

**Business Continuity Plan**

## Baildon Town Council

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| Next Review Date | September 2025 |  |

**Maintaining this document is the responsibility of:** Town Clerk

**The following premises are covered in this document:**

Offices at Northgate and Bracken Hall Countryside Centre

**Copies of this document can be found:** On our website at Baildontowncouncil.gov.uk

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## Business Continuity Overview

### Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to prepare Baildon Town Council, as far as is reasonably practical, to continue to provide important functions and services in the event of a disruption.

### Outcome

The outcome of this plan is to ensure that the council can maintain an appropriate level of service.

### Plan objectives

* Serves as a guide for those implementing our 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.

### Key staff

If a disaster occurs the members of our team tasked with enacting this plan are:

* Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (herein referred to as the Clerk)
* Deputy Town Clerk
* Administrative Assistant
* Bracken Hall Countryside Centre Manager
* Chairperson of the Council

## 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 council. The clerk or deputy clerk 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 disruption 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 providing assistance for those staff who have been affected.

## Communicating with Staff

When an emergency situation arises the Clerk / Deputy Clerk / Chairperson of the council are the first points of contact. Communication should be passed from the Clerk in the first instant, and the Deputy Clerk and finally the Chairperson of the Council, depending on the availability of the staff members.

Usual methods of communication include (but are not limited to) telephone, email, text message and social media (where appropriate). These methods of communication should continue to be used as available.

All staff contact details are available via the Clerk on Baildon Town Council website.

Should restrictions about specifics of an incident be necessary, these will be limited to the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Chairperson of the council.

**Communications Protocol**

Baildon Town Councils’ communications protocol should be referred to before making any statements to the pubic or media.

1. **Equipment**

All staff are enabled to use their council issued laptop within their home setting.

The Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Bracken Hall Countryside Centre (BHCC) Manager and the Volunteer Co-Ordinator have work issued mobile phones or personal mobile phones which they use for work purposes through agreements already in place with the council.

If replacement equipment is required, this can be done via home delivery to staff addresses at very short notice.

Equipment within Baildon Town Council offices may necessitate emergency replacement and this will be agreed on an individual basis with the clerk to ensure safety of delivery.

All council data is stored in the cloud and is backed up off site using EDGE IT services. Any need to restore data should be directed through EDGE.

1. **Staff or Councillor Incident/Vacancy**

A staff incident can include a sudden family emergency, long term sickness, injury or other event which renders a key member of staff suddenly unable to work. It also includes a temporary period when a post is vacant.

**Step 1: Ensure no service interruption**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Critical activity** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| 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 (including rota management for BHCC and Library) | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / Chair of Council, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| 2. Planning during a member of staff’s notice period must start immediately | The Chair will call an extraordinary meeting of the Staffing Sub Committee (with appropriate member(s) of staff present) to plan in detail how the vacancy will be covered in the temporary period. This will begin a period of delegation to and induction of relevant members of staff. Consider Locum (paid for by insurance claim). | Chair. Clerk or Deputy Clerk as appropriate. |
| 3. Assess extent of loss | Identify whether the affected staff member’s absence is likely to be temporary, longer-term, or permanent. Keep in mind this may be a difficult period for the staff member and / or their family. | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Chair of Council |
| 3. Loss of Councillors due to multiple resignations (causing the Council to be inquorate) | Co-option of Councillors. Bradford Council to be informed in order to instigate by-election / co-option procedure | Clerk / Deputy Clerk |
| 4. Lack of candidate for Chair of Council or a Committee | A ‘rolling’ Chair is established. Each remaining councillor becomes temporary chair from the start of each meeting until the start of the next meeting. | Clerk/Deputy Clerk |

If the staff loss is temporary, support the member of staff who will be filling the gap until the absent member of staff returns. If the absence is long-term or permanent:

**Step 2: Business continuity**

See Appendix for role profiles and essential tasks of the Clerk, Deputy Clerk.

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| **Critical activity** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| Banking  | * Payments in and out of the account.
 | Clerk / Deputy Clerk |
| Payment of staff salaries | * Consider a six-monthly payment to payroll.
 | Clerk/Deputy Clerk |
| Legal financial responsibilities (audit, AGAR) | * Immediately explore legitimate delays to processes and confirm them in writing,
* Consider Locum (paid for by insurance claim)
 | Clerk/Deputy Clerk |
| Extra-ordinary meeting of Full Council called as appropriate and if summonsing timescales allow | * To resolve any financial changes
* To resolve closure or changes of opening hours at Library or BHCC
 | Chair |
| Communications | * If access to emails is required and the staff member is unable to give a password then access will be secured via the Clerk or Chair writing to 2Commune.
* Reference Data Audit and GDPR.
 | Clerk, Chair |

### Premises Incident

A premises incident can include flood, fire, or any other disaster that renders our office inaccessible. Should be read in conjunction with BTC Emergency Plan 2023.

**Step 1: Evacuation of premises & safeguarding of staff**

**In office hours**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| 1. Evacuate the building | Follow normal fire drill procedure | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Admin Ass, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| 2. Check evacuation is complete | Staff and visitor safety is the priority. Check everyone on-site has been evacuated | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Admin Ass, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| 3. Verify if incident is real | If false alarm, resume business as normal | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Admin Ass, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| 4. Call emergency services | 999 / 112 | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Admin Ass, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| 5. Record details of any injuries sustained in the incident | Use injury form available on staff intranet | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Admin Ass, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| 6. Alert staff and volunteers | Alert any staff due to arrive on-site soon of the incident, and tell them to await further instructions | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Admin Ass, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| 7. Assess impact | Senior team meet to assess the scale of the incident & decide next steps | Clerk / Deputy Clerk/Chair of Council  |

**Outside office hours**

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| **Action** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| 1. First person on-site to notify Town Clerk | Do not enter the building | All staff |
| 2. Call emergency services | 999 / 101 | All staff |
| 3. Alert staff | Alert any staff or volunteers due to arrive on-site soon of the incident, and tell them to await further instructions | All staff |
| 4. Assess impact | Senior team meet to assess the scale of the incident & decide next steps | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / Chair of Council  |

**Step 2: Business continuity**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Critical activity** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| Phones | Staff to use work issued mobile phones (if available), personal mobiles if not  | Clerk / Deputy Clerk/Admin Ass, BHCC Manager, Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| Internet | Staff to use home internet connections | All staff |
| Inform insurance company | Contact details: Zurich 0800 876 6984fnlc@uk.zurich.com  | Clerk / Deputy Clerk  |
| Inform landlord | Contact details:BDMC Nigel Gillatt 01274 434224Nigel.gillat2@bradford.gov.uk Sally IllingworthBracken Hall HouseTel: 07932 750715Email: sally@brackenhallhouse.co.uk | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / ~~RFO,~~ BHCC Manager |
| Post redirection | Form available on Post office website | Admin Assistant |
| Inform customers | If disruption is expected, inform customers via email / website news item | Admin Assistant |

### Infrastructure Incident

An infrastructure incident can include the loss of computer / telephony systems, internet access, or power.

**Step 1: Understand the extent of the loss**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Infrastructure** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| Phones | Contact phone provider to ascertain extent of outage. Contact details:BT 0800 028 1550Acc: MY \*\*\*\*3242BHCC Acc. GP\*\*\*\*7154 | Clerk / Deputy Clerk Admin Assistant |
| Internet | Contact internet provider to ascertain extent of outage. Contact details:BT 0800 028 1550Acc: MY \*\*\*\* 3242BHCC Acc. GP\*\*\*\*7154 | Clerk / Deputy Clerk Admin Assistant |
| Mains power | Contact power provider to ascertain extent of outage. Contact details:BDMCNigel GillattTel: 01274 434224Nigel.gillatt2@bradford.gov.ukBHCC npower 01213897163Acc. A00\*\*\*\*7804 | Clerk / Deputy Clerk Admin Assistant |

If outage is temporary, inform staff to stay put and await further instructions. If the outage is ongoing:

**Step 2: Business continuity**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Critical activity** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| Phones | Staff to use personal mobile phones  | Clerk / Deputy Clerk/ Admin Assistant |
| Internet | Staff to use home internet connections | Clerk / Deputy Clerk/ Admin Assistant |
| 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 | Clerk / Deputy Clerk |
| Expenses | Confirmation given by Clerk to all staff on exceptional expenses. |  |

1. **Pandemic or Epidemic Outbreak**

Pandemic and epidemic both refer to disease outbreaks. Epidemic refers to disease across a region and pandemic refers to disease in many countries or continents (possibly globally). Either can result in the restriction of movement of the population, quarantine or self-isolation.

**Step 1: Ensure essential service delivery**

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| **Critical activity** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| 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 including Library and BHCCC. | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Chair |
| 2. Assess extent of loss | Identify whether absence is likely to be temporary, longer-term, or permanent. Keep in mind this may be a difficult period for the staff member and / or their family. Staffing sub-committee to decide on temporary cover strategy if necessary | Clerk / Deputy Clerk /Chair/ Staffing Sub-Committee |

**Step 2: Business continuity**

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| **Critical activity** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| 1. Keep up to date with official sources of information and guidance | Review all upcoming meetings, events and council activities in light of the guidance and legal implications | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / Chairperson of Council |
| 2. Emergency delegated powers | Guidance will be issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) with regards to remote meetings of the council and use of emergency delegated powers | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / RFO / Chairperson of Council  |
| 3. Work environment | Use of Microsoft Teams is available to all staff. Work issued equipment enables home working  | All staff |
| 4. Appoint new Councillors | Inform Bradford Council to instigate by-election / co-option procedure  | Clerk / Deputy Clerk |
| 5. Inform customers | Website, noticeboards and social media to be updated to inform people how the council will operate | Admin Assistant |

## Recovery Phase

The purpose of the recovery phase is to resume normal working practises for the entire organisation. Where the impact of the incident is prolonged, normal operations may need to be delivered under new circumstances e.g. from a different building.

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| **Action** | **Details** | **Responsible Person(s)** |
| 1. Agree and plan the actions required to enable recovery of normal working practises | Agreed actions will be detailed in an action plan and set against time scales with responsibility for completion clearly indicated. |  Staffing Sub-Committee |
| 2. Respond to any long-term support needs of staff | Depending on the nature of the incident, we may need to consider providing support services | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / Staffing Sub-Committee |
| 3. Publicise that there is now ‘business as usual’ | Inform customers through normal channels that our business is operating as normal | Admin Assistant |
| 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. | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / Chair |
| 5. Review this Continuity Plan considering lessons learned from incident and the response to it | Implement recommendations for improvement and update this plan to the Governance Committee. Ensure a revised version of the plan is read by all members of staff. | Governance Committee / Clerk or Deputy Clerk to implement  |

1. **Calendar of Critical Council Events**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Event** | **Responsible** |
| April | Annual Town Meeting | Clerk / Deputy Clerk / Admin  |
| April | Internal Audit | Clerk/Deputy Clerk |
| May | First Full and Annual Council meeting. AGAR | Clerk/Deputy Clerk |
| June | AGAR | Clerk/Deputy Clerk |
| August | HR contract renewal | Clerk /Deputy Clerk |
| August | Insurance renewal | Clerk / Deputy Clerk  |
| October | Internal Audit | Clerk/Deputy Clerk |
| December | Budget | Clerk |
| January | Confirmation of Precept | Clerk |

1. **Appendix**

**TOWN CLERK - JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Overall responsibilities**

The Town Clerk will be the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law of a local authority's Proper Officer. The Town Clerk will be wholly responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Authority are carried out.

The Town Clerk is expected to:-

* **Advise** the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of the Authority's activities and in particular to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement all decisions, and monitor their effectiveness.
* Provide effective **management of all resources**, reporting to Council as and when required.
* **Manage effectively all staff** employed by the Town Council.
* Maintain productive working relationships with all sectors of the Baildon community, and wider as required, an **act as the representative of BTC** when requested.

**Specific responsibilities**

1. Overall management of formal Council meetings, including:
* To prepare agendas for meetings of the Council and its Committees, ensuring that statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed. Consultation with appropriate councillors as required.
* To attend all meetings of the Council and all meetings of its committees and sub-committees, or ensure that such duties have been delegated to another Officer.
* To act in compliance with legislation, including that on data protection, freedom of information, and public interest.
1. To lead and manage the staff team in keeping with the policies of the Council, and in order to maximise the potential of each member of staff. This will include establishing clear reporting relationships, addressing any contractual issues, and annual appraisal and development.
2. To personally provide a friendly and approachable point of contact for the public when required, and also ensuring the provision of a effective and informative customer reception during agreed working hours.
3. To have managerial oversight for effective control of resources (assets, materials, and data), working with the responsible Financial Officer/ Deputy Clerk to ensure :-
* Management of finances and preparation of Accounts, and Audit
* Procurement of contracts and contract management
* Ensuring effective Risk Management policies and practice are in place
* Effective IT and data management
* Business continuity plans are in place
1. To support Town Councillors to develop and manage ongoing and new project work in line with Town Council decisions. Where needed conduct research into best practice elsewhere, or undertake feasibility assessments on proposals, or otherwise advise on the likely effects of specific courses of action.
2. To actively promote Baildon Town Council within the community using all channels as appropriate, including e-newsletters, and to take the lead role in maintaining and updating the Council's website, whilst encouraging contributions from other staff. To encourage two-way communication wherever possible.

Guided by the Communication Protocol, to work with Councillors as appropriate to prepare and issue regular press releases and news items for the website and social media about the activities and decisions of the Council.

1. To hold, or work towards in an agreed time frame, the achievement of the status of Qualified Clerk as a minimum requirement for effectiveness in the position of Clerk to the Council, and to continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council: (Suggested membership of the professional body The Society of Local Council Clerks or SLCC). To attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk as required by the Council.
2. To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for any public meetings called by the Council and to clerk these meetings and undertake follow-up work as agreed by the Council.
3. To receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and to deal with the correspondence or documents or bring such items to the attention of the Council. To issue correspondence as a result of instructions of, or the known policy of the Council.
4. To perform such other reasonable duties as may be required by Baildon Town Council.

**DEPUTY TOWN CLERK – JOB DESCRIPTION**

## Main purpose of the role

1. To assist, support and deputise for the town clerk in all aspects of the day to day management and operation of Council services and resources.
2. To assist and support the town clerk in the execution of the council’s decisions and implementation of council policy.
3. In the absence of the town clerk, to ensure the continued effective, compliant operation of the town council and as such, to assume the statutory roles of the proper officer.

## Specific Responsibilities

* To assist the town clerk with all council business and operations.
* To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for any public meetings called by the council and to clerk these meetings and undertake follow-up work as agreed by the council.
* To attend and take minutes and manage all tasks and actions of the Economy, Environment and Community committee meetings (out of office hours).
* To represent the council at conferences, meetings etc.
* To manage, co-ordinate, monitor and review the council’s policies, procedures, and practises.
* To ensure the health and safety of people and resources.
* To carry out other duties commensurate with the post, as identified by the town clerk.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT - JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Overall Responsibilities**

The Administrative Assistant to the council will be responsible to the town clerk of the council for a number of different administrative aspects of the town council including assisting the Planning Committee in all their functions and responsibilities. The administrative assistant will further assist the clerk to ensure that the instructions of the council in connection with its function as a Local Authority are carried out.

**Specific Responsibilities**

**Customer Service**

* Helping members of the public who contact the town council.
* Dealing with general queries by phone or from visitors to the office.
	+ Dealing with routine enquiries and correspondence without reference.
* Monitoring the council’s general email and social media accounts.

**Administrative Service**

* To update the town councils’ website and social media pages.
* To provide administrative support service to the office.
* Regular communication with the town clerk.
* Typing of letters/emails and correspondence.
	+ Contributing to the preparation of the Baildon Town Council newsletter.

**Planning**

* To attend all planning meetings, currently on 2nd Thursday of the month.
* To prepare, in consultation with appropriate members and the town clerk, agendas and associated documents for meetings of the council’s Planning Committee.
* Ensuring all minutes are formatted, checked and uploaded to the website.

**Purchasing**

* + Ordering stationery and other items as required.
	+ Source and purchase specific items under the direction of the town clerk.
	+ Monitor and replenish all stock items as required.

 **Equipment**

Providing information regarding equipment i.e. updates/replacement.

 **General**

* Assisting the town clerk in a variety of tasks.
* Assisting in the organisation of events and functions.
* Maintaining a database of organisations and other contact names and numbers that are regularly needed.
* Attending training courses or seminars as required by the town council (particularly Introduction to Local Council Administration).
* Providing help and assistance to the town clerk and councillors.
* Any other duties as designated by the clerk.