

Title of Policy:	Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery
Section:	Operations

Purpose

There are many possibilities that may cause a disruption to the normal day to day operations of the Company. This Policy examines the more likely occurrences and considers ways in which adverse disruptions can be minimised, through proper planning.

Statement

There will be occasions when the conduct of business is severely disrupted by events which are outside of the control of the Company, yet can be foreseen, to some degree. The most common events which are likely to impact the Company include extreme adverse weather conditions (e.g. severe snowfall, flooding, heatwave), serious medical events such as a flu pandemic, terrorist incidents, and significant power failures. All of these events are possible, yet the likelihood of any particular event will be different, not only in respect of the event itself (severe snowfall is more likely than a terrorist incident, for example), but also in respect of local climatic conditions (severe snowfall is more likely on the English/Scottish borders, than say the South West of England).

In order to ensure continuity, even in extreme adverse circumstances, the Company will plan for the most likely events and consider, in advance what actions need to be taken to minimise disruption.

Procedure and Guidance

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

Business continuity is an objective – the continuation of business in what might be extreme and adverse circumstances. Disaster recovery is an element of business continuation and concerns the ability to recover data stored on computers, which, otherwise, if lost completely, might result in serious consequences for the business.

The Business Continuity Plan – the 4 Pillars

Strategic Assessment

In any situation where resources might not be sufficient to meet demand, some form of rationing may be required, albeit for a temporary period. This will require an advanced understanding of how possibly limited resources can be used for the greatest impact, and to whom they should be directed.

Risk Assessment

The process of risk assessment will enable the Company to consider the likelihood of an event happening in the first place, and the possible impact upon operations. Although the process will not reduce the risk, which of course is outside of the Company's control, the impact may be mitigated by careful examination of the use of alternative resources or modus operandi.

Strategy and Plan

Having assessed the risks, and considered the alternative options available, the Business Continuity Plan can be developed.

Test and Review

Having a plan is of no use if it does not work, and the Company will make every effort to test and regularly update the plan.

General Assumptions

Assumptions must be made on the basis of a) the event, and b) best and worst-case scenarios. The following published guidance suggests:

- In the event of a minor disruption assume the office would be out of use for 24 hours. For a more significant disruption assume access would be denied for more than 7 days.
- How robust is your IT system? Could you cope without access to information stored on your computer? Do you have a maintenance contract in place? Assume you will not have access for at least a day.
- How reliable is your telephone network? In the event of a communications failure do you have a contract with a third-party maintenance company? Could you get by with mobile phones if there was a fault with the landline? Plan to be without landline phones for at least 5 hours.
- In a pandemic it is not unrealistic for 25% - 35% of staff to be off work at any one time. Rates could be even higher in a small business. The absence rate will include those who are sick, those caring for others and the 'worried well' who are simply too scared to come to work. On average people will be absent for 5-8 days, but some may never return. In a smaller business it is usually more difficult to cope with staff shortages. Who are the key people? Could you cope if you lost their experience and expertise?
- Loss of electricity supply across a region could last 24 hours, although in areas exposed to significant weather effects 3 days might be a more realistic assumption. On-site generators, where available, should allow for at least 10 days operations without re-supply.
- Assume that loss of water and or disruption to the sewerage services could last for 3 days.
- In a fuel crisis some staff might struggle to get to work. How long could you reasonably expect to cope in this situation? The disruption to the transport network from a fuel crisis could easily last up to 10 days. Would all staff be able to get fuel?

The Company accepts these reasonable assumptions and will plan accordingly.

The Strategic Assessment

Prioritisation of services in an emergency

The Company delivers services to Clients and when resources are limited, or access to clients is restricted (flooding, for example) they must be directed towards those Clients who have the greatest need – in other words they must be prioritised. How should this be done? The Company believes that limited resources should be targeted at Clients who require essential services which are unlikely to be delivered by alternative means. Key tasks undertaken by Care Workers will be analysed by:

Impact

- Does the service provided, when considered overall, have a serious direct impact on clients?
or
- Is there a significant financial impact?
- Are the duties statutory?
- How necessary is the service in an emergency?

Vital	5
High	4
Medium	3
Low	2
Non-vital	1

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This policy was implemented/reviewed on? The date of the next review is?

This model requires the approval of the purchaser prior to implementation

Priority

- Estimate the length of time you could operate before this service must be operating again:

Within 24 hours	5
3 days	4
7 days	3
28 days	2
Longer	1

Alternative

- Could part or all of the work be provided by alternative means, perhaps by a family member, a local voluntary organisation or by using temporary staff for a short period of time? Estimate how much of the service could be provided this way?

None	5
25%	4
50%	3
75%	2
100%	1

Function	Impact	x	Priority	x	Alternative	=	Score
E.g. Bathing	3	x	4	x	3	=	36
Dressing/Undressing	1	x	4	x	3	=	12
Etc.							

Source: Business Continuity Plan: Devon County Council

This process offers general indications only – in other words, bathing a client when in an emergency, with very limited resources is likely to be a non-priority task, and cancellation would allow diminished resources to be directed to higher priority situations. This is eminently sensible – however when using these assessments on an individual client basis, then personal circumstances will have to be taken into account, such as the non-ability of friends, family members etc. to step in, for example. Equally, a Client visit may involve several tasks, with different priority ratings – only one of which may be required to render the visit “essential”.

Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning

Assessing the risks to continuity of service provision, considering ways in which the risks can be reduced, and designing contingency plans for when the worst happens are the key elements of the Company’s Business Continuity Planning.

The Company has considered the following as the major potential areas of risk:

- No electricity, phones, water etc.;
- Forced closure of office;
- IT systems breakdown;
- Severe staffing shortages.

Each area has been assessed for the likelihood of the event, its impact, general risk-reducing measures, and actions for consideration in the event of the worst happening.

KLOE Reference for this Policy	Regulation directly linked to this Policy	Regulation(s) relevant to this Policy
Well-Led	Regulation 17: Good governance	