



RYDE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

The following premises are covered in this document:

Ryde Town Council Chambers

10 Lind Street

Ryde

Isle of Wight

PO33 2NQ

Copies of this document can be found:

www.rydetowncouncil.gov.uk

Review Date 1st Feb 2026

DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS

Ryde Town Council was established in May 2008 and is, as a Parish Council, the first level of local government for the Ryde community. The Council delivers a variety of services such as public toilets, allotments, a dedicated Environment Officer, decorative lighting, Christmas Trees and summer planting. In recent years, the Council has also taken on the responsibility of beach cleaning and the beach lifeguard service and makes a substantial contribution towards the maintenance of the Town's play equipment and the upkeep of Appley Park. In addition, Ryde Town Council has taken on two major projects, Ryde Marina and Network Ryde. The former was transferred to the Council in 2021 and there has been considerable investment into the Marina in order to make it into a sustainable business. The latter is a new youth service which started in a rented shop in Ryde High Street but it has now outgrown its premises and is moving into the St Thomas's Heritage Centre.

OUR CUSTOMERS

The residents of Ryde, visitors to Ryde and any other individual who qualifies to use the services we provide.

OUR COUNCILLORS

Councillors are democratically accountable to residents of their Wards. The overriding duty of Councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.

In addition, Councillors :

- Are collectively the ultimate policymakers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions.
- Contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage citizen involvement in decision making.
- Effectively represent the interests of their Ward and of individual constituents.
- Respond to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially.
- Participate in the governance and management of the Council.
- Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.
- Serve the public interest and take decisions having regard to the interests of the whole local community.
- Act as a responsible employer and ensure the safety of all staff.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to prepare our business in the event of extended service outages caused by factors beyond our control and to restore services to the widest extent possible in a minimum time frame.

OUTCOME

The outcome of this plan is to ensure that the business is able to maintain a good level of service for our customers.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

- Serves as a guide for those implementing our business continuity plan.
- Assists in avoiding confusion experienced during a crisis by documenting, testing and reviewing recovery procedures.
- References and points to the location of critical data.
- Provides procedures and resources needed to assist in recovery.
- Ensure Councillors are kept up to date should the plan be activated.

KEY STAFF

If a disaster occurs the members of our team tasked with enacting this plan are:
The Facilities Officer, The Clerk, The Planning Officer.

STAFF WELFARE

It must be recognised that an incident that results in the enacting of this plan may also cause additional pressures for staff. Staff members need to be given clear direction about the priorities of the business. Managers must ensure that they monitor staff more closely to ensure that their welfare is maintained.

Staff should be aware of what their role is when a major disruption occurs. Clear and concise communication with staff is pivotal to having an organised response. Staff must be made aware of what communication methods are going to be used so they can find out the latest information. If staff are working from a different location than normal proper lines of communication must be made available.

Managers who suspect that staff members have suffered undue stress or even trauma from the business disruption must consider providing assistance for those staff who have been affected.

COMMUNICATING WITH AND BY STAFF

The Clerk will communicate with staff all updates and news regarding any emergency incident. All communication with the press will to be through the Clerk or through another member of staff with prior approval from the Clerk.
Any interview with the press will be undertaken by the Mayor or Deputy mayor.

COMMUNICATING WITH COUNCILLORS

The clerk, or designated officer, shall, in the first instance, notify the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of any updates and news regarding an emergency incident followed by communication to all councillors.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC

Communications with the public should be via the RTC website, social media, local news outlets and notice boards all to be issued by the receptionist.

EQUIPMENT

All staff have a work laptop to enable them to work away from the office in an emergency. Staff that normally work away from the office also have a work mobile phone and their numbers are shared with all members of staff. Staff will be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses incurred (with the approval of the FRO)

In the event of an emergency all calls to the RTC phone line (01983 811105) will be diverted to a mobile phone in the possession of the receptionist. The backup system for the server will be held by the receptionist.

DATA PROTECTION

When working away from home, as a result of an unexpected office closure, all data on work laptops must be protected in accordance with the Ryde Town Council Data Protection Protocol and working practises must be in line with EU General Data Protection Regulations. All connections by a work laptop to the internet, when away from the workplace, must be made using a secure password protected internet connection.

PREVIOUS MAJOR INCIDENTS.

COVID 19 PANDEMIC.

In March 2020 a worldwide Covid 19 Pandemic forced all businesses to shut down. In addition, all non-essential travel and contact was made unlawful.

Ryde Town Council set up a facility to help shielding Ryde residents who were unable to access the shops and other essential services. This included setting up a database of those who needed help and those volunteers who were willing to offer help. Staff members then co-ordinated over the phones the appropriate help for the appropriate shielding resident.

Furthermore, staff members carried on to the best of their abilities and as directed in the previous Business Continuity Plan, the work that they would normally have been expected to manage whilst in the office.

SCENARIO 1

PREMISES INCIDENT

A premises incident can include flood, fire, or any other disaster that renders our office inaccessible.

Step 1: Evacuation of premises & safeguarding of staff, visitors and Councillors.

In office hours

Action	Details	Responsible Person
1. Evacuate the building	Follow normal fire drill procedure	Facilities Officer, Planning Officer, Receptionist
2. Check evacuation is complete	Check everyone on-site has been evacuated (Reference visitors book)	Facilities Officer, Planning Officer, Receptionist
3. Verify if incident is real	If false alarm, resume business as normal	Facilities Officer, Planning Clerk
4. Call emergency services	999	Facilities Officer, Planning Clerk
5. Record injuries sustained in the incident	Forms available via cloud based critical documents.	Receptionist Clerk
6. Alert staff, visitors and Councillors	Alert all staff, and tell them to await further instructions	Receptionist Clerk
7. Assess impact	Senior team meet to assess the scale of the incident & decide next steps	Clerk

Outside office hours

Action	Details	Responsible Person
1. First person on-site to notify Clerk	Do not enter the building	All staff
2. Call emergency services	999	All staff
3. Alert staff	Alert staff due to arrive, and tell them to await further instructions	All staff
4. Assess impact	Senior team meet to assess the scale of the incident & decide next steps	Clerk or designated officer
5. Alert Councillors	Alert all Ryde Town Councillors	Clerk or designated officer

Step 2: Business continuity

Critical activity	Details	Responsible Person
Phones	Staff to use work/personal mobile phones. Contact Wight Fibre to forward office lines to staff mobiles	Receptionist Clerk
Internet	Staff to use home internet connections or use own data which will be reimbursed.	All Staff
Inform insurance company.	42 Quay Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5BA Tel 0800 335 500	Clerk
Inform landlord	Lariday Properties, 21 Shirley's Ditchling Hassocks, East Sussex, BN6 8UD	Clerk
Post redirection	Forms available via cloud based critical documents.	Receptionist, Clerk
Inform customers of incident via:	Inform customers via website, social media, local news outlets and noticeboards	Receptionist, Clerk

SCENARIO 2

INFRASTRUCTURE INCIDENT

An infrastructure incident can include the loss of computer / telephony systems, internet access, or power.

Step 1: Understand the extent of the loss.

Infrastructure	Details	Responsible Person
Phones	Contact phone provider to ascertain extent of outage. Tel: 01983 811711	Receptionist, Clerk
Internet	Contact internet provider to ascertain extent of outage. Tel: 01983 811711	Receptionist, Clerk
Mains power: SSE	Contact power provider to ascertain extent of outage. Tel: 105	Facilities Manager
Temporary Power Outage	Inform staff to stay put and await further instructions.	Facilities manager
Ongoing Power Outage	Staff to work from home until power is restored. If staff homes are also affected contact local shared office providers to rent desk space.	Clerk, Facilities Manager, Planning Officer.

Step 2: Business continuity

Critical activity	Details	Responsible Person
Phones	Staff to use company mobile phones. Phone provider to forward office line to receptionist's mobile	Receptionist,
Internet	Staff to use home internet connections. If home connection unavailable contact local shared office providers to rent desk space	All Staff
IT	PC Consultants 01983 811711	Receptionist,
Mains power	Staff to work from home until power is restored. If staff homes are also affected contact local shared office providers to rent desk space.	All Staff
Meetings	Rescheduled meetings and ensure that councillors and attendees are informed of the revised venue.	All Staff
Communication with Councillors	Ensure that emails to councillors are forwarded and other lines of communication are maintained.	All Staff
Post	Post Box to be attended (if still in use) if not post to be redirected as above	Receptionist

SCENARIO 3

STAFF INCIDENT

A staff incident can include a sudden family emergency, injury or other event which renders a key member of staff suddenly unable to work.

Step 1: Ensure no service interruption.

Critical activity	Details	Responsible Person
1. Identify interchangeable staff	All staff should have team members who can perform their roles basic functions. Identify the relevant person and support them in carrying out business-critical activities.	All staff
2. Assess extent of loss	Identify whether the affected staff member's absence is likely to be temporary, longer-term, or permanent. Remember this may be a difficult time for the staff member and/or their family.	Clerk
3. Temporary loss of staff	Either fill the gap with appropriate existing staff or employ a new temporary staff member.	Clerk Personnel Panel
4. Longer term loss of staff	Alert Personnel Panel to discuss appropriate action	Clerk

Step 2: Business continuity

Critical activity	Details	Responsible Person
1. Recruit temporary or full-time replacement	Follow the standard recruitment procedure to find a full-time, part-time or fixed-term replacement.	Clerk and / or Personnel Panel

SCENARIO 4

National or Worldwide Emergency

An emergency such as a pandemic or chemical/nuclear incident.

Action	Details	Responsible Person
Decision making usually made by various committees	See below Emergency scheme of delegation. (annex 1)	Committee Clerk Committee Chair and / or Deputy Chair

RECOVERY PHASE

The purpose of the recovery phase is to resume normal working practises for the entire organisation. Where the impact of the incident is prolonged, normal operations may need to be delivered under new circumstances e.g. from a different building.

Action	Details	Responsible Person
1. Plan the recovery of normal working practises.	Agreed actions in an action plan and set against time scales with responsibility for completion.	Clerk
2. Respond to any long term support needs of staff.	Depending on the nature of the incident, we may need to consider providing support services.	Clerk
3. Publicise that there is now 'business as usual'	Inform customers through normal channels that our business is operating as normal.	Receptionist, Clerk
4. Prepare report outlining issues and possible better practice.	This should be reviewed to ensure key actions resulting from the incident are implemented within designated time scales.	Clerk, Planning Officer
5. Review this Continuity Plan and evaluate its effectiveness.	Implement recommendations for improvement and update this plan. Ensure a revised version of the plan is read by all members of staff.	Clerk, Planning Officer
6. Report to Full Council	Ensure elected members are aware of any recommendations arising from a review of the incident.	Clerk

MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW OF PLAN

Any changes in personnel which affect the plan should be address immediately and alternate fulltime staff should be located to carry out the vacant roles.

The plan should also be checked and reviewed as follows:

When there has been an incident which necessitates the utilisation of the plan, an incident report should be prepared and an assessment of the plan's performance should be carried out.

When there is a significant change in the way that Ryde Town Council is run because of a change in legislation etc. the effects should be evaluated with respect to the plan.

Or after a maximum period of 2 years.

Any changes made as a result of the bi annual review should be reported to the Place, Neighbourhood and Planning Committee and approved by Full Council.

EMERGENCY SCHEME OF DELEGATION – OFFICERS

BACKGROUND

In the event of an emergency which renders the Town Council Offices unusable, for example a local incident such as a building fire / flood or a national or worldwide incident such as an earthquake or pandemic the following Emergency Scheme of Delegation should be enacted.

Staff have already arranged for the phones to be diverted if needed and have set up 'Microsoft teams' to enable all staff to stay in contact and work efficiently from home.

This Scheme of Delegation can also be enacted in the event of any other significant national or regional emergency.

DELEGATION TO OFFICERS

The following matters are delegated to the Council's Officers to make decisions on behalf of the Council in the event of an emergency.

These decisions must be exercised in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and any approved policy framework and budget.

The Council may at any time, following resolution, revoke any delegated authority.

Officers may decide not to exercise delegated responsibilities and may instead make a recommendation to a committee or the Council. Similarly, where Officers have no delegated power to make a decision, they report the matter to Committee or the Council for a decision.

All decisions made under delegated powers by officers should be in accordance with the Council's ethos, current policy, ethics and in the best interests of the Council, Ryde and its residents.

1. Town Clerk

The Town Clerk shall be the Proper Officer of the Council as defined in law. The following decisions are delegated to the Town Clerk:

- i. Issue all statutory notifications.
- ii. Receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office.
- iii. Receive and record notices disclosing pecuniary interests.
- iv. Receive and retain documents and plans.
- v. Hold the Council's Seal and apply it to documents as approved.
- vi. Sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
- vii. Receive copies of By-laws made by principal authority.
- viii. Certify copies of By-laws made by the Council.
- ix. Sign summons to attend meetings.

- x. Ensure compliance with Standing Orders
- xi. Manage all Town Council staff, either directly or indirectly.
- xii. Manage the provision of Council services, buildings, land and resources.
- xiii. Incur expenditure in an emergency up to £10,000 whether budgeted or not.
- xiv. Act on behalf of the Council in an urgent situation and report back to the Council as soon as practical.
- xv. Deal with dispensation requests from Members under the Code of Conduct.
- xvi. Deal with matters specifically delegated by Council or Committee.
- xvii. Take all decisions relating to the training of Councillors & staff.
- xviii. Decisions for Health & Safety across all Council owned sites.
- xix. Day to day management of all of the Council's Human Resources functions.
- xx. Decisions regarding the provision of services and whether to close premises or cease the provision of services.
- xxi. To re-deploy staff if required to aid and support emergency community initiatives
- xxii. To apply for Grants on behalf of the Council.

To have the following delegated authority in consultation with the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor.

- xxiii. Appoint all employees in accordance with the Council's staff structure.
- xxiv. Authorise minor non-fiscal adjustments to contracts of employment and job descriptions to meet the needs of the Council.
- xxv. Appoint casual / temporary members of staff as needed to meet the business needs of the Council and within existing budgets.
- xxvi. Authorise additional hours of work for existing staff on a temporary basis to support the business needs of The Council.
- xxvii. Deal with all disciplinary matters and hearings in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy.
- xxviii. Authorised to issue press releases on any Council activity exercised in accordance with Council policy.
- xxix. Incur expenditure in an emergency up to £25,000 whether budgeted or not.
- xxx. To declare an 'Emergency' and implement the Emergency Scheme of Delegation.
- xxxi. To make decisions on any new business if in accordance with the Town Council's agreed Corporate Plan.

2. Deputy Clerk

To act as the Proper Officer in the absence of the Town Clerk where necessary for the smooth running of the Council.

- i. To deputise for the Clerk in their absence and to be afforded the same delegated authority as listed in section 1.
- ii. Overseeing Council transparency, access to information and data use and storage, including day to day management of Council's website.
- iii. Matters specifically delegated by the Council, a committee or the Clerk.
- iv. In the absence of the Town Clerk, authorised to issue press releases on any Council activity exercised in accordance with Council policy.

3. Responsible Financial Officer

- i. Ensure Compliance with Financial Regulations.
- ii. Ensure compliance with all financial procedures.
- iii. Determine accounting policies, records and control systems.
- iv. Manage risk management of the Council.
- v. Approve the payment of all invoices.
- vi. Proper administration of the Council's financial affairs.
- vii. Report to External Auditor matters under Local Government Finance Act 1988 s114.
- viii. Arrange and manage the Council's insurance arrangements.
- ix. Management of Council salaries in accordance with contracts of employment.
- x. Matters specifically delegated by Council or Committee.
- xi. In the absence of the Town Clerk, authorised to issue press releases on any Council activity exercised in accordance with Council policy.
- xii. Responsible for the overall management of all budgets in accordance with Council policies.
- xiii. To approve virements between budget headings in consultation with the Clerk and the Chair of the relevant committee.

The RFO or Finance Administration Officer to have the following delegated authority in consultation with the Chair and/or Deputy Chair of Finance.

- i. To respond to all consultations addressed to the finance committee on behalf of the Council.
- ii. To approve Grants applications that adhere to the Council's grant funding policy up to a value of £10,000.
- iii. In the event of the RFO or Finance Administration Assistant being unavailable to work the Planning Clerk shall deputise for the RFO and have delegated authority to act in their absence.

4. Facilities & Assets Officer

- i. Day to day management of land, buildings and other resources.
- ii. Management of maintenance, cleaning and all other Council service contracts.
- iii. Day to day management of all employees within section.
- iv. Approve expenditure up to £5,000 for urgent works required to any Council facilities.
- v. Day to day management of Civic functions of the Council.
- vi. Decisions for Health & Safety across all Council owned facilities.

To have the following delegated authority in consultation with the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor.

- i. For reasons of safety close any of the following facilities to the public:
- ii. Skatepark, Public Conveniences, Allotments
- iii. In the absence of the Town Clerk, authorised to issue press releases regarding any Council facilities exercised in accordance with Council policy.

- iv. In the event of the Facilities and Assets officer being unavailable to work the Facilities and Maintenance assistant shall deputise for the FA Officer and have delegated authority to act in their absence.

5. Planning Officer – To have the following delegated authority with regard to all decisions regarding:

- i. Day to day management of all employees within section.
- ii. Day to day management of all planning matters.
- iii. Incur expenditure within budgeted limits.

To have the following delegated authority in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Planning Committee

- iv. To submit a response on behalf of the Town Council with regard to Planning Applications
- v. To submit a response on behalf of the Town Council with regard to Licensing Applications
- vi. To submit a response on behalf of the Town Council with regard to Highways proposals
- vii. To decide on Public Realm Improvement applications
- viii. Ryde Marina –in consultation with the Chair of the Marina Management Committee will have authority to make any decisions regarding the safe running of Ryde Marina and to commission any works as agreed in the Marina Improvement Plan.
- ix. In the event of the Planning officer being unavailable to work the Committee and Place Plan Co-Ordinator shall deputise for the Planning Officer and have delegated authority to act in their absence.

6. Network Ryde – Youth Work Manager

- i. The day to management of Network Ryde be undertaken by the Youth Work Manager or in their absence the relevant Session Lead.
- ii. Day to day management of employees within this section
- iii. To re-deploy staff to aid and support emergency community initiatives
- iv. To apply for Grants on behalf of Network Ryde
- v. To incur expenditure within budget.
- vi. To appoint staff as considered necessary within budget.

To have the following delegated authority in consultation with the Chair of the Network Ryde Sub-Committee

- i. To temporarily close 147 High Street on Health and Safety grounds
- ii. To agree to provide and implement Outreach Services
- iii. To temporarily cease outreach services on Health and safety grounds
- iv. To suspend or restart services in line with Government advice.
- v. To make any decisions necessary to ensure the safe running of the Council's Youth Service and the safety of staff.

In the event of the Clerk being incapacitated or unavailable to work the Chain of command is as follows:

- i. Town Clerk
- ii. Deputy Town Clerk
- iii. RFO
- iv. Planning Officer
- v. Facilities Officer

Network Ryde

- i. Youth Work Manager
- ii. Deputy Youth Work Manager
- iii. Clerk
- iv. Youth Workers

Ryde Marina

- i. Beachfront Operations Manager
- ii. Marina Operatives
- iii. Beachfront Assistants