



# PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

## Business Continuity Plan & Policy

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to prepare the Council's business in the event of extended service outages caused by factors beyond the Council's control and to restore services to the widest extent possible in a minimum time frame. This Plan has been developed to complement the overall risk arrangements, help maintain critical services during and after any major disruption and promote recovery.

The Business Continuity Plan 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.

### 2. Outcome

The outcome of this plan is to ensure that the business is able to maintain a good level of service.

### 3. Plan objectives

- Serves as a guide for those implementing the Business Continuity Plan
- Assists in avoiding confusion experienced during a crisis by documenting, testing and reviewing recovery procedures.
- References and points to the location of critical data.
- Provides procedures and resources needed to assist in recovery.
- Ensure Councillors are kept up to date should the plan be activated
- To minimize the social, political, legal and financial consequences

### 4. Structure

The Council must identify and appoint a team which will convene in the event of a disaster and will decide whether to invoke the necessary recovery plans. The team will include all or some of the following:

- The Clerk
- The Chair of the council
- The Chair of all the committees
- The Deputy Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer, Assistant Clerk and Media & Communications Officer

The team priorities will be:

- Staff safety and welfare
- Customer/resident safety
- Recovery of essential services
- Legal compliance
- Minimisation of financial loss

## **5. Documentation**

This Business Continuity Plan will be kept as an electronic and hard copy by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council. Copies of the plan will be distributed to all staff and Councillors.

## **6. Definitions of Incidents**

Three levels of incident have been defined, the most serious being a Level 3 incident: a major incident.

### Level 1 Incident: Local Incident:

Defined as a local incident that is not an emergency and does not cause serious physical threat to people or property. Results are likely to be limited disruption to services.

### Level 2 Incident: Minor Incident:

Defined as an incident that could pose an actual threat to people or property but does not seriously affect the overall functioning of the Folk Hall or the other halls. This might include the isolation or evacuation with the assistance of the Emergency Services.

### Level 3 Incident: Major Incident:

Defined as an incident causing significant disruption to hall operations. It may affect the entire building(s), and staff, with the potential to escalate and involve external Emergency Services who would probably take operational control of the incident which would necessitate the invocation of the Business Continuity Action Plan.

## **7. Staff Welfare**

It must be recognised that an incident that results in the enacting of this plan may also cause additional pressures for staff. Staff members need to be given clear direction about the priorities of the business. Managers must ensure that they monitor staff more closely to ensure that their welfare is maintained.

Staff should be aware of what their role is when a major incident occurs. Clear and concise communication with staff is pivotal to having an organised response. Staff must be made aware of what communication methods are going to be used so they can find out the latest information if they are going to be working from a different location than normal.

Managers who suspect that staff members have suffered undue stress or even trauma from the business disruption must consider aiding those staff who have been affected.

## **8. Communication**

Employees – the Clerk will communicate with staff all updates and news regarding any emergency incident.

Councillors – the Clerk will notify the Chairman of the Council of any updates and news regarding an emergency incident followed by communication to all Councillors.

Public - communications with the public will be via the Councils website, social media, local news outlets and notice boards.

All communication with the press will be dealt with as per the Councils Media Policy.

## 9. Equipment

All staff have a work laptop or other IT equipment at home to enable them to work away from the office in an emergency. Phone numbers are shared with all members of staff. Staff will be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses incurred (with the approval of the Clerk).

## 10. Data Protection

When working away from home, as a result of an unexpected office closure, all data on work laptops must be protected in accordance with Portishead Town Council policies and working practises must be in line with General Data Protection Regulations. All connections by a work laptop to the internet, when away from the workplace, must be made using a secure password protected internet VPN connection.

## 11. Premises incident

A premises incident can include flood, fire, or any other disaster that renders the office inaccessible.

### In office hours:

Action	Details	Responsible Person(s)
1. Evacuate the building	Follow normal fire drill procedure	Town Clerk
2. Check evacuation is complete	Staff and visitor safety is the priority. Check everyone on-site has been evacuated	Town Clerk
3. Verify if incident is real	If false alarm, resume business as normal	Town Clerk
4. Call emergency services	999	Town Clerk or Assistant Clerk
5. Record details of any injuries sustained in the incident	Record in Incident Book	Town Clerk or Assistant Clerk
6. Alert staff, visitors and Councillors	Alert any staff due to arrive on-site soon of the incident, and tell them to await further instructions	Town Clerk or Assistant Clerk
7. Assess impact	Clerk to assess the scale of the incident and decide next steps	Town Clerk
5. Alert Councillors	Inform all Councillors	Town Clerk

**Outside office hours:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>
1. First person on-site to notify Clerk	Do not enter the building	All staff
3. Alert staff	Alert any staff due to arrive on-site soon of the incident, and tell them to await further instructions	All staff
4. Assess impact	Caretaker to contact Clerk to assess the scale of the incident & decide next steps	Caretakers
5. Alert Councillors	Inform all Councillors	Town Clerk

**Business continuity:**

<b>Critical activity</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>
Phones	Staff to use personal mobile phones of which details are shared via the staff contact log. Calls to the office number being recorded and available to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk, who will ensure messages are forwarded to the appropriate staff member.	Town Clerk or Assistant Clerk
Internet	Staff to use home internet connections.	All Staff
Inform insurance company	Aviva policy arranged by BHIB: Policy No: LCO 01844 Dated 18.5.2020 Loss Claims Aviva helpline: 0800 0151498 Legal Expenses DAS helpline: 0345 3001899	Town Clerk
Post redirection	Post Office	Office staff to organize at request of Town Clerk
Inform service providers, residents and others	Website, social media, local news outlets and noticeboards	Media & Communications Officer

**Infrastructure incident**

An infrastructure incident can include the loss of computer / telephony systems, internet access, or power. If the outage is temporary, inform staff to remain and await further instructions.

<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>
Phones & Internet (Broadband) Connections	Contact phone provider to ascertain extent of outage: Focus Group: PTC Account Number FX0700 Focus Support: 0330 024 200 <a href="https://focusgroup.co.uk/contact-us/">https://focusgroup.co.uk/contact-us/</a>	Office Administrator/ Community Engagement Officer

IT - Computer Network	Contact IT Network provider/IT Support: Mike Ham – Compex Computer Services Tel: 01934 740456 Mob:07768 254877 Mike.ham@compex.uk	
Mains power	For power outage contact <b>Western Power Distribution</b> either online reporting of Power loss or call 0800 6783 105  The power supplier for our amenities is: Folk Hall-SSE Site Ref:551705634 RBH-SSE Site Ref:891821803 NWH-SSE Site Ref:81789206 WW Toilets-SSE Site Ref: 801823304	

**If the outage is ongoing:**

<b>Critical activity</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>
Phones	Staff to use personal mobile phones of which details are shared via the staff contact log. Calls to the office number being recorded and available to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk, who will ensure messages are forwarded to the appropriate staff member.	All Staff  Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk to forward voice messages
Phones & Internet (Broadband) Connections	Staff to use home internet connections. See Focus contact details above.	All Staff
IT - Computer Network	Staff to use laptop and mobile devices from home. For IT & Network support see above.	All Staff
Mains power	Staff to work from home until power is restored. If power outage is widespread and staff homes are also affected contact local shared office providers to rent desk space.	All Staff
Meetings	Move any scheduled meetings and ensure that Councillors and attendees are informed of the change of meeting place	All Staff
Communication with Councillors	Ensure that emails to Councillors are forwarded and other lines of communication are maintained.	All Staff
Post	Post Box to be attended (if still in use) if not post to be redirected as required	Office Administrator

**12. Loss of key staff**

A staff incident can include a sudden family emergency, injury or other event which renders a key member of staff suddenly unable to work.

<b>Critical activity</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>
1. Identify interchangeable staff	All members of staff should have team members who can perform their roles, even if it is in a reduced capacity. Identify the relevant person and support them in carrying out business-critical activities	All staff
2. Assess extent of loss	Identify whether the affected staff member's absence is likely to be temporary, longer-term, or permanent.	Town Clerk
3. Longer term loss of staff	Alert Staffing and Finance committee to discuss appropriate action	Town Clerk
4. Recruit temporary or full-time replacement	Follow the standard recruitment procedure to find a full-time, part-time, or fixed-term contract (as appropriate) replacement.	Staff & Finance Chair and Committee

### 13.Recovery phase

The purpose of the recovery phase is to resume normal working practices for the entire organisation. Where the impact of the incident is prolonged, normal operations may need to be delivered under new circumstances, different location etc.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Responsible Person(s)</b>
1. Agree and plan the actions required to enable recovery of normal working	Agreed actions will be detailed in an action plan and set against time scales with responsibility for completion clearly indicated.	Town Clerk
2. Respond to any long-term support needs of staff	Depending on the nature of the incident, Council may need to consider providing support services	Town Clerk
3. Publicise that there is now 'business as usual'	Inform public/customers through normal channels	Town Clerk and Media & Communications Officer
4. Carry out a debrief of the incident and complete report to document opportunities for improvement and any lessons identified	This should be reviewed to ensure key actions resulting from the incident are implemented within designated time scales.	Town Clerk
5. Review this Continuity Plan considering lessons learned from incident and the response to it	Implement recommendations for improvement and update the plan. Ensure a revised version of the plan is read by all members of staff.	Town Clerk
6. Report to full Council	Ensure Councillors are aware of any recommendations arising from a review of the incident	Town Clerk

#### **14. Maintenance and Review of Plan**

Any changes in personnel which affect the plan should be addressed immediately.

The plan should also be checked and reviewed as follows:

- When there has been an incident which necessitates the utilisation of the plan, an incident report should be prepared and an assessment of the plans performance should be carried out;
- When there is a significant change in the way that the Town Council is run because of a change in legislation etc. the effects should be evaluated with respect to the plan.

***Adopted by Town Council on 20 January 2021***