

Policy Development Process

Introduction The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on the process to be followed when aligning, developing, drafting, implementing and reviewing policies during the shadow period for Ards and North Down Borough Council.

For the purposes of this document a policy is defined as: *Any practice, written document or decision of the Council which determines the principles and processes by which the Council carries out its business and functions.*

It is recognised that, during the shadow period, there are numerous decisions and policies to be implemented to make the Council fit for purpose on Day One. These guidelines are intended to provide a mechanism to efficiently make decisions and provide policies which are:

- Consistent in approach and developed systematically
- Fit for purpose and enable services to be delivered on 1st April 2015
- Aligned to stakeholder needs
- Compliant with legislative requirements

A copy of the process map for the below process can be found in Appendix 1.

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Policy Development Process, Continued

Identify requirement for policy	The need for a new policy, the alignment of existing policies or the adoption or adaptation of a single existing policy (as operated by one of the two legacy Councils) may be identified by the Council, Chief Executive, Transition Management Team or by relevant officers.
Agree Responsible Officer	The Chief Executive and Lead Policy Officer will, in conjunction with the relevant Department Heads, identify the Responsible Officer(s) (ROs) who will be tasked with the policy development.
Undertake research and consultation	Where there is a discretionary element on the implementation of the new policy, or amendments to an existing policy the ROs shall undertake, as far as is practicably possible, targeted research and consult with relevant internal and external stakeholders. The extent and nature of the research will vary depending on the policy being developed.
Draft the policy	The ROs should then proceed to draft the policy. The standard format and structure of a policy document can be found in Appendix 2.
Equality screening	All policies shall be equality screened to assess their impact or likely impact upon the nine Section 75 categories. The ROs will fill in the Equality Screening Form (available on the intranet) and email the completed Form, together with a copy of the policy, to the Equality Officer. The Equality Officer will then facilitate a review of screening forms with a peer group. Policies should not be presented to Council before being equality screened.

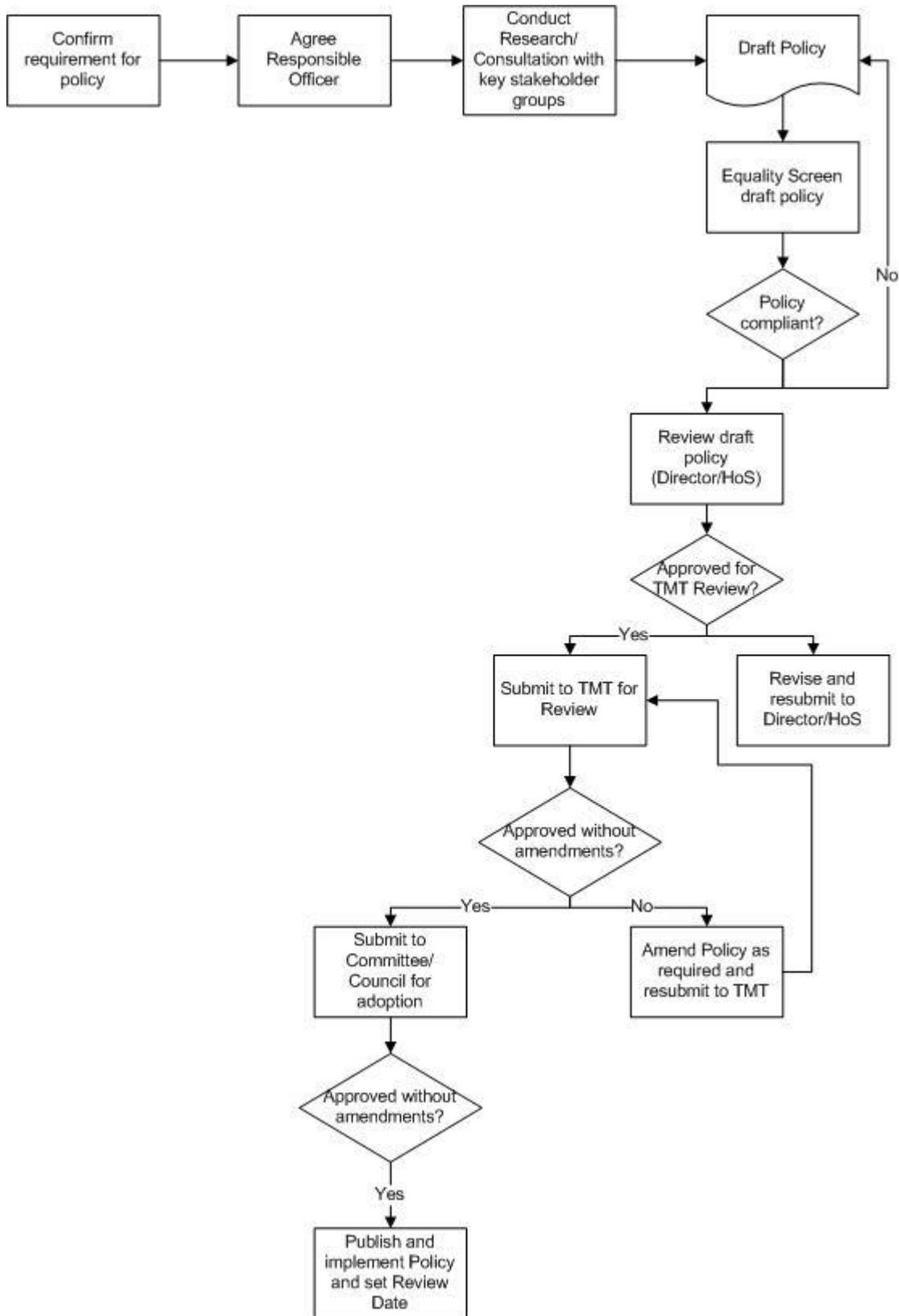
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Policy Development Process, Continued

Consultation	It is acknowledged that during the Shadow period time constraints may not allow extensive consultation. The External Consultative Panel will consider all external facing policies but, as they only meet three times a year, some may be retrospectively considered after adoption by Council. In such instances any significant issues arising will be addressed when the Policy is reviewed. The recognised Trade Unions and a relevant staff forum will also be consulted in relation to relevant internal policies.
Review draft policy	The Policy and a covering report should be submitted to Member Services for the next Transition Management Team (TMT) agenda.
Approval of policy by TMT	TMT shall either approve or may suggest amendments to be made. On some occasions the review and approval process may be undertaken by the Chief Executive and other NDADC relevant officers. The policy will then be submitted to the relevant Council Committee.
Approval of policy by Council	After Council approves the policy the ROs shall begin the implementation of the policy, subject to the effective date. Some will take immediate effect whilst other new policies will only come into effect on 1 st April 2105.
Publish, implement and review policy	Information on publishing and implementation of policies, as well as undertaking a review of a policy can be found in Appendix 3

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APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2

POLICY COVER SHEET

Policy Title	
Policy/File Reference	
Version	
Policy Summary	
Responsible Officer(s)	
Date of Equality Screening	
Date of consultation with Consultative Panel (external policies)	
Date of consultation with Unions and Staff Forum (internal policies)	
Date of Council approval	
Implementation date	
Appendices attached	
Next review date	

Revision History:

Version	Changes made by	Date	Reason for Change

Details of the Policy

This can be as detailed as required but should be the POLICY issues – procedures and examples should all be appendices to the Policy.

The Policy can be broken down into as many separate headings as necessary



APPENDIX 3

Implementation of Policies

Introduction	The RO(s) shall begin implementing the policy following approval by the Council if the decision takes immediate effect or on 1 st April 2105 if the policy only applies after vesting day.
Publication and communication of the policy	The RO(s) should consider to whom the policy needs to be communicated to eg staff, external bodies, consultees and the most appropriate communication method for each group e.g. intranet, Council website, Team Brief, mailshot, or public meetings. The RO shall liaise with the Lead Policy Officer and Communications Officer with respect to this.
Staff training	The RO(s) shall develop an outline of what training is needed, and refer this to the Head of HR in NDADC.
Monitoring the policy	It is important to establish at the outset what information and data will be required to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy. The data collected should be based as closely as possible on the outcomes and aims of the policy.
Review the policy	The review of a policy should be undertaken by the RO (s) within a maximum period of 2 years after its implementation, or at an agreed earlier time frame which allows for the gathering of performance information.
