

## REPORT TO PROCEDURES COMMITTEE – 20 APRIL 2018

### POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW FRAMEWORK – ROLE OF AREA COMMITTEES

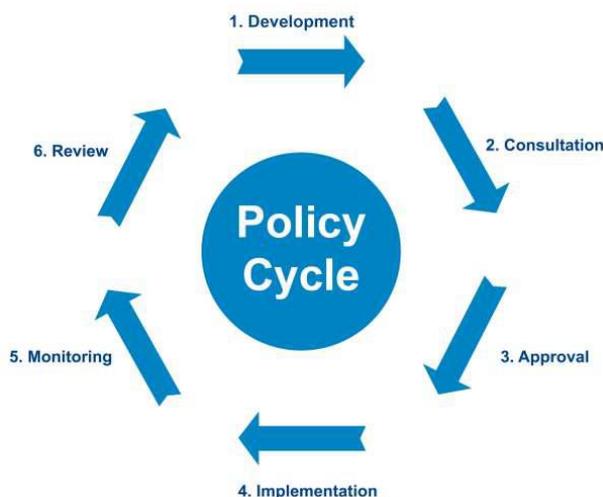
#### 1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Procedures Committee:

- 1.1 Note the role of Area Committees in the Policy Development & Review Framework;
- 1.2 Note the progress update on the implementation of the Policy Development & Review Framework; and
- 1.3 Suggest revisions to the framework as appropriate.

#### 2 Discussion

- 2.1 Within the [Scheme of Governance](#), effective from January 2017, a Policy Development & Review Framework for Aberdeenshire Council was confirmed. The framework was incorporated into Part 4A Scrutiny recognising the cyclical nature of policy development and review and the role of Elected Member scrutiny to ensure policies were being delivered effectively and propose a review of policy where the impact was not as anticipated.
- 2.2 The overarching aims of the Policy Framework are to:
  - Confirm the principles that guide policy development and review;
  - Establish standardised procedures to ensure that policies are developed, approved, monitored and reviewed consistently;
  - Provide a comprehensive, single point of reference for information relating to policy development and review.
- 2.3 The framework provides a logical process for the lifecycle of a policy which can be summarised as:



Role of Elected members

2.4 Elected Members and, in particular, Area Committees have a distinct role in policy development and review during specific stages in the cycle:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Role for Area Committees</b>	<b>Role for Policy Committees</b>	<b>Other Political Involvement</b>
<b>1. Development: Commissioning</b>	An area committee may recommend a policy is developed because of scrutiny undertaken.	<p>Policy development may be commissioned or initiated by policy committees, senior managers or any other council officer.</p> <p>A policy committee may recommend a policy is developed because of scrutiny undertaken.</p> <p>A policy committee may also request the development of a specific policy following the annual review of their policy framework.</p> <p>Irrespective of how a policy idea is commissioned, time must be spent during this stage in dialogue with the appropriate policy chair/vice-chair to secure agreement for the policy to come to committee.</p>	Further political discussion may be required or beneficial through pre-agenda or political group discussion, or sometimes Policy Budget Steering Group.
<b>2. Development: Engagement</b>	Engagement should be on a locality basis and should be designed to be as inclusive and engaging as possible using formats such as workshops or facilitated sessions. Engagement should be undertaken early in the process whilst		Members from the locality should be involved in any engagement activity.

Stage	Role for Area Committees	Role for Policy Committees	Other Political Involvement
	<p>ideas are being formulated and before decisions on options have been taken.</p>		
<p><b>3. Consultation</b></p>	<p>Specifically, there must be consultation with area committees.</p> <p>A starter paper should be submitted to all appropriate area committees detailing the core issues and how the proposed policy change might affect each Area or Service.</p> <p>Such reports should be submitted timeously to Area Managers to enable discussion at Area Management Teams should this be considered appropriate.</p> <p>The starter paper should set out the timetable for the area committee to submit its views and for the eventual consideration of the matter by policy committee.</p>		<p>Consultations will seek comments interested parties, internal or external, including Members.</p>
<p><b>4. Approval</b></p>		<p>Officer approved drafts should then be recommended for approval to the relevant policy committee at the next available opportunity. All</p>	

Stage	Role for Area Committees	Role for Policy Committees	Other Political Involvement
		<p>policies, whether new or revised, must be approved by Members.</p> <p>When preparing recommendations for approval to the relevant committee, consideration should be given to seeking delegated authority to make minor changes to the policy without reverting to committee.</p>	
<b>5. Monitoring</b>		<p>Each policy committee will consider an overview of their policy framework on an annual basis to identify gaps or review requirements.</p>	
<b>6. Review</b>	<p>Area committees have the discretion to request a policy review at any time.</p> <p>Area committees may also identify a requirement to review (or develop) a policy through Scrutiny.</p>	<p>Each policy committee will annually consider the need to review existing policies supported by the appropriate chief officer.</p> <p>Policy committees have the discretion to request a policy review at any time.</p> <p>Area committees may also identify a requirement to review (or develop) a policy through Scrutiny.</p>	<p>Incoming administrations may instruct the responsible senior officer to initiate a review where policies are not consistent with revised priorities.</p>

### Implementation of Framework

2.5 To manage the framework and ensure policies can be developed and reviewed appropriately, a policy register has been created within Pentana, the council's corporate performance management system. The register will allow

officers, members and residents to understand the policies that are in place to support effective service delivery and allow officers to manage the life cycle of a policy.

2.6 Services have identified all existing policies currently informing planning, decision making and delivery of business. Information collated includes:

- Lead officer
- Date the policy was approved,
- Responsible Policy Committee
- Date of review

This information and a copy of the policy (and any supporting operational procedures and resources) is retained in the register as a central repository.

2.7 It is anticipated that prior to Summer 2018 recess each Policy Committee will receive a report confirming the policies within the delegation of the Committee and advising Committee when each policy will be considered for review by the Committee over the next 12 months. A policy should be reviewed no later than five years from the date the policy was approved. It is anticipated that there may be policies which were approved prior to the Policy Development & Review Framework being adopted and a phased programme of reviews may be necessary.

2.8 A programme of awareness is planned to ensure officers are able to use the Policy Development & Review Framework effectively. Through Directorate Management Teams, officers will be reminded of the existence of the framework and the process in place for policy development. This will include an emphasis on the role for Area Committees, Policy Chairs and Policy Committees at each stage of developing or reviewing a policy. Learning material is being developed, accessible on ALDO to help officers become more familiar with the framework and best practice when developing and reviewing policies and associated procedures and advice and guidance is also available to officers through the Policy, Performance & Improvement team.

2.9 Changes to the framework have been proposed as part of the next review of the Scheme of Governance. These include:

- Updating the advice on privacy impact assessments to reflect the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations from May 2018
- Inclusion of Town Centre First Principle to ensure all policies take account of the principle where appropriate

The Policy Development & Review Framework will continue to be incorporated into Part 4 of the Scheme of Governance however it is proposed to separate out Part 4 into Part 4A Scrutiny and Part 4B Policy Development & Review Framework to make it easier to navigate to the guidance.

Procedures Committee may wish to suggest further revisions as part of considering this report.

2.10 The Monitoring Officer for the Committee has been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and is satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance.

### **3 Scheme of Governance**

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider this item as the Procedures Committee has a remit to consider proposed changes to Aberdeenshire Council's Scheme of Governance and to make recommendations on required amendments.

### **4 Implications and Risks**

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment has not been carried as this report is inform Committee of progress on the implementation of a policy framework. An Equality Impact Assessment was previously conducted when developing the framework and no impact was identified.
- 4.2 There are no financial, staffing or Town Centre First principle implications arising from this report.
- 4.3 No risks have been identified however the Policy Development & Review Framework helps to control the following risk on a Corporate Level:
- Reputation management

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