairs	Democratic Services
Highways & Transportation	Waste Services
Commissioned Services	Education
Engagement & Consultation	Corporate Risk
Prevent & Channel	Marketing & Resident Experience
Human Resources	Public Health
Social Care	Health & Safety
Technology	Facilities Management

Directorate Resilience Group Chairs

Each directorate has a Resilience Group, which meets regularly to and operated to Terms of Reference described in the KCC Business Continuity Management Policy. When the Corporate Business Continuity Plan is activated, these group Chairs (or a nominated deputy) will be required to provide regular situation reports to the ExCDRF. Responsibilities will include;

- Contacting Business Continuity Plan Owners to ascertain where plans have been activated;
- Arranging Extraordinary Directorate Resilience Groups as required;
- Gather and share information on the impact on services (including commissioned services) within the directorate;

- Highlighting where there has been a specific impact critical services;
- Briefing the Directorate Management Team; and
- Contributing to the debrief process following an incident to identify lessons learned.

9. Communicating in a crisis

The aim of all communications during an emergency or significant business continuity disruption is to 'alert and inform but not to alarm'.

All communications must be credible, clear, concise and timely.

The template at Appendix A3 considers:

- Who? (identifying the target audiences, which should include 'hard to reach' groups)
- What? (The key messages that the audience need to receive. Note: In an emergency there will be key messages that all agencies should share but KCC must prepare those that are relevant to its own services)
- How? (identifying the best channels to use for the target audience groups)
- When? (the timing of the messages issued)

It is important to note that this Plan considers corporate messages. The responsibility for communicating with staff lies with service heads and managers as described in the Service Level Business Continuity Plans.

10. Other Plans and Guidance

There are a number of other plans and guidance documents that may be used in conjunction with this plan or referred to as required. The below table shows some of these documents that may be used and where they can be located. Kelsi for schools also holds key document, including health & safety information for schools.

	Knet	Kent.gov	Resilience Direct
KCC Business Continuity Management	✓		
Policy			
Divisional / Service Business Continuity			✓
Plans			
KCC Crisis Communications Plan			✓
KCC Emergency Response Framework		✓	✓
KCC Emergency Recovery Plan		✓	✓
Specific KCC Emergency Plans		✓	✓
HR Policies & Guidance	✓		
Health & Safety Policies & Guidance	✓		
Duty Director Handbook			✓
DEPO Handbook			✓
CEC Guidance			√

11. Situation Reports

During an incident, Situations Reports (SitReps) may be required, these could be requested internally by (EX) CDRF, Corporate Management Team (CMT), or to develop Common Operating Pictures (COP) if requested externally by Kent and Medway Resilience Forum or Central Government.

Situation Reports are collated via Microsoft Forms by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service and all services may be asked to complete SitReps through (Ex) CDRF or their DRG.

Questions on the SitRep will be determined by REPS with oversight from (Ex) CDRF or multi-agency partners if relevant. SitReps seek to flag any issues or potential risks to critical services to ensure Ex (CDRF) / CMT or multi-agency partners / Central government are aware.

12. Record Keeping, Finance and Insurance

Any business disruption may result in a legal requirement for KCC to provide evidence relating to its emergency response. All persons involved in an incident response may be required to give access to documents produced before, during and because of an incident.

An activity and decision log must be started as soon as this plan is invoked and maintained throughout to accurately record all information received, actions taken and the justification for decisions. Records from incidents will also be used to inform debriefing and lessons learned.

All costs and damage / losses associated with any business continuity response must be recorded throughout an incident. Purchases of any value must adhere to agreed KCC purchasing guidelines. It is the Chief Finance Officer's responsibility to approve large spend and to decide how any extra burden is dealt with (e.g. whether the service will absorb the cost or will be reimbursed centrally). Any expenditure / loss not recorded may not be eligible for reimbursement via KCC or its insurers. For information on insurance claims and reporting, see 'Insurance Policies and Claims' on KNet.

13. Stand Down

The (Ex)CDRF will assess when to stand-down and defer to the Duty Director for approval.

The decision to stand-down the corporate response to a BC Incident may be in advance of the service level recovery.

14. Debrief

Following stand-down, REPS will lead a debrief to allow involved services to provide feedback on the response, and identifying lessons learned for the County Council.

15. Recovery

Any residual impacts or consequences of the incident will be identified by the Duty Director.

A different Duty Director will be chosen to undertake the Recovery Director role then there will be an official handover from the Duty Director who led the response and the KCC Emergency Recovery Plan will be activated.

Appendix A - Supporting Information

A1 Meeting Locations List

The majority of meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams, however, if there is a requirement for in person meetings, the following locations have been pre-identified.

Priority	Location (room number and full address)
1	redacted
2	
3	
4	

A2 – Ex CDRF Agenda Template



Extraordinary Cross Directorate Resilience Forum – *Incident Name*

Date:

Time:

Microsoft Teams Meeting

No.	Item	Lead
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies	Chair
2.	Urgent Decisions for Attention	
3.	Background and Current Situation	
4.	Update from Directorate Resilience Group Chairs	DRGs
5.	Update from TCG/SCG (if appropriate)	
6.	Update from Cells (list as appropriate)	
7.	KCC Media and Communication	Comms
8.	Next Steps	Chair
9.	Any Other Business	All
10.	Date of Next Meeting	Chair

Extraordinary Cross Directorate Resilience Forum Incident Name					
	Action Log				
Ref Number	Action Owner	Action Date	Action	Update	Action Status

A copy of this agenda template can be found in the Extraordinary Cross Directorate Resilience Forum MS Teams page.

A3 - Communications Plan Template

[Incident/event type]

KCC Communications Plan [version]

Update [date]

1. Aim

This plan supports the KCC Strategic Strategy to mitigate the impact of [the incident/event] on KCC's staff, customers, services and commissioned providers.

2. Objectives

- Support the Duty Press Officer's role in co-ordinating a 'communications' response
- Clarify the Duty Director's role in communicating to Members and signing off key messages
- Enable the Duty Press Officer to provide an update to the multi-agency Media Lead (Kent Police) if required

Further information on KCC's role in a multi-agency response is described in the KRF Media and Communications Plan. A copy can be obtained from Resilience Direct.

3. In an emergency

The KCC Duty Emergency Planning Officer

will be able to assist with queries about content.

OOH Press Officer: [Name(s) and number]

OOH Digital Services: [Name(s)] (via Duty Press Officer)

Internal Comms: {Name and contact details]

4. Distribution

Press Office / Digital Services / Contact Centre / Resilience & Emergency Planning Service / Duty Director / Highways/ Public Protection

5. The Communications Plan

Who is your audience?	What is KCC saying?	How will we share this?	When does this happen?	R/A/G Status [insert status below]
Members	Advice on the impact of the incident and KCC's response to the incident	 Duty Director Verbal / Email briefing 	 As soon as is practicable once the situation is shared. Following Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). When the response has stood down. 	
CMT	Advice on the impact of the incident and KCC's response to the incident	Duty DirectorVerbal / Email briefing	 As soon as is practicable once the situation is shared. Following Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG). 	

Managers	 [incident update] Travel updates Safety advice Business Continuity Plan prompts (know where your staff are, make sure they can get to and from work safely) Request for information or action. 	 KMail for Managers Directorate Resilience Group Chairs – direct emails to managers Health & safety advice line 	When the response has stood down. As soon as possible once it is determined by the Duty Director that action is required from managers.
All staff	 [incident update] Travel updates Safety advice Health & safety messaging Business Continuity Plan prompts Building closures Security messages Sign in to Teams when working at home 	KMailKNetViva Engage	As directed by the Duty Director

Service Users	Update service users on the service status i.e. what has been closed / what is open/ any changes to service delivery [decided hashtags/ media messages]	 Kent.gov.uk Twitter Facebook pages Service controlled social media channels Health & safety advice line Kelsi for schools (Must inform Contact Centre of closures) Requests from mainstream media 	 As described in service Business Continuity Plans Case work systems (for quick messaging/messaging on risks)
Commissioned Service Providers	Business continuity advice and guidance	Cross Directorate Resilience Group	 Following CDRG on [date] Further advice available on request but BC guidance issued and new templates on RD
Public	 Public Health Messages Roads and travel update Building / school /service closures Good news messages Signpost to other agencies messages 	 Kent.gov.uk Twitter Facebook pages Service controlled social media channels Requests from mainstream media – provide talking head Kentclosures.com (administrated by schools but Contact Centre support 	As directed by the Duty Director

Other Responders	 Response information Key messages for agencies' response teams (above) 	password changes) VMS on network Resilience Direct (maintained by Kent Resilience Team / Resilience & Emergency Service)	Regular and in time for Strategic, Tactical and Cross Directorate meetings	
Parish Councils	 Look out for your neighbours Check your community emergency plans If you don't have one, contact your borough or district council for advice Are there local resources that can help? 	 KALC Kent.gov.uk Community Wardens Public Protection 		

A4 – Strategic Strategy Template

[Type of incident] Kent County Council Strategic Strategy

This strategy has been developed by the Cross Directorate Resilience Forum and agreed by the Duty Director [Director name].

Aim

This strategy intends to mitigate the impact of [the incident/event] on KCC staff, services, customers, commissioned providers and Kent's communities from [dates affected].

It supports the aims of the multi-agency Strategic Strategy for Kent Police [Operation name].

Strategic Objectives

- 1. Maximise the safety of staff and commissioned providers who are delivering KCC services.
- 2. Maintain the safe operation of services provided by KCC as Category 1 responder including support and voluntary agencies.
- 3. Ensure the continuity of critical services including Highways, Social Care and Health, Infrastructure and Marketing and Resident Experience during the response and provide customers with clear information about the services they can access.
- 4. Maintain the flow of traffic on the road network in Kent.
- 5. Identify and maintain key services to vulnerable people and communities which will include isolated communities, vulnerable people and care homes.
- 6. Reduce the impact of the adverse weather conditions on the communities and businesses of Kent insofar as this is possible.
- 7. Preserve trust and confidence of the public, minimising and managing community impact arising from the adverse weather conditions and any subsequent events following the response to the incident.
- 8. Manage any consequences of the weather and the unintended consequences of organisational response.

- 9. Ensure a consistent media response that identifies key messages and reaches all stakeholders (including Corporate Management Team and Members) though a variety of channels.
- 10. Assess the likely needs of KCC services, communities and businesses in the recovery phase and facilitate a multi-agency return to normality at the earliest opportunity.

The Strategic Strategy is in priority order and subject to review by the Cross Directorate Group and Duty Director.

All tactical planning and delivery will be consistent with the Strategic Strategy.

Reviewed and amended on -	
Date:	
Time:	
Name:	
Role:	

A5- Tactical Plan Template

[Incident/event type and operation name]

Kent County Council: Tactical Plan [version and date]

THREAT/ RISK STATUS: [status] reported to SCG

1. Aim

This plan has been developed to describe the actions required to deliver the KCC Strategic Strategy and described the resources and actions required to mitigate the impact of [incident/event] on KCC staff, services, customers, service providers and Kent communities.

2. Objectives

- Describe specific actions required from KCC services to respond to the [incident]
- Provide assurance to the Duty Director that the KCC strategic objectives will be achieved
- Monitor output from key KCC services involved in the response and collate information for SitRep to feed into the multi-agency Common Operating Picture (COP)
- The Situation Report (SitRep) provides the multi-agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group with the Common Recognisable Information Picture (CRIP)

3. Distribution:

Duty Director, Cross Directorate Resilience Forum, Resilience & Emergency Planning Service, Resilience Direct

4. The Plan

Key:

Action Complete	Action Ongoing	Action Not Started

Strategic Objective	Tactical Action [insert decided actions]	Accountable [insert names/groups/ services below]	Progress / Outcome [insert progress/outcomes below]	R/A/G [insert status below]
1. Maximise the safety of staff and commissioned providers who are delivering KCC services.	Issues internal messages to all managers and staff [relevant to the incident/event] and encourage activation of business continuity plans.			

2. Maintain the safe operation of services provided by KCC as Category 1 responders including support and voluntary agencies.	 Ensure Health and Safety policy and guidance are followed. Establish KCC Command rota until [date]. Confirm set up and staffing of CEC until [date]. Co-ordinate voluntary sector and partner response capability and report to TCG/SCG. 		
3.Ensure the continuity of	 Activate the Cross- 		
critical services	Directorate		
including	Resilience Group		
Highways, Social	to co-ordinate		
Care and Health,	corporate		
Infrastructure	business		
and Kent	continuity actions		
Communications	and resource		
during the	requirements		
response and			

provide customers with clear information about the services they can access.	 ICT to confirm whether there are any technological risks to services. [service(s)] to confirm whether there are additional resources or support required from partners. 		
4.Maintain the flow of traffic on the road network in Kent.	Identify any needs for mutual aid or assistance.		
5.Identify and maintain key services to vulnerable people and communities which will include isolated communities, vulnerable people and care	Confirm with TCG and other partners and parish councils whether there are communities that have been cut off, then identify the needs of those communities.		

homes.			
6.Reduce the impact of the adverse weather conditions on the communities and businesses of Kent insofar as this is possible.	 Proactive comms messages to be co-ordinated and issued to the public, to include advice to businesses. This will inform the Recovery Needs Assessment. 		
7.Preserve trust and confidence of the public, minimising and managing community impact arising from the adverse weather conditions and any subsequent	 Duty Director briefing to CMT and Members. Ensure Media and Comms Plan includes Good News Stories 		

events following the response to the incident.			
8.Manage any consequences of the weather and the unintended consequences of organisational response.	 Use the Cross-Directorate Resilience Group to monitor the impact of the disruption on all KCC services. Assess whether the response has resulted in unintended consequences e.g. staff welfare, hours worked, reputational issues 		

9.Ensure a consistent media response that identifies key messages and reaches all stakeholders (including Corporate Management Team and Members) though a variety of channels.	Develop KCC Communications Plan for the Press Officer to use during the emergency in coordinating KCC activity and liaising with multi-agency colleagues		
10.Assess the likely needs of KCC services, communities and businesses in the recovery phase and facilitate a return to multiagency normality at the earliest opportunity.	 Appoint a Recovery Director. Use the Cross- Directorate Resilience Group to complete a recovery needs assessment 		

Appendix B - Review Record

This plan will be reviewed annually by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service and presented to Cross Directorate Resilience Forum.

In the interim period, any significant changes will be identified by the Cross Directorate Resilience Forum during their standing meetings

Date/ Version	Changes	Approved by	
April 2014	First draft	, KRT Supervisor	
April 2015	Second draft to reflect / include Duty Director role	, KRT Supervisor	
March 2016	Feedback from Infrastructure update of Premises and ICT recovery strategies required	, Director EPE	
April 2016	Feedback from GET DMT incorporated ICT Recovery Strategy incorporated	, Director EPE	
May 2016	Feedback from Corporate Management Team	, Head of Paid Service	
June 2016	Sign off from Head of Paid Service	, Head of Paid Service	
August 2016	Update – Ben Watts replaced Geoff Wild	Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	
March 2017	Update to reflect input from Kent Communications	Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	
May 2017	Include Move to Critical update	, Head of Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	
July 2017 v2.0	Comprehensive update	, Resilience Officer Principal Resilience Officer	
November 2017 v2.0	Plan was reviewed by Cross Directorate Group and significant changes	, Chair of Cross Directorate Group	

	were requested		
April 2018 v2.1	Plan was updated by Resilience and Emergency Planning Service for sign off by the Cross- Directorate Resilience group on 14 th May	Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	
September 2018 v2.2	Plan was reviewed updated by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	
October 2018 v2.3	Plan was reviewed and given Final sign-off at the Cross-Directorate Resilience Forum on 23 rd October 2018.	, Chair of Cross Directorate Group	
September 2019 v3	Light touch review ahead of scheduled Brexit date (31st October 2019)	, Resilience and Emergency Planning Manager	
November 2020 v4	Plan was reviewed and updated by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	, Interim Director for Environment, Planning and Enforcement	
December 2021 v5	Plan was reviewed and updated by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	Resilience and Emergency Planning Service (Resilience and Emergency Planning Manager)	
December 2022 v6	Plan was reviewed and updated by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	Resilience and Emergency Planning Service (- Resilience and Emergency Planning Manager)	
December 2023 v7	Plan was reviewed and updated by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	Resilience and Emergency Planning Service (- Resilience and Emergency Planning Manager)	
June 2024 v8	Plan reviewed and updated by the Resilience and Emergency Planning Service	Cross Directorate Resilience Forum	

Appendix C - Incident, Training and Exercising Record

Date	Type of Training / Exercise / Incident	Overseen by
7 th February 2019	GET SMF (Brexit Business Continuity exercise)	
4 th March 2019	T200 (corporate Business Continuity exercise)	
14 th March 2019	Challenger (Brexit Business Continuity exercise)	
Various dates through 2018/19	Exercise Loki (online and live Business Continuity exercise tool)	
Various dates throughout 2019	Exercise Pale Fox (corporate Brexit preparedness)	
12 th September 2019	Exercise Phoebe (Strategic Commissioning)	
12 th September 2019	Exercise Persephone (corporate severe weather and flooding exercise)	
12 th March 2020 onwards	COVID-19 Response	
8 th September 2021	Exercise Stonechat (Dungeness B Level 2 STAC)	
22 nd October 2021	Exercise Fenrir (Infrastructure Business Continuity)	
28 th October 2021	Exercise Scarce Emerald (Kent and Medway Reservoir Inundation)	
6 th December 2021	Exercise Basilea (KCC Flood Response)	
9 th December 2021	Exercise Morrigan (Animal and Plant Health)	
10 th December 2021	Exercise Marsh Harrier (COMAH- Britannia Metals)	
5 th July 2022	Exercise Achelous (Givaudan COMAH)	
2 nd November 2022	Exercise Lemur (National Power Outage)	
4 th November 2022	KCC Flood Response Plan	

	Validation Exercise	
12 th December 2022	KCC Incident Response Exercise (inc. Cantium)	
28th February 2023	Exercise Artemis (Animal and Plant Health)	
29-31 st March 2023	Exercise Mighty Oak (National Power Outage)	
23 rd May 2023	Exercise Southern Emerald (Reservoir Inundation Exercise)	
1 st June 2023	Exercise Havre	
26 th June 2023	Exercise Zeus (Major Accident Hazard Pipeline)	
17 th – 19 th July 2024	Exercise Jura – Corporate EES Business continuity Exercises	