

Item: 17

Title: Review of policies and procedures

Gweithredu / Action required	Approval
Amseru / Timing	Urgent
Argymhelliad / Recommendation	<p>We recommend that the Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the rationale for a review of our developing governance framework and agree the need for external support to review our policies and procedures. 2. Note and agree the proposed approach to a full review of policies and procedures.
Risg / Risk	<p>Robust policies and procedures ensure good governance, compliance with statutory requirements and they keep our organisation safe. They are also key to establishing a common understanding and organisational culture.</p> <p>This decision is linked to the following corporate risks:</p> <p>Organisational culture - unable to establish common culture early on may have longer term impacts.</p> <p>Finance - unplanned expenditure incurred due to uncertainty around demand, weak approval systems or fraud, leading to costs exceeding budget.</p> <p>National approach - unable to embed a national approach, leading to a lack of understanding, poorly designed systems, and inefficiencies in systems.</p> <p>Statutory obligations - Uncertainty of scope and extent of statutory obligations (known and unknown) leading to</p>

	failure to meet wider legal and regulatory obligations and/or fines or losses.
Cyllid / Finance	<p>We propose that the work is undertaken in two phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The cost of phases 1 (details can be found below) is expected to be below the threshold for Board approval (<£25k). We estimate this could be met from unallocated funding for 2023-2024 - We anticipate that there will be a need for phase 2 (details can be found below). The cost of this phase would need to be met from 2024-25 budget. We anticipate that the cost of phase 2 will require Board approval.
Amcan Cynllun Corfforaethol / Corporate Plan Objective	Priority 07: Be a well-run, trusted and ambitious organisation.
Cydraddoldeb, amrywiaeth a chynhwysiant / Equity, diversity and inclusion	N/A
Cyfathrebu / Communications	<p>Please tick one of the following boxes if this activity will have an impact on:</p> <p>Internal: our people <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>External: our customers/partners/stakeholders <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>External: our organisation's reputation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
Cymeradwyaeth / Approval/Clearance	Chief Executive
Trafodaethau/ Penderfyniadau Blaenorol / Previous discussions/decisions	N/A
Awdur/ Cyflwyno / Author/presenting	Ceri Sullivan – Interim Head of Governance and Board Secretary

Dyddiad / Date	16.01.2024
Cefndir / Background	
<p>During the establishment of Llais, Welsh Government set up the Governance and Finance Workstream to oversee the governance and finance arrangements for the new body.</p> <p>The workstream consisted of policy leads from across Welsh Government. Part of their role was to advise on day 1 requirements for Llais. This included the required policies and procedures for a Welsh Government public body.</p> <p>Our governance framework and supporting policies and procedures were created, quality assured by the workstream and signed off by our Board in advance of Llais becoming operational. We made a commitment to review these policies and procedures after one year of operations to determine if they were fit for purpose.</p> <p>In addition to this, a number of policies and procedures were transferred from the former Community Health Councils in Wales, the majority of these were NHS All Wales documents. The transfer took place on the understanding that Llais would review and refine all documents and make the necessary changes to ensure they were aligned to Llais’s culture and status as a Welsh Government Sponsored Body.</p> <p>Through our learning from other Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies and from being operational, we have identified some gaps in our list of policies and procedures. Whilst these policies and procedures weren’t previously identified as ‘day 1 essential’, they are important documents that we feel we should have as a public body.</p> <p>Through our discussions with regulatory bodies, we have learned more about our statutory requirements as well as the non-statutory expectations of public bodies in Wales. Whilst we have learned a lot from our engagement with stakeholder, we’re not confident that we have a comprehensive understanding of these expectations.</p> <p>Llais has over 150 policies, procedures, standards and guidance documents.</p>	
Manylion / Detail	

As a new organisation we have the opportunity to shape our policies and procedures so that they are effective, efficient and support the type of organisational culture we are striving for.

We recognise that our internal auditors play a key role in determining the effectiveness of our policies, procedures and controls, we require additional support to review our approach and to identify any gaps as early as possible.

We propose that we commence a tender exercise to procure a supplier to:

1. Review existing governance documents and ensure they reflect best practice and are appropriate based on the legislative provisions that established Llais; and create a holistic process for ongoing review and approvals. This will include suggestions on how we can strengthen our governance framework and supporting documents.
2. Carry out a gap analysis of current policies and procedures and identify additional key policies that need to be created. This would be based on best practice and Llais's status as a Welsh Government Sponsored Body.
3. Review of all policies and procedures and suggest changes and additions to rationalise and simplify those documents. This phase may also include support drafting new policies and procedures.

We propose that this work is carried out in two phases. Phase 1 would include action 1 listed above. We suggest that phase 1 is carried out imminently whilst the organisation is still relatively new and any changes required can be implemented with minimal disruption.

Phase 2 would include actions 2 & 3. We are currently recruiting to a number of roles that are key to shaping our policies and procedures. By delaying phase 2 we will be able to reassess our requirements against our capacity and capability at that point in time.

To carry this out in two phases we will need to run two separate tender exercises.

Action required from Board:

The Board is asked to:

1. Note the rationale for a review of our developing governance framework and agree the need for external support to review our policies and procedures.
2. Note and agree the proposed approach to a full review of policies and procedures.