



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Joint Governance Committee  
30 January 2018  
Agenda Item 9

Ward: [n/a]

## **Disaster Recovery Test**

### **Report by the Director for Digital & Resources**

#### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This document provides an overview of the proposed Information Technology (IT) Disaster Recovery (DR) test, which is scheduled for the weekend of the 16th and 17th June 2018. The following weekend (23rd/24th June) has also been booked in as a contingency in the event that the earlier proposed date has to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

#### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 An IT DR test, to demonstrate we can recover and run systems in the event of a mains power outage, was previously scheduled for 14th October 2017 but was postponed the day before due to a major incident that occurred on the Academy Revenue & Benefits system, which had just been brought back in-house.
- 2.2 The database associated with revenues and benefits system was considered as unstable by the supplier (Capita) and the DR test therefore posed too greater risk to the system, operational activities, and the council's reputation. Furthermore, the DR test would have drawn on resources required to resolve the major incident and restore normal service.
- 2.3 The need to execute the DR test still exists; the cancellation referenced above was not the first cancellation and this specific test has not been carried out in recent years.

#### **3.0 Proposals**

- 3.1 It is proposed to carry out a DR test over the weekend of the 16th and 17th June 2018. This test will follow the nature of the previous plan, which was to invoke a mains power failure to demonstrate systems can be safely and automatically shut down by the data centre power systems and can be brought back online with full functionality whilst running on generator power.

- 3.2 At this point, the date has been agreed with Facilities Management and measures are in place to prevent the booking of public events at the Town Hall over the selected weekend. Over the chosen weekend, there are events booked in the evening at the Assembly Rooms, but the risk of the DR test affecting those events is extremely low i.e. the risk is not being able to restore power. This will be mitigated by having electrical contractors onsite for the duration of the switch between mains and generator power. Following Cllr Barton's suggestion, the following weekend (23rd and 24th) June has been booked in as a fall back date in the event that the earlier weekend has to be postponed due to unforeseen circumstances.
- 3.3 *Wider Disaster Recovery/ Business Continuity Controls*
- 3.4 It should be noted that this DR test one of a number of measures forming part of the Councils overall resilience and business continuity plans. The council employs a Business Continuity Manager who works with services to maintain their preparedness plans for unforeseen events.
- 3.5 The Councils have a Strategic Duty Officer on call every day (consisting of a member of CLT or a Head of Service) who are trained to provide leadership in an emergency situation. The Strategic Duty Officer is supported by key technical officers from relevant disciplines including ICT and Digital.
- 3.6 In relation to ICT resilience there is an in-flight project to move the underpinning infrastructure services to a cloud-hosting provider (the Infrastructure as a Service IaaS project). The successful delivery of this 'cloud hosting' project (through 2018) will start the process of removing the reliance on the Town Hall for the operation of IT services used by the councils and their customers.
- 3.7 It should also be noted that a number of key services have already been moved to off-site, resilient cloud-hosting, such as the email service (via Google), waste management operations, housing register, Adur Homes housing repairs (in progress) and contact centre CRM. Planning and building control services are also due to follow shortly. All of these services run independently of the Councils' data centre and can be accessed securely via the internet from any location or device.
- 3.8 Whilst the DR test outlined in this report will provide greater assurances in terms of dealing with an unplanned power outage, it does not address the risks associated with the potential loss of the Town Hall (eg due to flooding or fire damage). The migration of servers to the cloud as part of IaaS will reduce these risks as well as improving the resilience and flexibility of the service.
- 3.9 The Councils have also invested in technology which will enable the establishment of an emergency control room or contact centre in the event of Portland House or the Town Hall not being available and to act as a control centre in the event of a disaster. This technology will be put through further testing in the coming months.

## **4.0 Legal**

- 4.1 Section 111 Local Government Act 1972 provides that the Council shall have the power to do anything (whether or not involving expenditure, borrowing, or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or right) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.

## **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 It is recommended that a budget of £6K is allocated for the DR test. This budget will cover the cost of the generator hire and other external specialists that will be required on site to support the tests and mitigate risks e.g. electrical engineers and support for the fire suppression facilities in the data centre.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to note the proposals for the DR test in May 2018.

### **Local Government Act 1972**

#### **Background Papers:**

None.

#### **Contact Officer:**

Jan Jonker - Head of Customer & Digital Services  
[jan.jonker@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:jan.jonker@adur-worthing.gov.uk)  
07881255291

Robert Wood - Interim ICT & Digital Manager  
[robert.wood@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:robert.wood@adur-worthing.gov.uk)  
Tel

## **Schedule of Other Matters**

### **1.0 Council Priority**

- 1.1 The resilience of the Council's ICT and Digital Infrastructure is critical to our ability to deliver our services. This DR test will provide assurance regarding the ability of our services to recover from an unplanned power outage.

### **2.0 Specific Action Plans**

- 2.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **3.0 Sustainability Issues**

- 3.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

- 4.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- 5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **6.0 Human Rights Issues**

- 6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **7.0 Reputation**

- 7.1 Not having robust DR procedures in place can adversely affect the reputation of the council.

### **8.0 Consultations**

- 8.1 Key officers have been consulted on the proposals.

### **9.0 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 There were several risks identified in the previous DR test planning exercise and these risks will be reviewed and managed accordingly.
- 9.2 The most significant risk is that the IT systems encounter issues when power is restored, which is because there has not been a complete power-down scenario for many years. This will be mitigated by ensuring the data centre power facilities are configured to shut down systems in a safe and controlled manner, and that full systems backups are completed prior to the test.

- 9.3 There are risks associated with not carrying out the DR test because the risks highlighted in 9.2 (IT systems encountering issues when being powered on) are likely to carry a greater impact if there was a real scenario involving power loss. The DR test will demonstrate the the integrity of the systems can be maintained under these circumstances and facilitate learning to repond in the best possible way in a real scenario.

## **10.0 Health & Safety Issues**

- 10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

## **11.0 Procurement Strategy**

- 11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

## **12.0 Partnership Working**

- 12.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.