**Diogelu Gwent
Gwent Safeguarding**

Business Continuity Plan
Guiding Principles

Ratified by Board	Protocols & Procedures	Review Date
September 2024	Sub Group	September 2027

Business Continuity Plan

Guiding Principles

Introduction

Learning from practice reviews, both regional and national, has indicated that there were times during the Covid 19 pandemic where the safeguarding of both children and adults at risk may have been compromised due to the unprecedented impact upon service delivery. This highlights the importance for organisations to have in place robust business continuity guidance in order to inform practice and maintain standards of service delivery which allow for effective safeguarding to continue. The need for this was outlined as a recommendation in SEWSCB 4/2022 Child Practice Review Stanley [SEWSCB 4-222 CPR Stanley Report (gwentsafeguarding.org.uk)](https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk)

It is acknowledged that the requirements of organisations will differ vastly depending upon their role and responsibilities and therefore, this document provides suggestions for guiding principles rather than prescriptive standards.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the business continuity plan is to provide clear guidance to staff delivering the service when dealing with a crisis or incident that affects part, or all, of day-to-day operations. The aim is to ensure that essential services are identified and maintained in an event or situation whereby service delivery is impacted. In the event of a crisis or emergency some functions may need to be enhanced, reduced or suspended, depending on the nature of the function and the emergency that is taking place.

Guiding Principles

- Designate a business continuity lead and deputy/deputies who take responsibility for the completion and implementation of the plan, usually a representative from Senior Management.
- Specify the aims and objectives of the plan.
- Define the role and responsibilities of the organisation and identify what are considered as 'essential services.'
- Identify what the resource dependencies are in order to allow for the delivery of essential services (e.g. staff, locations, equipment, technology).
- Outline 'normal,' services which it may be possible to defer for a set period of time and consider any safeguarding impacts should services be deferred.
- Identify potential disruptions to service and a risk assessment should be carried out identifying the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact should it occur. It may be helpful to prioritise potential risks using a RAG rating system.
- Consider the potential impacts these risks could have on the organisation, whether they occur on their own or combined.
- Identify additional preventative and mitigating controls and resources.

- Develop business continuity plans based on the risks/identified impact, and resources that can be used to mitigate these risks and maintain the continuity of the service.
- Identify clear ownership and responsibility for each action or response.
- Decide where to keep the plan and how staff can access it.
- Review and update the plan regularly.
- Identify and link the plan to local authority and government major incident planning, including emails, websites, contact details, existing plans and documents.
- Ensure that the plan is consistent with statutory requirements and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- Any relationships to other plans/documents or interdependencies with other agencies should be clearly stated.