



Business Continuity:

Business Continuity Management Awareness Session for Oldham

Steelhenge Consulting was tasked by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council to provide a one day Business Continuity (BC) awareness session for its non-statutory care service providers within the 'Supporting People' programme.

The primary objective of the day was to raise Business Continuity awareness amongst delegates who included social landlords, charities and representatives from nationwide care organisations.

The statutory duty placed upon Local Authorities by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 obliges them to provide assistance and advice to both commercial and voluntary organisations with regard to business continuity. This duty is directly linked to the government's 'resilience agenda' which aims to develop the capability and capacity of local communities to withstand major disruptions and thereby reduce their reliance on statutory authorities. With supply chain issues central to BC planning, many organisations are now turning to providers and looking closely at what Business Continuity plans they in turn have in place. In some instances, this has extended as far as stipulating that evidence of a BC plan must be provided in order to compete for future contracts.

With a diverse audience who had very different baseline levels of business continuity understanding, the challenge for Steelhenge was to design a day's training that would engage and benefit all delegates.

A highly interactive approach was developed, tailored specifically to the needs of the audience and to achieve Oldham's objectives. It comprised a mixture of class room-style training in BC and the BC cycle supported by workshops to put the theory into practice within the care service context. The workshops helped delegates understand how to develop and conduct a business impact analysis and assess risks to their businesses. A third scenario-driven workshop exercise enabled the delegates to practice their decision-making processes in managing a crisis situation.

The hands on approach provided a creative, lively and productive learning environment that enabled delegates to speak openly about their experiences. This opportunity for attendees to share experiences and ideas resulted in new alliances being formed between organisations who had not previously engaged.