
ICT DISASTER RECOVERY BRIEFING

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To brief Members of the Committee on the ICT Disaster Recovery arrangements for the Council.

Summary

2. This report outlines the existing ICT infrastructure and the disaster recovery arrangements which are in place.

Recommendation

3. That the report is noted.

Reasons

4. The briefing is presented in response to a previous request of the Audit Committee.

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Head of ICT and Design and Print**

Background Papers

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S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no specific crime and disorder impact.
Health and Well Being	There is no specific health and well being impact.
Carbon Impact	There is no specific carbon impact.
Diversity	There is no specific diversity impact.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected equally.
Groups Affected	All groups are affected equally.
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no budget or policy implications.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The ICT Disaster Recovery arrangements support the business of the Council in delivering ODPP
Efficiency	The successful delivery of Disaster Recovery arrangements assists in the overall efficiency of the Council.

MAIN REPORT

Overview

5. The Council's ICT infrastructure has been architected in such a way as to build in resilience and redundancy wherever practical. Components such as individual servers and disks have redundancy built in and the way in which they are configured adds another level of resilience and flexibility in terms of failover and recovery. The Data Centre in which the core ICT equipment resides is in itself designed to minimise single points of failure through dual power routing, additional cooling, security and so on. In terms of power provision, the standby generator provides a final safety net in the event of mains power loss.
6. As well as the above facility in Darlington, there is a backup/disaster recovery suite based at Stockton. This serves as the Council's daily off-site backup service and ensures that copies of data are held securely and at a safe distance from the main data centre in Darlington. This smaller Stockton computer suite also serves as a disaster recovery facility should a major problem occur at Darlington. The two sites are connected by two high speed diversely routed network links, whereby one link is sufficient to handle the ICT capacities needed to run both Darlington and Stockton Councils. These links are in constant use day and night.
7. The backup/disaster recovery suite at Stockton has roughly half the processing capacity of the main service in Darlington. Therefore, in a disaster recovery situation, it may not be possible to fully replicate normal availability of systems and a subset would be prioritised.

ICT Disaster Recovery Plan

8. ICT have developed a disaster recovery plan to manage the recovery of ICT systems in the event of a disaster situation. The actual circumstances of the disaster are not defined as they cannot be constrained except to say it is a plan that

is invoked when the Council's normal access to ICT systems and services is not possible for some reason, and the normal ICT incident and major incident resolution process cannot resolve the incident.

9. There are a various events or incidents that can lead to invocation of the plan. Examples include but are not exclusive to:
 - (a) Loss of Primary Data Centre.
 - (b) Loss of access to Primary Data Centre.
 - (c) Major Critical System Component or Software Failure.
10. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that critical systems required are recovered to an acceptable level once the Disaster Recovery Plan has been invoked. The plan will be managed by a member of the ICT management team who will act in the role of the Recovery Manager and direct resources accordingly.
11. The Recovery Manager will ensure that all the appropriate ICT staff are either gathered together or made aware of the event and that they will appraise their teams accordingly.
12. The Recovery Manager, as part of their responsibilities, will ensure that the service fails over to the Disaster Recovery Data Centre at Municipal Buildings in Stockton and that key ICT staff are instructed to work from the alternate ICT office at 16 Church Road near to Municipal Buildings.
13. The Recovery Manager will ensure that business critical systems i.e. those systems that have been prioritised as 1 or 2, are restored within agreed timescales and that information is available to the customers via the designated Communications Officer.

Testing of the Plan

14. The Information Security Manager in conjunction with the Assistant Head of ICT (Transition & Operations) will:
 - (a) Ensure that a program of test system recovery is established and adhered to. That a report for each test is completed and that any improvements are reflected in documentation required for this plan.
 - (b) Ensure that, once a system has been recovered via testing, an Assurance Statement is issued to the System Owner.
 - (c) Establish a schedule for testing this plan with complexity set out below.

Complexity	Exercise	Frequency
System Recovery	Simulation	Monthly as per testing schedule
Simple	Desk Check	Bi-Annually
Medium	Walk-through of the plan	Annually
	Simulation	Annually
	Exercise critical activities	Annually or less

15. Testing has previously included corporate systems such as Payroll, HR and Finance as well as service specific systems i.e. Housing Management. Planned tests in the near future include; Revenues & Benefits and Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

Return to Normal Business

16. Once it has been established that the primary site is available, the Recovery Manager will ensure that plans are in place to recover back to that primary site with minimum disruption to the business.

17. The Recovery Manager will also ensure that at the end of the event a report is produced and a review meeting takes place with all relevant staff and any improvements identified are reflected in the plan and associated procedures.

Outcome of Consultation

18. There has been no formal consultation in the preparation of this report.