

Adopted: 15th December 2020

Policy Statement

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Cam & Dursley Emergency Plan for incidents which impact the daily running of the Town Council.

1.2 The Business Continuity Policy is intended to provide an overall framework for managing the repercussions of a serious incident which identifies the resource requirements, list of contact names and addresses, and actions that need to be considered and taken, in the event of a serious disruption to the business activities undertaken by the Council.

1.3 This Policy aims to provide a structured plan to enable the Council to be able to respond to an incident in an appropriate, logical way. It will ensure the Council can fulfil its obligations both as a provider of local services and as an employer; the policy is intended to support the Council through this process.

1.4 The objective of the Business Continuity Policy is to reduce the impact of an incident and to provide the Council with a pre-planned course of actions. Occurrences may arise which could not have been foreseen or may not have been considered. For these situations, the Council will use their experience and knowledge to adjust checklists or actions set in the policy accordingly.

1.5 The Business Continuity Policy will be reviewed regularly by the Council and amended and updated if necessary. If an incident occurs the management of the crisis must be reviewed to learn from mistakes and to improve procedures.

2. Objectives

2.1 In the event of an emergency the objectives of the Business Continuity Strategy are:

- To help ensure the continuity of service provision in the event of a business disruption.
- To save time and reduce any initial confusion.
- To preserve the Council's image and reputation.
- To minimise general disruption.
- To ensure control is established by the Council at the critical early stages of a disaster situation.
- To minimise the social, political, legal and financial consequences of the incident.

3. Services

3.1 The Council is located at Jacob's House, Castle Street, Dursley GL11 4BS and provide services to the residents of Dursley. The services include:

- Management of Kingshill Cemetery.

- Maintenance of War Memorial Recreation Ground, Kingshill Play Park, Highfields Play Area and other green areas within the town.
- Hire of pitches & changing room facilities at War Memorial Recreation Ground.
- Provision of The Vibe Youth Centre
- Management of Town Hall & Market Place

3.2 The Council also provides administrative services including:

- Review of Planning applications
- Policy and Financial Management
- Public Relations / Information provision
- Civic and Democratic support
- Community Event organisation and support
- Neighbourhood Development Plan

4. The Plan

4.1 Recovery Team

The Council must identify and appoint a Recovery Team which will convene in the event of a disaster and will decide whether to invoke the necessary recovery plans.

The team will include at a minimum:

- The Town Clerk and/or Deputy Town Clerk
- The Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor
- The Emergency Management Co-ordinator (see Cam & Dursley Emergency Plan)

4.2. Alternative Office Accommodation

In the event of Jacob's House not being accessible the alternative office accommodation is located at The Vibe Youth Centre, 3 Parsonage Street, Dursley, GL11 4BW. The Youth Centre has telephone facilities, WI-FI internet access, IT equipment including computers & printer, kitchen and toilet facilities.

The Town Council Key Holders are Cllrs Neil Grecian and Peter Hayes.

The Town Council own the pavilion within the War Memorial Recreation Ground, which has facilities which could be used in an emergency situation including telephone.

Where possible, the Council will continue to operate with minimum disruption from the office located at Jacob's House, Castle Street, Dursley.

In the event of major disruption or where the situation warrants the Town Clerk/Mayor will consider the appropriate level of staffing and access to Jacob's House by the public.

Where the situation warrants the office staff will be directed to "work from home" as necessary.

5. Priorities

The Recovery Team priorities will be:

- Staff safety and welfare
- Customer/User safety
- Recovery of essential services
- Legal compliance
- Minimisation of financial loss
- Recovery of all other activities

6. Documentation

6.1 A hard copy of the Business Continuity Policy will be held by the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor. A copy of the policy will be available to download from the Town Council website.

Appendix A: List of Councillors and Officers will be available to Councillors and Staff only.

A Business Continuity file on the Management System on the computer will contain all relevant documents. P:/Council Matters/Policies/Business Continuity/

These documents will also be filed in the emergency “box” located on the filing cabinets in the upstairs meeting room at Jacob’s House.

7. Disruption Scenarios

7.1 The approach to developing a Business Continuity Policy is firstly to identify different disruption scenarios and then to plan how to deal with them. A number of incidents can affect council operations, for example fire, flood, server failure, acts of terrorism, flu pandemic or prolonged loss of power. Each of these could result in a disruption. The disruptions have been grouped into three categories:

- Council building – denial of access to the building or loss of the building.
- Failure of IT or telephone systems.
- Unavailability of key or sufficient staff.

7.2 Council Buildings: Following a business disruption or incident, Jacob’s House could be inaccessible for three main reasons:

- Denial of access, meaning that though systems and services are unaffected, staff are unable to gain access to the building. This could happen following incidents such as a security threat, environmental contamination, or a serious event nearby.
- Fire, flood or structural damage could damage or destroy all or part of the building. This could also affect systems.
- When access has been restricted by Central Government instructions e.g. lockdown

7.3. Failure of Critical IT Service or Telephone System

- Some or all critical IT or the telephone system could be unavailable, for example, a server failure, a cyber-attack, a network problem, or the cutting of a communications cable supplying Jacob's House.

7.4. Unavailability of Key or Sufficient Staff

- Staff that support business critical activities could become unavailable. Examples are personal injuries to key members of staff, or pandemic affecting a group of staff.

8. The Response

8.1 Relocation

Should relocation be required from Jacob's House, it would be necessary to identify those pieces of equipment which would be required to ensure the delivery of the Council's essential services; in essence, what standby facilities and equipment would be necessary and which suppliers could be used to provide emergency equipment on a temporary basis.

It may be necessary to make arrangements with third parties regarding the delivery of equipment at short notice by identifying alternative sources.

The Clerk will be responsible for contacting the Council's insurance company to provide details regarding the incident and the level of the losses.

In the event of an unforeseen circumstance and until such time as the emergency incident is declared safe, the following measures should be implemented at these locations:

Jacob's House

In the event of Jacob's House not being available:

- The Town Clerk to display notices advising of temporary location and emergency contact number.

The Pavilion, War Memorial Recreational Ground

In the event of the pavilion and/or the WMRG not being available:

- The groundsmen will be based from the Kingshill Cemetery/Jacob's House.
- The Town Clerk will inform the local sports teams and other hirers.
- The entrances to the WMRG will have temporary information signage erected and/or access restricted.

WMRG, Kingshill and Highfields Play Areas

In the event of the play areas not being available:

- The Town Clerk will contact any contractors due to carry out programmed or routine maintenance works.

- The entrances to the play areas will have temporary information signage erected and/or access restricted.

Kingshill Cemetery

In the event of the cemetery not being available:

- The Town Clerk will inform the local funeral directors and grave diggers.
- The gates will remain locked (except to emergency vehicles).

The Vibe Youth Centre

In the event of The Vibe not being available:

- The Town Clerk will inform the representatives from the Tabernacle Church URC.
- The Town Clerk will inform our youth service provider.
- The Town Clerk will inform the cleaning contractor and any other relevant contractors/tradespeople.
- The entrance to the youth centre will have temporary information signage erected and/or access restricted.

Town Hall/Market Place

In the event of the Town Hall/Market Place not being available:

- The Town Clerk will inform the Trustees.
- The Town Clerk will inform the hirers.
- The Town Clerk will inform the cleaning contractor and any other relevant contractors/tradespeople.
- The entrance to the Town Hall will have temporary information signage erected and/or access restricted.

Town Council Meetings

Town Council meetings are held in community meeting rooms at the Fire Station, Kingshill Road and the Methodist Church, Castle Street, Dursley. An alternative venue to be arranged in the event of either location not being available subject to the legal requirements of Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12, paras 7 and 23 and Local Government Act 1972 s. 243.

Where the situation warrants, the Town Council will host meetings using an “online” forum.

8.2 Failure of Critical IT Service or Telephone System

The Council must be able to respond and recover from a disruption to its information and communications technology, i.e. if relocation is required, additional IT and telephones may be required.

It will be necessary to suspend burial requests until access to the cemetery records are available. An electronic copy is included within the back-up and the original documents are stored within the fire proof safe at Jacob’s House.

Current meeting agendas and historical minutes are located on the town council website, with hard copies stored at Jacob's House.

The Council must ensure that regular proper back-ups of our IT software are undertaken and that this information can be restored with immediate effect if required. The Council's electronic files are stored and accessible via secured login in the cloud.

The Council's financial software package is web-based and accessible by secure log-in.

The Council must consider all forms of communication that it uses, including emails, telephony, (mobile and land line), hand-held radios, and PA systems, and how these will assist in delivering services during an emergency.

Updates will be provided via the Town Council's website and social media pages throughout the emergency period.

In the event of the Town Council website not being available the Town Clerk will contact the service department of our website provider.

8.3 Unavailability of Key or Sufficient Staff

In the event of the following key members of staff/councillors not being available:

- The Deputy Mayor will deputise for the Town Mayor.
- The Deputy Town Clerk will deputise for the Town Clerk.
- The Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator will deputise for The Emergency Co-ordinator.