

PETERBOROUGH



CITY COUNCIL

Risk Management and Business Continuity Policy

2009-10

Members and management are committed to embedding the principles of risk management in the culture and behaviours across the council. This policy has been agreed by Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team. The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains in line with strategic activities and objectives, and will be updated as necessary to reflect any significant business change.

Scope

This policy outlines strategic objectives with regard to risk management and business continuity within Peterborough City Council. How these objectives will be achieved is outlined in the accompanying Strategy. It also sets out the standards and definitions the council will be working to, and outlines broad areas of responsibility.

This policy will be communicated to all staff and stakeholders via the council website and Insite, and will also be available on request.

Context

Peterborough City Council (PCC) is a unitary authority, employing around 6,500 staff and providing a wide range of services to a population of approximately 163,300 people (Registrar General, 2007). The council's Vision is to provide a quality of service which genuinely contributes to making Peterborough the place to be in the Eastern region. In this way, the council affects the everyday lives of all who live and work in the city.

Risk is defined by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) as: "the uncertainty of an event occurring that could have an impact on the achievement of the objectives". The council recognises that there are risks in everything it undertakes and that it has a duty to manage these risks. This duty is to staff and those people working in the council, residents, service users, partners and funding agencies. Risk can have both negative and positive consequences, and it is the council's aim to minimise negative impacts and to exploit potential opportunities through a robust risk management process.

Risk management is defined by the Institute of Risk Management (IRM) as: "the process which aims to help organisations to understand, evaluate and take action on all their risks with a view to increasing the probability of success and reducing the likelihood of failure". The Business Continuity Institute (BCI) defines BCM as: "a holistic management process that identifies potential impacts that threaten an organisation; provides a framework for building resilience and the capability for effective response; safeguards the interests of key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value-creating activities".

The relationship between risk management and business continuity management is a complex and often-debated one. For the purposes of PCC, it is helpful to view BCM in simple terms as a risk management control, i.e. once events which could potentially affect service provision have been identified, BCM is one way of reducing the impact of those events materialising. It is therefore useful to have RM and BCM united and coordinated centrally, to increase overall organisational resilience and efficiency.

Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) it is a statutory duty for local authorities to have in place fit for purpose business continuity plans (BCPs). Risk management (RM) is not currently statutory for the council; however, as with business continuity management (BCM), it is in the interests of the organisation to have sound BCM and RM processes in place, in order to maintain efficient business operations, increase effective decision making and safeguard the interests of stakeholders.

Enterprise Risk Management

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) is defined by the IIA as: “A rigorous and coordinated approach to assessing and responding to all risks that affect the achievement of an organisation’s strategic and financial objectives”. It is the council’s intention to manage risk within ERM guidelines as good practice; further details are outlined in the strategy.

BS25999

BS 25999 is a new British Standard of business continuity management. It is the council's intention to manage business continuity within the guidelines of BS25999, with the possibility of achieving accreditation in the future.

Risk Management and Business Continuity Objectives

- Enable the achievement of the council’s strategic priorities:
 - Creating the UK’s environment capital
 - Creating strong and supportive communities
 - Delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth
 - Creating opportunities – tackling inequalities
 - Providing value for money
- Integration of risk management and business continuity into the culture of the council.
- Ensure compliance with laws and regulations.
- Demonstration of effective governance within the council.
- Enable the council to anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative conditions.
- Provide assurance regarding the management of significant risks.
- Support management in making decisions that pay full regard to risk considerations.
- Mitigation of all effects of a disruptive incident, including threat of litigation, potential financial losses and damage to council reputation.
- Deliver efficient operations, effective processes and efficacious strategies.
- Minimisation of injury, damage, loss and inconvenience to all stakeholders, (including staff, residents, service users, assets etc.), arising from, or connected with, the delivery of council services.
- Increased supply chain resilience.
- Raised awareness of the need for business continuity and risk management by all those connected with the delivery of services (including partners, delivery agents etc).

- A common language and understanding and a joined up and fully coordinated approach with regard to risk management activities throughout the organisation.
- Openness and honesty in all risk communications, and effective reporting procedures throughout the council.
- Introduction of a robust framework and procedures for identification, analysis, assessment and management of risk, and the reporting and recording of events, based on best practice.

Responsibilities

A full reporting structure and further details of roles and responsibilities are outlined in the strategy. Broad areas of responsibility for risk management are:

Elected Members have a responsibility to understand the strategic risks that the council faces, and should oversee the effective management of risk by PCC officers.

The Chief Executive will be accountable to Members for the effective management of risk within the council and will ensure that appropriate procedures, resources and skills are introduced in order to achieve this.

The Corporate Management Team will be responsible for monitoring the strategic risk register and receiving notifications of significant risks from departmental risk registers.

The Resilience Services Manager is responsible for leading the BCM and RM processes, which will be coordinated by the Senior Business Continuity and Risk Management Officer. This includes promoting BCM and giving generic advice to the local commercial and voluntary sector, which is also statutory for the council under the CCA. Supportive development and training to this role has been given and will be ongoing as necessary.

Heads of Service will be expected to commit appropriate resources to risk management within their areas.

Risk Champions will be nominated within key areas and will take on the departmental management of operational risk.

All staff have a responsibility to make themselves aware of risk management in everyday duties and to report risk issue as appropriate.