

Report to:	Senior Management Team (SMT)
Report by:	Helen Gardner-Swift, Head of Corporate Services (HOCS)
Meeting Date:	To be considered by email/ad hoc meeting of the SMT
Subject/ Title: (and VC no)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 – Absences (ill-health, self-isolation, caring responsibilities, vaccinations and foreign travel) - new • Remote Working Guidance – updated • Gradual Return to Office Premises Handbook – revised and updated • Health and Safety Policy and Handbook – ad hoc updates VC168587
Attached Papers (title and VC no)	COVID-19 Absences (ill-health, self-isolation, caring responsibilities, vaccinations and foreign travel) VC168805 Remote Working Guidance VC168666 Gradual Return to Office Premises Handbook – revised and updated VC168610 Health and Safety Policy and Handbook VC153701

Purpose of report

2. The purpose of this Committee Report (CR) is to seek approval of four revised and updated draft documents.

Recommendation and actions

3. I recommend the following:
- the SMT consider and approve the following draft documents:
 - COVID-19 Absences (ill-health, self-isolation, caring responsibilities, vaccinations and foreign travel) - new
 - Remote Working Guidance - updated
 - Gradual Return to Office Premises Handbook – revised and updated
 - Health and Safety Policy and Handbook – ad hoc updates
 - subject to the draft documents being approved, the Key Document actions for each document as set out in paragraph 19, are also approved
 - the SMT agree that the publication arrangements as set out in paragraph 22.

Executive summary

COVID-19 Absences (ill-health, self-isolation, caring responsibilities, vaccinations and foreign travel) - new

4. If approved, this document will:
- cover specific situations relating to COVID-19 and absence policies and working arrangements
 - supplement the policies and procedures set out in the Employee Handbook (VC153224)
 - replace the COVID-19 Additional Temporary Guidance (VC131882) approved and issued in March 2020

Remote Working Guidance - updated

5. If approved, this document will:
- provide updated guidance on remote working
 - replace and supersede the “Additional Temporary Guidance – Remote Working” (VC133211)
 - be additional and supplementary to the Employee Handbook, Health and Safety Policy and Handbook, Staff Manual and related policies and procedures.

Gradual Return to Office Premises Handbook – revised and updated

6. If approved, this document
- sets out how we will move forward as members of staff are welcomed back to the office premises
 - is additional and supplementary to our existing Employee Handbook, Health and Safety Policy, Staff Manual and related policies and procedures and any additional guidance issued to staff relating to COVID-19 or remote working (see above)
7. Staff have been consulted on two previous drafts of the document and their comments taken into account.

Health and Safety Policy and Handbook – ad hoc revision

8. The following have been revised and updated in accordance with updated public health guidance and health and safety advice
- First Aid and Medical Attention - paras 80-87
 - Fire Safety Awareness Procedures - paras 137-181
9. These are ad hoc updates to an existing approved document.

Risk impact

10. The Commissioner’s reputation and, also, public confidence in the Commissioner could be undermined if the Commissioner does not demonstrate good practice and good governance.
11. The revised draft documents, if approved, will mitigate against strategic and operational risks of not having effective and robust governance and human resource arrangements in place.

Equalities impact

12. The Commissioner is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and treatment and to ensuring that there is no discrimination in our employment and health and safety practices.
13. As regards each document, any equalities impact arising from the revised and updated guidance has been identified and mitigated.

Privacy impact

14. As regards each document
 - any privacy impact arising from the revised and updated guidance has been minimised
 - no new high-risk processing of personal data has been identified.

Resources impact

15. Having effective and up to date policies and procedures ensures consistency of approach in managing employees.
16. Once approved, the HOCS will keep the four documents under review and will update them to take account of any updated public health guidance.
17. As we move towards the end of the COVID 19 pandemic, it is hoped that:
 - any remaining and necessary provisions of the COVID-19 Absences (ill-health, self-isolation, caring responsibilities, vaccinations and foreign travel) will be incorporated into the Employee Handbook
 - the Remote Working Guidance and the hybrid working provisions in the Gradual Return to Office Premises Handbook will be incorporated into the Staff Manual.

Operational/ strategic plan impact

18. There are specific operational plan projects relating to hybrid working and the review of policies and procedures relating to hybrid working. The updating of policies and procedures has required input from the Corporate Services Team and the SMT.

Records management impact (including any key documents actions)

19. If approved, the following will apply:

Document	Responsible Manager	Approver	Review period	Key Document Class	Published
COVID-19 Absences (ill-health, self-isolation, caring responsibilities, vaccinations and foreign travel)	HOCS	SMT	As required	C5	Y

Remote Working Guidance	FAM	HOCS	Annual	C5	N
Gradual Return to Office Premises Handbook	FAM	HOCS	As required	C5	N
Health and Safety Policy and Handbook	HOCS	SMT	Annual	C5	N – redacted version of this document published

Consultation and Communication

20. The HOCS will advise all members of staff of the approval of each of the documents.
21. The Finance and Administration Manager (FAM) and the SMT have been consulted on the draft documents.

Publication

22. I recommend that this CR is published in full but that each of the documents is published as follows:
 - the COVID-19 Absences (ill-health, self-isolation, caring responsibilities, vaccinations and foreign travel), is withheld on the basis that section 27 of FOISA applies and the Key Document will be finalised and published in full on our website as soon as possible
 - the Remote Working Guidance is withheld from publication on the basis that section 39(1) of FOISA applies
 - the Gradual Return to Office Premises Handbook is withheld from publication on the basis that section 30(b)(ii) and 39(1) of FOISA applies
 - the Health and Safety Policy and Handbook:
 - the unredacted version is withheld from publication on the basis that section 39(1) of FOISA applies
 - a redacted version is published
 - the redacted version is withheld on the basis that section 27 of FOISA applies and the Key Document will be finalised and published in full on our website as soon as possible