Think about this simple scenario yourself and/or talk it through with your colleagues

**Initial information**
Your primary supplier has a problem. They operate a Just In Time (JIT) process but have just phoned to say that they will not be able to deliver your expected consignment at lunchtime today because thieves broke into their compound overnight, drained the delivery vehicles’ fuel tanks and filled them with sand. They think it will be several days before they can resume their deliveries to you, but they will do their best to get something to you tomorrow.

Points for discussion:
- What, if any, is the immediate impact on your business?
- What are your initial priorities?
- Are there any Health and Safety issues?

**Update**
It is now mid afternoon. The supplier has phoned with an update. They have sourced alternative transport but that will only be available in 24 hrs time. They are very sorry that they were unable to deliver till then but the original vehicles are being held by police pending forensic examination and there are no other suitably sized vehicles available in their area. The vehicles are immovable and blocking their yard’s entrance/exit route.

Points for discussion:
- What, if any, is the short term impact on your business?
- What are your short term priorities?
- What information would you now give to members of your team, where would you get this from and are all, including out of hour, contact details up-to-date?
- What response and/or recovery plans are you going to initiate?

**Longer term implications**
Two days later, the supplier has just managed to get one partial delivery to you. They are now saying that it will be a week to return to normal operations as some of their drivers may be implicated in the crime and are suspended. Sourcing appropriately qualified drivers is proving difficult.

Points for discussion:
- What, if any, is the long term impact on your business?
- What are your long term priorities?
- Are there any actions that you could take now to reduce the likelihood or impact of this happening in the future?
- Do your BC and recovery plans have all the information you required to manage this scenario?
Just Out of Time

In relation to this scenario

- Ensure critical suppliers, i.e. those supporting your critical activities, have suitable Business Continuity arrangements, including documented plans.
- Make sure that Business Continuity is referenced within the contractual process as well as the contract itself.
- Actively promote resilience with your supply chain
- Include Business Continuity as part of the QA and review process of provider’s arrangements.
- Do the suppliers’ contracts have penalty clauses?

For additional resilience

- Planning now could help you provide a service in the future, minimising negative effects if the worst happens - protecting staff and customer wellbeing and helping your organisation work efficiently and cost-effectively.
- Familiarise yourself with your team’s main point of contact in the event of a disruption and make sure all staff know who they report to.
- Ensure staff records are up-to-date for quick communication in an incident and that telephone numbers are included in your relevant business continuity plan.
- If possible, instigate remote working, giving priority to those staff members that are most critical. If you and/or your team could operate from an alternative location, ensuring you know how and when it will be made available.
- Remember that while you may consider your team is critical, across your organisation other teams may be rated more critical than your own. Are there other teams you could support? Are there people with skills you require elsewhere in your organisation?
- Have you documented your team’s critical skills to spot vulnerabilities? Where possible ensure more than one person can perform a particular task or has access to a critical system.
- Plan ahead for annual leave to provide continuity of service and ensure ‘out of office’ messages include an alternative contact (and/or group mailbox where appropriate), together with an indication of when messages will be accessed.
- In the event of a serious incident disrupting normal services, a group may meet to ensure a structured reaction and coherence across your organisation.