children's hearings scotland

The Children's Panel – life changing.

# BUSINESS CONTINUITY POLICY

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# 1. Introduction & background

## 1.1 Context

This is the Business Continuity Policy for Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS). It lays out the approach, planning, and testing of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The Business Continuity Plan is a separate document located here. It is managed by the CHS Business Continuity Group who meet at minimum each quarter, if not more frequently.

The Business Continuity Plan is subject to annual review and will be submitted annually, with this Policy and the Digital Disaster Recovery Plan (DDRP), to the CHS Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) for consideration, assurance, and approval of any substantive changes in approach. The Plan will also be shaped and improved as we learn from testing and managing actual Business Continuity Incidents (BCI). Any changes made to the Business Continuity Plan or Policy warrants a review of the Digital Disaster Recovery Plan (DDRP) and vice versa.

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is to ensure CHS can continue to deliver its essential services in the face of a disruptive incident or emergency by providing a reference tool for the actions required during or immediately following an emergency or incident that threatens to disrupt normal business activities. This purpose frames the activities to be prioritised when managing an incident and to allocate resources accordingly.

### 1.2.1 Definitions

An **Event** is something that happens, especially when it is unusual or important.

An **emergency** is an actual or impending situation that may cause injury, loss of life, destruction of property, or cause the interference, loss or disruption of an organisation's normal business operations to such an extent it poses a threat to its ability to operate/function. [1]

An **incident** is any event that may be, or may lead to, a business interruption, disruption, loss and/or crisis. The plan will help to ensure the continuation of business-critical services by minimising the impact of any damage to staff, premises, equipment or records. The plan will help to include an adequate level of detail used to maintain the business functions.

[1] Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's Dictionary. Copyright © HarperCollins Publishers

A **disaster** (aka Cataclysm) is any natural or human-generated calamitous event that produces great loss of human life or destruction of the natural environment, private property, or public infrastructure.[2]

A **business continuity incident (BCI)** is any event requiring the implementation of special arrangements within an organisation to maintain or restore services.[3] Please see Section 4 for full details on Business Continuity Plan Triggers.

**Crisis Management** refers to the identification of a threat to an organization and its stakeholders to mount an effective response to it.[4] In the case of CHS, it covers the initial phase of a business continuity incident up to 72 hours.

**Continuity** is an organisation's ability to maintain critical business functions (as defined in Appendix A of the Business Continuity Plan) during and after a disaster has occurred.[5] In the case of CHS it covers the phase of a business continuity incident up to 2 weeks.

**Recovery** in business, refers to the process of restoring a struggling company to a stable, profitable state.[6] For CHS this means the return to business-as-usual activities and full support and training of panel members as well as hearings taking place as regular. This could be either putting in place longer term measures to cope with the backlash of a BCI or returning to regular activities.

An **active panel member** is someone who has been on rota within the past 3 months or is scheduled for future.

## 1.3 Objectives

To ensure services are maintained with minimal interruption, CHS' Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is committed to identify major business continuity risks that threaten the continuation of the delivery of products and services, and to develop, implement and maintain effective preventative and responsive recovery strategies.

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[2] Written and fact checked by The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, Last Updated: Oct 21, 2024

[3] Business Continuity Policy template, NHS Foundation Trust, Microsoft Word - Document in website layout.xls (publishing.service.gov.uk)

[4] Hayes A. (2024 August 15) *Crisis Management: Definition, How It Works, Types, and Example*. Investopia. Crisis Management: Definition, How It Works, Types, and Example

[5] S. Gillis A. (2024 April*) Business Continuity.* TechTarget. What is business continuity and why is it important? | Definition from TechTarget

[6] Smith R. (2024) *What does Recovery Mean in Business?* Forbes Burton. What Does Recovery Mean in Business? | Forbes Burton

The objectives of this policy and the BCP are to:

- Provide basic information about the business and its activities
- Provide an overview and prioritisation of essential services delivered by CHS and associated supporting functions
- Identify and manage any risk to key services to protect the operating functions of staff and the volunteer community, and respond promptly to re-establish those services when interruptions occur
- Provide the SLT with a framework and strategies for identifying and assessing potential and actual risks that threaten key systems and services and for responding to any disruptive incidents (incident management)
- Provide staff with procedures to minimise or prevent exposure to business continuity risks and identify some of the key actions staff can take in a disruptive incident
- Contain the cost and volunteers community impact of business continuity risks by developing action plans that respond to a broad range of identified risks
- Ensure that a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is developed, implemented, regularly tested, and updated as appropriate
- Provide a framework for return to 'business-as-usual' (resumption and recovery)
- Learn from incidents to improve response/operations

### 1.4 Remit

The BCP considers those core functions and services carried out by both CHS staff and the panel community which are essential to our ability to deliver our legislative requirements for children's hearings.

The following functions are covered by the Plan:

- Finance
- Facilities and ICT
- HR and staff support
- Resource Allocation
- Tribunal Delivery
- Internal and external communications

The following sites are covered by the BCP:

- Thistle House
- Staff and volunteer's remote working/working from home

The operation of SCRA Hearings Centre's is covered by their own Business Continuity arrangements with close engagement at national and local levels should they be subject to Business Continuity measures. SCRA and CHS share their BC Plans annually to provide assurances and ensure alignment.

## 1.5 Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made within the BCP.

### 1.5.1 Generally used assumptions

Business continuity plans will cover three phases of an event:

1. Crisis management: for up to 72 hours following an incident, or until controls are re-established
2. Continuity: for 72 hours up to two weeks
3. Recovery: 2 weeks and beyond following an incident (Recovery plans needed to cover longer periods would normally be developed during the first two to four weeks of an incident.)

Post crisis review, analysis, and improvements will be developed by the Business Continuity Group.

## 1.6 Scope

While all parts of our business are important, if an incident did occur, priority must be given to the restoration of the processes that are deemed to be business-critical to the performance of the organisation, namely, the ability to deliver panel members to support the Children's Hearings System. Critical operational or support activities have been identified that, without which, CHS would not be able to achieve its objectives.

The BCP illustrates how CHS will maintain services and minimise disruption in the event of:

- Reduction in staff or staff capacity
- Reduction in volunteers or volunteer capacity
- Loss of key premises or disruption to key premises (including home offices)
- Loss of IT & telecommunications connectivity or access (cyber or digital incidents are covered in the Digital Recovery Plan)
- Loss of Power
- Financial Processes
- Communications crisis or media crisis

### 1.7 Review and approvals

The CHS Business Continuity Plan and policy will be reviewed and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee every year, or earlier if there is a process change which requires an amendment.

The business continuity documents are also saved in the National Team general channel on MS Teams on our CHS tenancy. Copies of the documents will be printed: one kept at Thistle House, one given to the Corporate Governance Manager and one to each Directors. These will be printed off yearly minimum or after any substantial reviews. They will also receive digital copies of this document via their personal email for safe keeping.

## 2. Business Continuity Management (BCM)

The Business Continuity Management defines the scope of CHS' approach to maintaining continuity of support for the conduct of its business.

### 2.1 What is Business Continuity?

Business continuity provides a framework for creating resilience that will enable CHS to continue to fulfil its role in adverse conditions. It also provides the capability for an effective response should a serious incident occur. This resilience is delivered through a programme of work known collectively as **Business Continuity Management** (BCM).

BCM increases the resilience of the organisation by:

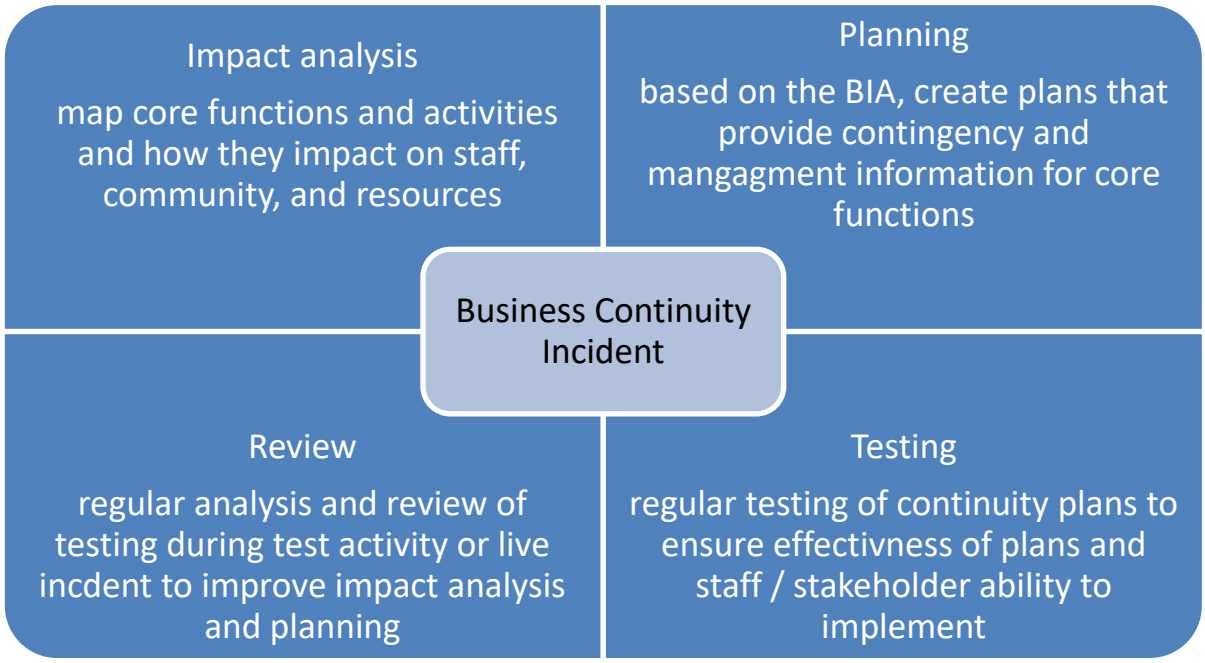
- maintaining a capability for responding to incidents or disasters
- minimising the extent of subsequent damage by developing an exercise recovery plan aimed at resuming activities within a pre-agreed timescale
- setting priorities by identifying those processes which, if lost, would most rapidly damage the organisation ability to deliver its essential services

## 2.2 Business Continuity Group

The Business Continuity Group have overall responsibility for management, control and activation of the business continuity plans during live incidents. Members of the group take responsibility for BIA (Business Impact Analysis) review, writing and revising continuity plans, and regular review of the policy and BCP.

More information on the Business Continuity Group can be found in section 3.

## 2.3 Business Continuity Framework




The Business Continuity Framework provides a structure for carrying out Business Continuity Management (BCM) within CHS. There are four steps within the framework:

### 2.3.1 Step 1: Impact Analysis

Provide basic information about the business and its activities. This is done through mapping out CHS core activities and functions. These activities are then framed in terms of staff, premises and other resources used to successfully carry out those activities. While the core functions of CHS are comparatively static, that does not mean that CHS is unaffected by change. As such the process of mapping these activities - known as **Business Impact Analysis** (BIA) located within the Business Continuity Plan (Appendix A) - is carried out annually. This usually involves confirmation that the current documentation is still valid and making minimal changes. The BCP details the Business Impact Analysis. A Business Impact Analysis (Appendix B of the Business Continuity Plan) should also be carried out as part of any initial implementation of a business continuity event.

### 2.3.2 Step 2: Planning

Within the BCP there are specific and detailed Business contingency and continuity plans for the seven major incidents identified as business critical within the scope. The plans outline what steps should be taken and when to:

- Communicate with staff and stakeholders
- Analyse the impact on business, deliverables, staff, community, and stakeholders
- Outline priorities in line with business continuity events
- Continue to manage and recover from an event

### 2.3.3 Step 3: Reviewing and Testing

The Business Continuity Working Group reviews and tests the BCP. The Group is made up of staff primarily involved with business continuity on a day-to-day basis. The Group will also be involved if a business continuity incident is occurring. Exercises take a particular scenario as a training opportunity that test the seven key plans for suitability during potential incidents such as severe weather (loss of facilities), total IT failure (loss of IT), pandemic flu (staff and volunteer capacity), etc.

Exercises allow members of the CHS Business Continuity Working Group, and other CHS staff, to become more familiar with their roles and to develop the Plan, to identify gaps in resources and skills that may be needed, and to effectively respond to an incident. Exercises will be undertaken quarterly and findings reported including recommendations for resources, additional plans and relevant policies.

### 2.3.4 Implementing the Business Continuity Plan

Members of the CHS Business Continuity Group implement the Plan. The group assesses which activities need to be restored and influences how resources are allocated to facilitate a quick resumption of CHS' relevant activities.

### 2.3.5 Training

To ensure continuity of service, staff will receive relevant training by managers and training requirements will be reviewed and updated on a yearly basis as part of the business continuity management system.

Training staff and stakeholders in the use of the Business Continuity Plan, Policy and DDRP is essential to maintaining a team equipped to handle an incident.

### 2.4 Audit and Risk Management

There is a close relationship between the Business Continuity Plan and Risk Management, particularly when risk mitigation is being undertaken. Introducing mitigation measures - reducing the likelihood of a particular risk occurring – typically involves introducing measures that improve resilience for a function or activity. The mitigation of one particular risk can often improve mitigation against other risks and improve the business continuity response.

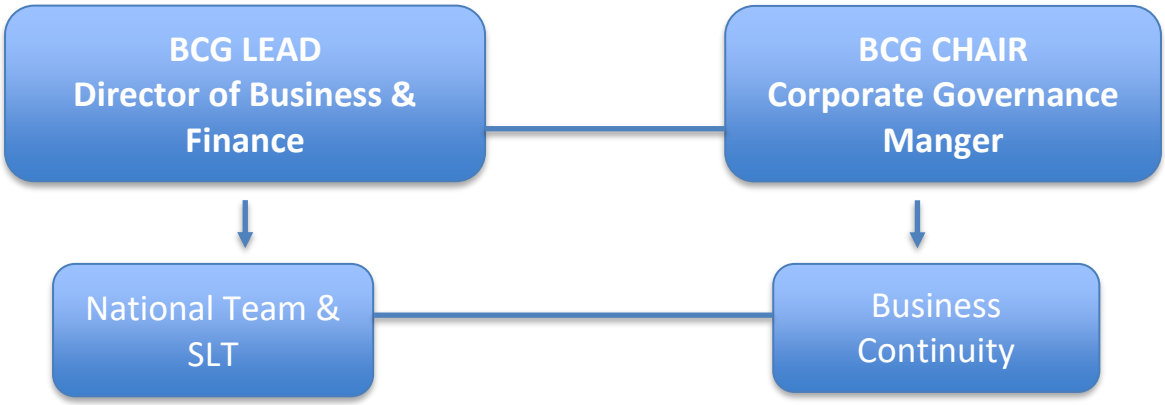
### 2.5 Testing & Feedback

The CHS Business Continuity Working Group meet at least quarterly to review and test the Business Continuity Plans (which includes the Digital Disaster Recovery Plan) making amendments and recommendations as appropriate. In the event of major change to the service or environment the BCP will be reviewed, tested and amended accordingly. All such changes will be recorded in the plans version controls.

## 3. CHS Business Continuity Group

Chaired by the Corporate Governance Manager, this Group will oversee the management, testing, and implementation of the plan. The Group membership is flexible consisting of a cross section of the National Team with responsibility for service regional delivery. Additional expertise may be sought on a flexible basis dependent on the business continuity activity being undertaken.

### 3.1 The CHS Business Continuity Group (BCG) structure




The Business Continuity Group have overall responsibility for management, control and activation of Business Continuity Plans. The BCG Lead has overall accountability for Business Continuity within CHS, while the BCG Chair is responsible for ensuring impact analysis and adequate planning is in place via the Business Continuity Plan and Policy.

During business-as-usual operations, the Chair of the BCG leads the testing and review of the Business Continuity Plans with the BCG members. During a live incident, the BCG Lead will take responsibility for mobilisation and implementation of plans. The Chair and Lead will call upon members of the BCG as needed during incidents, and for consultation on any review or planning.

## 3.2 BCG Membership

### 3.2.1 BCG Membership

- **Chair** – Corporate Governance Manager – Karen Griffin
- Depute Chair – PMO Manager – James Allan
- **Lead** – Director of Business & Finance – Jessica MacDonald
- Depute Lead – Director of Tribunal Delivery – Lynne Harrison
- Deputy - National Convener/CEO - Elliot Jackson
- Member - Director of Tribunal Delivery - Lynne Harrison
- Member - Director of Positive Outcomes – Carol Wassell
- Member - Director of People & Culture – Joanne O'Leary
- Member - Digital Strategy and Delivery Manager – Martin O'Brien
- Member - Communications and Engagement Lead (CEL) – Gareth Overton (holding during recruitment TBC for CEL)
- Member – Information Governance and Data Protection Officer –
- Danielle Metcalfe
- Member – Resource Allocation Manager – Judy Wilson

### 3.2.2 Business Continuity Working Group

All members of the Business Continuity Group above and:

- Practice and Standards Manager (P&SM) – Stephen Bermingham
  Depute – Practice and Policy Team Manager – TBC
- Finance Manager (FM) – Klaus Berchtenbreiter
  Depute – Director or Business and Finance represents financial interests
- Resource Allocation Team Leader – Wilma Corbett
  Depute - Resource Allocation Manager represents the Resource Allocation function
- Office and Administration Coordinator – Laure Hann
  Depute – Governance Officer – Frieda Cadogan
- Representative from the Tribunal Delivery Manager – Iain MacDonald
  Depute – Laura Conachan

Please see Appendix B for Business Continuity Group contact details.

### 3.3 Business Continuity Group (BCG) Roles & Responsibilities

| Member | Role in Group and during an Incident |
|---|---|
| Chair – Corporate Governance Manager<br><br>Depute Chair – PMO Manager | The Business Continuity Group Chair is responsible for leading the BCWG, ensuring quarterly testing and review of the BCP meets the requirements of this policy.<br>They are responsible for the annual BIA & BCP reviews or when changes to working or business plans impact business arrangements.<br><br>During a live event they are responsible for:<br><br>Supporting the Lead to fulfil their duties and maintain the action log (see BCP Appendix H)<br>Coordinate emergency financial payments (in line with the BCP plans)<br>Hold daily Sit-Rep meetings<br>Act as primary liaison with the emergency services (as required) |
| Lead – Director of Business and Finance<br><br>Depute Lead – Director of Tribunal Delivery | The Business Continuity Group Lead is responsible for ensuring a business continuity plan is in place and that it is kept up to date and reviewed.<br>They are the accountable owner for the Business Continuity Plan and call the plan to actions as necessary. During a continuity incident, the BCG Lead will take responsibility for operational implementation of plans. In addition, should the Chair be unavailable, they may take responsibility for their role dependent on the scale of the incident.<br><br>• Call the plan to action when needed, informing SLT, Board, and the BCG<br>• Leads the BC Group through enacting any business continuity plans<br>• Main point of contact during an incident and recovery phase<br>• Maintain overview of incident, taking the lead on resilience and recovery planning which exceeds the BCP time frames<br>• Liaise with the CEO, Board, and key partners as required |
| Deputy - National Convener/ CEO (NC/CEO) | The BCG Deputy is responsible for supporting the BCG Chair and Lead, as well as standing in for either role should one be unavailable during an incident. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Tribunal Delivery - Director of Tribunal Delivery<br><br>Depute – Iain MacDonald | The Director of Tribunal Delivery is responsible for continuity of AST & Hearings operations.<br><br>• Hold regular meetings with Tribunal Delivery Managers & Resource Allocation Manager<br>• Act as primary liaison with SCRA and operational partners<br>• Link actions and activities of continuity plans with regional teams and support their core functions |
| Staff Welfare – Director of People & Culture<br><br>Depute – People & Culture Partner | The Director of People & Culture is responsible for staff welfare.<br><br>• Workforce impact analysis and planning<br>• Coordinate and support alternative accommodation/arrangements<br>• Liaison with Thistle House, Site Emergency Management Team (SEMT) Lead the BC Group through review and testing of any business continuity plans<br>Staff wellbeing, welfare, and safety |
| Practice, Policy, and Training – Director of Positive Outcomes<br><br>Depute – Practice and Standards Manager | Ensure continuity of practice and policy standards during incidents. Ensure training of business continuity is provided within CHS and business continuity and risk management training feature in training planning.<br>In addition, should the Director of Tribunal Delivery be unavailable during an incident, the Director of Positive Outcomes may be called upon to assume their role within the BCG.<br><br>• Coordinate CHSLA to ensure training functions continue<br>• Liaise with Scottish Government, SCRA, and Sponsor Team on any practice and policy related issues<br>• Recommend and manage any changes to practice including training and communication for the community |
| Digital Recovery – Digital Strategy and Delivery Manager<br><br>Depute – Digital Support Manager | The Digital Strategy and Delivery Manager is responsible for the annual review and quarterly testing of the CHS Digital Disaster and Recovery Plan and/or any digital recovery necessary during a live event. Any changes made to the DDRP warrants a review of the BC Policy and Plan. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Implement the CHS Digital Disaster and Recovery Plan as needed<br>• Establish replacement telecommunications network and IT services<br>• Liaise with Scottish Government, SCRA, Brightwire and CSAS ICT teams<br>• Dictate any communications in relation to ICT to be shared with CHS community |
| Media, External, and Internal Communications - Communications & Engagement Lead (CEL)<br><br>Depute – Senior Communications and Engagement Officer | The CEL is responsible for the communications during an incident including liaising with and responding to press enquiries. If the incident involves an accident or other risk to health, the police or emergency services' communications teams assume the lead role in relation to providing information about the incident. Only the police should issue casualty or fatality numbers.<br><br>• Establishing a CHS community-wide communications plan using an email-shot and/or Teams massages<br>• Draft responses for use internally and externally at key points during the enactment of the BCP<br>• Communicating with local and national media and for establishing a response centre<br>• Respond to and log all media calls giving all media the same information and tell them when new information will be available |
| Business Continuity Working Group | Takes responsibility for quarterly testing of the BCP, reporting on findings and making recommendations as necessary. Membership of the group is fluid, allowing for staff and community members with experience/expertise to be brought in as needed.<br><br>• Support the testing and review of continuity plans<br>• Support the implementation of plans during an incident, as directed by the Chair or Lead |
| **All Staff** | • **All staff are required to familiarise themselves with arrangements to deal with an incident** |

### 3.4 Incident communications

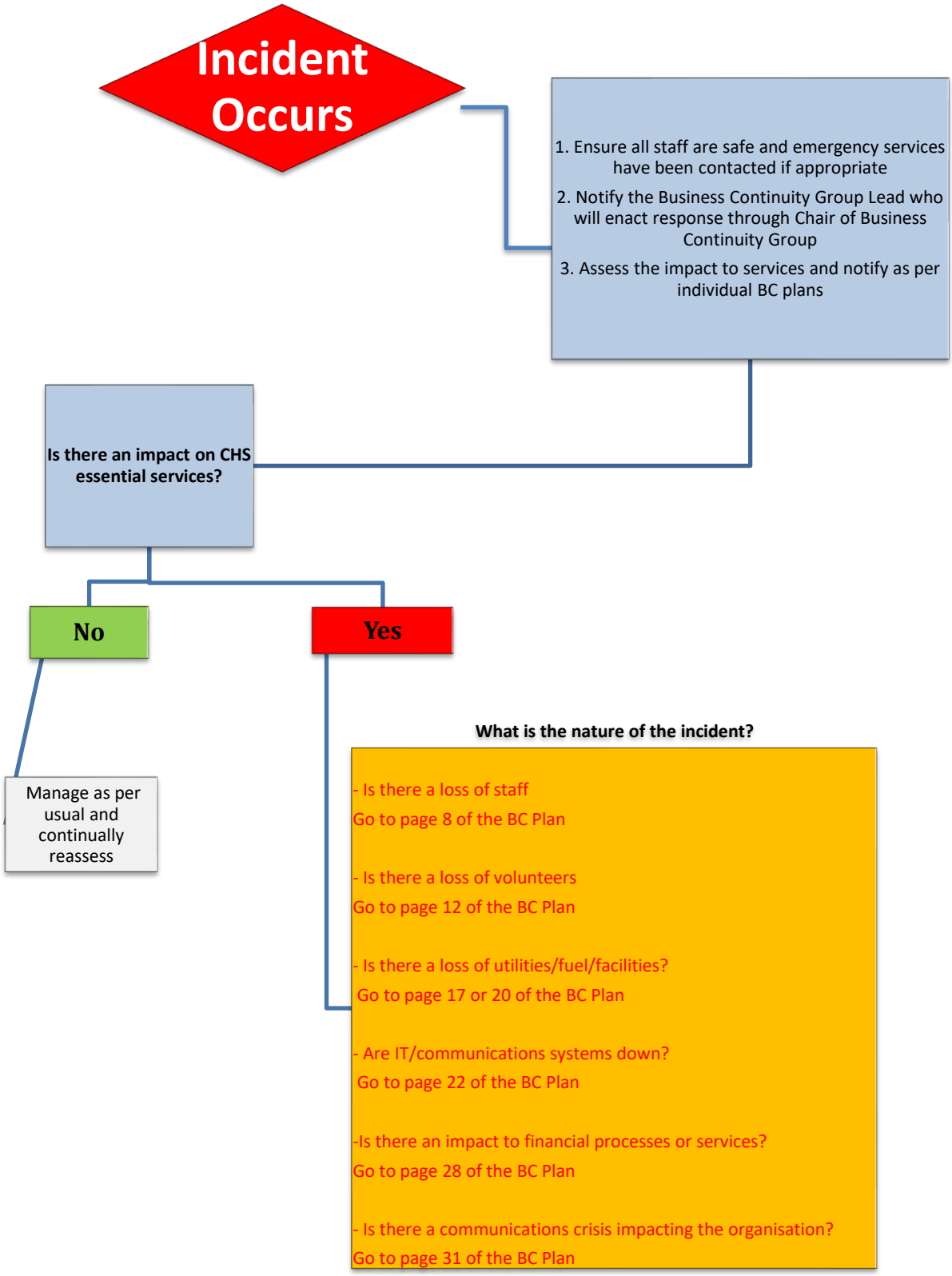
The Lead of the BCG informs SLT, staff and the Board as appropriate that the Plan has been activated and communicates the following information:

- The nature of the crisis and, if relevant to the situation, an estimate regarding the length of time CHS is expected to be affected
- How staff and the Board will be updated (social media/phone/email) and when (frequency)

APPENDIX B identifies contact details for the Business Continuity Group. The National Team can be contacted via CHS Teams Tenancy and platform in the event SCOTS goes down. If both platforms cease to function, a CHS phone tree will be used see APPENDIX C.

# 4. Business Continuity Plans Triggers

## 4.1 BCI Flow chart



## 4.2 Detailed Potential Triggers of the Business Continuity Plan

Although the following triggers are detailed with outage times, the Business Continuity Plan should be triggered as soon a disruption is expected reach this threshold.

| Potential Triggers of the Business Continuity Plan | Plan triggered |
|---|---|
| An event where the Resource Allocation Team highlights a concern that affects the minimal function of the rota allocation. The available panel member data is currently assessed monthly. | BCP Loss Volunteer Capacity |
| An event where an accountable director believes that the level of absence prevents a specific function or directorate to deliver the minimal business requirement. | BCP Loss of Staff Capacity |
| A major incident where existing business premises are out of use and result in significant staff disruption for more than 7 days. | BCP Loss of Premisses |
| An event where Scotland experiences loss of power on a large locality or national scale. Plans to be adapted based on scale of event and localities involved. | BCP Business Contingency for Loss of Power |
| A disruption to some of the existing premises which can remain in use and most staff are able to flex around the business needs. | No trigger |
| Any incident resulting in the loss of ICT functions or connectivity for over 30 % of the National Team or the | BCP Loss of IT and DDRP |

| Potential Triggers of the Business Continuity Plan | Plan triggered |
|---|---|
| Community Team lasting more that 6-8 hours and impacting critical processes. | |
| Any incident resulting in the complete loss of the SCOTS server suite which could take several days to restore a limited desktop and impacting critical processes | BCP Loss of IT SCOTS & DDRP |
| Any incident affecting the ability to access SCOTS that exceeds 4 hours | BCP Loss of IT SCOTS & DDRP |
| Any incident affecting @chscotland.scot that exceeds 36 hours | DDRP |
| Any incident incurring loss of connection to SCOTS servers and networks impacting Financial and HR systems | BCP Continuity for Financial Processes, BCP Loss of IT SCOTS & DDRP |
| A failure affecting CSAS exceeding 30 minutes | DDRP |
| Any Business Continuity incident is likely to impact Financial and HR systems. | BCP Continuity for Financial Processes |
| Any incident affecting CHS is a potential communications issue and, where appropriate, communications will be required for the CHS community. | BPC Contingency for Media or Communications |
| An event where CHS' reputation is at risk due to media attention/an event where CHS' communication tools are at risk. | BPC Contingency for Media or Communications |

| Potential Triggers of the Business Continuity Plan | Plan triggered |
|---|---|
| A significant closure of hearing rooms | BCP Loss Volunteer Capacity |

## APPENDIX A – HR Policy regarding Business Continuity

1. **Temporary working arrangements**
   Several temporary working arrangements might be identified and implemented which may apply to your working hours, work locations, duties, working solely from home or remaining at home for a period of time on special leave.

   Any changes in working arrangements will be discussed with you in advance. All requests will be reasonable and will consider individual skills and personal circumstances balanced against the needs of the organisation.

   You will be expected to demonstrate a high level of flexibility in an emergency and make all reasonable attempts to find solutions to personal circumstances to attend work where required.

2. **Temporary Deployment Elsewhere**
   CHS reserves the right to temporarily deploy colleagues elsewhere as the need arises. This could be in a different department or location.

   Once adequate and safe operating cover is established in a service area staffing levels will be assessed by managers to see if support can be provided elsewhere.

   Any training or health and safety risk assessment (e.g. lone working) necessitated by redeployment will be organised by the relevant manager.

   Special consideration will be given to any colleagues with protected characteristics or who might be at higher risk due to personal or health related reasons. Such colleagues should not be redeployed into inappropriate roles.

3. **Temporary Alternative Duties**
   You may possess easily transferable or generic skills e.g. manual, customer care, IT, admin and clerical that can be used in your normal place of work or elsewhere in an emergency.

   You may, therefore, be required to undertake reasonable alternative work outside of your normal job description. This is so support can be given to overstretched internal services. It is not expected that you would undertake a role for which you do not have the basic necessary skills or abilities nor undertake a professional role that you are not qualified in.

4. **Working Additional Hours and Non-Standard Patterns of Work**
   You may be asked to work additional hours to help provide service cover and continuity. In the first instance managers will seek volunteers to work additional hours either within their own job roles or a redeployed one.

   If you are required to work additional hours beyond your normal contracted hours and/or non-standard patterns of work (e.g. evenings/weekends) you will be compensated through TOIL (time off in lieu) or overtime in accordance with your terms and conditions. In exceptional circumstances and depending on the type and duration of an emergency consideration will be given to all colleagues being paid for overtime.

   As far as is practicable you are expected to find solutions to personal circumstances to attend work but consideration will be given to reimbursing additional costs that you may incur if you are requested to work outside of normal contracted hours such as childcare costs. This will be reviewed and decided on a case-by-case basis by the relevant Director.

   You and your manager should maintain records of attendance and hours worked.

5. **Working Time Regulations and Working Hours**
   Working arrangements are subject to the working time regulations. In an emergency the regulations for daily rest breaks, weekly rest breaks and the minimum 11 hours break between the end of work and the commencement of the next work period can be applied differently.

   Breaks can be shorter but if you do not get your normal contracted breaks, you will receive compensatory rest. This is a period of rest which is the same length as the period of rest or part of a period of rest that you have missed. It should be taken as soon as possible.

   If your working hours are adjusted any health and safety risks need to be appropriately assessed by your manager and continuously assessed through regular check-ins. Managers are also encouraged to guide colleagues to use the Wellbeing Planning Tool to support management of wellbeing during emergency situations.

6. **Temporary Additional Responsibilities**
   To continue to provide essential services you may be asked to take on extra responsibilities at a higher pay scale in addition to your substantive post or to 'act-up' for a limited period of time. These payments can only be paid where the duties are undertaken for at least four weeks and authorised by the relevant Director. Related allowance will be paid in line with CHS salary policy.

   Once the emergency has ended, you will be redeployed to your substantive role will continue to be paid at your substantive salary.

7. **Location of Work**
   CHS operates a hybrid working model and in case of an emergency, it may not be feasible for you to attend your assigned base location and therefore, for the duration of the emergency, you may be working solely from home.

   Depending on the type of incident it is possible that if you usually work from home, you may be asked to report to work in the CHS office for service delivery or refrain from working from home.

   As mentioned in section 3, any changes in working arrangements will be discussed with you in advance. All requests will be reasonable and will consider individual skills and personal circumstances balanced against the needs of the organisation.

8. **Special Incident Leave**
   Where some functions or services are suspended for a period and there is no immediate redeployment requirement and home working is not possible you may be sent home or asked to stay away from work. This will be regarded as special paid leave and affected employees will receive normal contractual pay but no overtime payment.

   If you are advised to stay at home, you must remain contactable and available for work as you may be called into work at short notice (i.e. the same day). You and your manager will be expected to keep in regular contact with each other to keep abreast of the latest situation.

   On your return from a period of special incident leave colleagues will be expected to maintain a flexible approach until CHS services are back to normal.

   If you are advised to stay at home and wish to take annual leave or become unwell you should follow the normal related CHS procedures.

9. **Flexitime Arrangements**
   To maintain emergency service provision your manager may need to suspend flexitime arrangements. Flexitime is not an employee right and as outlined in the flexitime policy and amendments to flexitime may be agreed by managers.

10. **Travel Claims**
    Payments relating to travel will be made in accordance with CHS' agreed travel policy.

11. **Annual Leave**
    Annual leave arrangements still apply during an emergency. New requests for annual leave should be booked in accordance with normal procedures. It may be necessary, however, to limit annual leave to sustain services.

    You may make an annual and other leave request due to caring responsibilities and your manager will need to take this into account when they consider your leave request.

    All new annual leave requests will be decided on their merits and on a case-by case basis.

    Pre-booked annual leave will be honoured but in exceptional circumstances where your services are deemed as critical the matter will be discussed with you. If you cancel a holiday at the request of CHS then, if necessary, leave will be permitted to be carried over into your subsequent leave year even if this exceeds the normal 5 days carry over limit.

    Pre-booked annual leave cannot be withdrawn whereas the result of the emergency you would have been sent home.

    Annual leave already booked will be considered as taken. However, in exceptional circumstances where holiday plans have been cancelled due to an external circumstance (e.g. the travel company has gone into administration, adverse weather conditions) your manager will have the discretion to reimburse some, or all the leave booked. You may be asked to provide evidence of the change in circumstances.

    You will be expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work throughout the duration of an emergency.

## 12. Sickness Absence

CHS' normal sickness absence policy and reporting procedures should be followed as set out in the Maximising Attendance Policy.

Managers will handle sickness absence with care and sensitivity and any concerns dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

You will be expected to keep in regular contact with your manager.

## 13. Caring Considerations

You are expected to attend work throughout an emergency unless your absence is authorised by your manager (e.g. following a risk assessment or due to your work being suspended) or you are sick and have followed the maximising attendance policy.

You have a responsibility to find solutions to personal circumstances which enable you to fulfil your work commitments but there may be several reasons that mean you have difficulty in attending work such as family member sickness or disruption to nurseries and schools. It is acknowledged that the CHS' duty to sustain key functions and services need to be balanced with the pressures that will fall on colleagues who have caring responsibilities and other personal commitments.

Managers will support you by considering appropriate existing policies such as parental leave, annual leave, flexitime, unpaid leave, time off for family emergencies and compassionate leave.

To fulfil a caring role, you may make a request for a temporary change to your work location, working hours and working pattern.

Managers will handle all absence and temporary working arrangement requests with care and sensitivity and on a case-by-case basis.

## 14. Impact on Wellbeing

All employees working additional hours should consider the impact that this may have on their physical, emotional, and psychosocial health factors and reflect on what might be early signals that their wellbeing is at risk. Colleagues are encouraged to proactively build in activities that can support their wellbeing, personal resilience and positive engagement outside work which work for them and are advised to maintain openness with line managers about commitments, caring responsibilities, and personal needs.

To help consider these factors and support discussions with line managers, see the NHS Education for Scotland Wellbeing Planning Tool and Wellbeing Animation summarising the ABCs of self-care

Times of crisis or largescale incidents may have an ongoing impact due to increasing pressure in people's lives and at work. CHS is committed to providing good working conditions and support our colleague's wellbeing.

There are several resources available to support wellbeing:

- One to one counselling and support from Health Assured including 'in the moment' support, counselling services, cognitive behavioural therapy programmes and more
- Work-focused support from a qualified mental health professional through Able Futures - the Access to Work mental health support service
- Individual resources from NHS Education for Scotland: Taking care of myself | Turas | Learn (nhs.scot)

If you are struggling during an emergency period, please speak with your Line Manager or People Operations who can support you best during and after the incident.

## 15. Reserved Forces

If you are a member of the Reserved Forces, you should have already informed CHS about this commitment. The Reserved Forces are:

- the Royal Fleet Reserve
- the Army Reserve
- the Air Force Reserve
- Royal Naval Reserve
- the Royal Marines reserve
- the Territorial Army
- Royal Auxiliary Air Force

If the Government issues emergency powers members of the Reserve Forces services will be released from their contractual duties and responsibilities to assist in the protection of national security.

If you are not required for Reserve Forces duties you will be required to attend work as normal.

## 16. Other Volunteers

Other volunteers can be Retained Fire Fighters, Nurses, a member of a special disaster team etc. This is not an exhaustive list.

If you are a volunteer, CHS would expect you have already sought and obtained permission from your manager to work as one, particularly if you are required to be on call at work.

If you are called upon to 'volunteer' and have not obtained prior permission from CHS then the request to be released from your duties can be reasonably refused.

## 17. Contact Arrangements

For you to be contacted in the event of an emergency and to be notified of any changes in your work arrangements etc. you are asked to make sure that your contact details in the HR self-service system are accurate and shared with your line manager. Please see Appendix C for the phone cascade details

It is possible that you may be contacted by a member of the Business Continuity Group during an emergency.

If you are contacted, you are expected to work cooperatively with your managers or members of the Business Continuity Group.

## 18. Unreasonable refusal to Work/Unexplained Absence

An unreasonable refusal to attend work could result in the disciplinary procedure being followed once working arrangements have returned to normal.

Whilst considering individual personal circumstances any unexplained absences may be dealt with under CHS' disciplinary policy and procedure.

As an organisation, CHS is committed to reviewing any emergency and consider how we can learn for the future. Colleagues may be asked to take part in this review by the Business continuity group, to share views and support our continuous improvement as an organisation through a feedback form and debrief interviews and/or meetings.

## 19. Roles and Responsibilities

### 19.1 Employee Responsibilities

- in the event of an emergency be prepared for possible changes to your normal working arrangements which could affect your hours, location and duties.
- be aware of your role and responsibilities in an emergency - check this with your manager.
- demonstrate a high level of flexibility and make all reasonable attempts to find solutions to personal circumstances to attend work.
- work cooperatively with your manager(s) or members of the Business Continuity Group if you are contacted outside of normal working hours.
- inform your manager of any health issues, domestic circumstances that could affect your attendance or redeployment.
- record any extra hours that you work.
- keep in regular contact with your manager and make sure you are contactable.
- make sure your manager knows beforehand if you are a member of one of the Reserved Forces or volunteer for an organisation whose services may be called upon in an emergency.
- follow any advice or precautions issued for specific circumstances such as a pandemic, communicable or contagious disease.

### 19.2 Line manager responsibilities

- maintain your key services and functions.
- determine if support can be provided to other CHS services.
- brief colleagues beforehand what their roles are in an emergency and what actions will be expected of them.
- have contact numbers for essential staff and establish a contact system within your service.
- check if any of your team members are members of the reserved forces
- keep colleagues informed of any changes to working arrangements and keep in regular contact with them.
- arrange any training and relevant risk assessments
- be mindful of the working time regulations and keep records of changes in hours and responsibilities of staff.

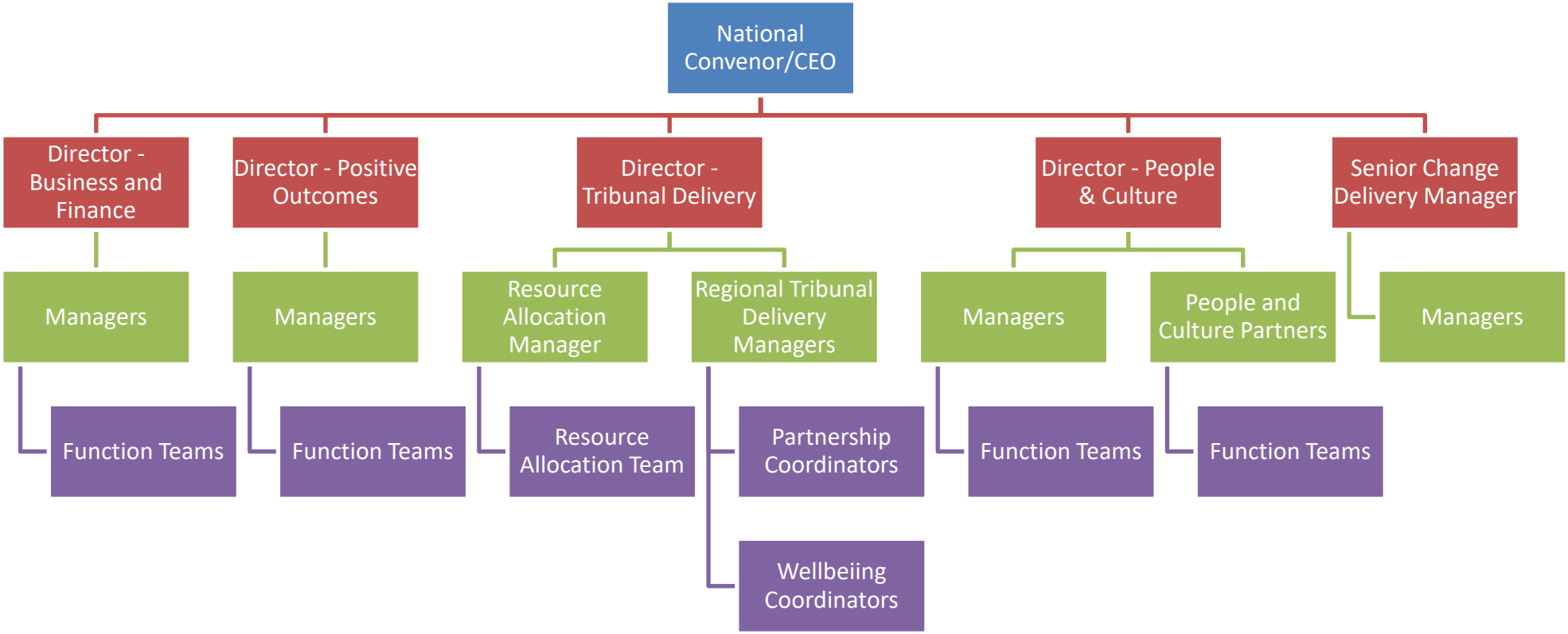
- consider staff needs such as care responsibilities, pregnancy, young workers etc.
- be aware of policies to support you team members, if applicable:
    - parental leave
    - annual leave
    - unpaid leave
    - time off for family emergencies and compassionate leave absence management
    - flexitime

- handle requests about changes in temporary working arrangements, annual leave, sickness absence etc. with sensitivity. Balance the caring responsibilities of colleagues against the needs of the service.
- arrange payments for overtime or TOIL and submit retrospective significant difference forms for staff who have taken on extra responsibilities.
- when the emergency is over or subsided deal with any unexplained absences or concerns.

## APPENDIX B – Business Continuity Group Contact Details

WM = Work Mobile PM = Personal Mobile

## APPENDIX C – National Team Call Cascade Details



# APPENDIX D – Version Control

| Document Location | G:\CHS\Corporate Services and Finance\Research\Risk Management\Business Continuity Plan | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Date** | **Owner** | **Summary of Changes** |
| V0.1 | 10.08.2021 | Business Operations and Governance Lead | Moved policy out of BCP to create separate document. Amendments in line with implementation of the Business Continuity Group superseding the Disaster Management team. |
| V0.2 | | | Additions to section 1 – planning assumptions<br><br>Additions to section 4 – business continuity incidents |
| V0.3 | 01.04.2022 | Business Operations and Governance Lead | Addition of section 3 – Business continuity group and responsibilities |
| V0.4 | 03.05.2023 | | Section 1.7 – review and approvals section added |
| V0.5 | 03.05.2024 | Business Operations and Governance Manager | Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 – changes made in line with organisational and role changes |
| V0.6 | 02.09.2024 | Business Operations and Governance Manager | Section 3 – updates roles and names within BC team and group - including deputies for each role |
| V1.0 | 12/02/2025 | PMO Manager | Section 1.2.1 – Added Definitions<br>Section 1.4 – Added newly created CHS functions<br>Section 1.5.2 – Removed section as it is included in the BCP<br>Section 1.6 – Added 3 events that were missing that were in the BCP<br>Section 1.7 – clarified testing and review to include DDRP dependencies and added information to locate backup of the BC documents<br>Section 3.2 – Added members to the Business Continuity Group that were identified at testing<br>Section 3.2 – Updated to cover Tribunal Delivery more effectively |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Section 3.5 – Updated with a system to locate contact details of Staff and Board in the case of ITC incidents<br>Section 4 – Text has been replaced by a table to clearly define which plans are triggered when<br>Appendix A – Added in appendix the HR Policy regarding Business Continuity<br>Appendix B – moved from the Business Continuity Plan to be in the Policy<br>Appendix C – Formalised communication phone tree<br>Appendix D – Moved the version control to end of the document to ensure quick access to content in an emergency and to mirror the BCP |
| **Approvals** | ARC 25.02.2025 | | |