



# **BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN**

**Revised and adopted -  
26<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

## **1. Introduction**

OPC recognises the importance of producing and maintaining a Business Continuity Plan for implementation in the event of disruptions to the day to day running of the Council. This plan identifies the instances of disruption, the immediate responses, the procedures to follow to maintain continuity of service and the follow-up procedures and necessary changes to service delivery, where such services are disrupted by factors within Odiham Parish Council's area of responsibility.

## **2. Core Business of Odiham Parish Council**

The Council provides local services to its electorate which includes responsibility and the provision of:

- i) The Bridewell Community Hub and co-working hub
- ii) Website, social media sites, notice boards, newsletter information and the use of other social media to communicate important and relevant matters
- iii) Parks and open spaces including 4 play areas
- iv) Benches
- v) Waste bins in the play areas and OPC managed open spaces
- vi) King Street cemetery and burial bookings
- vii) Allotment site in Hook Road
- viii) King Street public toilets
- ix) The Parish Room (external and outside space only)
- x) Chapel Cottage
- xi) Christmas trees and tree lights in the High Street
- xii) The stocks and war memorial
- xiii) Feeder pillars; Odiham High Street and The Bury
- xiv) Issuing of grants, generally twice a year
- xv) Lengthsman works (funded by HCC)
- xvi) Acting as a statutory consultee on planning applications
- xvii) Managing the finances of the Council and using the precept for the benefit of the community
- xviii) Liaising with the District and County Councils and other partner organisations on issues that affect the parish
- xix) Responding to residents' enquiries and signposting
- xx) Civic responsibility such as organising civic events and fulfilling the Council's civic dignitary role.

## **3. Accountability:**

- i) Employer's Liability arising from the management of staff
- ii) Public liability arising from management of public assets
- iii) Landlord's responsibilities relating to the Chapel Cottage lease
- iv) Landlord's responsibilities for leased offices at The Bridewell
- v) Landlord's responsibilities for The Parish Room
- vi) Hirers liability when hiring OPC premises
- vii) Other local government rules and regulations when conducting routine administration for the Council

#### **4. Potential causes of disruption:**

- i) Loss of staff through illness, injury, death, resignation or long term leave
- ii) Resignation of councillors by any reason which leaves the Council inquorate
- iii) Loss of bank signatories following councillors' resignations and elections
- iv) Natural disaster - storm, flood, snow etc
- v) Fire
- vi) Cyber attack or technology loss
- vii) Widespread electricity loss
- viii) Pandemics and health crises
- ix) Physical security incidents – theft, vandalism, terrorism
- x) Supply chain or contractor interruptions
- xi) Regulatory changes

#### 4. Potential Impact and Continuity Plan

	Event	Minimise Impact	Immediate Action	Continuity	Longer Term
i	Loss of staff through illness, injury, death, resignation or long term leave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure office, admin and meeting procedures are clearly documented and kept in secure place which is known to other staff and Chair/Vice Chair.</li> <li>b) Ensure rolling program of work is up to date and all key tasks are listed.</li> <li>c) Ensure key contacts list is kept up to date.</li> <li>d) Access to log-ins and passwords are stored on secured drive.</li> <li>e) IT passwords are held by IT consultant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Other staff and Chairman/ Vice-Chairman to be informed.</li> <li>b) Inform HSE in the event of a RIDDOR occurrence happening whilst carrying out duties.</li> <li>c) Call extraordinary meeting to confirm appointment of temporary cover and/or motion to delegate decision making.</li> <li>d) Call staffing committee asap to agree course of action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Recruit temporary or permanent replacement as a matter of urgency.</li> <li>b) Provide sufficient general reserves to cover unforeseen changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Training for other staff.</li> <li>b) Succession planning.</li> <li>c) Review procedures.</li> <li>d) Regular councillor training.</li> <li>e) Review and risk assess procedures and working practises.</li> <li>f) Good documentation of records.</li> </ul>
ii	Resignation of councillors by any reason which leaves the Council inquorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Co-option Policy.</li> <li>b) Follow sector best practices and keep clear strategic plans to encourage councillor retention.</li> <li>c) Follow comms strategy to promote positive Council image.</li> <li>d) Keep up-to-date with Electoral Services rules and regulations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Clerk to liaise with remaining Councillors and agree action plan.</li> <li>b) Clerk to inform the Returning Officer at Hart DC and follow by-election rules, if required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Follow by-election process.</li> <li>b) Follow co-option process, if possible.</li> <li>c) Hart DC to decide on temporary working strategy for Council business.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Council to review procedures, training and working practices to encourage retention.</li> </ul>
iii	Loss of bank signatories following councillors' resignations and election.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Scheme of delegation.</li> <li>b) Maintain 4 bank signatories.</li> <li>c) Ensure robust agenda reports and adopted plans to provide background and history.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Communicate with former Cllrs asap after election.</li> <li>b) Ensure bank signatories are added on first annual council agenda after election and consider EGM to speed up process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Encourage training for Finance Committee members.</li> <li>b) Keep Scheme of Delegation under review to ensure it is fit for purpose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Annual review of relevant finance policies.</li> </ul>

	<b>Event</b>	<b>Minimise Impact</b>	<b>Immediate Action</b>	<b>Continuity</b>	<b>Longer Term</b>
iv	Natural disaster - storm, flood, snow etc	Refer to OPC's Emergency Plan	Refer to OPC's Emergency Plan	a) Ensure staff have access to OPC's records from home. b) Keep phone and contact details up to date to enable OPC staff and members to communicate.	a) Review procedures. b) Review effectiveness of Emergency Plan.
v	Fire	a) Back up all electronic files on Cloud. b) Follow proper H&S and fire inspection regimes. c) Ensure building fire alarm system and extinguishers are regularly serviced.	a) Implement fire evacuation procedure if fire is at The Bridewell. b) Inform fire alarm company, insurer, Council and all hirers and tenants.	a) Dependant on location and severity of fire - discuss with staff and Council to agree action plan.	a) Review procedures. b) Review fire detecting systems.
vi	Cyber attack or technology loss	a) Cyber Security Policy. b) All OPC IT equipment is regularly updated with current malware software. c) Server files backed up and back-up disk stored off site. d) Important documents scanned and filed. e) All staff and councillors have Office 365 email accounts. f) Online software used for website, finance, salaries, Bridewell bookings, burial bookings, mapping and media design.	a) Notify IT support. b) Notify Council.	a) Follow advice from IT consultant.	a) Review procedures and safeguards.
vii	Widespread electricity loss	Refer to OPC's Emergency Plan	a) Refer to OPC's Emergency Plan. b) Communicate with staff and councillors on WhatsApp before phone batteries deplete.	a) Agree action plan dependent on scale and length of power loss. b) Utilise staff and councillors living in unaffected areas.	a) Review procedures. b) Review effectiveness of Emergency Plan.

	<b>Event</b>	<b>Minimise Impact</b>	<b>Immediate Action</b>	<b>Continuity</b>	<b>Longer Term</b>
viii	Pandemics and health crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Business continuity plan.</li> <li>b) Scheme of delegation.</li> <li>c) Staff laptops have access to all OPC files and are kept at home.</li> <li>d) Contact details held for staff and councillors.</li> <li>e) Systems for keeping up to date with national and sector guidance.</li> <li>f) Selected Councillors issued with Bridewell keys.</li> <li>g) Process to allow selected Councillors to have access to office procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Follow national guidance.</li> <li>b) Refer to OPC's Emergency Plan.</li> <li>c) Assess risk for employees, tenants and hirers.</li> <li>d) Agree action with Council.</li> <li>e) Office to update website and social media sites if Parish Office is closed.</li> <li>f) Staff to stay in touch with line manager.</li> <li>g) Consider whether an EGM is required to delegate decision making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Keep position under constant review.</li> <li>b) Maintain business continuity where possible by working at work.</li> <li>a) Utilise scheme of delegation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review procedures to ensure improvements.</li> </ul>
ix	Physical security incidents – theft, vandalism, terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Risk assessments.</li> <li>b) Good building security systems.</li> <li>c) Proper checks for new staff and hirers.</li> <li>d) Insurance cover with regular review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Notify emergency services as appropriate.</li> <li>b) Notify building tenants and hirers and implement evacuation procedures if appropriate.</li> <li>c) Notify staff and Council to agree immediate action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Agree course of action with Council dependent on impact from event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review procedures.</li> <li>b) Re-assess risks.</li> <li>c) Re-assess control methods.</li> <li>d) Review insurance.</li> </ul>
x	Supply chain or contractor interruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Maintain regular and positive communication with suppliers.</li> <li>b) Robust working practices to identify risks eg regular site inspections.</li> <li>c) Use a range of contractors and suppliers.</li> <li>e) Robust checks when appointing a new contractor or supplier.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Seek to achieve early resolution.</li> <li>b) Notify Council and call EGM for Council decision if required.</li> <li>c) Report to community and hirers/tenants if appropriate.</li> <li>d) Ask insurer for guidance on business interruption if appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ask other Councils and clerks to suggest alternative contractor or supplier.</li> <li>b) Use Scheme of Delegation.</li> <li>c) Seek Council approval for a change in contractor or supplier asap.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review policies and processes for selecting new contractors and suppliers.</li> </ul>
xi	Regulatory changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Follow sector updates and training for early notification of changing and new legislation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Arrange training asap.</li> <li>b) Report to Council asap, identify actions and agree action plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Full review of sector guidance for best practise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Regular training and networking for staff and councillors.</li> </ul>