LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

Procedure note: **PN1049-01**

Policy framework: **PN1049**

Procedure for managing Business Management Policy Tools

Official

Key point summary

This Procedure explains how Business Management policies and organisational procedures are developed, approved, implemented and maintained in line with the LFB Policy Framework (PN1049). It provides a clear, consistent approach for Policy Owners and Authors, ensuring that policy tools are lawful, proportionate and properly governed.

Policy tools are managed through three stages:

- Design – define the need, select the correct tool, confirm the domain, determine whether the work is new or a change, and identify the approval route.
- Develop – draft the document, complete impact assessments, consult stakeholders, engage with the Policy Scrutiny Group where appropriate, and obtain approval.
- Deliver – communicate, publish and record the approved tool, apply scrutiny and assurance, and maintain it over time.

Supplementary guidance is provided to explain how centrally managed Business Management policy tools are supported by the Information Governance Policy Team and the Policy Scrutiny Group at key points in the process.

Throughout the process, Policy Owners remain responsible for ensuring that policy tools are accurate, appropriately approved, clearly communicated, properly recorded and kept up to date.

Introduction

This Procedure sets out how Business Management policy tools are developed, approved, implemented and maintained in accordance with the LFB Policy framework (PN1049). It provides a clear, structured approach for Policy Owners and Authors to follow, ensuring that policy tools are lawful, consistent, proportionate and properly governed.

The Procedure reflects the lifecycle established in the Framework, including requirements for tool selection, governance, impact assessment, consultation, approval, communication, records management and assurance. It is designed to be practical and proportionate, enabling Policy Owners to exercise appropriate judgement while maintaining clear accountability.

Policy tools should be managed through three broad stages:

Design → Develop → Deliver

Each stage groups related activities and helps ensure that policy tools are created and maintained in a structured and consistent way.

Procedure overview

Stage 1: Design

(Need → Tool → Domain → New or change → Approval route)

The Design stage establishes the purpose, scope and governance pathway for the policy tool before drafting begins.

Identify the need

The Policy Owner must clearly define the issue, requirement or risk that the policy tool is intended to address. This may arise from statutory change, organisational priorities, operational learning, audit findings or identified gaps.

Select the appropriate policy tool

The Owner must determine whether the requirement is best addressed through a Strategy, Policy, Organisational Procedure, Local Procedure or Guidance, based on the purpose, scale and level of prescription required.

Confirm the functional domain

The Owner must confirm that the tool sits within the Business Management domain and consider whether there are any public-facing or operational implications that may affect governance, approval routes or communication.

Determine whether the work is new or a change

The Owner must establish whether:

- a new policy tool is required, or
- an existing tool is to be amended.

For amendments, the Owner must determine whether the change is minor, substantive or major, in line with the Framework. Changes that alter intent must follow the full approval process.

Confirm the approval route

The Owner must identify the appropriate Approver and governance route based on the type of tool, its impact and the Scheme of Governance. Where required, early advice should be sought from General Counsel Corporate Governance team or the Policy Scrutiny Group.

Stage 2: Develop

(Draft → Engage →Impact assessments → Consultation → Approve)

The Develop stage is where the policy tool is created, tested and formally approved.

Draft the policy tool

The Author/Drafter prepares the document using the approved template, ensuring that it follows the required structure, is written in clear language, and aligns with the Policy Framework.

Early engagement with the Policy Scrutiny Group

Policy Owners should consider seeking early advice from the Policy Scrutiny Group during the Develop stage, particularly where a policy is new, substantially amended, cross-cutting, or may introduce a new or contentious policy position.

The Group provides advisory input to help ensure that:

- the correct policy tool and approval route have been identified,

- amendments have been appropriately classified as minor or substantive,
- impact assessments and consultation have been considered proportionately, and
- communication expectations are clear.

Engagement with the Group does not replace consultation and does not remove responsibility from Policy Owners or Approvers. Its purpose is to support good governance and avoid avoidable issues prior to formal approval.

Complete impact assessments

The Policy Owner must consider the implications of the proposed policy or change and complete any required formal impact assessments, including:

- Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA),
- Health and Safety impact or risk assessment,
- Sustainable Development Impact Assessment (SDIA),
- Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA).

These ensure that policies are lawful, safe, inclusive and proportionate prior to approval.

Carry out consultation

The Policy Owner must consult with relevant stakeholders to inform development and validate practical application. This may include:

- affected internal teams,
- subject matter experts,
- Representative Bodies (including Trade Unions),
- corporate functions (e.g. HR, Finance, Legal, ICT).

The level of consultation must be proportionate to the scale and impact of the policy or change, and Industrial Relations procedures must be followed where applicable.

Seek approval

The completed policy tool must be submitted through the appropriate governance route for formal approval. The Approver confirms adoption; responsibility for the ongoing management of the policy remains with the Owner.

Stage 3: Deliver

(Communicate → Publish → Record → Scrutiny → Assure → Maintain)

The Deliver stage ensures that the policy tool is properly implemented, communicated and maintained over time.

Communicate

The Policy Owner must ensure that changes are communicated in a way that is proportionate to their scale and impact. Minor updates may require only routine notification, while more significant changes require targeted or broader communication. Internal Communications should be engaged where appropriate.

Publish

The approved policy tool must be published in the appropriate location (e.g. Brigade Wide Documents Library), ensuring that staff can easily access the current version.

Record

The Policy Owner must ensure that the policy tool is properly recorded and managed in line with records management requirements. This includes:

- maintaining a single authoritative version,
- ensuring version control is clear and auditable,
- archiving previous versions appropriately.

Scrutiny

Recently approved policy tools may be subject to review by the Policy Scrutiny Group as part of its routine oversight activity. This provides retrospective assurance that governance, impact assessment, consultation and communication requirements have been applied appropriately. The Group's role is advisory and does not affect the validity of the approval or remove responsibility from the Policy Owner or Approver.

Assure

The Owner must apply a proportionate approach to assurance, using existing mechanisms such as management oversight, audit activity, feedback or learning. This ensures that the policy is being followed and is functioning as intended.

Maintain (including review cycles)

The Policy Owner is responsible for ensuring that the policy tool remains current, accurate and effective over time.

For policies and organisational procedures, the Owner must:

- carry out a formal review at least every three years,
- bring the tool forward for earlier review where there is a trigger event (e.g. legislative change, audit findings, organisational learning or significant change), and
- ensure that review dates are recorded and monitored in line with records management arrangements.

For local procedures and guidance, Owners and Team Leads should:

- keep tools under regular, active review through day-to-day use,
- update content as required to reflect changes in practice, learning or local arrangements, and
- ensure that tools remain accurate and fit for purpose at all times.

These tools are intended to be used frequently and updated as needed, and are supported by more flexible approval arrangements. As a result, their currency should be maintained through ongoing management and use, rather than reliance on fixed review cycles.

Maintain

The Policy Owner is responsible for keeping the policy tool current. This includes:

- reviewing in line with agreed cycles,
- updating in response to legislative change, organisational learning or emerging risks,
- ensuring that withdrawn or superseded versions are clearly identified and archived.

Supplementary guidance: Document governance arrangements for Business Management policies and organisational procedures

Business Management policies and organisational procedures are subject to central governance and publication arrangements. This section explains how the Information Governance Policy Team and the Policy Scrutiny Group support the Design → Develop → Deliver lifecycle set out in this Procedure.

It does not replace the core process; it clarifies roles, hand-offs and expectations for centrally managed tools.

Design stage – early engagement and setup

At the outset of the Design stage, Policy Owners should contact the Information Governance Policy Team. Early engagement ensures that:

- the correct policy tool has been selected,
- the Business Management domain has been confirmed,
- the appropriate approval route is identified,
- and any dependencies or governance considerations are understood before drafting begins.

Where a policy is new, substantially amended, cross-cutting, or potentially contentious, Owners should also consider early engagement with the Policy Scrutiny Group. This provides advisory input on governance, classification of amendments, likely impact assessment requirements, and anticipated communication needs.

Early engagement is advisory and does not remove accountability from the Owner or Approver.

Develop stage – drafting, impacts, consultation and approval

During the Develop stage:

- Drafting should use the approved templates provided by the Information Governance Policy Team.
- Amendments to existing tools must be made using tracked changes to ensure an auditable record.

Policy Owners remain responsible for:

- completing required impact assessments,
- undertaking proportionate consultation (including Representative Bodies where applicable),
- and ensuring evidence of both is available before approval.

The Policy Scrutiny Group may be engaged during this stage to sense-check:

- whether amendments are correctly classified,
- whether impacts and consultation are proportionate,
- and whether the proposed communication approach is appropriate.

Once the tool is ready, the Information Governance Policy Team will support final governance checks and progress the document through the agreed approval route.

Deliver stage – communication, publication and records management

Following approval:

- Policy Owners are responsible for determining and delivering appropriate communications.
- The Information Governance Policy Team will:
    - assign policy or procedure numbers (for new tools),
    - update version and review metadata (for amended tools),
    - register the tool centrally, and
    - publish the approved version in the authoritative repository.

Records management requirements are applied at this point to ensure:

- a single authoritative version,
- clear version history,
- and appropriate archiving of superseded or withdrawn documents.

As part of its periodic activity, the Policy Scrutiny Group will review newly issued or updated tools to provide retrospective assurance that governance, impacts and communications have been handled appropriately. Learning from this review may inform future advice and the quarterly policy update communications.



This procedure should be read with:

- PN1049 – Policy framework
- PN0830 - Sustainable development impact assessments
- PN0673 - Risk assessment procedure
- Hotwire guidance on Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)