

# APPENDIX E1: MINOR POLICY APPROVAL— CHECKLIST

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The following checklist is provided to assist officers in drafting minor policy approval letters. Letters to the Prime Minister are to be clear and concise (1–2 pages, with any additional necessary detail included in attachments). Further details can be found in Chapter 3 of the *Legislation Handbook*.

- Background**—provide any relevant background information regarding the measure being proposed. This includes:
  - explaining how the proposal relates to the Government’s existing public commitments
  - noting any existing policy authority for the measure.
- Legislation programme**—advise how the proposal is to be legislated (e.g. inclusion of measure in a bill already on the legislation programme for the current sittings; addition of a new bill on the current programme; inclusion of a new bill in a future sittings).
  - A request for a variation to the programme may be required and, if so, will need to accompany the request for minor policy approval.
- Outline**—provide an outline of the proposal (in plain English). This will be:
  - a short, sharp statement that encapsulates what approval is being sought
  - set out in the first or second paragraph of the letter.
- Stakeholder views**—summarise views of relevant stakeholders and (if necessary) how any concerns will be addressed.
  - If stakeholder concerns are not being addressed, explain why.
  - If the measure requires the agreement of other ministers, this would ideally be obtained before writing to the Prime Minister. The letter to the Prime Minister notes the outcome of consultations between ministers and is copied to those ministers.
- Other sensitivities**—explain any other relevant sensitivities and how these are being managed.
- Timing**—explain any critical deadlines and the consequences of the deadline not being met.
  - Indicate why it is critical to obtain approval by a certain deadline and advise any critical dates for introduction or passage of the legislation.
- Next steps**—if applicable, set out, or seek agreement to, the forward process following the policy approval (e.g. when and how further approvals would be obtained, when implementation would occur) and, if applicable, seek agreement to release an exposure draft of the legislation.
- Budget impact**—confirm the budgetary impact of the proposal.
  - Generally, requests for additional expenditure will need to be considered by Cabinet, so it would be unusual to seek agreement to new expenditure via correspondence.
- Regulation impact statement**—confirm that the Office of Best Practice Regulation has either approved the regulation impact statement (RIS) or advised that a RIS is not required.
  - Where a RIS is required, it can be attached to the letter.
- Contact details**—provide the name and phone number of a departmental action officer who can be contacted to clarify any details of the proposal.