



Bristol City Council

Finance Scheme of Delegation

Version	Purpose/Change	Author / Review Date
V0.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated in conjunction with changes to the Financial Regulations	Denise Murray June 2018
V0.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Concomitant with Financial Regulations review	Denise Murray December 2019
V1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scope and purpose of the scheme expanded, and classes of transactions excluded stated.Changes in management structures and changes to job titles.Capital reflect actual practiceChanges to write off arrangements to reflect the corporate debt management policy.Hyperlinks to “additional procedures” reinstated.Define “Following consultation with” and evidenced required	Denise Murray February 2023

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Document owner:	Denise Murray, Director of Finance/S151 Officer

Introduction

In the Constitution, the Mayor and Full Council delegate certain powers and functions to the Executive Directors. Officer Schemes of Delegation then explain how these powers are delegated onwards to officers across the council

The Policy and Budget Framework Procedure Rules apply to in-year changes or amendments to the budget, the Financial Regulations provide the framework for managing the council's financial affairs and the Finance Scheme of Delegation details the power that officers have to make financial decisions. As a collective, they aim to ensure that the council conducts its financial affairs in a way that complies with specific statutory provisions and best practice and that an effective internal controls framework is maintained.

This Finance Scheme of Delegation outlines officer delegation; details the power that council officers have to make decisions on spending and other finance issues across the council and sets out the approved financial limits within which authorised officers may conduct the council's business. The Scheme includes general limits on spending money for both revenue and capital expenditure, asset disposals, maladministration or compensation, insurance claims, virement, emergency and urgent payments and supplementary estimates.

In the event that the authorised officer is unable to take a decision then the decision can be taken by the relevant line manager up to and including the Executive Director.

Guidance for managers and staff on financial management or how to use Schemes of Delegation is available on the intranet.

The council's subsidiaries and schools are excluded from this policy as each has their own scheme of financial delegation aligned with the associated regulations.

Finance functions delegated to officers

No	Delegated Function	Limitation	Authorised officer
1	<p>General Expenditure</p> <p>Power to incur expenditure within the approved budget, provided it is within the relevant area of responsibility, legally incurred, within council policy, and procured in accordance with the council's procurement procedures.</p> <p>This covers all revenue and capital expenditure including the award of contracts for supplies, works and services.</p> <p>These financial delegation levels are built into the workflow approval process in the financial system and inherit through the</p>	up to £500	Self-approved by requesting officer
		In excess of £500, but not more than £25,000	Budget Holder (or officer with authority delegated by the Budget Holder)
		In excess of £25,000, but not more than £100,000	Heads of Service
		In excess of £100,000, but not more than £250,000	Director (following consultation* with the relevant Executive Director)
		In excess of £250,000, but less than £500,000	Executive Director with approval of the Section 151 Officer** and relevant Cabinet Member(s) with delegated financial

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	officer's position		authority.
		£500,000 and above, but not more than £1m	Cabinet approval needed. Post Cabinet approval of the key decision - the requisition or payments can only be authorised by: Director / Executive Director
		Over £1m	Cabinet approval needed. Post Cabinet approval of the key decision - the requisition or payments can only be authorised by: Section 151 Officer
2.	<p>Re-profiling (including acceleration) of capital payment between financial years</p> <p>If the overall project funding and / or prudential borrowing level is not increased, approval must be sought in line with the limits set out.</p> <p>Where the funding is increased see section 3 below</p>	Less than £500,000	Executive Director (following consultation with Section 151 Officer (or officer with authority delegated by the Section 151 Officer to ensure that there are no adverse implications on capital financing resources) and relevant Cabinet Member(s), and subsequently reported in the Finance Monitoring Report to Cabinet; unless the amount being re- profiled is greater than 25% of the project or block approval, in which case the £500,000 and above level of approval is required.
		£500,000 and above	Cabinet (following Executive Director consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member(s) as above.
3	<p>Adding schemes to the Capital Programme or increasing the level of capital expenditure on an existing scheme</p> <p>Schemes will in the main be added to, or removed from, the</p>	Less than £500,000	Executive Director with approval of the Section 151 Officer** (or officer with authority delegated by the Section 151 Officer) and relevant Cabinet Member(s) with Cabinet approval via Finance Monitoring Report.

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	<p>Capital Programme as part of the annual budget setting process.</p> <p>Requests outside of this process to change the Capital Programme by adding or removing schemes, or by allocating additional items to an approved scheme, must be approved by a supplementary process.</p> <p>Where the funding is associated to a new external funding bid see section 4 below.</p> <p>Where the funding includes prudential borrowing in excess of the borrowing level agreed in the budget, regardless of value, this must be approved by a report to council.</p>	<p>£500,000 and above</p>	<p>Cabinet (following Executive Director consultation with the Section 151 Officer and relevant Cabinet Member(s)).</p>
			<p>Full Council approval is needed to increase affordability indicators</p>
4	<p>Submission of plans and bids to government / external bodies</p> <p>Plans / bids submitted for external funding must go through the council's governance process and in accordance with the Grant bid and claim protocol with any associated match funding identified prior to submission</p>	<p>Expenditure of the funds must follow the General Expenditure delegations at 1</p>	<p>Financial data / analysis must be approved by the Business Partner (Finance) and the Section 151 Officer where specified</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer and Executive Directors must, as appropriate, satisfy audit requirements in respect of external funding claims</p>
	<p>Direct allocation (without a submission of a bid) of specific grant funding from government departments for core activity.</p> <p>Request to change the council's revenue or capital budget by adding additional funding must be approved by a supplementary process</p>	<p>Expenditure of the funds must follow the General Expenditure delegations at 1</p>	<p>Director with approval of the Section 151 Officer** and relevant Cabinet Member(s)</p> <p>Cabinet approval via Finance Monitoring Report</p>
5	<p>Asset Leasing</p>		<p>All proposed leasing arrangements to be appraised and approved by Corporate Finance</p>

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6	<p>Treasury Management</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer is responsible for treasury management and no other employees, unless named in the officer delegation, must borrow or invest council monies, make loans to or acquire interest in companies, joint ventures or other enterprises</p>		The Section 151 Officer or officer with delegated authority
7	<p>Disposal of Assets</p> <p>Disposal of council assets other than:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land and Property - see Scheme of delegation Growth and Regeneration • Schools - covered by Scheme for financing schools and Financial regulations for schools with delegated budgets <p>Consult as outlined and proceed in line with delegations and any associated disposal guidance or original grant conditions</p>	<p>Up to 5,000</p> <p>In excess of £5,000 but not more than £100,000</p> <p>In excess of £100,000, but not more than £250,000</p> <p>In excess of £250,000, but less than £500,000</p> <p>£500,000 and above</p>	<p>Head of Service</p> <p>Head of Service Property / Culture</p> <p>Director; following consultation with the Head of Service Property / Culture and relevant cabinet member</p> <p>Executive Director; following consultation with the Director, Head of Service, relevant cabinet member and the Section 151 Officer</p> <p>Cabinet (following consultation with Cabinet Member, Executive Director and the Section 151 Officer)</p>
8	<p>Power to make payments or provide other benefits in cases of maladministration or compensation</p>	<p>up to £500</p> <p>In excess of £500, but less than £5,000</p> <p>In excess of £5,000, but less than £10,000</p>	<p>Heads of Service (following consultation with the Budget Holder)</p> <p>Director (following consultation with the Budget Holder)</p> <p>Executive Director (following consultation with the Budget Holder)</p>
9	<p>Fees and Charges</p> <p>All new fees and amendments to existing charges will be reviewed annually and subject to formal approval in accordance with the</p>	<p>All changes</p>	<p>Cabinet (following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, Executive Director and Section 151 Officer)</p>

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	<p>Budget and Policy Framework.</p> <p>Any request to change fees and charges outside of this process must be subject to a separate Cabinet report.</p> <p>Officers do not have the power to make changes to policies relating to fees and charges or give concessions to fees and charges</p>		
10	Write Off of Income		The Debt Write Off Policy and authorisation levels is outlined within the Corporate Debt Management Policy
11	<p>Budget Virements</p> <p>Authorisation levels for virements: within or from a directorates revenue and capital budgets; within approved policy headings:</p> <p>No virements are possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - from capital to revenue budgets - from staffing budgets to supplies and services budgets - If the proposed virement, together with the total of previous virements within the same financial year, would result in an aggregate increase or decrease in the original 'net' budget for any directorate of more than 25% or £500,000. <p>A virement that is likely to impact on the level of service activity of another budget holder can only be implemented with the agreement of the relevant budget holder(s).</p> <p>The Section 151 Officer (or officer with delegated authority) may also approve budget adjustments of unlimited value where they are purely technical in nature (eg not impacting upon the service provided or on</p>	<p>Up to £25,000</p> <p>In excess of £25,000 but not more than £100,000</p> <p>In excess of £100,000 but not more than £500,000</p> <p>£500,000 and over</p>	<p>Heads of Service / (following consultation with the Budget Holder)</p> <p>Director (following consultation with the Budget Holder)</p> <p>Executive Director with approval of the S151 Officer and relevant Cabinet member(s))</p> <p>Cabinet approval</p>

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	income generated)		
12	<p>Settling insurance claims / related works</p> <p>The settling of insurance claims against the council not covered by our insurance and in compliance with all relevant insurance terms and conditions, will be subject to approval as follows</p>	<p>Up to £500</p> <p>In excess of £500, but not more than £25,000</p> <p>In excess of £25,000 but not more than £100,000</p> <p>In excess of £100,000, but less than £250,000</p> <p>In excess of £250,000, but less than £500,000</p> <p>£500,000 and above</p>	<p>Principal Risk and Insurance Officer</p> <p>Risk and Insurance Senior Officer</p> <p>Head of Strategic Finance (in consultation with Risk and Insurance Senior Officer)</p> <p>Section 151 Officer (in consultation with Risk and Insurance Senior Officer)</p> <p>Executive Director with approval of the Section 151 Officer and relevant executive member(s) with delegated authority.</p> <p>Cabinet (following consultation with relevant executive member(s) with delegated authority, Executive Director and Section 151 Officer)</p>
13	<p>Emergency / Urgent Payments</p> <p>Emergency / urgent payments in this instance are those made in extenuating circumstance, arising</p>	<p>Up to £250,000</p> <p>In excess of £250,000, but not more than £2m</p>	<p>Executive Director, following consultation with the relevant cabinet member</p> <p>Head of Paid Service or Section 151 Officer following</p>

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	<p>as a consequence of unforeseen circumstances (eg a natural disaster, a civil emergency or a court order, etc) and where budget provision has not been made and the payment cannot be covered within the relevant service's existing budget.</p> <p>A full report (see opposite for further detail) will be produced to the relevant forum (threshold permitting) explaining the decision, the reasons for it and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.</p>		<p>consultation with the Mayor or Deputy Mayor with responsibility for City Economy, Finance and Performance (two of the three named roles).</p> <p>The following report formats should be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer Executive Decision (OED) for values below £500k, service resources are available and non-key decisions. • Finance urgent key decision where draw down from corporate or general reserves and/or a key decision is required which must be published within a cabinet report.
14	<p>Supplementary Estimates</p> <p>The withdrawal of funds from reserves to provide additional funding to meet service budget requirements is referred to as a supplementary estimate</p>	<p>up to £1m</p> <hr/> <p>In excess of £1m</p>	<p>Mayor</p> <hr/> <p>Individual estimates exceeding this limit shall be referred to Council for determination</p>
		<p>Funded from the approved policy level of minimum general reserves</p>	<p>Supplementary revenue estimate which are to be funded wholly or in part from the approved policy level of general reserves, regardless of value, must be approved by Council</p>
<p>Changes to the delegated limits / values above may only be made with the approval of the council's S151 Officer</p>			

* Following consultation with (= after discussion and agreement with someone), with agreement evidenced in written form.

** The officer appointed under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 (Section 151 Officer / Chief Finance Officer) in the council is the Service Director: Finance