



Business Continuity

The client A rural county council with revenues around £.8bn. A complex mix of services that equate to over 500 product or service lines. Business conducted from more than twenty locations. 16,000 people employed. Business Continuity was already in place but limited to recovery of County Hall.

How we helped the client to implement BCM themselves so that they remain independent and own it themselves.

The challenge

- Persuade the directors to widen their concept of Business Continuity Management (BCM) from just a major event affecting County Hall to the wider risks that might affect the resilience of the council
- Respond to the widening of the concept sensitively so that those who had worked hard on the current plan were kept on-side
- Take a consultant approach that would fit with the restricted budget the client had for this
- Maximise the involvement of the internal staff so that they led the programme and felt they owned it
- Ensure that the BCM remained embedded within the culture of the organisation and ensure the ongoing longevity of the programme without consultant involvement

The response A conceptual piece of work was drawn up which placed the current plan in the centre of the new plan from which all the other activities would flow. This was sold to senior management at a workshop in which BCM was championed by another council's head of BCM and various activities were undertaken including a risk assessment and an overall business impact analysis (BIA) to prioritise the 500 plus services that were run by the council.

Once support from senior management was gained, the programme launched with further BIA's being conducted with all the prioritised services. Once the BIA was complete, a flow chart of activities was mapped and the resources required were analysed. This was done initially with a lead from Liz Taylor Risk Consulting, and then a consultant from LTRC supervised the internal staff running their own workshops. Eventually the LTRC team supervised the project plan and ran the scenarios for the corporate plan.

The outcome A recent event caused the business continuity plan to be activated for the client. It was not one of the risks that had been forecast being wildly unexpected and very hard to predict. Nevertheless the client's response was well orchestrated as a result of the planning and exercising that had been undertaken and the incident passed with no external comment.

A post incident analysis revealed opportunities to improve the response, including the purchase of advanced communication devices which could access the internet, receive emails, and act as multi purpose communication and data storage devices.

The client is now looking to benchmark against BS 25999 with a view to gaining certified compliance. This will then drive the requirement for suppliers to improve their own BCM processes and add a degree of resilience that will guarantee continuance of providing the services to those who most need it – and whose needs would increase in a time of emergency.

Key points

- Business continuity owned by client
- BCM implemented by building on what was already there
- Continuing improvement