AUDIT COMMITTEE	Agenda Item **11**
	Brighton & Hove City Council

EXTRACT FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION HELD ON 2 JUNE 2009

Subject:	*ICT Risk – Business Continuity*	
Date of Meeting:	**30 June 2009**	
Report of:	*Director of Strategy & Governance*	
Contact Officer:	Name: **Mary van Beinum** **Scrutiny Officer**	Tel: **29-1062**
	E-mail: mary.vanbeinum@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Wards Affected:	All	

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION

4.00PM 2 JUNE 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Mitchell (Chairman); Alford, Meadows, Morgan, Older, Pidgeon (Deputy Chairman), Randall, Wakefield-Jarrett and Watkins

PART ONE

8.   ICT RISK - BUSINESS CONTINUITY

8.1   The Head of ICT Technical Services introduced the report in response to possible concerns at the February Audit Committee regarding ICT systems risks. The report was to provide reassurance on the actions that were being taken.

8.2   The business continuity plan for ICT includes annual testing of the resilience of the core infrastructure for data and telephony systems and the new Assistant Director of ICT in post since November was developing and driving through the plans previously in place.

8.3   The plans allowed for communications internally and externally in the event of disaster. For the future they were being extended to include better use of currently deployed technology to meet more of the authority's business needs in the event of different scenarios.

8.4   Members were concerned that there had been no ICT Assistant Director in post for more than a year. There was a question as to whether the public would have confidence that calls were being dealt with locally, if non-geographical phone numbers were to be introduced.

8.5   Replying to a query about staffing, the Head of ICT Technical Services said there were partnership arrangements for IT specialists to support systems across the authority in the event of a disaster. Staff training in the use of different ICT systems was important and there was provision for key staff to work remotely for example if in a disaster buildings could not be accessed.

8.6   The Commission discussed home working and the possible use of videoconferencing. The Head of ICT Services said that with the migration to 'outlook' e-mail and the availability of instant messaging there was now a unified communications framework to help support staff away from their desks.

8.7   A Member group to monitor progress on ICT developments was suggested.

8.8   RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

11.   ITEMS TO BE TAKEN FORWARD

11.1   Members noted that the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny would be presented to full Council and the report on ICT risk would be taken back to the Audit Committee.

AUDIT COMMITTEE	Agenda Item **11**
	Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	*ICT Risk – Business Continuity*	
Date of Meeting:	**2 June 2009**	
Report of:	*Interim Director of Finance and Resources*	
Contact Officer: Name:	**Paul Featherstone**	**Tel: 29-0433**
	Head of ICT	
E-mail:	paul.featherstone@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Wards Affected: All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. **SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

1.1   The Audit Committee meeting on 24th February 2009 considered the Business Continuity risks around ICT services, and resolved to refer ICT risks to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider in the 2009-10 work plan.

1.2   This report sets out the current position and future moves for ICT resilience.

2. **RECOMMENDATION:**

2.1   That the Commission consider and comment on the progress being made.

3. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The current position with ICT and Business Continuity

3.1   ICT had been without a permanent Assistant Director for approximately 1 year, and during this time there had been limited clarity over the work that has been undertaken to mitigate ICT risks around Business Continuity.

3.2   The council's Business continuity manager reported that he was optimistic that the situation would improve with the appointment of a new Assistant Director.

3.3   ICT have designed the current base infrastructure with a view to maintaining resilience for core key systems. The current base however, while capable of maintaining core services in the event of a disaster, still requires some work to improve the systems covered.

3.4   Core services are those services that have been identified by the Business Continuity Manager in consultation with service areas and for these services there are specific disaster recovery plans in place that are tested on an annual basis.

3.5　Currently ICT systems have improved resilience by:

- Running from two main computing facilities – each using different parts of the main electricity grid;
- In each facility, a data store that has data replicated between the two sites and a number of servers that are not fully utilised;
- A program of server virtualisation (this allows faster moving of applications from one facility to the other);
- Contracts in place with external business continuity service providers.

3.6　Telephone resilience is catered for by:

- Operating two different telephony systems, one hosted externally;
- Having the internal system designed to be resilient and removing single points of failure.

3.7　All these systems are supported by documentation to allow straightforward changes and recovery by skilled ICT technical staff, although without requiring high level specialist skills in the given system.

Future moves for ICT resilience

3.8　In the ICT plan for the coming year there is some additional work planned to improve the resilience:

- Moving our telephone lines onto the most appropriate system – for example moving the public facing lines to the internal system;
- Investigating non-geographic numbering (0845, 0844);
- Improved document management, ensuring that the appropriate recovery documentation remains current and accessible;
- Investigating new locations for the main facilities.

Continuity for the support of ICT

3.9　In order for these Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plans to be useful and relevant, there is a supporting ICT Business Continuity plan. This concentrates on being able to maintain the ability for council staff and elected members to be able to contact ICT. The ICT service desk is the key point of contact and there is a tested business continuity plan around this.

3.10　This is supplemented by key ICT staff having the ability to work from any location, including their own home. These staff have council installed equipment to enable this and also to support the continued operation of ICT.

4.   CONSULTATION:

None directly in relation to this report.

5.   FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

To follow.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

None.