

**LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Meeting to be held on 26 November 2018

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN TEST

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Executive Summary

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) is required to have effective Business Continuity (BC) Arrangements in place in order to comply with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and National Framework.

In June-August 2018 LFRS attended a wildfire on Winter Hill that led to the activation of the LFRS Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The scale and severity of operational activity during this period delivered a far more thorough test of BCP plans than can be simulated through exercise.

Decision Required

The Planning Committee is asked to note and endorse the use of Winter Hill as the annual Business Continuity test.

Background

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 based requirements placed upon all Category 1 responders includes the duty to:

- Maintain plans for the purpose of ensuring that if an emergency occurs or is likely to occur, the person or body is able to continue to perform his or its functions;
- Consider whether a risk assessment makes it necessary or expedient for the person or body to add to or modify emergency plans.

In order to comply with LFRS BC Policy, an annual test should be held. LFRS tend to focus this test in an area that has not been evaluated in recent years. The test would span both strategic and tactical level BCP documentation.

Planning for the annual BC test event is usually shaped and subsequently delivered by a small cohort with the Response and Emergency Planning team to ensure that it is a real time test for managers and key personnel who role play on the day.

Winter Hill provided a rising tide event that was preceded by several other wildfires and mutual aid requests from other services. This provided some scene setting for managers and the scope to predict that a larger event would occur. Several key decisions were taken prior to and during Winter Hill which will inform our future BC arrangements.

The protracted use of large numbers of resources (due to incident attendance not only at Winter Hill but across the county) tested personnel, equipment and appliance degradation on an unprecedented scale.

Whilst the incident demonstrated that the BCP policy and plans are aligned to good practice guidelines as set out by the Business Continuity Institute (the independent body for good Business Continuity practice worldwide) there were a number of lessons to be learned.

In addition to a range of incident specific debriefs, LFRS business continuity was examined through a debrief session hosted by GM Murrell whereby areas of improvement, areas of best practice, recommendations and lessons learnt were captured in a key decisions log. A subsequent action plan has been created and resolution will be managed through the Senior Management Team.

Business Risk

The Business Continuity Institute Best Practice Guidelines support the use of testing which minimises day to day impact on the organisation. Good Business Continuity reduces business risk through staff training, policy testing and subsequent implementation of learning.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

HR Implications

None

Financial Implications

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		