



Long Stratton Town Council

Pavilion, Manor Road, Long Stratton, Norwich
NR15 2XR Chairman: Mr Kelly Lunness. Clerk: Mrs B Buck

Tel: 01508 530524

Email: office@longstrattontowncouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.longstrattoncouncil.info

Business Continuity Policy

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 on order for the Council to mobilise its response and undertake work to prevent or mitigate the severity of potential disruption. 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 delivery.

The Council has an overall responsibility for both disaster recovery and emergency planning but has delegated all power in both cases of civil emergency and other cases of urgency to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman subject to reporting at the next Council meeting.

The Council is responsible for the overall management and control of the Council's finances.

This policy refers to operating procedures on both disaster recovery and emergency planning.

Responsibility for maintaining services is primarily the responsibility of the Clerk. On discovering or being advised of a disaster which might affect business continuity or a major civil emergency the member or officer will contact the Clerk or Chairman if the Clerk is unavailable.

The Clerk or Chairman will then: -

- Ensure all members and officers are contacted, advised of the situation and of the action required if any.
- Convene any necessary meetings
- Advise statutory authorities (e.g. emergency services, HSE etc) and insurance company as necessary.
- Invoke process of determining loss or damage and minimising it.
- Request a consultant for expert advice such as additional Health & Safety risks and actions to be taken if applicable.
- Keep a log of actions taken by all staff.
- Issue any press statements deemed necessary.

Risks and Actions

Loss of office facilities due to fire or disaster

Within 24 hours:

- Notify insurance and any statutory authorities
- IT recovery (see below)
- Establish virtual office working
- Advise bank and ensure banking services are protected.

- Request support from principal authority and other partners (if necessary)

Within 14 days:

- Advise clients/ contractors
- Re-establish council meetings
- Establish temporary offices and advise members, clients, officers and public
- Salvage physical records/ files and list priorities with actions
- Prioritise service recovery actions
- Access contractual obligations
- Re-establish key internal financial procedures

Within 1 month:

- Re-establish committee meetings
- Access financial loss, income etc for insurance claim
- Make insurance claim

Loss of IT through damage, theft, system malfunction etc.

Within 24 hours

- Notify insurance, police etc
- Locate back up (cloud for immediate access and weekly hard drive back up)
- If theft, consider security of financial and sensitive data (see financial risk assessment)
- Advise Chairman and members

Within 1 week:

- Arrange for alternative systems and hardware
- If necessary, get latest hardware
- Install back up

Loss of Investment money

Within 24 hours:

- Quantify loss and understand cause
- Take any immediate action to minimise loss
- Advise members
- If required, notify the police

Within 14 days:

- Assess implications on the rest of the financial year
- Review investment policy

Within 1 month:

- Establish likely recovery from the Government, FCS, principle Council, bank or insurer
- Take action to adjust costs and make provision for any necessary loan/ change of priorities.

Major Civil Emergency

South Norfolk District Council as the principal authority has a statutory responsibility to prepare a major emergency plan which sets out how it will, in conjunction with various other agencies, including emergency services respond to major and other civil incidents. The principal authority acts in support of the emergency



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services and aims where ever possible to lessen the effects on people, property and the environment and to assist with the restoration of normality.

Long Stratton Town Council does not have a duty to support the principal Council however where Long Stratton or neighbouring parishes have been affected the Council will assist where possible. Where a localised emergency arises such as long-term power failure, or severe weather conditions, the Council will, with officers and Councillors to ensure the vulnerable are protected using the Community Emergency Plan

Loss of an employee

Loss of an employee due to short term sickness

- Clerk to report to the Chairman and members at the earliest availability
- Clerk to arrange cover as necessary

Loss of an employee due to long term sickness

- Clerk to report to the Chairman and members at the earliest availability
- Clerk to arrange cover as necessary – either through volunteers or employment agencies.
- Arrange an insurance claim where appropriate for key man cover

Loss of an employee permanently through death, injury, misconduct, illness or resignation

- Immediately source a temporary replacement through employment agency if applicable
- Start the recruitment process
- Assess security implications for IT and access to Council premises and information.
- Contact any professional bodies as appropriate
- Arrange for return of Council owned equipment.

Loss of Clerk

The Council office will contain sensitive data which is not always available to members or the public (Data Protection Regulations). As a result, strict procedures must be in place to ensure data remains safe but the Council can continue to carry out the services required.

Loss of Clerk due to scheduled annual leave – up to 13 working days

- The Clerk to ascertain whether annual leave spans over a scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council
- If yes, Clerk to discuss with the Council moving the scheduled meeting or to provide a locum Clerk/ existing officer for the meeting,
- Clerk to ensure all work is up to date and any scheduled meetings prepared for, prior to leave commencing.
- Clerk to provide a handover; including work mobile phone; to the Locum Clerk/ existing officer, detailing actions taken and any expected correspondence that needs urgent attention

- Office to be available for meetings however office computer and filing cabinets to be locked and inaccessible during Clerks leave.

Loss of Clerk due to scheduled annual leave – over 13 days

- Council to provide a locum Clerk or discuss with existing officers if they can cover essential operations.

Loss of Clerk due to short term illness – up to 2 weeks

- Clerk to inform Chairman with prognosis and expected return date
- Clerk to inform Chairman and existing officers with actions that need to be taken during period of absence
- If absence is over where an ordinary meeting of the Council, or a committee meeting, members are collectively to be approached via email regarding approaching a locum, requesting an existing officer, postponing the meeting or nominating a Councillor to take the minutes of the meeting.
- Meeting room to remain available but office to be locked if another officer is not available to cover unless there is a need from 3rd parties such as Police to access CCTV. This will be documented by the Councillor/ Officer in the office. Computer to be turned off and filing cabinets locked.

Unexpected loss of Clerk due to long term illness – over 2 weeks

- Council to provide a locum or asking existing officers to cover essential operations.

Unexpected loss of Clerk permanently through death, injury, misconduct, illness or resignation

- Immediately source a locum
- Start the recruitment process
- Assess security implications for IT and access to the office and filing cabinets
- Contact any professional bodies as appropriate
- Chairman to instigate an action plan in conjuncture with existing officers to ensure services are maintained until locum clerk/clerk is in place.

Best practice in all scenarios

- Clerk to operate out of office on all emails when on annual leave. Mobile phone number to be displayed in the out of office for emergencies only. Mobile phone to be given to an existing officer for monitoring.

This ensures any emergency within the Town can be actioned in the event of absence of the Clerk.

- Clerk to copy in Officers, Chair and or Vice-chair to emails pertaining to the services carried out by the Council

This allows the Chair and other officers to have up to date knowledge in the event of the Clerks absence, this does not include emails with personal/ sensitive data unless the Chair/ Vice Chair can justify the need to know. In the event of this happening a summary of the communication will be provided to avoid a data breach.

- The Clerk to have a sealed envelope containing pertinent information to carry out Council functions (passwords, keys etc). To be held in the safe.

The envelope is to remain sealed always, if opened it must be in the presence of another member and reported to Council at the next available opportunity. Once the envelope has been opened all information



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accessed must be changed where possible. This does not allow members to access the computer/ files but allows a locum Clerk/ Clerk the tools to carry out the role efficiently.

- Computer back up is to the Cloud (resolved 9th April 2018)
- Clerk to carry a Council laptop/ council desktop with her always.

This allows immediate back up of files and continuity of working if Clerk is unable to get to the office for reasons of extreme weather etc or in the case of an emergency the information is available. This does not include data that is covered by the General Data Protection Regulations which will be backed up manually to a hard drive weekly and password protected on the main office computer.

Reviewed 03.06.2025 Adopted 09.06.2025.