I.T. Service Design and Transition Policy

Version – v2.5

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1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose

This IT Service Design and Transition (SD&T) Policy has been produced to detail and describe the rules which must be followed by all parties involved in any change activity that has the potential to impact on IT Service. The SD&T process provides a methodical and robust framework in which design and transition activity can be effectively managed.

The SD&T process description specifies the SD&T processes and controls that are in place to minimise, or, where possible, prevent, the exposure of the IT Service Management functions, and therefore our Customer and Post Office (PO) Ltd, to any potential risk to or degradation of service as a result of the introduction of new products, services or changes.

The purpose of the SD&T processes and controls are to ensure that requirements are input to enable the service to be effectively and efficiently designed, is a cost effective and value for money service, and to ensure that it can be supported through its lifecycle, including decommissioning.

The SD&T team will represent the interests of the IT Service and Operations team in order to ensure that any changes do not impact the BAU run estate unexpectedly.

1.2   Goals

The goals of SD&T Team are to:

- To ensure any new, changed or decommissioned services follow a standard and consistent set of IT policies and processes.

- To ensure the service(s) being deployed have an agreed set of Non Functional Requirements that provides a support wrap suitable to ensure it continues to meet agreed Post Office's business SLAs, IT security and data protection guidelines

- Ensure that the service is designed to be the most cost effective, value for money service

- Ensuring the service is fit for purpose, widely understood, can be supported and runs as expected.

- Ensuring all impacts on services, hardware and software whether that change is new, changed or decommissioning has been correctly procured through Contract and Vendor Management and adheres to Post Office procurement guidelines and rules.

- Ensure that exposure of IT Service and Operations management, and therefore our customers and Post Office LTD, to potential risk is minimised through the introduction of a methodical framework for managing change and transition activity.

- Ensure collaborative working between Business recipients of IT managed services and the IT Service and Operations management themselves, suppliers of IT services and technology, and wider Project teams (inside and outside Post Office)

1.3   Scope

The policy applies to all Post Office employees, agents, contractors, suppliers and consultants who may be involved with any transition activity or change with has the potential to impact on IT Service.

This policy applies to all changes that have an IT Impact. These can be delivered in a number of ways including those methodologies known as Waterfall and Agile. The policy covers all sizes of change including small changes, iterative releases, software releases as well as large changes, such as procurement exercises, large vendors and bespoke contracts.

2   Roles and Responsibilities

- The Head of Service Design and Transition owns the policy and is responsible for:
    - Ensuring the policy is aligned with business needs
    - Ensuring the policy is adhered to
    - Ensuring that regular reviews of the policy's content are carried out and that any required updates are made in a timely manner
    - Ensuring the most up to date version of the policy document is published and available to stakeholders for use
    - Ensuring all changes impacting IT are fully aware of and aligned to this policy

- The SD&T Team, reporting to Head of Service Design and Transition, are responsible for:
    - Supporting the policy owner in their responsibilities
    - Day to day implementation of and adherence to the policy
    - Disseminating SD&T policy to a wider audience for any stakeholders for managing change
    - Providing sign posts for change initiators to others teams who are impacted, identified as part of the IT Impact Analysis

- Heads of IT Service is responsible for

    - Ensuring that any services in scope of IT Service Management are appropriately covered with a service wrap.
    - Ensuring that service changes are delivered in line with Business Requirements
    - Ensuring that IT Requirements are communicated and agreed with all parties
    - Ensuring that before any go live of a service in a live data environment (aka production, live, in service, BAU, in operation, in operational support, etc)
        - All Requirements placed on a change are met
        - Any risks or issues are understood and accepted with mitigation plans
        - All operational costs (OPEX) are understood and accepted
    - Ensuring that any Warranty periods and exit criteria are met prior to closure of change activities (i.e. project team exit, defects raised with planned resolution dates, etc)
    - Providing final approval for any service change to be moved into live (aka go live, production, BAU, etc). Heads of Service may delegate this authority to Head of SD&T or IT Service Manager.

- Project, programme and business stakeholders are responsible for facilitating adherence to or adhering to this IT policy

3   Policy Statement

The SD&T Team will:

- Provide lead subject matter expert capability on service design and transition activities
- Provide Non Functional Requirements that are fit for purpose when the service moves to a BAU run state.

- Assure all changes in service (whether new, changed or decommissioned) to agreed criteria. Criteria will be derived from standard published ways of acceptance and, where required, project specific criteria

- Where requested, provide lead or subject matter experts on Service Design and Transition, including modelling, planning, transition and early life support activities.

- Engage with Business and Account teams (Business Relationship Manager's, Portfolio Managers, Programme and Project managers, Product Managers) on a regular basis to ensure a shared understanding of roadmaps and future plans.

- Contribute to all stages of delivery (initiate, assess, design, build, test, run) to ensure that the IT service designed is both cost effective and value for money, for the Client, the Customer and Post Office.

- Work collaboratively with our internal stakeholders, (IT Service and Operations, other Post Office Business and Account teams, etc) through the full project lifecycle, to ensure that roadmaps, future plans are understood and associated service impacts are identified.

- Work collaboratively with the Product, Portfolio and Project managers, and Project team members, through the full project lifecycle to represent IT Service and Operations team. This will ensure all service impacts are identified and included as deliverables in project plans therefore ensuring that, at handover stage, the service...

    o Is fit for purpose

    o Is widely understood

    o Can be supported

    o Does not impact the business in any negative or unexpected way

- Identify, manage and mitigate risks or issues with a concept, design, test or deployment, escalating where appropriate.

- Seek to ensure quality by adopting standard processes, deliverables and documentation. (even where the vagaries of project requirements may require different levels of IT Service Design and Transition activity)

- Work collaboratively with our Customers, Clients, Stakeholders and Suppliers and expect that they will adhere to the SD&T processes.

The SD&T Team will not provide approval or support the transition of a project through any Post Office Governance gating unless all signed off SD&T specific readiness/acceptance criteria have been satisfied. This may include the following documentation:

- Service Design, including appropriate service modelling

- Agreed SLA's and other performance metrics and monitoring

- Service Transition, release or deployment plans

- Operational Level Agreements

- Operational Acceptance Certificate

- Warranty or Success criteria

- Other certification or criteria as defined under the Service Design and Transition principles

All stakeholders will:

- Support the SD&T processes and procedures

- Engage at the earliest opportunity with the SD&T team

- Consult the SD&T Team at appropriate stages for sign off/concurrence to proceed (via any formal Post Office governance gating)

- Consider and adhere to the SD&T Principles

- Adhere to the SD&T Guidelines

- Contribute to and support the development of any transition, release or deployment plans

- Include the Service Transition Plan in the overall project plan

- Ensure free and open channels of communication with the SD&T team throughout the project lifecycle.

- Identify and own relevant risks and issues and escalate via appropriate, agreed channels.

4   Governance

There should be no exceptions to this policy. The Policy applies to all change and transition activity and is a mandatory part of gaining concurrence to proceed to go live. Any service that interacts with live production systems or data is covered.

This policy forms one component of the overall IT Policies within Post office. The policy will align with other IT policies and Post Office policies to deliver changes in service. As a child of those policies where a conflict arises it will managed as per Section 5 and/or 7 to conduct a review and ensure that there is consistency in delivery between all Post Office functions.

The Post Office governance forums (aka Change Excellence programme) are support by and support the SD&T processes. The governance forums will not support or approve projects through the relevant gates without concurrence from the SD&T Team.

4.1   Control Standards

The control standards described below are derived from the IT Controls Framework (COBIT 5). The controls are in place to manage the risks within the defined Risk Appetite statements, as contained within the table below. To comply with this, mechanisms are in place within IT to demonstrate compliance.

The table below sets out the relationships between identified risk, and the required minimum control standards.

Risk Area	Description of Risk	Minimum Control Standards	Who is responsible	When
Establish an effective implementation plan	Absence of well defined and communicated implementation plans may result in implementation of changes without a structure and correct instructions, lacking an impact assessment of interdependencies with other systems/ processes. This may result in business service outage, financial, reputational and brand damage.	· Ensure implementation plans reflect the broad implementation strategy, the sequence of implementation steps, resource requirements and criteria for management acceptance.	Defined - Service Design and Transition Manager Ongoing oversight – Release manager	Go Live Quarterly
Plan acceptance tests - Delivery	Failure to plan testing, including definition of roles, responsibilities, and entry/exit criteria may result in insufficiently tested changes being implemented in PO production environments resulting in incidents and unavailability of business critical systems.	· Align test plans to the program/project plan and communicate and consult them to appropriate PO business owners and IT stakeholders. · Test plans must be derived from the risk assessments from the project and shall cover all functional and technical requirements including requirements for performance, usability, pilot, security testing and fall-back or rollback arrangements. · Ensure test plans are approved by stakeholders, including business process owners and IT, as appropriate .Examples of stakeholders are application development managers, project managers and business process users. · Ensure test logs are reviewed by the development team to that all errors found have been remediated or formally accepted as known errors before migrating the change to Production. · Validate that testing is designed and conducted by a test group independent from the development team. · Ensure testing is conducted only within the test environment.	Defined - Service Design and Transition Manager Ongoing oversight – Release manager	Go Live Quarterly

		· Ensure final acceptance is evaluated against success criteria. Test results must be presented in a form that is understandable to business process owners and IT so an informed review and evaluation can take place.		

5 Policy / Process Reviews

The effectiveness and efficiency of the SD&T process is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Post-implementation reviews should take place for each transition of a service into live. Lessons learnt and actions will be raised as a business change request, service request or process depending upon the nature, feeding into the continual service improvement across the business.

At a minimum the SD&T policy and processes will be reviewed once per year. Next review date is as a per stated in Section 8 Control

6 Audits

All business requests resulting in a need for a Service engagement are logged in the service management tool and data is available for audits to take place. Internal and external audits may occur on an ad hoc basis.

7 Continual Process Improvement

It is the responsibility of the allocated Service Design and Transition manager to capture information that feeds into the continual service improvement plan for the SD&T policy and process.

8 Control

Policy Version

Date	Version	Updated by	Change Details
19/09/2018	2.0	Stuart Banfield	Updated policy
13/11/2018	2.1	Stuart Banfield	Updated to include reference to Cobit5 controls
06/12/2018	2.2	Stuart Banfield	Update after review by Risk team
15/03/2019	2.3	Stuart Banfield	Update
05/04/2019	2.4	Stuart Banfield	Added notes for • All project will adhere to this policy regardless of delivery method (Waterfall or Agile) • Heads of Service responsibilities and sign off • Confirms to other policies and requirements
13/05/2019	2.5	Stuart Banfield	Further updates after receiving feedback from various areas of IT and business

Policy Approval

Group Oversight Committee: Risk and Compliance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee

Committee	Date Approved
IT Leadership Team	TBC

Policy Sponsor: Mick Mitchell

Policy Owner: Stuart Banfield

Policy Author: Stuart Banfield

Next review: May 2020