



Overview and Scrutiny Board 18 March 2020

Subject Heading:	Policy and Strategy Development Framework
SLT Lead:	Jane West, Chief Operating Officer
Report Author and contact details:	Sandy Hamberger, Assistant Director of Policy, Performance and Community (01708 434506) sandyhamberger@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	The Policy and Strategy Development Framework is not a statutory document but in line with good practice, and to ensure consistency, a policy and strategy development framework has been developed alongside a key policy list.
Financial summary:	<p>There are no financial implications arising from this report which is for information only.</p> <p>The implementation and monitoring of the key policy library is anticipated to be contained within existing budgets.</p>

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	[X]
Places making Havering	[X]
Opportunities making Havering	[X]
Connections making Havering	[X]

SUMMARY

In line with good practice, a high-level framework has been written to provide in-house guidance for the development of policies and strategies and to provide a

consistent approach to all stages of policy / strategy formation, approval and review.

Attached as an appendix to this is a library of current policies and strategies in Havering, which will be maintained corporately (by Policy, Performance and Communities), so that members and officers have up to date information readily available for review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following comments from the Opportunities Theme Board in February 2020 the Overview & Scrutiny board are asked:

- a) To consider the attached Policy and Strategy Development Framework
- b) To note the status of current policies and strategies as set out in Appendix 1.

REPORT DETAIL

Background

Attached to this report is a Policy and Strategy Development Framework (Appendix 1), which has been produced to provide in-house guidance to staff responsible for developing policies and strategies.

The purpose of the framework is to provide a consistent approach to all stages of policy and strategy development, as well as ensuring the Council has consistent, relevant and up-to-date governance documentation. This supports the 2019 LGA Peer Review improvement recommendation (number 9).

It is important to ensure that all policies and strategies are aligned to corporate objectives and new documents are not developed in isolation from existing policies and strategies. Essentially the Policy and Strategy Development Framework and Key Policy Library will be for operational usage but Members will have access to underpin their decision-making and scrutiny.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) considered the framework in January 2020 and agreed the next step would be to disseminate to Opportunities Theme Board, then to present to Overview and Scrutiny Board for your information.

The key policy list (Appendix 2) shows that the council have over 300 policies and strategies. During the Opportunities Theme Board, it was agreed that a review of the key policy list will be undertaken within six months. This review is to detect any duplicated policies and to identify any policies and strategies that do not meet the definition as set out within the framework. We will then start to look to see which of

the policies on the list are to be kept, decommissioned or amalgamated together in the hope to reduce the number of policies held within the council.

For Information

1. The Key Policy Library has a 'RAG Rating' column for internal monitoring purposes. This defines the status of each policy and strategy as follows:
 - a. Green indicates that the policy / strategy has been completed and is in date and being used;
 - b. Amber indicates that the policy / strategy is due to be refreshed but that there is a current version still in date or an older version is still in use;
 - c. Red indicates that the policy / strategy is due to be refreshed and an older version is not being used;
 - d. Blue indicates that the document is either no longer needed, or that the document is newly written and awaiting sign-off.
2. Overall, significant progress has been made with populating the Key Policy Library. There are some gaps in information but the library is a working document and will be updated regularly.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The implementation and monitoring of the key policy library is anticipated to be contained within existing budgets. If through these processes pressures on budgets materialise, these will be flagged and escalated through the appropriate channels as part of regular monthly budget monitoring.

Legal implications and risks:

The Policy and Strategy Development Framework and Key Policy Library will be for operational usage but Members will have access to underpin their decision-making and scrutiny roles.

The Framework states that when developing a policy, early legal advice should be sought on the implications of such a proposal.

The Council can be held to account for departure from any of its policies by:

- internal complaints
- a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman
- or by way of Judicial Review.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no HR implications or risks that impact directly on the Council's workforce as a result of the recommendations. The Framework is an internal guidance document designed to inform operational activity.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Framework sets out an expectation that a completed Equalities and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) checklist is included on all future policies and strategies and that this is used to determine whether a full EqHIA is required. The checklist has been included within the templates and is further explained within the Framework.

The EqHIA checklist has been completed for the Framework itself and it was determined that a full EqHIA is not required as this document is for internal guidance only.