

Audit and Corporate Governance Committee Report

Report of Head of HR, IT & Customer Services

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To: AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 20 March 2012

AGENDA ITEM 4

Business continuity update

Recommendations

We invite Audit and Corporate Governance Committee to note our plan to test our business continuity arrangements on 24 April 2012.

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide committee with an update requested at the meeting of 30 January 2012 on the timescales for testing our business continuity plans.

Relationship with corporate plan

2. Having effective business continuity arrangements in place will help the councils in meeting their shared strategic objective of 'managing our business effectively'.

Background

3. At the last meeting of this committee, 30 January 2012, following our update report on risk management and business continuity arrangements, the committee asked for an update report on the timescales for testing our business continuity arrangements.

Testing timescales

4. We identified that we still needed to develop a testing schedule which would demonstrate the effectiveness of our arrangements without causing a major disruption to public services while the test was in progress.
5. We are seeking assistance from our colleagues at Oxfordshire County Council who are experienced in carrying out tests and using different scenarios.
6. We have now secured a simulated 'walk-through' test which will take place alongside an emergency plan exercise. This is a very good way to test our business continuity plans, and will also allow us to use a scenario which requires a multi-agency approach. The test is scheduled for 24 April 2012.
7. Once completed, we will be able to use the results to produce a schedule for future testing and implement any improvements that may be required. We will provide committee with a summary of the results of the test and will also detail the improvements we have made if necessary.

Financial, legal and any other implications

8. There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report, other than to note that by having business continuity arrangements in place, the council is meeting its obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Conclusion

9. Following the committee's request to set out a timescale for testing our business continuity arrangements, we can now confirm that this will be done on 24 April 2012.

Recommendation

10. We invite Audit and Corporate Governance Committee to note our plan to test our business continuity arrangements on 24 April 2012.

Background report

- Audit and Corporate Governance Committee 30 January 2012: Business continuity arrangements and risk management update