



Oifig Luachála
Valuation Office

Valuation Office Governance Framework

March 2022

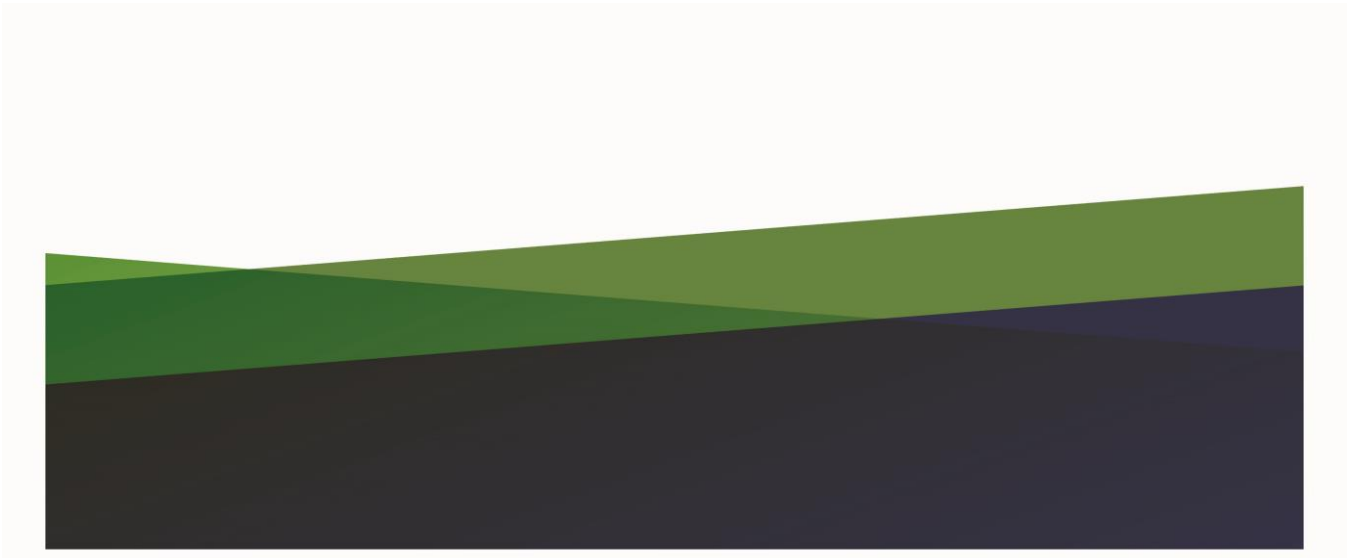


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FORWARD BY THE COMMISSIONER OF VALUATION

This Governance Framework has been prepared in accordance with the principals and requirements set out in the Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service, taking into account the particular requirements of the Valuation Office.

The effective operation of these procedures and governance practices is essential for the proper management and control of the functions delivered by the Office.

Adherence to documented procedures and controls is essential in supporting the staff of the Valuation Office in carrying out their work in an open and transparent manner. This Framework is an important enabler in building and demonstrating trust with key stakeholders such as ratepayers and their professional agents, rating authorities, members and Committees of the Oireachtas, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Comptroller and Auditor General and other Departments and Offices that interact with the Valuation Office.

The Framework is intended to act as a supplement to, and has drawn upon material from, other official content which sets out a wide range of governance requirements, Public Financial Procedures, various Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circulars and, of course, a range of internal practices, procedures and controls.

Good governance is not the sole concern of designated Senior Managers, but must be pervasive throughout an organisation. This document, therefore, seeks to provide a key support to the management and staff of the Valuation Office in pursuit of best practice in relation to good corporate governance.

Colm Lavery
March 2022

Introduction – What is Corporate Governance?

Corporate Governance is a system by which organisations are directed and managed to serve the best interests of all its stakeholders so that they can be assured that the organisation is operating effectively and efficiently in accordance with law and satisfactory standards.

Good Corporate Governance is a key factor in underpinning the integrity and efficiency of an organisation and applies the core principles of good governance, fairness, accountability, responsibility and transparency.

In the Civil Service, good governance is vitally important in ensuring that Departments and Offices effectively deliver its statutory and policy obligations. It ensures that a framework of structures, policies and processes are in place to deliver on these obligations and it also allows for an objective assessment of management and corporate performance.

Purpose and Scope of this Document

This document is intended as a guide to the staff of the Valuation Office and to our customers on how we do our work and why we do it in the way we do. The purpose of this Governance Framework is to provide a clear and comprehensive summary of the principal aspects of corporate governance within the Valuation Office and has been prepared against the backdrop of the Office's impending merger into Tailte Éireann. This document sets out a framework for the governance of the Office so that it can best deliver on its objectives in a professional, fair and balanced manner.

The Governance Framework focuses on key areas of governance and it also points to sources of more detailed guidance and includes, within the appendices, key governance documents addressing assurance, compliance, planning and oversight arrangements.

It is envisaged that this Governance Framework will be developed further over time as the governance agenda and needs of the Office and its stakeholders evolve in line with ongoing best practice. The Management Board will review this Governance Framework on an annual basis or as necessary to ensure its effectiveness.

CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW OF THE VALUATION OFFICE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the work of the Valuation Office, the mission of the Office, senior management and organisational structures, to briefly outline the strategic and business planning process and our core values.

The Valuation Office is the State property valuation organisation. We are an independent Government Office, under the aegis of Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, staffed by civil servants. The core function of the Office is the establishment and maintenance of a uniform and equitable valuation base on which commercial rates are raised by Local Authorities, as provided by the Valuation Acts 2001 to 2020. These valuations are integral to the commercial rating system in Ireland and form the basis for approximately €1.5 billion of Local Government funding each year. The Office also provides a valuation consultancy service to Government Departments and Offices and to other State Agencies.

We are also custodians of an extensive archive of unique valuation records which provide information and insights into the social history of Ireland covering the period from 1850 to 1990. These records provide an invaluable resource for genealogical and historical research.

In conducting its business, the Valuation Office interacts with a wide range of customers and other Stakeholders, including ratepayers and other members of the public, Local Authorities, professional agent's acting on behalf of ratepayers or other clients, genealogical researchers/agents and staff of other Government Departments and Offices.

As part of its programme of rationalisation of State Bodies, the Government is proceeding with a merger of the Valuation Office, Property Registration Authority (PRA) and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi). The new organisation arising from the merger, known as Tailte Éireann, will have responsibility for several important functions, including:

- The State property registration system
- The State mapping and surveying infrastructure
- The State property valuation service
- The development and maintenance of State geospatial information
- Dealing with applications for purchase of ground rents and

This Chapter describes the values that we strive to embody as officials of the Valuation Office. It also sets out the standards that are generally incumbent on members of the Civil Service which they would be expected to observe in their professional duties. Finally, the Chapter sets out the specific ethical requirements that must be complied with by prescribed levels of officials in the Valuation Office.

1.1 Mission

Our mission, as set out in the Valuation Office Strategic Plan 2021 - 2023, is to deliver an impartial and trusted property valuation service, in an efficient manner, to support the Government of Ireland, through skilled and motivated staff. The core function of the Office is the production and maintenance of fair and equitable valuation lists of commercial and industrial properties under the provisions of the Valuation Acts 2001 to 2020.

1.2 Values, Behaviours, and Culture

As set out in our Strategic Plan, each member of staff is committed to the successful delivery of our mission and the ongoing development of our Office. The following are the core values to which we subscribe:

Commitment to Excellence

We are dedicated to delivering high quality services, in a sustainable manner, for the benefit of citizens and other stakeholders.

Collaboration

We recognise that positive relationships and teamwork, with our colleagues and partners, are central to delivering on our commitments.

Flexibility

We embrace innovation and continually improve our systems and processes to achieve better outcomes.

Integrity and Accountability

We work in an impartial and transparent manner, and are each accountable for what we do. We communicate honestly and openly with each other, and with the individuals and organisations with whom we interact.

Respect

We embrace equality, diversity and inclusiveness. We support an environment where people are treated with dignity and valued for their individuality.

The values outlined above are closely aligned with the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviours, the Code of Ethics and the Civil Service Renewal Plan. Please refer to the following links for further information.

<http://www.sipo.gov.ie/en/Codes-of-Conduct/Civil-Servants/>

<http://www.per.gov.ie/en/civil-service-renewal/>

The Civil Service Renewal Plan describes the values of the Civil Service as encompassing:

- A deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money
- The highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

1.3 Standards of Conduct

The Standards in Public Office Commission (www.sipo.gov.ie) oversees the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour. The Valuation Office is committed to having a strong and effective framework for the management of conflicts of interest and standards of conduct of public officials so as to provide assurance as to the quality and efficacy of its governance standards. The Management Board of the Valuation Office, therefore, expects all staff members to meet the objectives of the Ethics in Public Office Acts which provide for disclosure of interests that could materially influence a designated person in relation to the performance of their functions. The Acts cover senior civil servants working in the Office as well as other designated persons, designated directorships and designated positions of employment in public bodies.

1.4 Ethics in Public Office

The Standards in Public Office Commission publishes guidelines under the Ethics in Public Office Acts, 1995 and 2001 for [prescribed public servants](#) as well as [office holders](#) (i.e., Ministers, Ministers of State, etc.) to ensure compliance by them with the requirements of the legislation. The guidelines provide information on the steps that public servants need to take in order to comply with the

requirements of the legislation. Public servants may seek advice from the Commission concerning any provision of the legislation or the application of any such provision in any particular case.

The key requirements of the Ethics Acts are as follows:

1.5 Annual Returns of Statements of Interest

Staff of the Valuation Office occupying designated positions are required to furnish a statement of registerable interests to the Commissioner of Valuation, who is the relevant authority for the Office.

1.6 Statements of a Material Interest

Where an official function of a designated position of employment falls to be performed and a person who occupies that position, or a 'connected' person (e.g. a relative, civil partner or a business associate) has a material interest in the matter, the person must not perform the function and must furnish a statement of the facts to the Commissioner of Valuation. If the person intends to perform the function, because there are compelling reasons to do so, he / she must furnish a statement of the compelling reasons to the Commissioner of Valuation. Statements of persons who occupy designated positions of employment are not furnished to the Standards Commission.

1.7 Codes of Conduct

The Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour forms a part of the terms and conditions of service of all civil servants including Ministerial appointees. The Code underpins the rules in many areas including in relation to impartiality and confidentiality, civil servants and politics, behaviour at work, improper use of influence, and the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, payment for outside work and appointments outside the Civil Service. A copy of the Code is given to every appointee who must certify in writing that they have read it.

1.8 Protected Disclosures

Section 21 (1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 requires that every public body shall establish and maintain procedures for the making of protected disclosures by workers who are or were employed by the public body and for dealing with such disclosures.

Section 21(3) provides that the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform may issue guidance for the purpose of assisting public bodies in the performance of their functions under subsection (1).

Section 21(4) requires that public bodies shall have regard to any guidance issued under subsection (3) in the performance of their functions under subsection (1).

1.9 Regulation of Lobbying

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 commenced operation on 1st September 2015. This means that lobbying activity must be registered on the Lobbying.ie [website](http://www.lobbying.ie).

Section 6(4) of the Act requires each public body to publish a list of designated public officials of the body. The purpose of the list is to:

- Allow members of the public identify those persons who are designated public officials; and
- Act as a resource for lobbyists filing a return to the Register who may need to source a designated public official's details.

The Commissioner of Valuation is the Designated Person in the Valuation Office under the provisions of Section 6 of the Act. Further information on the Regulation of Lobbying can be found on our website www.valoff.ie

1.10 Organisational Structure

The organisational structure of the Valuation Office derives from its core function which is the provision of accurate up-to-date valuations of commercial and industrial properties to ratepayers and rating authorities, as provided by the Valuation Acts 2001 to 2020.

The Office is currently engaged in a national programme to revalue all commercial and industrial properties in Ireland. The purpose of these revaluations is to bring more equity, fairness and transparency into the local authority rating system for non-domestic property.

In addition to rolling out the national revaluation programme the Office provides valuation services for rating purposes to all Rating Authorities whereby existing and new properties have their valuations entered in the Valuation List as part of a process known as "Revision" of valuation. Applications for Revision of valuations arise from a material change to an existing commercial property such as an extension, a subdivision or an amalgamation of two or more properties or the completion of a completely new commercial property.

The Office also provides a valuation consultancy service to Government Departments and other state bodies and agencies.

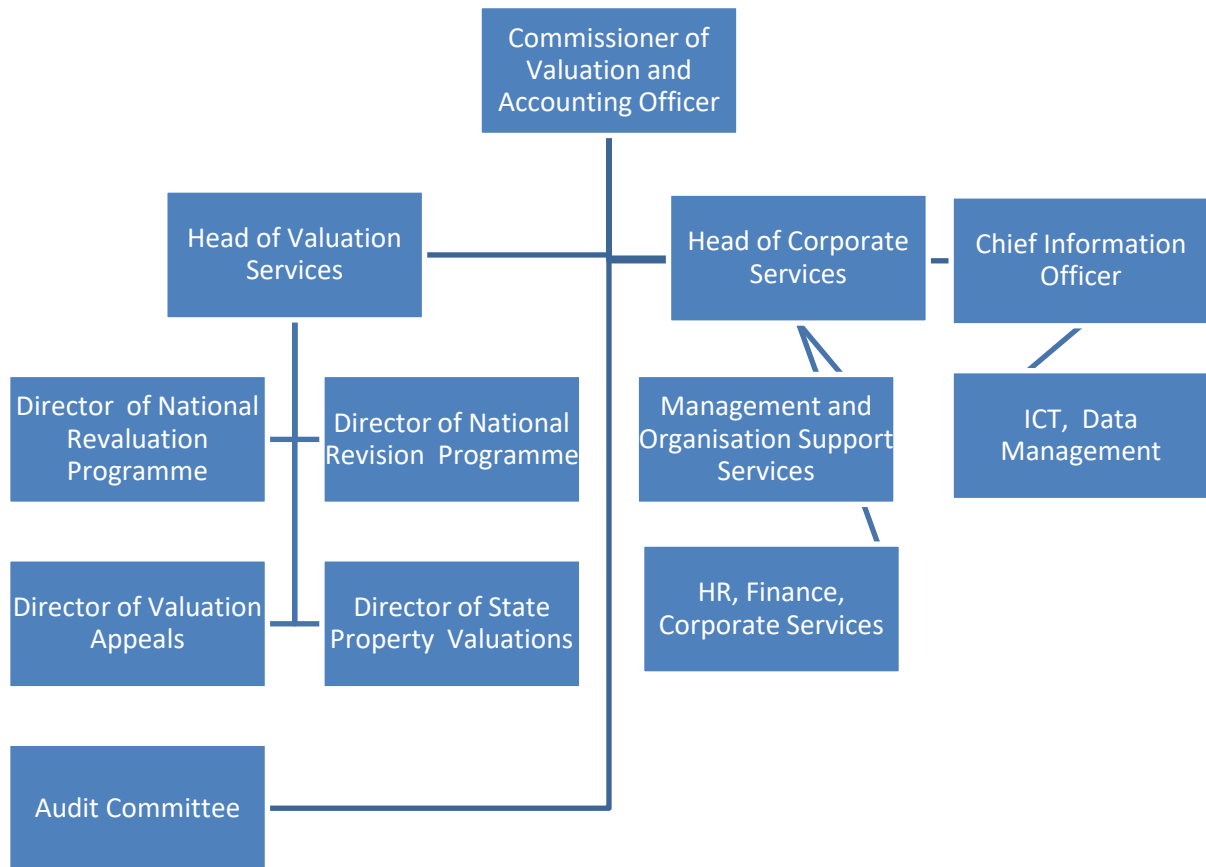
The work of the Office is largely project based and its structure may change to meet operational needs and emerging priorities. It is, however, key to the effective operation of the organisation that there is clarity about individual roles and responsibilities within each project. This clarity is provided through the proper operation of the governance arrangements and application of management procedures within this Framework.

The Commissioner of Valuation who is also Chief Boundary Surveyor and Accounting Officer for the Valuation Office (Vote 16) has responsibility for the overall effective management of the Valuation Office including management of staff; delivery on the core remit of the Office of the provision of up to date valuations of commercial and industrial properties to ratepayers and to rating authorities; delivery of the national revaluation programme; delivery of a programme for revision of existing valuations; provision of a valuation consultancy service to Government organisations and, as Chief Boundary Surveyor, advising on the fixing of maritime and statutory boundaries.

The Commissioner of Valuation is the Chairperson of the Management Board of the Valuation Office.

The role of the Management Board is to support the Commissioner in reaching decisions on the strategic direction of the Valuation Office, the development and implementation of appropriate strategies and in meeting the corporate governance responsibilities of the Office. Membership of the Board consists of Commissioner of Valuation, the Head of Valuation Services, the Head of Corporate Services, the Chief Information Officer, the Director of the National Revaluation Programme, the Director of the National Revision Programme, the Director of Valuation Appeals, the Director of State Property Valuations and an Assistant Principal is secretary to the Management Board.

1.11 Organisational Chart Valuation Office



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1.12 Strategic Planning & Decision Making

The Valuation Office *Strategic Plan 2021-2023* outlines the strategic direction which the Valuation Office is taking in the period leading up to the establishment of Tailte Éireann. This is a continuation of the strategies set out in the Valuation Office *Strategic Plan 2018 to 2020*. The Public Services Management Act 1997 prescribes that the Office must secure the approval of the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage for a three-year Strategic Plan, which defines the objectives of the Office and the way in which it will achieve those objectives.

Therefore, the Valuation Office's Strategic Planning process is carried out pursuant to the Public Services Management Act, 1997, according to which each Department must publish a strategy statement every three years or within six months of the appointment of a new Minister. The document sets out key objectives, outputs and strategies to be achieved.

In addition, a *Business Plan* is prepared on an annual basis. This Business Plan provides a structured planning approach at all levels of activity across the organisation. It aims to be flexible in order to respond to changing priorities. This Plan details the projects at hand for the year ahead. It details for each project, the sponsors & managers, staff numbers & names, objectives, any assumptions, milestones to be reached, completion target dates and the relevant extract from the Strategic Plan which each project aims to meet. This document brings clarity to the roles and responsibilities of each staff member.

The annual Business Plan enables employees to see exactly how their individual work contributes to their team's goals, to their division's goals and ultimately to the Office's corporate goals. It also shows how working towards these goals helps achieve the Office's overall priorities supported by the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS).

Sectoral Plans or Project Plans are available to meet the objectives/goals set out in the Business Plan. The range of projects can typically include items such as:

- National Revaluation by Local Authority Area
- A programme of ongoing Revision of Valuations
- Special Projects including Global and Asset Valuations
- Pilot Projects including Outsourcing and Occupier Assisted Valuation
- Valuation support to Tenant Purchase Schemes
- ICT & Systems Development

- Appeals Unit
- Public Office & Archives
- Data Capture Unit
- Valuation Administration and Projects Unit
- Human Resources (HR) & Corporate Services
- Accounts Unit
- Internal Audit
- Training and Development

Progress on each *Project Plan* is monitored by the Project Sponsor and Manager on an ongoing basis.

The Strategic Plan, annual corporate Business Plan and individual project plans are systematically managed, supported and directed by Senior Management and the Management Board.

1.13 Business Plans

Team Business Plans, which are generally the responsibility of Team Leaders/Line Managers, detail project work in each Team and are a core element of the Office's overall planning and delivery strategy. These plans are concise and set out how the elements of the annual Business Plan will be implemented as well as recording the essential elements of "*Business As Usual*" work and targets.

Progress on the annual corporate *Business Plan* is monitored by the Management Board on a regular basis.

1.14 Annual Report

An annual progress report is prepared by the Office for the Minister's approval, as required by the Public Service Management Act 1997. The Annual Report outlines the main achievements and developments during the year to advance the Office's objectives, as set out in the Strategic Plan. Material for the annual report is provided by each project team and operational unit in the Office. In addition to obligations arising under the 1997 Act, the Commissioner of Valuation is also required to submit a report to the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage in accordance with the provisions of Section 41 of the Valuation Act, 2001. This report covers all operational matters coming within the Commissioner's remit.

1.15 Performance Management

The Performance Management and Development System (PMDS), which operates across the Civil Service, is a tool designed to help all managers and staff in the Valuation Office manage and improve performance. Performance Management centres on the role and effectiveness of line managers in setting goals and reviewing and strengthening the performance of their staff. The formal recording of this information is done through the PMDS. Meetings are generally held three times a year with each member of staff. Goals and tasks are set out at an individual level and agreed between the member of staff and their manager.

It is the responsibility of each and every member of staff to ensure that their goal setting form is current and complete. PeoplePoint, the HR and Pensions Shared Service for the Civil Service, has designed **ePMDS** to enable all Employees and Managers to complete, revise and submit their PMDS forms online. Managers at all levels are responsible for ensuring full adherence to the PMDS process. The Management Board collectively, and its members individually, are responsible for ensuring the effective operation of performance management across the Office as a whole.

Project management by its very nature requires ongoing monitoring to insure objectives, milestones and completion target dates are met. Electronic work returns are prepared on a weekly basis with monthly statistics compiled for line managers and senior managers.

PMDS with the aid of work management systems is designed to be a fair and effective way of measuring and developing performance and should be seen as a two-way collaborative process which encourages staff and their managers to consider, discuss and agree on what needs to be done to strengthen individual performance, the performance of the Valuation Office as an organisation, and the services we deliver to the public and other stakeholders.

1.16 Responsibilities in relation to Business Planning

Commissioner of Valuation

- preparing Strategic Plans for submission to the Minister;
- overseeing and monitoring implementation of strategic priorities;
- providing progress reports to the Minister on the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Head of Valuation Services, Senior Managers

- overseeing the implementation of the Office's priorities through monthly monitoring by the Management Board;
- contributing to the Strategic Plan and associated progress reports for approval by the Management Board and the Minister;
- preparing Business Plans for their respective areas and agreeing the overall annual Business Plan for the Office;
- providing monthly status updates on the implementation of strategic objectives to the Management Board;

Team Leaders/ Line Managers

- managing implementation of the strategic priorities and business plans;
- planning for the Team in collaboration with staff and other stakeholders in line with the strategic objectives of the Office;
- acting to achieve the objectives relevant to the Team in accordance with the Office's Strategic Plan.

1.17 Internal Communication Arrangements

The Valuation Office values the views of all staff and recognises the importance of open communication throughout the organisation. The Office is committed to creating an environment where staff members are as fully informed as possible and are free to express their views within the Office.

The internal lines of communication include:

- 1) Project/ Team Meetings
- 2) Correspondence issued through electronic mail
- 3) Management Board Minutes
- 4) Open Forum
- 5) Briefings & Workshops on particular topics
- 6) Intranet

In addition to the above the Commissioner of Valuation has taken personal responsibility for the development and implementation of a new communications strategy for the Office. The input of staff has been sought and the views and opinions expressed will help inform the strategy.

1.18 External Communication Arrangements

In conducting our business, we interact regularly with a wide range of customers including ratepayers and other members of the public, the Oireachtas, Rating Authorities, professional agents acting on behalf of ratepayers or other clients, genealogical researchers and genealogical agents, and staff of other Government Departments and Offices. Our Customer Charter sets out the standards that customers/stakeholders can expect in their dealings with the Office - see **Appendix 1**.

This Charter details the processes and the Office's commitment to the stakeholder when contact is made by telephone, email or in person. It also sets out how we treat information provided to us during the course of our valuation work.

The Office regularly liaises with customers and stakeholders through participation at relevant seminars and through briefing sessions on key developments of interest to individual customers and customer representative organisations. The Office also liaises with customers and stakeholders during the development of any new legislation as was done at various stages leading up to the enactment of the Valuation (Amendment) Act, 2015

In the event that a stakeholder is dissatisfied with a service provided by the Valuation Office, they are encouraged to bring it to the attention of the staff member concerned, in the first instance. If necessary, the matter can be referred to a Complaints Officer at a later stage.

The Valuation Office is committed to delivering a high quality service and has invested significantly in developing modern information systems to enhance the delivery of our services and will continue to do so. We urge our customers to use our online services, available through our website www.valoff.ie, where possible, and we are committed to extending these services on an ongoing basis.

In the lead up to publication of a new Valuation List, the Office liaises with all stakeholders including professional agents (through a joint Forum) and the local authorities who, in their capacity as rating authorities, will subsequently use that list as the basis for levying rates. The Office places notices on its website and in local newspapers and local radio stations to inform ratepayers and stakeholders in relation to various stages of a valuation of a particular rating authority area that the Office is carrying out.

1.19 Review of Effectiveness of Governance Framework

The Office's Governance Framework will be reviewed by the Management Board on an annual basis or as necessary to ensure its effectiveness and that it is kept up to date. The Framework will also be monitored by the Head of Internal Audit.

CHAPTER 2 – SENIOR MANAGEMENT ROLES & ASSIGNMENTS OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of senior management governance roles and responsibilities, including those relating to the Commissioner of Valuation, Chief Boundary Surveyor and Accounting Officer, Head of Valuation Services, Head of Corporate Service, the Chief Information Officer, Directors and the role of all staff.

2.1 Leadership and Organisational Capacity/Capability

The Valuation Office management team leads and manages the implementation of the systems, processes and behaviours necessary to promote good corporate governance across the organisation so that all staff work together as a high performing team.

It is crucial that all managers communicate effectively with staff and exercise their management, governance and leadership duties to create a working environment which facilitates high performance and fosters commitment, dedication, cooperation and active engagement of colleagues.

Ongoing and consistent communication at all levels of the Office, cascading from the Management Board to Team Leaders/Line Managers and their teams is the principal means through which the Office works to fulfil its mandate and to safeguard operational capacity. This ongoing interaction is formally supported by the process of business planning, monitoring and regular progress reviews at Management Board level.

To further safeguard our organisational capacity, and reflecting the major dependence we have on our data and the delivery of services through electronic means, we are developing a new three-year Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy to be aligned with a similar strategy being adopted by our future partners in Tailte Éireann – the PRA and the OSi.

2.2 Management Board

The Valuation Office Management Board meetings are held on a fortnightly basis and minutes are available to all staff members. Further details on the purpose and role of the Management Board are set out at Chapter 3.

2.3 Commissioner of Valuation, Chief Boundary Surveyor & Accounting Officer

The Commissioner of Valuation and Chief Boundary Surveyor bears overall responsibility for the conduct and performance of the Valuation Office under the provisions of the Valuation Acts 2001 to 2020. The Commissioner is also the Accounting Officer for the Valuation Office Vote (Vote 16). As such, he has responsibility for the overall effective management of the Valuation Office including management of staff; delivery on the core remit of the Office of the provision of up to date valuations of commercial and industrial properties to ratepayers and to rating authorities; delivery of the national revaluation programme; delivery of a programme for revision of existing valuations; provision of a valuation consultancy service to Government organisations and advising on the fixing of maritime and international boundaries.

The Public Service Management Act 1997 outlines the statutory responsibilities of the Commissioner. Under the 1997 Act, certain duties are assigned to the Commissioner under sections 4(1), 9(1) & 9(2), including, but not limited to:

- managing the Office;
- implementing Government policies appropriate to the Office;
- delivering outputs as determined with the Minister;
- providing advice to the Minister and using resources so as to meet the requirements of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993 in relation to regularity and propriety as well as to economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- preparing Strategic Plans for submission to the Minister;
- providing progress reports to the Minister on the implementation of the Strategic Plans;
- ensuring proper use of resources and the provision of cost-effective public services;
- making sure arrangements are in place to maximise efficiency in cross departmental matters
- preparing an outline of how specific responsibilities are to be assigned so as to ensure that the functions performed on behalf of the Minister are performed by an appropriate officer, or an officer at an appropriate grade or rank and

- managing matters relating to appointments, performance, discipline and dismissal of civil servants below the grade of Principal or its equivalent.

The list of duties specified in the Public Service Management Act 1997 while extensive are not necessarily exhaustive, and the Commissioner may also be required, under the Act, to carry out other functions on behalf of the Minister.

Accounting Officer: As Accounting Officer, the Commissioner of Valuation is personally responsible for the safeguarding of public funds and property under his control; for the regularity and propriety of all the transactions in the Appropriation Account bearing his signature; and for the efficiency and economy of administration in the Valuation Office. The Civil Service head of the Department/Office administering the Vote is normally appointed Accounting Officer on the premise that he or she alone is in a position to discharge responsibility for the moneys entrusted to that Department/Office, for the use made of its resources and for control of the assets in its keeping, such as land, buildings, stores, equipment or other property.

While the Commissioner, as Accounting Officer, can put in place arrangements to assist with aspects of the following governance obligations, he cannot delegate accountability to other officers or members of staff. These obligations are as follows:

- Preparation and presentation of Appropriation Accounts;
- Providing a Statement of Internal Financial Control to the Comptroller and Auditor General with the Annual Appropriation Accounts;
- Appearance before Public Accounts Committee;
- Putting in place an Internal Audit Unit;
- Establishing an Audit Committee;
- Responsibility for expenditure relating to the Valuation Office
- Approval of the award of major contracts.

2.4 Assignment of Senior Management Roles and Responsibilities

The assignment of responsibility for the performance of functions by individual officers is made on the basis of the personal (or team) work objectives identified under or associated with the Office's business plans. Assignments are amended from time to time by the Commissioner.

Under Action 21 of the Civil Service Renewal Plan, all Government Departments and Offices are obliged to publish a Framework of Assignments of responsibilities. This information in relation to the Valuation Office can be found at the following address <http://whodoeswhat.gov.ie>.

2.5 Head of Valuation Services

The Head of Valuation Services has overall responsibility for the operational delivery of all valuation services, including the management of all valuation programmes undertaken by the Valuation Office. The major programmes involve valuations for rating purposes for local authorities, in their capacity as rating authorities, including:

- Revision of valuations – which is the carrying out of an assessment of the rateable valuation of a particular property between Revaluations of the entire rating authority area in which that property is located;
- Revaluations – which is the carrying out of a new valuation of every relevant property of a particular rating authority area;
- Valuation advice on the sale, purchase and letting of property to and by Government Departments and Public Bodies;
- Valuation service to Local Authorities under Tenant Purchase Schemes;
- Providing valuation certificates for Land Registry and Registry of Deeds casework queries;
- Providing provisional valuation assessments for licensing purposes.

The Head of Valuation Services is also responsible for coordinating the drafting and implementation of relevant legislative changes, in conjunction with the Office of the Parliamentary Draftsman in the Office of the Attorney General.

2.6 Principal Officer – Head of Corporate Services

The Head of Corporate Services has responsibility for the delivery of the following services:

- Finance: the provision of the payroll and expenses services, financial and management accounting information, the preparation of the Office's annual appropriation accounts;

- HR: responsibility for the management of the Human Resource function, including Training, Learning & Development and Industrial Relations,
- Corporate Services: Accommodation and building maintenance matters at the Valuation Office, office supplies, Procurement, Disability/Equality responsibilities, Health & Safety compliance, Records Management, Public Office & Archives services to members of the public including the provision of extracts from the Office's public records and maps,
- Management and Organisation Support: in the coordination of Internal Audit, Ethics & Standards, legal advice and legislative proposals, coordinating the preparation of Strategic Plans, Business Planning, performance reporting, Data Protection, Freedom of Information (FOI) and operating the Office's media liaison service.

2.7 The Chief Information Officer

- The Chief Information Officer has responsibility for managing the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) function including the technical, human and financial resources associated with the ICT Unit, the Database Management & GIS Unit and the Enterprise Information Management Unit.
- ICT: Developing, supporting, and maintaining all ICT Systems in use in the Valuation Office.
- GIS: Development and implementation of enhancements to our systems which deploy Geographical Information and associated mapping technologies.
- And has responsibility for developing and delivering the strategic data requirements of the Valuation Office, including data governance and data integrity.

2.8 Directors

Directors in the Valuation Office have responsibility for the following areas and activities:

Revaluation – the National Revaluation Programme leading the production and delivery of new Local Authority valuation lists, the management of the carrying out by the Valuation Office of a new valuation of every relevant property in a particular rating authority area. The legal provisions which govern this are set out in Part 5 of the Valuation Act 2001, as amended by the Valuation (Amendment) Act 2015. The process commences when the Commissioner of Valuation makes a statutory order and the process results in the publication of a valuation list containing the valuations of all relevant properties therein.

Revision –the National Revision Programme in relation to the maintenance of Local Authority valuation lists between Revaluations. Revision of valuations is the means through which the valuation of a particular property may be assessed between Revaluations of the entire rating authority area in which that property is located. The legislation governing revision of valuations is set out in Part 6 of the Valuation Act, 2001, as amended by the Valuation (Amendment) Act 2015.

Requests to revise the valuation of properties may be made at any time, subject to fulfilling the conditions set out in the legislation. The occupier or interest holder of property, the rating authority, or an occupier of property appearing on the valuation list may initiate requests for revision. The Commissioner of Valuation may also initiate a revision request.

Appeals Unit – directing appeals to the Valuation Tribunal and Courts arising from the National Revision and Revaluation Programmes.

State Property Valuations - The delivery of property valuation services to Government Departments and Public Bodies. State Market Valuations including valuations under DPER Circular 11/15, Rental Valuations, State Asset Valuations, Rent Reviews and the valuation for rates purposes of properties occupied by Public Utility Undertakings.

Business development including extending the scope of the non-statutory valuation work carried out by the Office and the provision of specialist technical expertise, advice and support to internal and external Government stakeholders in relation to property valuations.

Special Projects and Global Valuations Unit – Global Valuations are valuations of the various properties of particular public utility undertakings which together make up a regional or national network. Section 53 of the Valuation Act, 2001 makes provision for the valuation of the relevant property of certain public utility undertakings on a global basis. The Unit also provides for the valuations of special projects, such as public assets and infrastructures, motorway tolls, and local water and sewage systems.

2.8 Responsibilities of all Staff

This Governance Framework applies to all staff in the Valuation Office who have a duty in assuring good governance by their adherence to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviours in the performance of their duties, as well as adherence to and application of corporate policies, procedures, circulars and Office Notices.

All staff are made aware, as part of the induction process, of their obligations under the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour, including requirements in relation to official secrecy, data protection, dignity at work, etc. All of the relevant publications, circulars and Office Notices are available for consultation by staff.

In accordance with the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, the Valuation Office operates a policy on Protected Disclosures in the workplace. The objective of the policy is to encourage a culture of 'speaking up' whereby staff with concerns about possible wrongdoing in the workplace are

encouraged to raise their concerns internally so that they can be investigated and addressed in an appropriate manner.

The Office's **Customer Charter** (Appendix 1) makes provision for procedures to deal with issues and complaints raised by the public. The purpose of the Customer Charter is to set out the standard of service our customers can expect to receive from the Valuation Office and the behaviour which our staff can expect from customers.

2.9 Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act, 2014 enables members of the public to obtain access to official information in the possession of public bodies, to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals, and, where appropriate, to enable persons to have personal information relating to them in possession of such bodies corrected.

The requests received in the Valuation Office are handled by a 'deciding officer'.

The Valuation Office is obliged under the Act to acknowledge a request within two weeks of the date of receipt and is obliged to respond to the request within four weeks.

2.10 Data Protection

It is the policy of the Valuation Office to be fully compliant with its legal requirements under the Data Protection Acts. This policy is achieved by providing documented assurance that:

- its staff and management is aware of those requirements, and
- the way in which it obtains holds and transmits personal data is systematically and regularly examined.

CHAPTER 3 – MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

Whereas the previous chapter concentrated on governance roles and responsibilities, the purpose of this chapter is to set out the management structure and arrangements in place including the Management Board, and other senior management groups.

3.1 Management Board

The purpose of the Management Board is to provide strategic leadership, vision and direction to the Office and ensure effective and robust governance.

The role of the Management Board is to support the Commissioner in reaching decisions on the strategic direction of the Valuation Office, the development and implementation of appropriate strategies and in meeting the corporate governance responsibilities of the Office.

The Management Board operates in accordance with its Terms of Reference which are reviewed annually by the Board and by the Internal Audit Unit as required, see **Appendix 2**.

Meetings are usually held on a fortnightly basis or more often if the need arises. The main items for consideration by the Board include:

- Reports from Committees;
- Progress against business plan milestones;
- Performance against key performance and efficiency measures;
- Key financial data, including performance against budget, monthly monitoring and consideration of future spending plans;
- Risk Management Policy – consideration of the Risk Register and ongoing management and mitigation of risk;
- Strategic Human Resource issues; and
- Progress and status of major projects.

Membership of the Board currently consists of the Commissioner of Valuation, the Head of Valuation Services, the Head of Corporate Services, the Chief Information Officer, the Director of the National Revaluation Programme, the Director of the National Revision Programme, the Director of Valuation Appeals, the Director of State Property Valuations and an Assistant Principal is secretary to the Management Board.

The business conducted by the Board, the decisions reached and the further actions required are recorded in the approved minutes of the Board meetings which are made available to all staff.

3.2 Sub-Committees of Management Board

Training and Development Steering Committee:

The Training and Development Steering Committee endeavours to ensure that the Valuation Office is delivering on the following key learning and developmental objectives:

- Ensuring that staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, attributes and behaviours appropriate to their current role and necessary for their further personal and professional development within the context of the Office's business plans.
- Developing potential through a combination of formal training and education programmes, on-the-job training, mentoring and self-managed learning.
- Harnessing the PMDS process to provide targeted training and development in order to:
 - assist in meeting business objectives as identified in the Strategic Plan and annual Business Plans;
 - support optimum performance at organisation, team and individual level.

ICT Steering Committee:

An ICT Steering Committee, reporting to the Management Board, will be established shortly following the publication of this Framework. This Committee will be responsible for the strategic planning, development and implementation of ICT services in the Valuation Office over the coming years.

CHAPTER 4 –AUDIT, ASSURANCE AND COMPLIANCE ARRANGEMENTS

This chapter contains an overview of the Compliance Framework encompassing Audit, Assurance and Compliance Arrangements.

4.1 Financial Control Environment - Audit & Risk Committee

The role of the Audit & Risk Committee, as part of the ongoing systematic review of the financial and budgetary control environment and governance procedures within the Office, is to oversee the internal audit function and advise the Accounting Officer on the maintenance and development of that function. It also reviews and offers advice on the Office's risk management procedures and comments on the Office's annual financial and performance reports. The Committee derives its authority from the Commissioner of Valuation as Accounting Officer and reports solely to him. It has an advisory role with no executive powers (**see Appendix 3**)

Specific Functions of the Audit & Risk Committee

- Advise the Commissioner on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Office's Internal Audit function.
- Approve the Charter for the Internal Audit (IA) Unit.
- Consider the nature and scope of any proposed internal audit of the Office's services and functions.
- Receive and consider the internal audit plan from the Head of Internal Audit and request the inclusion in the plan of specific internal audit reports as considered appropriate.
- Receive and consider each internal audit report from the IA Unit.
- Monitor progress against the plan through receipt of periodic progress reports
- Monitor management's response to Internal Audit findings and the implementation of its recommendations.
- Monitor the arrangements for the identification, management and control of strategic and operational risk within the Office.
- Meet with the Comptroller & Auditor General's staff once a year on matters of mutual interest and concern.
- Advise the Accounting Officer on the effectiveness of the prevailing system of internal controls.

- Advise the Accounting Officer on all matters relating to risk management, governance, performance measurement and external reporting and, generally foster the development of ongoing best practice in these areas.
- Consider any issues arising from the audit of the Appropriation Account by the Comptroller & Auditor General.

4.2 Internal Audit Unit

Internal Audit is an independent appraisal function established by management in order to review the system of internal control in the Valuation Office. Its role is to objectively examine, evaluate and report on the adequacy of internal control as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.

The Office's internal control system comprises the whole system of controls, financial and otherwise, established by management in order to achieve its objectives, ensure adherence to policies, safeguard assets and secure, as far as possible, the completeness and accuracy of records.

The Internal Audit Charter identifies the purpose, authority and responsibility of the Internal Audit Unit and of a person engaged to conduct a specific internal audit review of transactions processed or performance achieved by the Office.

The Audit & Risk Committee, in consultation with the Internal Audit Unit, is responsible for determining the Internal Audit Unit's ongoing programme of work and this programme is subject to approval by the Commissioner (**see Appendix 4**).

4.3 Public Procurement

The Valuation Office has a well-established policy in relation to the acquisition of supplies and services, ranging from the purchase of routine supplies or services to the award of more major contracts. The policy outlines the procedures to be followed in relation to procurement and associated payment.

The Office policy covers all purchases, whether under formal contract or not; and it outlines the appropriate national and EU requirements depending on the value of the contract. While only a limited number of staff may be involved in procurement at any stage, it is important that all staff are generally aware of the procedures (**see Appendix 5**).

4.4 Risk Management

The Risk Management Policy is a key part of the Valuation Office's corporate governance arrangements. It outlines the Office's approach to risk management, and specifies the roles and responsibilities of the Management Board, other managers and Internal Audit. Risk management concerns the identification, evaluation and mitigation of risks that threaten the achievement of business objectives. Corporate risks are those risks that are either strategic in nature or have the significance to impact at a whole-of-office level. These risks may be due to either or both internal and external events. Risk is unavoidable and the objective of the Risk Management Policy is the effective management, rather than absolute elimination, of risk.

Effective risk management offers a means of improving strategic, operational and financial management and helps to minimise financial losses, service disruption, reputational loss or adverse publicity. Risk management is the concern of everyone in the Valuation Office and is part of the normal day to day business including management processes such as planning, project and operational management, management reporting and internal audit **(see Appendix 6)**.

CHAPTER 5 – BODIES UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE OFFICE

This Chapter sets out the bodies under the aegis of the Valuation Office

There are no bodies under the aegis of the Valuation Office

APPENDIX 1 Customer Charter

Valuation Office Customer Charter

What we do: The Valuation Office is the State property valuation agency. Our core business is the valuation of commercial and industrial property for commercial rates purposes. In conducting our business, we interact regularly with a wide range of customers including ratepayers and other members of the public, Local Authorities, professional agents acting on behalf of ratepayers or other clients, genealogical researchers and genealogical agents, and staff of other Government Departments and Offices.

This Customer Charter sets out the standards that you, as a customer, can expect from the Valuation Office.

Our Contact Details:

Valuation Office,
Block 2,
Irish Life Centre,
Abbey Street Lower,
Dublin 1.
D01 E9 X0

E-mail: info@valoff.ie

Phone: +353 1 817 1000

Website: www.valoff.ie

The best way to contact us is by e-mail: info@valoff.ie

If you e-mail us or write to us, we will:

- ☑ Respond within 10 working days to routine requests for information.
- ☑ Send an interim reply within 5 working days on issues requiring detailed consideration.
- ☑ In our reply we will explain the reason for the delay, tell you who is dealing with the matter, and, if possible, say when a definitive response should be available.

If you contact us by telephone, we will:

- ☑ Answer your call promptly and give our name when we answer your call.
- ☑ Be courteous and helpful in dealing with your enquiry.
- ☑ Ensure that your call is dealt with by someone who can address your query.
- ☑ If we cannot provide an immediate answer, we will take the details of your enquiry and call you back within two working days.

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If you call to our Office:

- ☑ We will arrange for someone to see you promptly.
- ☑ We will respect your privacy.
- ☑ If we cannot deal with your query immediately, we will contact you within two working days.

We will endeavour to maintain clean, comfortable, and accessible facilities in our Public Office. However, if you have particular accessibility requirements, in advance of your visit please contact:

Disability Access Officer: Ms. Louisa Nolan

E-mail: Louisa.Nolan@valoff.ie

Telephone: 01-817 6483

If we need to inspect your property during a valuation:

- ☒ We will make every effort to contact you before carrying out an inspection
- ☒ Before conducting the inspection, our officer will show identification and provide you with contact details.
- ☒ Our officer will provide you with an information leaflet, which will contain details of the valuation process and your rights under the relevant legislation.

Confidentiality of information:

Information you provide to us during our valuation work will be treated in confidence and will be disclosed to third parties only with your express consent, or otherwise under our statutory mandate and our legal obligations.

Communicating with Customers:

We are committed to reviewing and improving our services on an ongoing basis and will consult with our customers, from time to time, by way of customer surveys and invite your comments on our services through our website. We will use this feedback to improve our services to meet customer needs on an ongoing basis.

We will also liaise with customers and stakeholders through participation at relevant seminars and briefing sessions on key developments of interest to individual customers and customer-representative organisations. **3 | Page**

If you are dissatisfied with our service:

The Valuation Office staff are committed to delivering a high-quality service. However, if you are dissatisfied with how we have provided any of our services, we ask that you, in the first instance, bring it to the attention of the staff member concerned.

We are committed to:

- ☒ dealing with issues in a courteous, expeditious and efficient manner.
- ☒ resolving issues, where possible, at the first point of contact.
- ☒ addressing any incorrect or inappropriate action on our part as soon as possible.

If you are not satisfied with our response to the issue raised, the best way to contact us is by e-mailing complaints@valoff.ie. We will aim to respond within 10 working days. If we need to investigate the matter further, you will be informed of the reason for any delay and advised of a date by which you can expect a response to your complaint.

Complaints Officer: Ms. Catherine Coyle

E-mail: complaints@valoff.ie

Telephone: 01-817 1050

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APPENDIX 2
Corporate Governance for the Civil Service

Chapter 3 - Management Board and Other Governance Structures

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction
2. Board Objectives
3. Board Remit
3. Membership of Board
4. Role of Management Board
5. Board Committees
6. Board operating procedures

1. Introduction

Under the provisions of the Valuation Office Act 2001, the Commissioner of Valuation bears responsibility for the conduct and performance of the Valuation Office. The role of the Management Board is to support the Commissioner in reaching decisions on the strategic direction of the VO, the development and implementation of appropriate strategies and in meeting the corporate governance responsibilities for the Office. This document sets out the Management Board's objectives and remit, membership, responsibilities and operating procedures.

2. Board Objectives

The objectives of the Management Board are to:

- Ensure the Office achieves its strategic vision and aim;
- Ensure accountability for the Office's performance; and
- Provide assurance that the organisation is managed effectively.

3. Board Remit

The Remit of the Management Board is to:

- Set the strategic direction of the Office through providing clear corporate strategic priorities and objectives;
- Approve and publish business plans;
- Approve the VO's Annual Reports and Voted Accounts of Expenditure;
- Set the Office's standards and values;
- Ensure good governance, adequate internal control and compliance systems are in place and are supported by an effective risk management strategy;
- Lead and oversee the process of change to enhance the Office's capability to deliver on its mandate;
- Monitor the use of resources and the achievement of performance objectives as specified in the business and project plans;

- Approve all major projects and strategic initiatives and policies impacting on corporate and business plan objectives, ensuring that there is alignment with existing budgetary and resource plans;
- Approve all expenditure decisions over a limit of €100,000.
- Take corporate decisions on high level operational issues.

3. Membership of Board

- Commissioner of Valuation (Chair)
- Head of Valuation Services
- Head of Corporate Services
- Chief Information Officer
- Managing Valuers

The Management Board is chaired by the Commissioner of Valuation and in his absence by the Head of Valuation Services. The Board ordinarily meets weekly following a set agenda. Occasionally, non-members are invited to attend Board meetings to discuss particular policies and strategies and for the purpose of presenting business and operational plans.

4. Role of Board

The Management Board is responsible for the development of organisational strategy and for supporting the delivery of that strategy. This includes taking appropriate steps to ensure that business is prioritised and decisions implemented in accordance with the objectives set by the Board. While the ultimate decision making responsibility remains with the Commissioner, the Management Board shall seek to reach agreement on a consensus basis.

Ethical Behaviour

All Board members have a responsibility to act in accordance with the Civil Service Code of Ethics.

Role of the Chair

The role of the Chair is to:

- Facilitate Board meetings;
- Ensure that systems are in place to provide Board members with accurate, timely and good quality information to allow the Board to consider properly all matters before it;
- Ensure Board adherence to the principles set out in Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service:
- Ensure that a Board effectiveness review is carried out periodically (at least annually) and that the results of such reviews are acted upon.

Role of Management Board Members

The individual role and responsibilities of each Board member are clearly defined and agreed with the Commissioner of Valuation.

In addition, Board members have a responsibility, in association with their fellow Board members for the management and governance of the Valuation Office as a whole and should attach the highest priority to attending Board meetings and contributing constructively to the business conducted at such meetings.

In undertaking their role, each Board member must:

- Discharge the responsibilities of their particular position, taking full account of the interests of, and implications for the remits of other Board members and the Office as a whole;
- Adopt a corporate approach in participating in all Board decisions and discussions, in particular those concerned with the development of strategic and business plans and the allocation of resources.
- At Board meetings, members are expected to take a corporate view of issues whether or not they have responsibility for the area concerned and to examine and challenge all proposals before the Board in a constructive and objective manner.
- Participate fully in the process of monitoring the Office's progress towards meeting agreed objectives and targets;
- Participate in the process of policy formulation for the Office;
- Participate in, and approve the planning of budgets and financial decisions.
- Be available to participate as a member of the Audit Committee and of other committees as agreed by the Board;
- Represent the Office at external meetings and participate in inter-Departmental networks as required.

5. Board Sub Committees

Delegation of Function

The Management Board may decide to delegate certain matters for consideration by sub committees of the Board. In such an event, each committee may be chaired by a Board member with clear terms of reference, including the scope of any decision making and the reporting requirements for the Board.

6. Board Operating Procedures

Attendance

In the event that a Board member is unavailable to attend a Board meeting, there is no requirement for a deputy to attend. Other members of staff from within the Valuation Office may be requested to attend Board meetings on an *ad hoc* basis. The Board Secretariat will be in attendance to support all meetings (see below).

Support to the Management Board

The Board is provided with a Secretariat by the Management Support Services Unit.

Business of the Board

The Management Board of the Valuation Office generally meets on a weekly basis, or more often as the need arises. Meetings will normally take place on Tuesday of each week.

An agenda will be prepared by the Secretariat following consultation with the Chair, with input from individual Board members as required. The Commissioner of Valuation, as Chair, approves the agenda prior to final circulation to members.

The main categories of information considered at Board meetings will include:

- Progress against business plan milestones;
- Performance against key performance and efficiency measures;
- Key financial data, including performance against budget, monthly monitoring and consideration of future spending plans;
- Risk Management Policy – oversight of the Risk Register;
- Strategic Human Resource issues; and
- Progress and status of major projects.

All papers for consideration by the Board are required to be with the Board Secretariat at least one day prior to a meeting for distribution to members. If papers are not sent to the Secretariat in a timely manner or are incomplete they may be held over for discussion to the following meeting. Where urgent decisions are required between Board meetings, the relevant issue may be dealt with by correspondence.

Board Minutes

The business conducted at the Board, together with decisions reached and actions required, are recorded in minutes prepared by the Board Secretariat.

Draft minutes are normally available for approval by the Board within five working days of the Board meeting. The approved minutes of Board meetings are made available to staff internally through the Office's Intranet.

APPENDIX 3

VALUATION OFFICE

CHARTER OF THE AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

In this Charter the following words and terms have these respective meanings:

- 1 “The Office”
Valuation Office

- 2 “The Accounting Officer”
The Accounting Officer is the head of Valuation Office i.e. the Commissioner of Valuation.

- 3 “Audit & Risk Committee”
A committee of five members comprising of two senior management personnel of the Valuation Office and three members external to the Valuation Office¹. One of the external members shall be the chairperson. The committee members and the chairperson are appointed by the Commissioner.

- 4 “Internal Audit Unit”
The Office Unit which is responsible for providing, or managing the provision of internal audit services to the Office. It is the intention initially, due to the nature and size of the Office, to have the Internal Audit undertaken on a contract basis and reporting to the Head of the Internal Audit Unit. The Internal Audit Unit currently forms part of the Strategic Management Services Team of the Office.

¹ As recommended in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies published by the Dept. of Public Expenditure & Reform - August 2016

Role

The role of the Audit & Risk Committee, as part of the ongoing systematic review of the control environment and governance procedures within the Office, is to

- Oversee the internal audit function and advise the Accounting Officer on the development of that function
- Review and advise on the Office's risk management procedures
- Review and comment on the Office's annual financial and performance reports.

Specific Functions

- 1 Advise the Commissioner on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Office's Internal Audit function.
- 2 Approve the Charter for the Internal Audit Unit.
- 3 Consider the nature and scope of any proposed internal audit of the Office's services and functions.
- 4 Receive and consider the internal audit plan from the Head of Internal Audit and to request the inclusion in the plan of specific internal audit reports as considered appropriate.
- 5 Receive and consider each internal audit report from the IA Unit.
- 6 Monitor progress against the plan through receipt of periodic progress reports
- 7 Monitor management's response to Internal Audit findings and the implementation of its recommendations.
- 8 Monitor the arrangements for the identification, monitoring and control of strategic and operational risk within the Office.
- 9 Meet with the Comptroller & Auditor General's staff (external auditors) once a year on matters of mutual interest and concern.
- 10 Advise the Accounting Officer on the effectiveness of the system of internal controls.
- 11 Advise the Accounting Officer on all matters relating to risk management, governance, performance measurement and external reporting and, generally, to foster the development of best practice in these areas.
- 12 Consider any issues arising from the audit of the Appropriation Account by the Comptroller and auditor General.

- 13 In its Annual Report to the Accounting Officer, the Committee should present its opinion on the adequacy of the risk management and internal control systems.
- 14 In the Annual Report to the Accounting Officer, the Committee should indicate its view on its own effectiveness with advice on how it can be strengthened and developed by management.
15. Monitor the implementation by management of recommendations contained in the reports of audit reviews conducted and accepted by the Accounting Officer.

Constitution

The Audit & Risk Committee derives its authority from the Commissioner of Valuation as Accounting Officer and reports solely to him. It has an advisory role with no executive powers.

Membership of Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee shall comprise of not less than five members, two of whom are appointed by the Commissioner from amongst the members of the Senior Management Group of the Office and three members appointed by the Commissioner who are external to the Office. One of the external members shall be appointed as Chairperson. The membership of the Committee will be reviewed after three years.

Independence

The Committee shall be independent in the performance of its functions and responsibilities and shall not be subject to direction or control from any other party in the performance of such functions.

Authority and Right of Access

The Committee shall have free and unfettered access to information needed to carry out its duties. The Committee is authorised to seek any information or documentation it requires from any member of staff and all members of staff are directed to co-operate fully with any request made by the Committee for documentation or attendance at meetings of the Committee. Additionally, the Committee shall have right of access to information concerning contactors, suppliers and customers, if and when required.

Meetings of Committee – Modus Operandi

The Committee shall meet not less than three times per annum and more frequently as circumstances require. At least three of the five members must be present to hold a meeting of the Committee. The Committee will normally operate on the basis of consensus. In the event

of a vote, a simple majority is required. The Chairperson will have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

The Commissioner or Head of Internal Audit may request the Chairperson to convene a meeting if either considers that one is necessary.

The Finance Officer as representative of senior management will normally attend meetings of the Committee and the presence of other members of management may be requested to attend meetings from time to time to examine and discuss specific aspects of corporate governance.

Draft minutes of meetings will be circulated within the three week period following the meeting and any matters arising will be discussed at the next following meeting. The Internal Audit Unit will provide the Secretariat to the Committee.

Reporting Procedures

The secretary to the Committee shall circulate the minutes of meetings to the Commissioner and to the staff of the Internal Audit Unit. General internal audit reports commissioned will be available to staff and published on the office Intranet subject to confidentiality issues. The Chairperson shall have direct access to, and shall meet at least once a year with, the Commissioner.

Not later than three months after the end of each calendar year the Committee shall submit an annual report on its activities during the year to the Commissioner and will proffer such advice and recommendations as deemed appropriate.

Effective Date

This Charter becomes effective immediately and will remain current for a three year period. The Charter will be subject to review annually.

Version Control

Date for Next Review	December 2022
Owner	Internal Audit Unit
Updates	Frequency of review added in December 2018. Charter was reviewed in May 2020 by Audit and Risk Committee with minor changes accepted. Charter was reviewed in March 2021 by Audit and Risk Committee and by Management Board in December 2021 with no substantial change required.
Version	1.3

APPENDIX 4

VALUATION OFFICE

CHARTER OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT

Internal Audit is an independent appraisal function established by management in order to review the system of internal control. Its role is to objectively examine, evaluate and report on the adequacy of internal control as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.

The Office's internal control system comprises the whole system of controls, financial and otherwise, established by management in order to achieve its objectives, ensure adherence to policies, safeguard assets and secure as far as possible the completeness and accuracy of records.

This Charter identifies the purpose, authority and responsibility of the Internal Audit Unit and of a person engaged to conduct a specific internal audit review of transactions processed or performance achieved by the office.

The Audit and Risk Committee, in consultation with the Internal Audit Unit, is responsible for determining the Internal Audit Unit's programme of work and this programme is subject to approval by the Commissioner of Valuation in his role of Accounting Officer.

It is the intention at this stage that all internal audit assignments will be conducted under a contract, on foot of the Internal Audit Unit's programme of work. The person(s) undertaking the assignments will report to the Head of the Internal Audit Unit to whom it will submit completed reports for consideration by the Accounting Officer and the Audit and Risk committee. There may also be circumstances where the staff of the Internal Audit Unit will conduct audit reviews at the request of the Accounting Officer.

Authority and Scope

The Internal Audit Unit derives its authority from the Commissioner of Valuation in his role as Accounting Officer for the Valuation Office Vote. A person duly engaged to carry out internal audit functions is authorised to have full access to Office records (manual and electronic), physical properties and personnel relevant to the carrying out of the review. Such a person will be responsible for safeguarding records and other materials entrusted to their care. Such a person will have recourse to the Accounting Officer during an assignment.

The Internal Audit Unit does not have any direct responsibility for or authority over, the activities it reviews, as this would impair its objectivity.

Responsibilities

The independent appraisal of the management of the functions specified for review in each assignment is primarily designed to give assurance to the Accounting officer as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Office's internal control and management system.

The primary responsibility for internal control rests with line managers who, without regard to audit activity, must ensure that appropriate and adequate control arrangements exist in their areas of responsibility. The role of internal audit assignments is to appraise the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements and to make recommendations for improvements as appropriate. Responsibility for implementation of audit recommendations also rests fully with the line managers concerned.

In carrying out assignments, a person engaged to perform internal audit functions will act professionally and ethically and will adhere to the standards and guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and will have regard to best practice as enunciated, in particular, by the Institute of Internal Auditors and the Auditing Practices Board. Any such person will have access to and co-operate with the auditor(s) appointed by the Comptroller & Auditor General.

Independence

In order to preserve the objectivity and independence of internal audit, each assignment will not include any operating responsibilities for, and will remain independent of, the activities being examined. However, it may, if deemed appropriate by the Accounting Officer, extend to the review of systems which are under development and advise on appropriate controls without prejudicing the right of internal audit to subsequently audit such systems.

Approach - Audit Assignments

Internal Audit will, in general, taking account of the control environment, adopt a systems-based approach to its audits supplemented, where appropriate, by use of traditional transaction testing and verification methods on a sampling basis. Managers of areas to be audited will be notified, where possible, in advance. During the course of an audit, management and staff will be required to co-operate fully with the auditor's requirements.

Reports

At the conclusion of each audit, a draft report is prepared and is submitted to relevant line management for views and comments on findings and recommendations. These views will be considered and recorded in the final report. The final report is then submitted for the consideration of the Audit and Risk Committee and is at the same time sent to the Accounting Officer and to the relevant line managers.

Relationship with the Audit Committee

The staff of the Internal Audit Unit will attend meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee at the request of the Committee and will submit plans and other reports for consideration by the Committee.

Relationship with External Auditors

The Internal Audit Unit will develop an effective working relationship with the external auditors i.e. the staff of the Comptroller & Auditor General's Office. Copies of final audit reports will be made available to the external auditors.

Contracts

The Internal Audit Unit will review any procurement contracts that are brought to its attention which exceed €25,000 in value (excluding VAT) that the Office proposes to award without a competitive tendering process.

Review

This charter will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Version Control

Date for Next Review	December 2022
Owner	Internal Audit Unit
Updates	Frequency of review added in December 2018. Charter was reviewed in May 2020 by Audit and Risk Committee with minor changes accepted. Charter was reviewed in March 2021 by Audit and Risk Committee and by Management Board in December 2021 with no substantial change required.
Version	1.3

APPENDIX 5
Valuation Office – Procurement Policy

Document Control

Version Number: 4-00

Issue Date: 15th September 2021

Author: Gerard Kelly

Approved By: Management Board

Approval Date: 13th September 2021

Change History

Version	Author	Date	Comments
4-00	Gerard Kelly	September 2021	Minor Amendments and updated document to comply with Audit recommendations regarding contract end
3-03	Len Smith	May 2018	Updated Head of Corporate Services and Chief Information Officer titles.
3-02	Len Smith	April 2018	Add Contract Termination clause.
3-01	Len Smith	April 2018	Updated document retention period to comply with GDPR policy.
3-00	Len Smith	March 2018	Major revamp following 2017 Internal Audit comments.
2	Catherine English	November 2015	
1	Mary Smyth	December 2011	

Introduction

This document outlines Valuation Office policy in relation to the Procurement of supplies and services, ranging from the procurement of routine supplies or services to formal tendering and placing of contracts.

The Policy covers all procurement, whether under formal contract or not; and it outlines the appropriate national and EU requirements depending on the value of the contract.

The document includes information on the Procurement Unit and its functions as well as details of related purchasing and payment processes and purchasing limits.

While only a limited number of staff may be involved in procurement at any stage it is important that staff generally are aware of the Policy.

Procurement Guidelines

In the first instance, procurement should be through relevant Office of Government Procurement (OGP) Frameworks or draw-down Agreements. Where a relevant OGP Framework or draw down Agreement exists but is not being used, the Purchasing Manager /

Budget Holder must document the reasons why in the Business Case Assessment. The Procurement Unit can assist you in finding the list of up-to-date OGP Framework Agreements.

In accordance with Government policy, and also in relation to SME participation in competing for contracts, an open procedure of competitive tendering is the norm for all contracts. This is in line with DPER Circular 10/14: Initiatives to Assist SMEs in Public Procurement 2014 and the 2016 Regulations which contain several provisions to make it easier for businesses and in particular SMEs to tender for Public Sector procurement contracts.

The type of process will depend on the value and nature of the requirement. As well as complying with this Policy, all staff involved with procurement must ensure that national and EU rules and guidelines are followed.

The Procurement Officer has responsibility for Procurement Policy and will be available to advise on specific procurement issues. The main national and EU guidelines are available from the [OGP Website](#).

The Procurement Unit will also assist in the preparation of tender documents and contracts, as appropriate.

Principles

The Valuation Office as a contracting authority is subject to EU Directive 2014/24/EU as implemented in Ireland by the European Union (Award of Public Authority Contracts) Regulations 2016 (SI No. 284 of 2016), (the “Regulations”), in respect of the procurement of services, supplies and works above certain values (the “EU Thresholds”). The principles underpinning the Regulations are equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality, and transparency. Where the Regulations do not apply – either because the value of the procurement is below the EU Thresholds or falls outside of the Regulations – the Valuation Office policy is to adopt a competitive process designed to obtain the best value for money that can be achieved in a manner that is both fair and transparent.

Authority and responsibility for spending allocated budgets lies with the Purchasing Managers/Budget Holders.

The Head of Corporate Services retains overall responsibility for procurement.

Contracts should be awarded on the basis of lowest price or on Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) principles.

Scope

This Policy relates to all procurement in the Valuation Office.

Objectives of this policy

- To ensure that procurement policy and procedures comply with all statutory requirements.
- To ensure value for money in all purchasing activity through robust procurement practices.
- To outline the roles and responsibilities of the Procurement Unit and of the Purchasing Units.

Contract Value - Limits and Procedures

Where no relevant OGP Framework or draw down Agreement is in place, the following procedures based on contract value are to be used.

Contract value up to €5,000 (exclusive of VAT)

Where the value of supplies or services is **less than €5000** (exclusive of VAT), three quotes must be obtained from competitive suppliers. The quotations must be in writing; however, Email quotations are acceptable.

Contract value between €5,000 and €24,999 (exclusive of VAT)

Where the value is **between €5,000 and €24,999** (exclusive of VAT), a specification must be issued either by fax, in writing or by email to at least three suppliers seeking written quotations. The etenders.gov.ie website may be considered as an advertising medium.

Contract value greater than €25,000 (exclusive of VAT)

- (A) Where the value is **greater than €25,000** (exclusive of VAT), the Request for Tenders must include details of the basis on which the contract will be awarded. The Request for Tender must be advertised on the etenders.gov.ie website.
- (B) Approval for all expenditure in **excess of €50,000** (exclusive of VAT) must be obtained in advance from the Commissioner of Valuation.

Contract value greater than € 139,000 (exclusive of VAT)

- (A) Approval for all expenditure in **excess of €50,000** (exclusive of VAT) must be obtained in advance from the Commissioner for Valuation.
- (B) Where the value of the contract is **€139,000** (exclusive of VAT) **or greater**, the Request for Tenders must be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union. It must include details of the basis on which the contract will be awarded.

In all cases the contract value is calculated as the full lifetime cost of the goods or services for the duration of the contract, including all possible options and extensions, exclusive of

VAT. Contracts without a fixed term should generally be valued based on four years anticipated supply.

Required Documentation

- Adequate documentation must be retained in relation to all procurement processes.
- All procurement competitions where the contract value is less than €5,000 (exclusive of VAT) must be documented on a procurement file which is retained in the Purchasing Unit (e.g. Facilities Management Unit, ICT Unit or other Purchasing Units).
- A competition reference number must be obtained for each new procurement initiative with a value of €5,000 (exclusive of VAT) or more. This number should be used in all documentation and communications relating to the procurement. The Facilities Management Unit issue the reference numbers – Special File References ('S' numbers).
- The Procurement Officer will maintain a register of all procurement competitions with a value of €5,000 (exclusive of VAT) or more.
- All contracts with a value greater than €25,000 (exclusive of VAT) must be advertised on the etenders.gov.ie website. Documentation relating to such competitions must be retained on a centrally registered file in the Procurement Unit and this file must be available for inspection on request by Accounts, the Head of Corporate Services, the Internal Auditors and the staff of the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- Documentation relating to each procurement competition must be kept for six years from the completion of the procurement process.

Tax Clearance

A Tax Clearance Certificate or electronic confirmation of a valid Tax Clearance Certificate is required from all suppliers or contractors providing goods or services in excess of €10,000 (including VAT) within any 12-month period and must be provided before the contract award, where the contract value warrants it.

Prior to award of a contract, the successful tenderer is required to supply their Tax Clearance Access Number and Tax Reference Number to facilitate online verification of tax status by the contracting authority. Accounts Unit maintain a file of existing suppliers Tax Clearance Access Codes and will notify each supplier when their Tax Clearance Access Code expires.

Contract Extensions

Where a contract contains an option to extend the term, and the Purchasing Manager/Budget Holder wishes to invoke the extension, the Purchasing Manager/Budget Holder is responsible for formally agreeing the extension with the contractor and keeping adequate records of the extension. Where the contract value is greater than €5,000 the

Purchasing Manager/Budget Holder must inform the Procurement Officer of the new contract end date.

Contract Termination/Discontinued

If it is necessary for the Valuation Office to terminate or otherwise discontinue a contract, it is the responsibility of the Project Sponsor/Project Manager, with the approval of the Management Board, to bring about such termination or discontinuation in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract.

Contract End/Extension/Value of Contract Exhausted

A reminder email of a contract ending will be issued by the Procurement Unit to the Contract Manager 4 months before the contract is due to end. The Procurement Unit will need to be advised by the Contract Manager if a contract will end or will be extended. The Contract Manager will be provided with a template letter for Contract Ending/Extension for issue to the Vendor. A copy of this letter should be sent to the Procurement Unit. The Contract Register will then be updated with this information.

When 75% of the value/number of specified days of the contract has been spent, the Accounts Unit will inform the Contract Manager (and send a copy to the Procurement Unit and Budget Holder) to alert him/her to prepare the appropriate necessary measures. When the total value of the contract has been spent, the Contract Manager must then end the contract or provide for an extension outside of the contract. Such an extension will require sign off at Management level. The Procurement Unit will need to be advised by the Contract Manager if a contract will end or will be extended outside of the contract. The Contract Manager will issue a letter for Contract Ending/Extension to the Vendor. A copy of this letter should be sent to the Procurement Unit. The Contract Register will then be updated with this information, if necessary - See Payments section, P. 12.

Derogations

Details of any contracts which exceed €25,000 (exclusive of VAT) in value and which are not subject to a competitive process must be entered on a central register, which is maintained by the Procurement Officer. Such contracts must be subject to independent review by Internal Audit or by a member of the Management Board who was not involved in the procurement process. **It is not envisaged that any such contracts will arise other than in the most exceptional circumstances and, should any case arise, advance approval to proceed is required from the Commissioner of Valuation. Realistic estimates of the total**

cost of the contract over its full life must be prepared in assessing the need to comply with various procurement requirements and thresholds.

Under the Dept. of Finance Circular 40/02 an Annual Report (signed by the Accounting Officer) in respect of contracts above a €25,000 threshold (exclusive of VAT) which have been awarded without a competitive process should be completed by the Finance Officer, signed by the Accounting Officer, and forwarded to the C&AG by 31 March of the year following the year that is being reported on. This should be copied at the same time to the Policy Unit of the Office of Government Procurement (email: returns@ogp.gov.ie).

The Procurement Unit

The Procurement Unit will advise on the correct policies and procedures in relation to Procurement.

Procurement above a value of €5,000 (exclusive of VAT)

In general, Procurement competitions with a contract value greater than €5,000 (exclusive of VAT) will be managed by the Procurement Unit, on behalf of the Purchasing Unit.

The Purchasing Unit will retain responsibility for:

- Business Case Assessment and budgetary approval
- The specification of the goods or services required
- For Contract values < €25,000, providing potential suppliers details
- Setting the Award Criteria and their respective weighting
- Answering queries and requests for clarification in relation to the goods or services requested
- Managing potential Conflicts of Interest
- Evaluating tenders
- Contract signing
- On-going contract management
- Raising purchase orders and managing receipt of the goods or services

The Procurement Unit will be responsible for:

- Producing and Issuing the Request for Tenders documentation
- Answering queries and requests for clarification in relation to the tender process
- Managing queries and requests for clarification
- Managing potential Conflicts of Interest
- Opening tenders
- Assisting with Tender qualification/selection and evaluation if required
- Tenderer management
 - Successful / Unsuccessful Letters

- Tenderer debrief
- Contract preparation
- File retention
- Contracts Register

Procurement below a value of €5,000

Procurement of goods or services with a value below €5,000 will be conducted in the Purchasing Unit. While the procedures will be less onerous, the same principles will apply, and the following records should be kept.

- Business Case Assessment and budgetary approval
- The specification of the goods or services required
- The Award Criteria and their respective weighting (may be cost only)
- Producing and issuing the Request for Tenders documentation
- Answering queries and requests for clarification
- Opening tenders
- Evaluating tenders
- Tenderer management
 - Successful / Unsuccessful Notices
 - Contract preparation
- Contract signing (if applicable)
- File retention
 - Budget approval
 - Request for Tenders
 - Submissions
 - Evaluation record
 - Approval for decision to award
 - Contract (if applicable)
- On-going contract management

OGP Frameworks and Drawdown agreements

The Office of Government Procurement (OGP) was established in 2014 and, together with four key sectors (Health, Defence, Education and Local Government), has responsibility for sourcing all goods and services on behalf of the Public Service.

The OGP have put in place a number of purchasing Framework Agreements with suppliers of goods and services, which are common across the Public Service. There are two main types of Frameworks:

1. **Single Supplier Agreements:** Public Bodies can draw down goods or services directly from a single supplier under contracts put in place by the OGP. These draw-down agreements are typically used for lower value, routine purchases. To use them the

Purchasing Unit typically needs to complete an Agreement Form and submit it to the relevant supplier. The Procurement Unit will assist in accessing the appropriate documentation.

2. Multi Supplier Agreements: A panel of potential suppliers have been approved for goods or services. Access to these is by way of a 'mini-competition' where a Supplemental Request for Tenders (SRFT) is submitted by the Contracting Authority to the OGP who issue it on their behalf to the panel members via the eTenders website. These Frameworks are used where more complex and/or more expensive goods or services are required.

Where a framework exists, the Procurement Unit will work with the Purchasing Unit and the OGP to complete the SRFT and other documentation.

Purchasing and Payment procedures

Purchase Orders

Only the designated Purchasing Officers may raise Purchase Orders.

A Purchase Order must be raised by the Purchasing Officer on the Accounts IDocs system for all goods/services and for all types of purchases in advance of an order being placed. The Purchase Order number must be quoted on all orders for goods/services.

Each order must be submitted to the supplier, by letter, email, or fax. Goods received/delivery notes must be matched against the Purchase Order by the Purchasing Officer.

The order must clearly show:

- the nature and quantity of the goods/services ordered,
- contract terms,
- conditions of use,
- quotation or agreed price and
- Cost centre against which the order will be charged.
- The Purchasing Officer must receipt the goods or services.
- Once receipted, the supplier's Invoice should be emailed to accounts_payable@valoff.ie, quoting the Valuation Office Purchase Order number.

Credit Card Usage

A Credit Card Usage Policy has been adopted by the Valuation Office and all purchases using the credit card must comply with this Policy.

Orders placed using the credit card must follow the normal procurement procedure.

On-line Ordering

Orders placed on the internet, by the Purchasing Manager/Purchase Holder, must follow the normal procurement procedure. Foreign purchases are subject to VAT. The total price including VAT liability should be calculated when considering a purchase.

Accounts Unit will make VAT return to Revenue.

Authorisation of Orders

Each Purchasing Manager / Budget Holder is responsible for purchase orders made from his/her budget. The purchase must be authorised in accordance with purchasing limits before a purchase order is placed.

The Budget Holder (at Principal Officer/Director level) must, if necessary, present the business case to the Commissioner of Valuation/Management Board to obtain any necessary approval to spend.

Payments

In all cases where a procurement competition has been advertised on the e-tenders website and a contract subsequently issued, the Procurement Officer should be informed by the officer responsible for management of the contract of all payments associated with the contract where the payments threaten to exceed the original value of the contract.

PSWT

Suppliers of professional services are subject to Professional Service Withholding Tax (PSWT) on relevant services. This tax will be deducted by the Office and paid to the Revenue Commissioners.

VAT

VAT is payable on purchases, where applicable, including foreign purchases. HEO/EO in Accounts Unit should be consulted in advance of placing any orders with foreign suppliers to establish the appropriate VAT treatment. All Purchase Orders, if applicable must include the cost of VAT.

Purchasing Officers and Approval Value Limits

Unit	Input Officers	€ 10k Limit	€ 25k Limit	€ 50k Limit
Facilities Management	Designated CO/EO: Facilities Management	HEO: Facilities Management	APO: Facilities Management, Training, Human Resources	Head of Corporate Services
Training	Designated CO/EO: Training	HEO: Training		
Human Resources	Designated CO/EO: Human Resources	HEO: Human Resources		
Management Support	Designated CO/EO: Management Support	HEO: Management Support	APO: Management Support, Finance, Public Office, Valuation Admin Services	
Finance	Designated CO/EO: Finance	HEO: Finance		
Public Office	Designated CO/EO: Public Office	HEO: Public Office		
Library	Designated EO: Valuation Admin Services	HEO: Valuation Admin Services		
Valuation Services	Designated EO: Valuation Admin Services	HEO: Valuation Admin Services	APO: Valuation Admin Services	Head of Valuation Services
ICT/GIS	Designated CO/EO: ICT	HEO: ICT	APO: ICT	Chief Information Officer
Data Management	Designated CO/EO: Data Management	HEO: Data Management	APO: Data Management	
Valuation Tribunal	Designated CO/EO Valuation Tribunal	HEO: Valuation Tribunal	Registrar, Valuation Tribunal	Head of Corporate Services

Expenditure over the value limit amounts above must be endorsed by next level authoriser or the Commissioner of Valuation.

All expenditure over € 50,000 (exclusive of VAT) must be authorised by the Commissioner of Valuation.

Purchasing Managers / Budget Holders

Declan Lavelle, Head of Valuation Services	Valuation Services
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Mary Smyth, Head of Corporate Services	Human Resources, Facilities Management, Management Support, Training & Development,
Liam Butler, Chief Information Officer	ICT, GIS, Data Management
Brendan Buggy, Registrar Valuation Tribunal	Valuation Tribunal

Head of Corporate Services – Mary Smyth

Procurement Officer – Gerard Kelly

APPENDIX 6
Valuation Office Risk Management Policy, 2019

Document Control

Version Number: 4

Issue Date: June 2019

Author: Catherine English

Approved By: Management Board

Approval Date: 12 June 2019

Change History

Version	Author	Date	Comments
4	Catherine English	June 2019	Policy Updated – due to annual review.
3	Catherine English	April 2018	Updated following issues highlighted at a meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee, to include section for risk incidents, in line with Civil Service Risk Management Guidelines.
2	Catherine English	May 2017	Policy Updated
1	Catherine English	May 2015	Policy Updated

Policy Statement

Risk is any threat to the achievement of the Valuation Office business objectives. These threats may be due to both internal and external events. Risk is unavoidable and the objective of this policy is the effective management, rather than elimination, of risk.

Effective risk management offers a means of improving strategic, operational and financial management; and helps to minimise financial losses, service disruption, or adverse publicity.

Risk management is the concern of everyone in the Valuation Office and is part of the normal day to day business including management processes such as planning, project and operational management, management reporting and internal audit.

Scope

This policy focuses on the corporate risks relevant to all business areas of the Office.

This policy sets out the

- Risk Management Responsibilities and Structures,
- Risk Identification,
- Risk Assessment,
- Mitigation of Risks,
- Risk Incidents/Events Management Policy,
- Monitoring and Reporting of risks.

This updated policy is effective from April 2019 and must be reviewed on an annual basis.

Risk Management Responsibilities and Structures

Risk management is initiated and directed by the Valuation Office **Management Board**.

- The Management Board will consider the Risk Register at least once per quarter.
- The Management Board will report on the corporate risks and controls to the Internal Audit and Risk Committee.

The system is managed for the Management Board by the **Chief Risk Officer** who

- Assists the Management Board in developing policy and supporting framework.
- Provides regular quarterly reports to the Management Board.
- Consults with managers and team leaders on identifying the main risks and mitigating controls.
- Maintains the Register of Corporate Risks.

Team Leaders/Managers are responsible within their team/unit for

- Implementing the risk management process.
- Identifying, evaluating and signing off on risks.
- Ownership and daily management of the risks.
- Ensuring there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for risk identification, management and reporting.
- Compliance with formal risk reporting requirements.
- Ensuring risk management awareness.

Individual staff members are responsible for

- Operating and monitoring internal controls
- Identifying risk and bringing to the attention of management
- Ensuring timely and effective identification and reporting of all risks

The **Internal Audit and Risk Committee** has a role in advising the Accounting Officer on the state of the Office's risk management. The Committee will review and agree the risk management processes. The Committee will receive feedback from the Head of Internal Audit and the Management Board on identifying, assessing, mitigating, reviewing and reporting on risks.

The function of the Internal Audit and Risk Committee is to assist and support the Accounting Officer in meeting his obligations in relation to the Statement of Controls.

Risk Identification

Risk identification is the exercise of identifying organisational exposure to uncertainty. The identification of risk exposure is the key to successful risk management.

There are four main categories of risk:

- Strategic risks – external risks, such as changing political or economic conditions.
- Operational risks – relating to procedures or technologies etc used to achieve particular objectives.
- Financial risks – relating to procedures, systems, accounts records which ensure the Office is not exposed to financial risk.
- Reputation risks – risks to the public reputation of the Office and their effects.

Other corporate level risks may include litigation risks, legal/regulatory risks, organisational management and human factor risks, technical, operational or infrastructural risks.

Risk identification techniques include

- Listing obvious risks to service continuity,
- Incident investigation,
- Audits and inspections,
- SWOT analysis.

Risk Assessment

When the important risks have been identified they must be assessed. Risks can be evaluated on the basis of three specific criteria:

- **Impact** if the risk actually happens. This is estimated using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is equivalent to having “no significant impact” and 5 is equivalent to having an “extremely detrimental impact”.
- **Likelihood** of an occurrence. This is estimated on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is “rarely, if ever” and 5 is “almost unavoidable/already happening”.
- **Effectiveness of Existing Controls** is estimated using a scale of 1 to 3 where 1 is “highly effective” and 3 is “no controls/controls ineffective”.

A risk ‘score’ is determined by multiplying the risk impact by the risk likelihood. This risk ‘score’ is then multiplied by the control effectiveness score to determine the risk reporting level. (See risk register template).

Risk Reporting Level:

Score	Threat Level	Action
0-12	Green	Issues that need to be reviewed from time to time
13-20	Yellow	Issues that need to be monitored regularly by management - level 2
21-24	Amber	Issues that need constant monitoring by management - level 1
25+	Red	Issues that require immediate attention, and reporting to the Management Board

Details of the scoring system are contained in the copy of the Corporate Risk Register at Appendix 1. The spreadsheet on which the Corporate Risk Register is based should be used as a template for team/section risk registers and copied on completion to the Risk Officer.

Mitigation of Risks

The majority of risks will be addressed by **Risk Reduction**, by containing the risk to an acceptable level. This will not prevent the risk completely but will minimise the frequency or severity of the negative impact of the risk; however any cost of mitigating a risk must not be disproportionate to the potential of the risk. Business continuity management is essential to mitigating the effects of risk on the business objectives of the Office.

Risk Incidents/Events Management Policy

Where a risk incident/event occurs:

- The incident must be reviewed by the relevant staff member to assess the impact of the incident using the impact criteria set out in the Risk Assessment section;
- The impact must be compared to the risk appetite statement to determine its seriousness;
- The relevant staff member escalates the incident, where appropriate to the responsible individual/ group;
- A mitigation plan for reducing the impact of this event is determined, agreed and actioned;
- Consideration is taken with regard to other similar risks/potential incidents which may occur; and
- The risk register is updated accordingly.

In addition to this, “near misses” should be treated in line with the above. Staff must report “near misses” and must take into account the potential impact should an event have taken place and must escalate as appropriate.

Monitoring and Reporting

The **Risk Officer** is responsible for monitoring actions of teams/sections against the risks during the course of the year and facilitating regular risk register reviews. The Chief Risk Officer, at present, in the Valuation Office is Ms. Catherine English.

Each **team leader/manager**

- Must be aware of the significant risks within their team/section,
- The possible impact on other teams/section,
- The possible impact on their team/section of others' risks,
- Must report in a timely and systematic manner to senior management on risk management, particularly on new risks or failure of existing controls.

Individual staff members should

- Understand their accountability for risks
- Immediately report to senior management on new risks or failure of existing controls.

Appendix 1: Sample Corporate Risk Register

Risk No.	Rating	Description	Likelihood	Impact	Control Effectiveness	Consequences	Measures to Address	Risk Owner
1	30	Failure of Revaluation Campaign	2	5	3	Collapse of rating income. Reputational damage. Abolition of Office	Data capture, Self-assessment. Outsourcing. Indexation.	Mgmt Board
2	30	Budget reduction	5	3	2	Reduced programme funding	Identify real savings. Identify potential savings	Mgmt Board
3	30	Human Resources-staffing shortage	5	3	2	Impact on productivity	Self-assessment. Outsourcing. Flexible work practice	Mgmt Board
4	30	IT Systems failure	2	5	3	Loss of data. Equipment damage	Data backup daily. Offsite storage.	M Smyth
5	24	Business Continuity-building damage	2	4	3	Loss of work base. Equipment damage.	Identification of emergency base. Data backup. Equipment replacement plan.	Mgmt Board
6	24	Financial Controls failure	3	4	2	Fraud. Loss of income.	Improve financial control. Improve audit measures.	M Smyth
7	16	Failure of 2017 Revision Programme	2	4	2	Reputational damage	Develop method to expedite revision programme. Maintain liaison with LAs	P Kyne
8	8	Failure to process Reval Appeals by the statutory deadline	2	4	1	Reputational damage. Failure to meet statutory obligations.	Resources and Planning: efficient processes in place to deal with appeals	C Spain
<p>Scores</p> <p>Likelihood: 1 rarely, if ever; 2 possible; 3 likely; 4 very likely; 5 unavoidable/reoccurring</p> <p>Impact: 1 no significant impact; 2 minor; 3 significant/containable; 4 high; 5 extreme detriment.</p> <p>Control Effectiveness: 1 highly effective; 2 could be improved; 3 none/ineffective</p> <p>Rating: Red-immediate attention, Amber-constant monitoring level 1, Yellow-constant monitoring level 2, Green-review from time to time</p>								

