## Report of the Performance and Compliance Co-ordinator

## Subject: Corporate Improvement Project - Improving management and communication of Corporate Policies and Standards update for Members

### 1. Purpose of Corporate Policies and Standards

- Set the guidelines and parameters for how the Authority operates, helping it to run smoothly and efficiently.
- Communicate the values and vision of the Authority and its legislative requirements, ensuring employees, Members and volunteers understand exactly what is expected of them in certain situations. As a result, they promote consistency across the Authority and provide guidance to employees when issues or disputes arise.
- Through setting out levels of responsibility, for individuals, teams, managers, senior officers, Members they provide a framework for managing accountability and delegation within the Authority.
- Support compliance with relevant legislation, and subsequently help reduce liability or other risks. Internal Auditors and regulators will consider the policies that we have in place and whether they are sufficient.
- Provide clarification and reinforce the standards expected of staff, Members and Volunteers in their professional dealings. Help Authority manage staff effectively by defining what is acceptable and unacceptable in the workplace.
- Help the public know the standard of service they can expect from the Authority and promote transparency in terms of decision making.
- Policies and Standards play a central role in supporting the Authority's Corporate Code of Governance.

### 2. Improving our Approach

It was identified by the Performance and Compliance Officer that there was a need to improve our approach to management and communication of corporate policies and standards:

| Issue | Opportunity for Improvement |
|---|---|
| Staff were having difficulty accessing the policies they needed or knowing what policies were in force. | Developing new Corporate Document Hub on Authority new staff Sharepoint intranet site with dedicated section for corporate policies and standards. |
| Lack of clarity on status and dates on some policy/ standards related documents. | Introducing new standards and policy templates with new version control sheet. |

| | To be applied to all active and new policies. |
|---|---|
| Issues around version control and policies being held by departments and not centrally. Some work had been done to move policies to central location, however departments had retained copies and there was still a level of uncertainty and poor document management. Change in key officers also demonstrated potential business continuity risks when held at department level. | Using Microsoft 365 – Sharepoint/ Teams to improve document control and management through creation of Corporate Policy Review Microsoft Team. All Corporate Policy documents to be held centrally on this Team as central depository. Use of classification functionalities to provide status information to different documents. A PDF version of policies stored here will be published to relevant section of Authority's Corporate Document section of new intranet |
| No co-ordinated and prioritised annual forward work programme in place. Some policies have not been subject to regular review or have missed planned review dates. | Identifying clear lead officers for each set of policy areas. Initial review and movement of all policies and standards into new template with policy control. Identifying which need light touch review and what needs more substantive review. Once this initial work has been completed an ongoing forward work programme will be developed with reminder process in place. |

## 3. Actions carried out to date

- Policies and Standards section created by IT team in Corporate Document Hub of Authority's new staff Sharepoint intranet site.
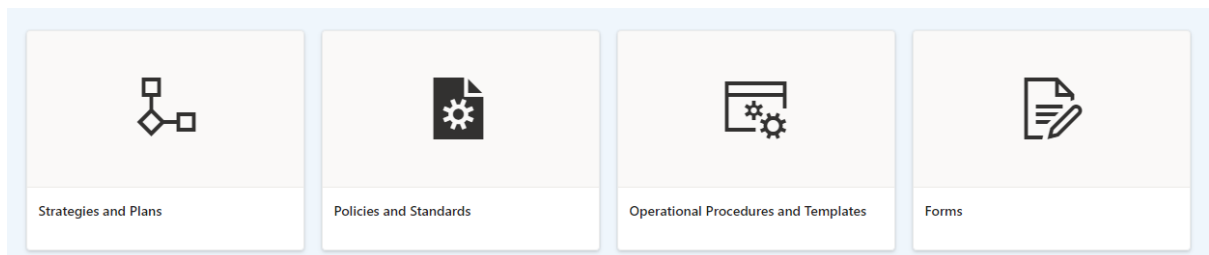


- New Standards, Policy and Procedure templates introduced with new version control sheet.
- Corporate Policy Review Team set up with channels for each of the assurance areas, classification system applied to help with monitoring of items.
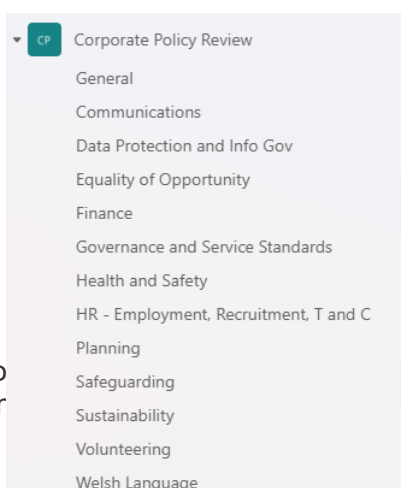
- Grouping of policies under key assurance areas with clear lead officers from Management Team linked to new structure. This structure is reflected in the channels created.

| Assurance Areas | Lead Officers – Management Team |
|---|---|
| Governance | CEO. Democratic Services Manager |
| Finance | Head of Finance and Fundraising |
| Safeguarding | Head of Engagement and Inclusion/ Head of People Services |
| Equality | Head of People Services |
| Welsh Language | Democratic Services Manager |
| Sustainability | Head of Decarbonisation |
| Planning (Relates only to Planning policies that are outside scope of Local Development Plan or Supplementary Planning Guidance) | Director of Placemaking, Decarbonisation and Engagement |
| Communications | Head of Marketing and Communications |
| Data Protection and Information Governance | Head of Decarbonisation, Democratic Services Manager, CEO (Data Protection). <br><br> Data Protection Officer and Performance and Compliance Officer will support development and review of Data Protection Policies. |
| Volunteering | Head of People Services |
| Health and Safety | Head of People Services. <br><br> Health and Safety Project Officer will support the development and review of Health and Safety policies. |
| HR – Employment, Recruitment and Terms and Conditions | Head of People Services. |

- Working with teams to collate and move existing policies and standards related documents from F Drive into the relevant channels on the Corporate Policy Review Team. Working with lead officers to review status of these and implement process of moving them to new template and carrying out light touch/ more substantive reviews. Ensuring version control sheet is completed as part of this process.
- HR Team have been having team policy review sessions and are utilising Expert HR to support policy review.
- Publishing policies moved into new template onto the new staff sharepoint intranet site.
- Reviewing of corporate procedures, templates, forms and guidance alongside this work.

## 4. Ongoing Process

- This is an ongoing process with significant number of policies and standards needing to be moved into new templates and reviewed. Progress is dependent on staff capacity and managing competing priorities.
- In terms of HR policies, officers are looking at amalgamating policies as part of this process to make certain policy areas clearer and easier for staff to follow. It will also assist with future updating of policies.
- Authority has gone through a restructure with changes to roles and responsibilities. This has provided opportunity for officers new in post to take a fresh look at some policies and our approach in some areas.
- Policies that require substantive review or relate to accountability areas that have not gone to the Authority for a long time will take longer to update and be ready for publication due to consultation and approval processes that need to be applied.
- The Authority staff handbook on the new intranet site is to be developed and will be in a new format including having hyperlinks to relevant documents held on the Corporate Policies and Standards section.

**Corporate Policy/ Standards List - Status and Forward Work Programme**

**Governance**

Management Team Leads: Democratic Services Manager and CEO

| Standards | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| PCNPA Standing Orders | Last updated in August 2017. Due to be reviewed 2024/25. Implement 5 year review cycle going forwards. Assess whether can be moved into new template or kept as is, due to nature of document. |
| Members Code of Conduct | The Code of Conduct was revised in 2016, when the Authority adopted the Model Code of Conduct when it was produced in 2016. It hasn't been updated since. Implement 5 year review cycle going forwards. Assess whether can be moved into new template or kept as is, due to nature of document. |
| Members Planning Code of Good Practice | Last updated 2021. Implement 5 year review cycle going forwards. Next review due 2026. |
| Code of Corporate Governance | To be moved into new template. Was approved by NPA 26/10/22. Next review due 2025 as part of three year review cycle. |
| **Policy** | **Status/ Forward Work Programme** |
| Whistleblowing Policy (POL_G1) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Complaints Handling Policy (POL_G2) | To be moved into new template. Was approved 20/9/23. Next review due 2026. |
| Unacceptable Behaviour by Complainants Policy (POL_G3) | To be moved into new template. Was approved 20/9/23. Next review due 2026. |
| Risk Management Policy (POL_G4) | New policy approved by Members at 20/3/24 NPA, subject to minor amendments. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Document being prepared for publication on staff intranet and for Members. Responding to internal audit recommendations. |
| Corporate Policy Development and Approval Policy (POL_G5) | To be developed. Need identified by Performance and Compliance Officer to provide greater clarity to Corporate Policy development and approval processes. First draft provided to Management Team for comment. |

**Note:** HR Policy Development, Approval and Implementation Policy will be replaced by Corporate Policy Development and Approval Policy (POL_G5) which will cover all policies including HR relate policies.

**Finance**

Management Team Lead: Head of Finance and Fundraising

| Standards | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Financial Standards | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Standing Orders relating to Contracting Procedures | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. Links with wider work being carried out relating to Socially Responsible Procurement Duty strategy, review of sustainable procurement policy and legislative changes |
| **Policy** | **Status/ Forward Work Programme** |
| Financial Reserves Policy (POL_F1) | Policy approved by NPA as part of annual Draft Budget Planning report that went to NPA 7/2/24. Policy being moved into new template for publication on staff intranet. |
| Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Policy Statement (POL_F2) | Policy approved by NPA as part of annual Draft Budget Planning report that went to NPA 7/2/24. Policy being moved into new template for publication on staff intranet. |
| Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy (POL_F3) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Money Laundering Policy (POL_F4) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Ethics and Due Diligence for Funding Policy (POL_F5) | To be developed. Need for policy identified by fundraising team. |

**Safeguarding**

Management Team Lead: Head of Engagement and Inclusion. Head of People Services.

| Policy | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Safeguarding Policy (POL_S1) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. Safeguarding group asked to provide comment. Outstanding internal audit action |

| | relating to safer recruitment to be applied to policy. |
|---|---|

## Equality

Management Team Lead: Head of People Services

| Policy | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Equal Opportunities Policy (POL_E1) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. Strategic advisor has been asked to provide comments. |

## Welsh Language

Management Team Lead: Democratic Services Manager

| Standards | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Welsh Language Standards - Compliance Notice, Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 | Assess whether can be moved into new template or kept as is, due to nature of document. |
| Welsh Language Standards – Comments and Complaints | Assess whether can be moved into new template or kept as is, due to nature of document. |
| **Policy** | **Status/ Forward Work Programme** |
| Welsh Language Policy (POL_WL1) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Welsh Language Awarding Grants Policy (POL_WL2) | To be developed. Need for policy identified by Welsh Language Commissioner following annual review. |

## Sustainability

Management Team Lead: Head of Decarbonisation

| Policy | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Environmental Policy (POL_ SU1) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Asset Management and Acquisition Policy (POL_SU2) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Sustainable Procurement Policy (POL_SU3) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Travel Policy (POL_SU4) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Fleet Policy (POL_SU5) | To be developed. Need for policy identified by Head of Decarbonisation. |

## Planning

(Note: Relates only to Planning policies that are outside scope of Local Development Plan or Supplementary Planning Guidance)

Management Team Leads: Director of Placemaking, Decarbonisation and Engagement

| Policy | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Planning and Enforcement and Compliance Policy (POL_ P1) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |

## Communications

Management Team Lead: Head of Marketing and Communications

| Policy | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Branding Policy (POL_ C1) | Policy reviewed by Head of Marketing and Communications and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Advertising Policy (POL_ C2) | Policy reviewed by Head of Marketing and Communications and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Corporate Media Policy (POL_ C3) | Policy reviewed by Head of Marketing and Communications and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Corporate Style Policy (POL_ C4) | Policy reviewed by Head of Marketing and Communications and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Social Media Policy (POL_ C5) | Policy reviewed by Head of Marketing and Communications and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Due to fast changing nature of social media landscape it was decided this policy should be reviewed annually - policy next due for review November 2024. |
| Website Style Policy (POL_ C6) | Policy reviewed by Head of Marketing and Communications and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |

## Data Protection and Information Governance

Management Team Leads: Head of Decarbonisation, Democratic Services Manager, CEO (Data Protection)

Note: Data Protection Officer and Performance and Compliance Officer will support development and review of Data Protection Policies.

| Policy | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| IT User Policy (POL_IG1) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. Consultation on revised policy complete, due to go to NPA for approval. Outstanding internal audit actions considered as part of review. |
| Information and Data Security Policy (POL_IG2) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. Consultation on revised policy complete, due to go to NPA for approval. Outstanding internal audit actions considered as part of review. |
| Data Protection Policy (POL_IG3) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. DPO to review as part of process. |
| Record Management and Retention Policy (POL_IG4) | To be developed. Need for policy identified by Record Management Team and in discussions with DPO. Will link in with wider work on retention schedule and development of sensitivity labels. |
| CCTV Policy and Register (POL_IG5) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. Staff asked to review CCTV register, DPO will then be asked to review policy. Register reviewed annually. |
| Publication Scheme (POL_IG6) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. However, format may be revised to reflect approach taken by other local Authorities. |
| Drone Policy (POL IG7) | To be developed. Need identified when CCTV policy was developed. Initial draft created, but was put on hold needs to be revisited following Authority restructure. |

**Volunteering**

Management Team Lead: Head of People Services

| Standards | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Volunteer Handbook (Includes PCNPA Volunteers' Charter) | Currently being reviewed by volunteering development officer. Discussion needed on whether due to nature of document the new standards template is suitable for it. |
| **Policy** | **Status/ Forward Work Programme** |
| Volunteer Policy (POL_V1) | To be reviewed and moved into new template |

**Health and Safety**

Management Team Lead: Head of People Services

**Note**: Health and Safety Project Officer will support the development and review of Health and Safety policies.

**Note:** Health and Safety Officer to review the current Health and Safety policies in 2024/25 to see if any of them would be better placed as Operational Procedures.

| Standards | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Visitor Safety Principles | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| **Policy** | **Status/ Forward Work Programme** |
| Health and Safety Policy (POL_HS1) | Updated Health and Safety Policy approved by Members on 20/3/24, subject to minor amendments. Document being prepared for publication on staff intranet and for Members. |
| Health and Safety Risk Assessment Policy (POL_HS2) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Incident Reporting and Investigating Policy (POL_HS3) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| No Smoking Policy (POL_HS4) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Display Screen Assessment (POL_HS5) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Electricity in the Workplace (POL_HS6) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Emergency Procedures Policy (POL_HS7) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| First Aid Policy (POL_HS8) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| The Management of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy (POL_HS9) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Water Safety Policy (POL_HS10) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Manual Handling Policy (POL_HS11) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |

| | |
|---|---|
| New and Expectant Mothers Policy (POL_HS12) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Health and Safety of New Workers Policy (POL_HS13) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Noise at Work Policy (POL_HS14) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Safety Sings and Signals Policy (POL_HS15) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Training for Working Safely Policy (POL_HS16) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Hand Arm Vibration Policy (POL_HS17) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Whole Body Vibration Policy (POL_HS18) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Working at Height Policy (POL_HS19) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Work Equipment and Machinery Policy (POL_HS20) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Workplace Welfare and Environment Policy (POL_HS21) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Young Person's Safety Policy (POL_HS22) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Work Related Stress Policy (POL_HS23) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. However, outstanding internal audit action on this policy suggests wider review needed, that will be linked to wider review of Employee Health and Well-being Strategy. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Safety Consultation Policy (POL_HS24) | Policy reviewed by Health and Safety Project Officer and moved into new template 2023. Published on new staff intranet site policy section. Policy next due for review 2026. |
| Contractor Management Policy (POL_HS25) | To be developed. Need for policy identified by Health and Safety Officer. |
| Fire Safety Policy (POL_HS26) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Lone Working Policy (POL_HS27) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Personal Safety Policy (POL_HS28) | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. |
| Asbestos Management Plan Policy (POL_HS29) | To be developed. Need for policy identified by Health and Safety Officer following internal audit recommendation. |
| Tree Safety Policy (POL_HS29) | Wider organisational discussion needed on whether this policy is still required. |
| Bad Weather Policy (POL_HS30) | Wider organisational discussion needed on whether this policy is still required. |

## HR – Employment, Recruitment and Terms and Conditions

Management Team Lead: Head of People Services

Note: HR are looking at amalgamating policies as part of review process to make certain policy areas clearer and easier for staff to follow. List below captures proposed new set of policies that will be in place.

| Standards | Status/ Forward Work Programme |
|---|---|
| Employee Code of Conduct | Currently being reviewed and moved into new template. Will link into wider work on review of values. |
| Manager Behaviour Framework | To be reviewed and moved into new template. Will link into wider work on review of values. |
| Performance Management Framework | To be reviewed and moved into new template. Will link into wider work on review of values. Capability policy to be amalgamated into this framework. |
| **Policy** | **Status/ Forward Work Programme** |
| Recruitment Policy (POL_HR1) | New Policy being developed by HR. A number of existing policies will be consolidated into this policy, including Reference, Job Shadowing, Student Work Experience, Recruitment of People with a Criminal Record, Handling of DBS. |
| Pay and Reward Policy (POL_HR2) | New Policy being developed by HR. A number of existing policies will be consolidated into this policy, including Long Service Policy Award, compensation policy, grading appeals policy, additional duties policy. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Employee Volunteering Policy (POL_HR3) | Approved 13/9/23. Published to new staff intranet in the revised template. Next due for review: 2026 |
| Training Policy (POL_HR4) | To be reviewed and moved into new template |
| Time Off Work Policy (POL_HR5) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. A number of existing policies will be consolidated into this policy, including Holidays and Time Off Work - Holiday Entitlement, Buying Additional Holiday, Holiday Protection, Time Off Work and Compassionate Leave. Legislative Changes to be considered. |
| Flexible Working Policy (POL_HR6) | Reviewed by HR and moved into new template. Finalising document for publication to staff intranet. Carry out wider review in advance of January 2025, including review of procedures and supporting flexi time recording spreadsheet. |
| Home and Hybrid Working Policy (POL_HR7) | To be moved into new template. Carry out wider review in advance of January 2025, linked to review of flexible working policy. |
| Sickness Absence Policy (POL_HR8) | Reviewed by HR. Finalise movement into new template for Management Team approval and publication on intranet. No substantial changes, policy consolidates following into one policy - long and short term sickness and considerations around menopause, pregnancy and disability. |
| Employee Health and Well-being Policy (POL_HR9) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. Outstanding internal audit action relating to this policy. Will take account of wider work being carried out on staff health and well-being. |
| Family Friendly Policy (POL_HR10) | New Policy being developed by HR to encompass all family friendly policies. Policies on maternity, paternity, adoption leave, carers leave will be consolidated into this policy. Will take account of new legislative changes. |
| Bullying and Harassment Policy (POL_HR11) | Reviewed by HR and moved into new template. Finalising document for publication to staff intranet |
| Dignity at Work Policy (POL_HR12) | To be reviewed and moved into new template |
| Domestic Abuse Policy (POL_HR13) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. HR Officer attending training which will inform review. |
| Drugs and Alcohol Abuse Policy (POL_HR14) | Reviewed by HR and moved into new template. No major changes. Finalising document for publication to staff intranet. |
| Reorganisation and Redundancy Policy (POL_HR15) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. Consider if Holiday Protection Policy or time off |

| | work policy should be consolidated into this policy or Time off work policy. |
|---|---|
| Retirement and Pension Policy (POL_HR16) | To be reviewed and moved into new template. |
| LGPA Employer Discretionary Policy (POL_HR17) | Updated policy approved by NPA 30/1/2019 to meet the requirements of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) (Amendment) Regulations 2018. To be moved into new template. |

**Recommendations**: Members are asked to receive and note the update report on Improving management and communication of Corporate Policies and Standards/ Corporate Policy List - Status and Forward Work Programme.