



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 reflects 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
V1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated in conjunction with changes to the Financial RegulationsChanges to job titles.	Tony Kirkham April 2024

Document status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Draft <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final
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Introduction

In the Constitution, the Policy Committees 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.

Within the remit of the S151 Officer there are sub-delegations as outlined in Appendix A.

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</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

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	<p>are built into the workflow approval process in the financial system and inherit through the officer's position</p>		<p>relevant Policy Committee Chair(s) with delegated financial authority.</p>
<p>£500,000 and above, but not more than £1m</p>		<p>Relevant Policy Committee approval needed.</p> <p>Post Committee approval of the key decision - the requisition or payments can only be authorised by: Director / Executive Director</p>	
<p>Over £1m</p>		<p>Relevant Policy Committee approval needed.</p> <p>Post Committee approval of the key decision - the requisition or payments can only be authorised by: Section 151 Officer</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<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>	<p>Less than £500,000</p>	<p>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 Policy Committee Chair(s), and subsequently reported in the Finance Monitoring Report to Strategy and Resources Policy Committee; 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.</p>
<p>£500,000 and above</p>	<p>Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (following Executive Director consultation with the Section 151 Officer and relevant Policy Committee Chair(s) as above.</p>		

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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 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>	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 Policy Committee Chair(s) with Strategy and Resources Policy Committee approval via Finance Monitoring Report.
		£500,000 and above	Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (following Executive Director consultation with the Section 151 Officer and relevant Policy Committee Chair (s)).
			Full Council approval is needed to increase affordability indicators
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>	Expenditure of the funds must follow the General Expenditure delegations at 1	<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</p>	Expenditure of the funds must follow the General Expenditure delegations at 1	<p>Director with approval of the Section 151 Officer** and relevant Policy Committee Chair(s)</p> <p>Strategy and Resources Policy Committee approval via Finance</p>

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	process		Monitoring Report
5	Asset Leasing		All proposed leasing arrangements to be appraised and approved by Corporate Finance in line with the Financial Regulations.
6	Treasury Management 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		The Section 151 Officer or officer with delegated authority
7	Disposal of Assets Disposal of Council assets other than: <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 Consult as outlined and proceed in line with delegations and any associated disposal guidance or original grant conditions	Up to 5,000	Head of Service
		In excess of £5,000 but not more than £100,000	Head of Corporate Landlord
		In excess of £100,000, but not more than £250,000	Director; following consultation with the Head of Corporate Landlord and Strategy and Resources Policy Committee Chair.
		In excess of £250,000, but less than £500,000	Executive Director; following consultation with the Director, Head of Service, relevant Policy Committee Chair and the Section 151 Officer
		£500,000 and above	Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (following consultation with the relevant Policy Committee Chair, Executive Director and the Section 151 Officer)
8	Power to make payments or provide other benefits in cases of maladministration or	up to £500	Heads of Service (following consultation with the Budget Holder)

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	compensation	In excess of £500, but less than £5,000	Director (following consultation with the Budget Holder)
		In excess of £5,000, but less than £10,000	Executive Director (following consultation with the Budget Holder)
		In excess of £10,000	Executive Director and S151 Officer (following consultation with the Budget Holder)
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 Budget and Policy Framework.</p> <p>Any request to change fees and charges outside of this process must be subject to a separate Policy Committee 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>	All changes	Relevant Policy Committee (following consultation with the Chair of Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, Executive Director and Section 151 Officer)
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 directorate's 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 pay to non-pay budgets - If the proposed virement, together with the total of previous virements within the 	Up to £25,000	Heads of Service / (following consultation with the Budget Holder)
		In excess of £25,000 but not more than £100,000	Director (following consultation with the Budget Holder)
		In excess of £100,000 but not more than £500,000	Executive Director with approval of the S151 Officer and relevant Policy Committee Chair(s))

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	<p>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, whichever is the lower.</p> <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 (e.g., not impacting upon the service provided or on income generated).</p>	<p>£500,000 and over</p>	<p>Strategy and Resources Policy Committee approval</p>
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>Risk and Insurance Officer</p> <p>Senior Risk and Insurance Officer</p> <p>Head of Strategic Finance (in consultation with Senior Risk and Insurance Officer)</p> <p>Section 151 Officer (in consultation with Senior Risk and Insurance Officer)</p> <p>Executive Director with approval of the Section 151 Officer and relevant Policy Committee Chair(s).</p> <p>Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (following consultation with relevant Policy Committee Chair(s), Executive Director and Section 151 Officer)</p>
13	<p>Emergency / Urgent Payments</p> <p>Emergency / urgent payments in this instance are those made in</p>	<p>Up to £250,000</p>	<p>Executive Director, following consultation with the relevant Policy Committee Chair.</p>

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	<p>extenuating circumstance, arising as a consequence of unforeseen circumstances (e.g., 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>Decisions over £2m, or wider policy related urgent key decisions, would be required to follow the wider constitution for urgent key decisions.</p>	<p>In excess of £250,000, but not more than £2m</p>	<p>Head of Paid Service or Section 151 Officer following consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee.</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 future relevant Policy Committee report.
14	<p>Supplementary Estimates</p> <p>The withdrawal of funds from reserves, or other funding routes, to provide additional funding to meet service budget requirements is referred to as a supplementary estimate.</p>	<p>up to £1m</p>	<p>Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, without reduction to general reserves policy threshold.</p> <p>Supplementary revenue estimates that would apply the use of general reserves, or commit the council to significant recurrent financial implications, must be approved by Full Council regardless of value.</p>
		<p>In excess of £1m</p>	<p>Individual estimates exceeding this limit shall be referred to Full Council for determination.</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