

Wem Town Council Business Continuity Plan (BCP)

Last Reviewed 18.10.25

Scope

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on the local authority to ensure that it is prepared, as far as reasonably practical, to continue to provide critical functions in the event of a disruption.

This Plan provides a framework for the Council to mobilise its response and undertake work to prevent or mitigate the severity of potential disruptions. This plan identifies the first reactions, recovery objectives, structure for implementation, monitoring, follow-up procedures and communication process to keep everyone informed of necessary changes to service delivery.

Business Continuity Planning is a proactive process which identifies the key functions of an organisation, the likely risks to those functions and the potential impact of those risks upon the service. From this information can be developed plans and procedures which ensure continuity of key functions.

Core Business of the Council

The Council provides services to Wem which include provision of:

- Website and noticeboards
- Streetlights
- Maintenance and safety checking of public open spaces, play areas and recreation ground
- Ground Maintenance, including tree safety, for Town Council land
- Provision of public toilets in Wem
- Maintenance and provision of Love Lane allotments and cemetery
- Floral display
- Bus shelters
- CCTV
- Outdoor Market

Incidents which could invoke the Continuity Plan (this list is not exhaustive and is a guide only)

National disasters/Weather related problems

- Fire
- Flood
- Health Crisis e.g. Covid-19

Failures

- Service failure

Losses

- Clerk through resignation
- Clerk through death

- Clerk through long-term injury/sickness
- Clerk through death or serious injury whilst working for the Council

The Clerk is the first point of contact for all emergencies and business continuity actions. The Clerk is to implement all business continuity actions except for the “Clerk not available” actions.

If the Clerk is not available and urgent action is required the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or a Member(s) of the Town Council nominated by the Mayor, shall implement all business continuity actions.

The Business Continuity Plan identifies the critical service areas and details actions to be taken to continue or recover delivery of the service within the following identified timescales - 24 hours, 7 days, 1 month, 3 months.

Each member of staff has a list of contact details of members and of staff. On discovering or being advised of a disaster which might affect business continuity or major civil emergency the staff member will contact the Town Clerk or Mayor.

Sufficient provision should be made in budget allocations to cover costs of implementing actions identified in the plan.

Major Civil Emergency

Shropshire Council as principal council is a category one responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and will typically lead the recovery from any emergency in the area. It has adopted a Major Emergency Plan which sets out how it will in conjunction with other agencies, including emergency services, respond to major and other serious civil incidents.

The Wem Area Emergency Plan will provide local guidance to all agencies including Town Council staff in the event of a major civil emergency. The WAEP is currently under review.

Review of plan

The business continuity plan to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee:

The Clerk is to check that all the contact details are current and correct

Town Council Finance and Corporate Governance Committee is to consider whether the critical activities, key risks and contingency plan actions are comprehensive and sufficient.

An updated Business Continuity Plan is to be given to every new Member.

Reviewed 19.4.2019, 25.4.2019, 7.7.2020, 12.10.2021, 11.10.2022, 12.10.2023, 18.10.24

Wem Town Council Business Recovery Map

Action	Immediate Response & Actions (24 HOURS)	Management Response (within 7 days)	Rebuild Confidence (Within 1 Month)	Rebuild Confidence (Within 3 Month)
Loss of Clerk due to sudden or long-term illness, incapacity or death	Inform Mayor, members and staff	Mayor to call extraordinary meeting of council to decide on temporary cover strategy – Contact SALC/SLCC about locum Clerk	Provide locum replacement and/or begin recruitment procedures	Review position and procedure for improvements
Loss or serious injury to member of staff whilst carrying out Council duties	Inform Mayor, staff members. Inform HSE (if required)	Mayor to call extraordinary meeting of council to decide on temporary cover strategy – and answer to HSE if required Contact SALC/SLCC about locum Clerk if required Inform insurers	Process of finding temporary cover or in case of the Groundsman depending on season draw up grounds maintenance contract for contractors.	Review position and procedure for improvements
Loss of Clerk due to resignation or dismissal	Inform Mayor, and staff	Mayor to call extraordinary meeting of council to decide on temporary cover strategy and/or begin recruitment procedures. Contact SALC/SLCC about locum Clerk	Process of recruitment or temporary cover period	Review position and procedure for improvements
Loss of Council documents due to fire	Inform Mayor and insurers Police	Review position	Report incident to full Council meeting	Review position and procedure for improvements
Loss of Council members due to	Inform all remaining	Call extraordinary meeting with	Instigate by-election	Start co-option process when

Action	Immediate Response & Actions (24 HOURS)	Management Response (within 7 days)	Rebuild Confidence (Within 1 Month)	Rebuild Confidence (Within 3 Month)
multiple resignations (causing Council to be inquorate)	members and staff and Shropshire Council Monitoring Officer	existing members and monitoring officer to decide temporary working strategy for immediate council business	procedure to recruit new members	authorised to do so. Review position and procedure for future
Loss of Council 'electronic data' due to fire, flood, breakdown or theft	Inform Mayor and staff. Contact support contractor to retrieve backups Inform insurers Inform police if necessary. Inform bank	Install back up files on temporary or replacement equipment. One drive can be accessed from any suitable computer and the office staff can continue to work provided suitable accommodation is available. Consider potential security issues such as data breach. Report incident to ICO if appropriate	Report incident to Full Council meeting Provide replacement equipment if necessary.	Review position
Loss of data or interruption of service resulting from cyber risks including phishing, ransomware and unauthorised access.	Implement the Cyber Attack Response Plan which identifies immediate, 7-day, 1 month and 3-month actions.			
Loss of Council's equipment due to theft or breakdown	Report theft to police, inform Mayor and insurers.	Decide if equipment needs instant replacement	Full Council meeting to agree purchase of new equipment	Review position

Action	Immediate Response & Actions (24 HOURS)	Management Response (within 7 days)	Rebuild Confidence (Within 1 Month)	Rebuild Confidence (Within 3 Month)
Loss of council office due to fire or flood	Inform Mayor, staff and insurers	Make arrangements and provide basic equipment to enable staff to work from home if necessary advise public and members of new arrangements via social media and website	Hold Council meeting to consider options Assess financial losses for insurance claim	Review position
Loss of investment funds	Quantify loss and understand cause Take immediate action to minimise losses	Assess implications on services for remainder of the year. Establish what if any support and protection is available		Review investment policy
Closure of use of Council Offices and Services due to national health restrictions	Make arrangements, and provide basic equipment, to enable staff to work from home if necessary	Advise public and members of new arrangements via social media and website. Clerk to operate Council Business as per emergency scheme of delegation Establish what support and protection is available	Review position in line with Government Guidance Assess financial losses Assess implications on services for remainder of the year	Review position in line with Government Guidance