

SERVICE POLICIES – PRODUCTION, REVIEW, APPROVAL AND STORAGE

SUMMARY

1. This report provides a brief overview of the Service's processes for producing, reviewing, approving and storing Service Policy and Guidance. These processes have been in place since 2011, following an extensive project to first make the transition from Service Orders to Service Policies & Guidance and secondly to ensure effective and robust policy approval and review processes.
2. The report also identifies a number of areas where the policy review process is being improved, in particular improvements to the Corporate Information Portal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. (a) Members take assurance from the processes currently in place for producing, reviewing and approving Service Policy and Guidance;
- (b) Members note the areas where improvements are being made to the Corporate Information Portal to further improve the policy review process.

REPORT DETAIL

4. *Overview*

The current processes for producing, reviewing, approving and storing Service Policy and Guidance have been in place since 2011. They are outlined within Service Policy SP1_2 (PGN1_2).

The current processes are the outcomes of a sustained project to first make the transition from Service Orders to Service Policies & Guidance and secondly to ensure effective policy approval and review processes.

All Policies and associated guidance are stored on the Service's Corporate information Portal and relevant Area Managers/Heads of Function are designated as being responsible for the production and review of policies for their areas.

Policy review periods vary between 1 and 5 years.

Management of the policy review and storage processes is undertaken by the Research and Policy Section via the Service Policy Administrator post.

All new policies/guidance and policy/guidance that after review has significantly changed undergo a 21 day consultation process. The consultation process is also managed by the Research & Policy Section.

Policy approval is by the relevant Board or CMT if the policy is of a corporate governance nature, e.g. Whistle Blowing Policy.

Scrutiny of the Policy Review process is undertaken by the Performance and Risk Board.

Flow charts associated with the production, review and approval of Service Policy and Guidance are attached.

5. *Areas for Improvement*

Work is underway to improve the storage and organisation of Service Policies on the Portal – this includes the reinstatement of automated workflows that inform those responsible for policies when review dates are due (this was an original feature of the process but was de-commissioned due to problems with the Sharepoint software on the Portal – currently notifications are done manually by the Research & Policy Section).

Another area being improved is the cleansing of the Portal of stored out of date policies and drafts (i.e. versions not stored in the policy area of the Portal) which are often accessed via the portal search engine.

Work is also currently in progress to fully refresh the portal and a request has been made to introduce a specific search engine for the Policy area of the Portal.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

6. Service Policy and Guidance supports all aspects of the Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

7. None arising directly

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8. None arising directly

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

9. None arising directly

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

10. None arising directly

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11. None arising directly

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

12. Appropriate communications to staff will be made once improvements to the Portal area are completed.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

13. Not applicable

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS


14. Service Policy SP1_2: Production of Service Policy and Associated Documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

15. (a) Members take assurance from the processes currently in place for producing, reviewing and approving Service Policy and Guidance;
- (b) Members note the areas where improvements are being made to the Corporate Information Portal to further improve the policy review process.

D SANDERS

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