

**Emergency Planning  
Annual Audit Commission Self-Assessment Tool 2007/08**

**Agenda Item ..**

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**Background Papers:-** Audit Commission self-assessment tool for Local Authorities  
Emergency Planning and Business Continuity.  
**Financial Implications:-** None  
**Equalities Implications:-** None  
**Legal Implications:-** None  
**Options:** None  
**Risks:** Lack of Emergency preparedness in response and recovery under  
the Civil Contingencies Act 2005 will have an adverse impact on  
the Authorities duty of care to the community and ability to deliver  
the 'business ' of the authority to the community and partners.  
Loss of reputation.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The annual audit commissions self-assessment framework has be developed to enable Local Authorities to review their current performance and identify areas for improvement within the legislation of Civil Contingencies Act.

The 2007/08 self-assessment shows improvements have been made in areas of Emergency Planning , preparedness, response and recovery.

Progress on Internal and External Business Continuity has significantly improved since 2005/06 however action is still required to embed the concept of Business Continuity within Services.  
(2.6.2 )

Excellent progress has been made on developing Strategic and Operational Risk Management Registers(8). An action plan is in place to update and reformat the Operational Risk register with Services(9) and review Services Business Recovery Plans(7) This will enable Services to ensure they have arrangements with their critical contractors and partners to support their Service during an emergency (5)

Information storing and sharing (2.4) remains at amber as data security arrangements are being revised by the Audit Insurance and Risk Manager.

### **DECISION**

Members are requested to note the self-assessment position statement for 2007/08 and action taken to ensure the emergency preparedness of Braintree District Council.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Emergency Planning</b> <b>Annual Audit Commission Self-Assessment Tool 2007/08</b></p>
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## **Details**

The Audits Commissions self-assessment tool for Local Authority Emergency Planning and Business Continuity is an optional checklist to be used as a basis for reviewing local preparedness. It aims to provide a framework against which Authorities can review current performance and identify areas for improvement in the light of the Civil Contingencies ACT 2005.

The tool has over 200 questions looking at corporate issues including awareness, responsibilities and commitment. The next seven sections follow the main duties outlined in the Act. Braintree District Council working in partnership with Essex County Council Emergency Planning Unit and Districts within Essex have condensed the tool to 30 questions to develop an annual position statement on Emergency Preparedness for the County.

Using the traffic light system areas of weakness in 2005/06 were identified as:-

- Exercises and training
- Risk Assessment (linked into the Essex Community Risk Register and Local Community Risk Register)
- Warning and Informing
- Business Continuity Management and Promotion

Action has been taken by the Emergency Planning team (which was expanded from a Emergency Planning Manager employed 1.5 days week to a small team of a Joint Emergency Planning Officer in partnership with Essex County Council and a 1 day week Technical Emergency Planning Officer, in 2005 due to the introduction of the Civil Contingencies Act) to continue to develop integrated Emergency Planning into Braintree District Council addressing the areas of weakness outlined in the 2005/06 self-assessment.

The 2007/08 self-assessment shows that improvements have been made in all the areas identified as a potential weakness for Braintree District Council.

Key issues for 2008/09 are:- Information Sharing, Business Continuity Management and promotion of the County and Local Community Risk Register whilst ensuring the key issues highlighted as 'green' remain a strength.

Attached as Appendix 1 is a copy of the Self Assessment tool showing compressions, action taken and areas for development from 2005/06 to 2007/08.

## Emergency Planning Self-Assessment Checklist

Y = Yes

P = Potentially

N = No

N/A = Not applicable

	Key Issues and Questions	2005/06				2006/07				2007/08				Action Taken /Areas for Development
		Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / A	
<b>Corporate Arrangements</b>														
1.	Are senior managers and Members aware of their authority's emergency planning responsibilities and performance?													Corporate Mgt Team and Key Officers all hold Emergency Plan. Distribution list in EP of all officers who are key responders and their roles in an emergency. There is also a published plan available to the public online & in hard copy .
2. a	Are <i>business continuity arrangements</i> seen as service management responsibilities and are they included in Performance Management Reviews and job descriptions?													Reviewed & exercised Business Continuity plan on 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2008 Included in Service Plans for individual services within BDC. It is included in Corp Mgt Team Job description but not in Performance Management Reviews. Awareness level has been raised within BDC Management Business Continuity "Z" cards have been distributed to Senior managers & Service Unit Managers
2. b	Are <i>emergency arrangements</i> seen as service management responsibilities													Seen as District Emergency Planning Officer role – included within Job Description of DEPO and

	Key Issues and Questions	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Action Taken /Areas for Development
	and are they included in Performance Management Reviews and job descriptions?	Y				Y				Y				Emergency Planning Team. Each Director has a responsibility & Job Description (Directors & Senior Mgrs) have now been amended to include Emergency Planning & Business Continuity responsibility
3.	Is there a programme of regular joint exercises and reviews to validate integrated emergency plans/arrangements (including business continuity plans), both within the authority and with external partners, with joint review/debriefing meetings held after these?			N		Y				Y				Training was Ad hoc. Training is now in third year of annual programme - good participation levels attained. Annual CMT exercise requested & provided Training programme is flexible and adaptable
4.	Are there arrangements to ensure consistency and integration between business continuity plans and emergency plans? (Between units and departments).	Y				Y				Y				Through communications between District Emergency Planning Officer and Audit, Insurance and Risk Manager (Business Continuity Management) of Key staff have been identified in the Business Continuity Plan and Flu Pandemic Plan. Information prepared by the Emergency Planning Team is promoted to Local Business' via the Head of Enterprise and Culture.
5.	Do you have arrangements to ensure that contractors will, where relevant, support the authority's response to an emergency, and be able to continue critical services in an emergency?		P				P				P			Still ongoing through Business Continuity Management, Procurement via Market Place. Some direct agreements with Service providers and partners. eg. SERCO and DCL. The Audit, Insurance and Risk Manager will review the procedure with Services to identify main contractors/partners during 2008/09.

	Key Issues and Questions	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Action Taken /Areas for Development
6.	Have you identified the hazards within the area and neighbouring areas, which could have an impact on the local area or community?													Sites at Haverhill – links to Sturmer Parish council & St Edmondsbury DC, Bradwell, Pipelines within the District, A12, Stansted Airport, Airfield at Earls Colne. Flooding in various areas of the District. Cross border meetings and direct meetings with industry have taken place where relevant Local Community Risk Register frequently updated and made available to mgrs on intranet for potential impact on Services
7.	Do you share information internally to help early identification of potential hazards and hence preventative/risk reduction work?													Internal (informal) communications via e-mail & managers – severe weather warnings to staff if above 50% probability. Any issue which may affect BDC services i.e. refuse collection, staff travelling in from a distance etc Local Community Risk Register available on intranet. Also any issues affecting Highways across Essex, are disseminated to staff.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>														
8.	Are the results of risk assessment used in planning and prioritising preventative and/or mitigation work?													Strategic Risk Management Register and Operational Risk Management is presently being updated and reformatted. Also through Local Community Risk Register which has been published on I-Connect Training programme has been implemented for Business Continuity Management and to address issues highlighted on the Local Community Risk Register.

	<b>Key Issues and Questions</b>	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	<b>Action Taken /Areas for Development</b>
9.	Do you provide information of risk assessment that is able to influence the risk management undertaken by service managers													Yes. Strategic Risk Management Register and Operational Risk Register are presently being updated by Services. Lead Officer Audit, Insurance and Risk manager. Emergency Planning Local Community Risk Register is available on I-Connect. Developing information booklet on the Community Risk Register.
<b>Emergency Planning</b>														
10.	Do you have appropriate up to date and flexible local plans or formal arrangements to deal with the consequences of a major incident, whatever the cause?													Revised and amended May 07/08 due for review May 2008. Public copies distributed to partners
11.	Do you have a media plan or formal arrangements for use in emergencies that have been discussed with your emergency service partners and are your press/communications officers clear about their roles?													Officers are clear about roles – there is a co-ordinated response - Emergency Plan states that each responding agency should liaise together. Further enhanced by PR Manager being Vice Chair of Media & Public Information Working Group on Essex Resilience Forum Media training is being discussed for inclusion in 2008/09 programme
12.	Do your plans and arrangements (including business continuity plans) take account of the particular needs of vulnerable individuals and local diverse communities?													BDC plan links direct to Social Care, PCT and Greenfield's CH. Responding officers should also liaise with Parish Councils. Public also self refer or relatives/neighbours self refer. List of vulnerable groups identified within Plan – ongoing work locally & at ECC

	Key Issues and Questions	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Action Taken /Areas for Development
1 3.	Do you have an Emergency Operations Centre/Control Room adequately equipped for a major emergency, with staff that know how to access and use the centre and its equipment?													Members Room –and “extending” reception area telephone points TV radio access – logs & message forms in overhead cupboard over telephones/plans etc in locked cupboard in interlinking room.
1 4.	Do you have contingency arrangements if your main EOC is unavailable or your main method of communication cannot be used?													Committee rooms/Braintree Town Hall or Rooms within Institute may be suitable – would link into ICT for Business Continuity Plan - mobile telephones, satellite telephones, airwave radios and alternative telephone network at Millennium Tower
<b>Resources</b>														
1 5.	Are there clear procedures for authorising additional emergency resources/expenditure in a major incident?													There is an emergency code available for use which District Emergency Planning Officer, Management Board & Liaison Officers are aware of
1 6.	Have you reviewed with voluntary agencies and partners, reliance on limited contractor and/or voluntary agency capacity?													Contact ECC for voluntary sector availability Self reliant for food and cooks. Contractors used for Sandbags, and specialist vehicles, in house staff used for vehicles & GCH referred to for housing issues through SLA. Have a Voluntary Forum Directory which is regularly updated via Essex voluntary Forum meetings.
1 7.	Do you know how much useable emergency equipment you have and is emergency equipment easily accessible in an emergency?													Phones/radios/ satellite phone & airwave/specialist clothes/emergency bedding & beds/tank (!) fleet vehicles – improved through Communications training –most available in basement or at District Emergency Planning

	Key Issues and Questions	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Action Taken /Areas for Development
														Officer desk or by phone call
	<b>Training</b>													
1 8.	Do you have a training strategy that covers all those who have responsibilities under emergency arrangements, and an associated structured training programme?													Annual training plan developed now in 3 <sup>rd</sup> year – directed at in house staff – Senior Management Team & Rest Centre staff and Communications Staff as initial priority
1 9.	Do you evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the training provided?													Standard template used by OD & feedback taken on the day at event and de-briefing at end of each training session
	<b>Inform and Warn</b>													
2 0.	Is there clarity and consistency between local partners about responsibilities for warning and informing?													Yes – laid out in plans, but in reality co-ordinated media messages – inform/warn – don't always occur – intention to liaise with Police on ground prior to incident
2 1.	Do you have a programme for testing your own and/or joint arrangements for warning and informing those who may be affected by emergencies (including staff)?													INTERNAL – e-mail to all staff on Severe Weather (Severe Weather Plan) EXTERNAL – very limited – through Essex Radio Snowline and Parish website etc PR Manager and PR Officer involved in Emergency Planning training and exercises to enhance understanding of roles etc – participation in Countywide Pandemic flu exercise – Partners in Health's Exercise Spring Fever.

	Key Issues and Questions	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Action Taken /Areas for Development
+ -	<b>Information Sharing</b>													
2 2.	Is critical information (paper based or electronic) duplicated and accessible in an emergency, with any back up/disaster recovery system tested in the past 12 months?													Key staff hold hard copies of plans at home and at office – all relevant staff hold “crib card” Memory sticks held by priority staff Need to set out procedures for manual ordering when Marketplace out of order. All information backed up onto tape and taken off-site once a week – would need to re-build servers.
2 3.	Do critical emergency planning systems have a high priority in your authority's ICT disaster recovery strategy?													In progress with manual back up – being researched through Business Continuity Service Plans.
2 4.	Do your information storing and sharing arrangements meet security and legal requirements, including those of any potential post-incident criminal or civil investigation?													Currently revising data security arrangements. A report will be going to the Audit Committee later in 2008.
	<b>Co-operation &amp; Joint Working</b>													
2 5.	Do you have regular links (including up to date mutual aid arrangements including costs and liability issues), with those responsible for emergency planning in all neighbouring authorities, especially where formal sub regional/regional arrangements do not include those authorities?													Revised and updated on a regular basis Local Authority Working Group – bi-monthly Primary Care Trust – quarterly Voluntary Working Group – quarterly Local Resilience Forum – annual Mutual Aid Agreement in place with Essex County Council and Districts.

	Key Issues and Questions	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Y	P	N	N / a	Action Taken /Areas for Development
	<b>Business/service Continuity Management</b>													
2 6.	Are authority/service group emergency management arrangements for any service disruption clearly set out and tested through exercises?													Senior Management workshop held in Feb 2007 follow up management table top exercise in March 2008. Exercise to be held by March 2009.
2 7.	Have all services assessed the potential for disruption by a structured process such as a business impact analysis that identifies risks and their potential impact on services, critical activities and dependencies?													Business Impact Analysis have been conducted with all depts & will be reviewed 2008/09. Information forms basis of Generic Business Continuity Plan and Service Business Recovery Plans – each Service needs to write its own Business Recovery Plan This will be exercised, reviewed and progressed during 2008/09 by the Audit, Insurance and Risk Manager.
	<b>Promotion of Business Continuity Planning</b>													
2 8.	Is there clarity over who within the authority is primarily responsible for BCM promotion?													Head of Enterprise & Culture in co-ordination with District Emergency Planning Officer & Emergency Planning Team.
2 9.	Does the authority make National information on BCM available for the local business community?													National info is available via links on website and some hard copy info available in reception areas Business Continuity Booklet promoted to local Community – Best Practice with Cabinet and Best Practice with Scottish Executive – has been requested for use as template across UK

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