

Finance Policy Manual

Approved Date	July 2020
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Related Legislation/Applicable Section of Legislation	Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (NI) 2015 Local Government (NI) Act 2014 Local Government (NI) Order 2005
Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks	Councils Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation Councils Procurement Policy Other Council Financial procedures
Replaces	
Policy Lead (Name/Position/Contact details)	Chief Executive Chief Finance Officer
Sponsor Directorate	Finance Committee
Version	4.0

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Introduction

This Finance Policy Manual has been established to provide Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council with a corporate framework by which to regulate all financial services and operations within its area of responsibility. It will also provide employees with a comprehensive understanding of all the core affiliated financial policies, procedures, codes and guidance documents that have been established to enable effective accountability within the management of Council's financial affairs.

This policy has been purposely developed at a strategic level and is supported by numerous operational procedures that will effectively deliver the day-to-day financial operations in a seamless and transparent manner.

Policy Scope

This Policy applies to all Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council employees (permanent, temporary and voluntary). The effective delivery of this policy will play a key role in helping Council achieve its strategic priorities as stated within the Causeway Coast and Glens Council Corporate Plan 2015-2019, and it will also contribute to Council realising its strategic vision of "Maximise the benefits of our unique location and landscape by providing ambitious, accessible, innovative and efficient services which fulfil customer expectations" by living out the key values of Council through this policy, Fairness, Excellence, Sustainability and Efficiency, Empowerment and Innovation. The policy will be supported by detailed financial procedures.

Aims of the Finance Policy

- To provide employees with clear, unambiguous and consistent guidelines when carrying out the financial activities of Council;
- ensure proper accountability, checks and controls are in place across all of Council's financial operations;
- To maintain and improve the Council's financial control environment including the management of financial risk; and
- To maintain and improve the financial systems and processes such that they are easy for users to access, operate quickly and efficiently.

Responsibility

The Chief Finance Officer has overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the Finance Policy.

It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to Council's Finance Policy and all of the associated policy and procedural documents that are referenced within it.

Review

This policy will be subject to scrutiny and from time to time, updates and reissues will be circulated.

It is anticipated that the first formal full review will take place in June 2021.

1 Audit, fraud and codes of conduct

1.1 External Audit – Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO)

1.1.1 The NIAO Local Government Auditor is the appointed independent external auditor under The Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005, as updated by the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014 and is required to examine, certify and report on the financial statements of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. The examination of the Statement of Accounts will be carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing issued by the UK Auditing Practices Board and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Chief Local Government Auditor.

1.1.2 The statutory responsibilities and powers of the designated Local Government Auditor are set out in the 2005 Order. In discharging these, the Local Government Auditor is required to carry out his/her work in accordance with a Code of Audit Practice. The scope of external audit in Local Government is extended to cover not only the audit of the financial statements, but also the audited bodies arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Code focuses on how the Local Government Auditor should carry out his/her wider range of functions and the audit of the financial statements is conducted in accordance with International Auditing Standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council.

1.1.3 Following completion of the audit the auditor will issue an Annual Audit Letter to the Council and will provide the Chief Financial Officer with a Report to those charged with Governance containing observations and recommendations on significant matters that have arisen in the course of the audit.

1.2 Internal Audit

1.2.1 The internal audit service within Council provides management with an objective assessment of whether systems and controls, (financial and nonfinancial), are working properly. It is a key part of the Council's internal control system because it measures and evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of other controls in order that:

- a) The Council and senior management can know the extent to which they may rely on the whole control system; and
- b) Individual managers can know the reliability or otherwise of the systems and controls for which they are responsible.

1.2.2 Whilst the responsibility for internal audit services sits with the Director of Corporate Services, Council currently outsources some internal audit service provision through a tendered contract.

1.2.3 The Internal Audit Service is carried out in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) which came into force on 1 April 2013 and is further informed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Local Government Application Note (April 2013) published to assist in the implementation of the PSIAS.

1.2.4 Council will annually agree and approve an Internal Audit Charter with the Internal Audit Service provider which clearly outlines the key roles, responsibilities, reporting mechanisms of Internal Audit.

1.3 Codes of Conduct

1.3.1 Under Corporate Governance, Council is responsible for developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct, and for defining the standards of behaviour for Councillors and staff.

1.3.2 The Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) is revising the Code of Conduct that was adopted by all Councils from 1 April 2015.

1.3.3 All Councillors are required to comply with the Northern Ireland Code of Conduct for Councillors as issued by the DOE in May 2014.

1.4 Whistleblowing and Fraud

1.4.1 The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with this commitment, the Council has developed a Whistleblowing Policy. The Council expects employees and others it deals with who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work to come forward and voice those concerns. The Whistleblowing Policy makes it clear that this can be done without fear of victimization, subsequent discrimination and disadvantage.

1.4.2 Where any irregularity is known or suspected regarding any matter of a financial or potentially financial nature affecting the Council, staff should follow the guidelines in the Council's Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan which sets out the detailed arrangements for reporting suspected fraud.

2. Purchasing procedures, Specific Delegated Authority

- 2.1 Purchasing officers, having issued and authorised a purchase order, are required to ensure that (i) goods and services are completely and satisfactorily supplied, (ii) all appropriate paperwork (quotations, order no., goods received note, etc) is retained awaiting an invoice from the supplier, (iii) funds exist to meet the cost of the order.
- 2.2 All invoices are received and registered within the Finance Department by Accounts Payable staff. If the invoice matches the purchase order (PO) it can be automatically cleared for payment, if there is a query or no PO, the invoices are passed to the purchasing officer for coding, authorisation and final checking.
- 2.3 The purchasing officer is responsible for checking that all paperwork matches up to the invoice and for following up any queries, which may arise (e.g. partial or non-completion, incorrect price/specification or workmanship/quality issues).
- 2.4 Once the purchasing officer is satisfied that all work has been completed, all the matched paperwork (as at 2 (a) above) plus the invoice should be passed to their line manager who authorises payment, as appropriate. (if line manager places order then Director must authorise invoice). Paperwork is normally held on site or uploaded to the system. If dept is satisfied with the goods received they can deliver on the system so that when the invoice is received in finance if the details match then the invoice is paid without further approval. Invoice only needs to be approved if there are variances more than £1 goods description doesn't match. If line manager places order HOS should authorise, if HOS places order director should authorise.
- 2.5 Authorising officers should check that:
 - (i) All documentation is correct to allow the invoice to be processed for payment
 - () The purchase order is within delegated financial authority
 - (i) Adequate funds exist against the relevant cost code/budget centre
 - (ii) Paperwork provides evidence that goods/services have been completely delivered/supplied to the satisfaction of the purchasing officer.
- 2.6 The authorising officer should follow up any points arising and either
 - (i) Return the order to the purchasing officer for further action

- (ii) authorise the invoice for payment
- (iii) pass the order to the Finance Service (Accounts Staff) for payment
- (iv) if invoice is not for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council return to finance noting this.

- 2.7 Invoices are paid weekly by the Finance Service (Accounts Payable Staff).
- 2.8 The Council's preferred option is for invoices to be paid by BACS. For this reason:
- (i) all suppliers are requested to provide BACS details
 - (ii) all invoices should be directed to the Finance Department (Accounts Payable Staff) for registration.
- 2.9 The authorised officers for procurement on behalf of Council will be agreed by the Chief Finance Officer.

3. Income, debt management, banking and cash handling

3.1 Income - invoicing and credit notes

3.1.1 All income transactions (including grant claims and miscellaneous third party transactions) must be covered by an official invoice.

3.1.2 Recharges between Council Departments do not need to be processed by an Invoice, an internal recharge form/email with supporting information is sufficient.

3.1.3 To generate an Invoice an email should be sent to accounts receivable (accounts.receivable@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk) detailing the request

3.1.4 To generate a Credit Note an email should be sent to accounts receivable detailing reason for credit and approved by relevant staff member

3.1.5 The following information should be emailed

- The name of the Service requesting the invoice/credit note.
- All of the following customer details must be completed.
Account Reference
Customer name in full/Trading Style
Customer address
Do not use initials only and avoid use of PO Box addresses as in the event of the customer defaulting in payment the Small Claims Court are unable to process applications using this information.
Telephone number

Full details for what the Invoice is to be raised for must be entered in the space provided e.g.

(a) Northern Health & Social Care Trust
Use of Ballymoney Townhall 27 Sept 2012 Order
No: 11111

(b) Northern Health & Social Care Trust
Use of Civic Headquarters – Meeting Room as per attached sheet.

In the case of (b) please attach 2 copies of any documentation to be forwarded with the Invoice (one copy retained on our file).

- An explanation as to why the Credit Note is being raised e.g. To cancel Invoice 2222 - Use of Civic Headquarters Invoice raised in error.
- When completed each request must include:
 - The relevant Department and detail code.

- The invoice amount net and gross of VAT.
- The relevant VAT code (see attached).
- Officer's signature and date signed off.

Only Officers who hold a recognised signing authority can sign Credit Note Requests.

3.1.6 Invoice Requests for one off goods or services should be raised and sent to Finance within 5 working days of the event happening.

3.1.7 Requests for on-going monthly services should be sent to Finance before the last working day of the month.

3.1.8 An Invoice/Credit Note number will be allocated by the Finance Service and the date inserted when the request is completed.

3.2 Debt Management

3.2.1 The following procedures are carried out at the end of every month:

- a) Print-out of aged debt reviewed by credit controller
- b) Statement issued on all accounts.
- c) Accounts with overdue balances greater than 30 days issued with 1st reminder letter.
- d) Accounts with overdue balances greater than 60 days issued with 2nd reminder letter.
- e) Accounts with balances more than 60 days overdue and who have not responded to telephone calls or reminder notices, will be submitted to the Small Claims Court. (for values of outstanding debts less than £3,000)

3.2.2 Bad debts up to £1,000 can be written off by the Chief Finance Officer, anything above this amount must be taken to the relevant Committee for permission to be written off.

3.3 Cash Handling and Banking

3.3.1 Cash is received for the following services at a number of locations across council:

- a) General Income – sales of bins, dog licences, building control fees, planning fees, registrar fees, allotments, grant income.
- b) Leisure facilities
- c) Tourist Information Office/Museums – gifts, sales, booking fees
- d) Public Toilets
- e) Pitch bookings, hire of outdoor leisure facilities
- f) Harbours and marinas
- g) Caravan sites
- h) Street trading, licensing

3.3.2 All cash must be lodged at least once per week

3.3.3 All cash must be kept in a secure location with access only by authorised personnel.

3.3.4 All safe limits for cash storage must be adhered to for insurance purposes.

3.3.5 Cash must be delivered to the finance service by an agreed method and accompanied by supporting documentation for input into the council's accounts system on a regular basis. Documentation to be emailed to accounts receivable.

3.3.6 All income must be coded using councils coding system. Any queries regarding coding of income or extraction of VAT on cash received should be directed to the Finance Service immediately.

3.3.7 A receipt is produced for all cash entered on the TOTAL financial system and a copy must be obtained for your records.

3.3.8 All discrepancies must be recorded and reported immediately to senior officers at each location for investigation and sign off.

3.3.9 All cash lodged into council bank accounts will be reconciled on a monthly basis.

3.3.10 The Finance Service need to be notified immediately of any fraudulent notes or bounced cheques, as this will have an impact on income being recorded for relevant departments

4. Procurement

4.1 Council's Procurement Policy is available as a separate document.

5. Credit cards and web purchases

- 5.1 The Council's preferred option is to pay for goods and services on the basis of an authorised invoice after goods and services have been satisfactorily provided. Payments are ordinarily made by BACS, electronic transfer or cheque at the earliest opportunity following verification by Council.
- 5.2 The Council also holds Bank of Ireland visa cards, which are available in certain circumstances to settle accounts where payment by credit card is necessary.
- 5.3 The Council's credit cards are issued in the personal names of the Directors of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.
- 5.4 It is, therefore, essential that each credit card transaction is authorised in advance on an individual basis. This arrangement is only overridden where a specific, written authority is given by the Chief Finance Officer. Any transaction not authorised in accordance with this paragraph may be deemed to be personal expenditure and, as such, would be treated as follows:
- 5.5 Each officer given a sanction to use the credit card should be aware that no items of a personal nature are permissible, even if the intention is to repay such expenditure. The Council takes the view that failure to comply with this aspect should be treated as a disciplinary offence.
- 5.6 The Council's credit card is available to pay for, or to reserve, goods and services via the Internet, or over the telephone, where immediate payment is required and unavoidable.
- 5.7 Use of the credit card will ordinarily be authorised for transactions such as:
- a) discounted air tickets available via the internet at a reduced price;
 - b) hotel bookings and reservations;
 - c) car hire bookings;
 - d) goods and services where the supplier insists on an advance payment or deposit.
- 5.8 The card is not to be used:
- a) for any transaction not authorised by the Chief Finance Officer;
 - b) for any item of personal expenditure;
 - c) for any item of supply where it is reasonable or normal to expect the supplier to invoice the Council for payment after delivery of the service;
 - d) for any item where the supplier is based in Northern Ireland (other than to secure a hotel booking);

- e) for transactions where there is a higher likelihood of a refund, or where alteration would incur a significant fee.
- 5.9 The overriding principle is that use of the cards should be to benefit the Council, rather than in the interests of the supplier.
- 5.10 No personal expenditure is to be charged to the credit cards. Meals and expenses, etc, are only a legitimate charge to the credit cards if such expenditure is necessarily incurred in the performance of official Council business and within defined expenses' scales, limits, etc.
- 5.11 Where Internet bookings are involved, a screen print should be taken with copies distributed to:
- (a) the travelling officer if appropriate;
 - (b) the Finance Service (attached to a copy of the purchase order).
- 5.12 Where a hotel, flight ticket or car reservation is made, the purchase order must fully show the financial details of the transaction.
- 5.13 In the event of hotel expenses, etc., being charged to the credit card, receipts etc., **must** be obtained as usual. These receipts are to be passed to the finance department on the officer's return to the office.
- 5.14 Where other goods/services have been provided any receipts or invoices must be authorised as normal and passed to finance.
- 5.15 If for any reason a refund is sought, or tickets are not used, Finance must be notified immediately in writing.
- 5.16 When goods/services have not been satisfactorily delivered, or there are grounds to stop or query a credit card payment, the Chief Finance Officer is to be notified immediately as there is a time limit for credit card queries.
- 5.17 Purchasing officers should be aware of the possibility of a duplicate invoice being received for an item charged to the credit card. To protect against the possibility of double payment, any such invoice should be marked "paid by credit card", and then forwarded to the finance department.

6. Capital Expenditure, business cases and depreciation

- 6.1 All capital schemes (excluding ICT) will be administered by the Environmental Services Directorate in conjunction with the directorate that the project emanates from.
- 6.2 As part of the estimates process and in line with the Prudential Code each department will estimate the capital expenditure requirements for the next 3 financial years. Notwithstanding the provision of estimated financial provision for schemes in the rates setting process each capital scheme will also require a business case and or economic appraisal to support a final decision by Council to commit to a capital expenditure scheme. The business case and or economic appraisals must be presented to Council and be approved prior to expenditure. Pro forma documentation is available for the purpose from finance.
- 6.3 With regard to the scale of capital expenditure for the purposes of materiality a de minimis level of expenditure will be determined and reviewed from time to time. The initial de minimis level is £1,000. All capital costs will be treated either as revenue (below the de minimis level) or as a fixed asset and added to the fixed asset register.
- 6.4 Detail codes will be attributed to identify capital acquisition costs, disposal and depreciation.
- 6.5 All capital invoices must be authorised by the relevant Director (SLT).
- 6.6 When a decision is taken to either dispose of an asset held on the fixed asset register or transfer it between departments this must be recorded on the appropriate form including sign off by the Head of Service as evidence of approval for the disposal/transfer. The authorised form must be sent to the Finance Service and a copy retained by the Head of service. The fixed asset register will then be amended accordingly.
- 6.7 Capital assets will be categorised for depreciation purposes either as Operational or Non Operational. Capital assets other than land, community assets and heritage assets will be depreciated over the term of their useful economic life.
- 6.8 The Council will set the life, residual values and depreciation rates of each category of asset.

7. Bank Accounts (including foreign currency accounts) and BACS

7.1 All bank accounts are managed by senior Finance staff under direct and written authority delegated by Council. No other member of staff is authorised to enact any Council banking business with Bank of Ireland or any other financial institution.

7.2 Accounts

The following bank accounts are used across Council:

7.2.1 General Account

This account is used as follows:

Payments for:

Suppliers

Wages & Salaries

Government bodies for payroll deductions

Sundry expense payments

Loan repayments

Receipts for:

Cash book

Debtors (including Trade Waste)

Loan receipts

7.2.2 Credit Card

This account is used to purchase items that must be paid upfront i.e. flights, accommodation.

7.2.3 Deposit Account

From the general revenue account surplus money is transferred in to this account for short periods of time and earns interest for the Council. The money is recalled cashflow dictates.

Transfers between these accounts are completed by senior finance staff.

7.3 Online Banking

7.3.1 This facility enables authorised Council employees to access details of the main bank accounts held with the Bank of Ireland.

7.3.2 Access is electronic and is password protected.

7.3.3 Current Day Balances are accessed each day details of transactions downloaded.

7.3.4 Transfers are made between accounts through the online banking facility.

7.3.5 Access to the Online banking facility is restricted to Finance Officers.

7.4 Bank Reconciliation

7.4.1 Each bank account is reconciled on a monthly basis

7.4.2 Each Bank Reconciliation Summary must show:

7.4.3 The Book Balance (as per Ledger) brought forward, a summary of each main source of receipt for the month, and a summary of each of the main sources of payment for the month to arrive at the Book Balance at the end of the month.

7.4.4 This balance must be agreed with the reconciled month end Bank Statement balance, which must be shown as Bank Statement balance plus Outstanding Lodgements less Outstanding Cheques.

7.4.5 A detailed list of all reconciling items must be attached to the Bank Reconciliation Summary.

7.4.6 Each bank reconciliation must be reviewed and signed off by Financial Accountant

7.5 BACS

Bankers Automated Clearing System (BACS) is an established and secure system used by Council to transfer electronically all payments directly into the bank/building society accounts of employees and suppliers.

7.5.1 Information required for BACS payments

- 1 Name of Employee or Supplier
- 2 Address of Employee or Supplier
- 3 Bank/Building Society Name
- 4 Bank/Building Society Address
- 5 Branch Sort Code (6 digits)
- 6 Account Number (8 digits)
- 7 Full Name of Account Holder
- 8 BACS details must be confirmed via telephone with the supplier and verified with a follow up email from the Supplier (even if BACS details are on the Supplier invoice).

7.5.2 Councils are encouraged to pay Suppliers as promptly as possible in order to meet the 10 day prompt payment commitment made by Central Government in response to the current economic position. Payment by BACS ensures a prompt and efficient payment to Suppliers and Council will endeavour to pay Suppliers and Employees by BACS when possible.

8. Loans

- 8.1 The Council operates under the powers conferred upon it by the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 1972, The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions (1985 – 2002) and Local Government Finance (NI) Act 2011. The latter in particular regulates the powers of the Council to borrow in certain circumstances.
- 8.2 Other Commercial Loans (Sinking Fund)
- 8.3 The Council set the level of local rates on an annual basis and these include sufficient funds to service the costs of long term and short terms loans (principal and interest). This is determined within the guidance issued by the Department for Communities (and its successors), the Prudential Code and in particular affordability indicators.
- 8.4 In order that Council can plan its loan requirements efficiently it is essential that capital schemes are planned and approved in a timely manner.
- 8.5 As part of the capital scheme a prudent assessment will be made of the economic life of the asset. The term of each Council loan must not exceed the economic life of the asset it is used to finance.
- 8.6 Short term loans are accessed solely to mitigate excessive overdraft charges and to ensure Council funding remains adequate to meet anticipated cash flow needs.
- 8.7 Receipts from the disposal of assets above the de minimis limit set by the Department may not be used to service revenue expenditure. The current de minimis limit is £5,000.
- 8.8 Receipts from disposal of assets must be matched against any outstanding loans on this asset.

9. Grants Receivable

- 9.1 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will receive grants to fund specific projects and service provision. It is important that the application for and receipt of grants is managed effectively to ensure that Council can maximise the funding available and minimise the risk of delay of receipt.
- 9.2 Each Service is responsible to ensure that all letters of offers are copied to the Finance Service, in full, upon receipt – to include all paperwork for submission of grant claims and any terms and conditions.
- 9.3 Most service areas complete their own grant claims, finance staff assist them with any documentation that is required.
- 9.4 Onus will remain on the service to maximise the amount of claim and ensure it is submitted in time, with the support of the Finance Service.
- 9.5 A claim will only be submitted early if all the relevant spend has occurred and it is of benefit to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council to do so.
- 9.6 Where difficulties are encountered in achieving expenditure profiles or deadlines for grant claim submissions, or where grant funders' requirements are not being met, it is essential for staff to refer the issue to the appropriate Director at the earliest opportunity.
- 9.7 Director(s) will seek extensions to claim deadlines or provide support, as appropriate, to achieve grant funders' protocols and deadlines for claim submissions.

10. Stock Control

- 10.1 Stock control is used to show how much stock Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council has at any one time and how the Council will keep track of it.
- 10.2 It applies to every item Council uses to produce a product or service, from raw materials to finished goods. It covers stock at every stage of the production process, from purchase and delivery to using and re-ordering the stock.
- 10.3 Electronic and manual records are used to manage and monitor stocks by the budget centre manager.
- 10.4 Any discrepancies in stocks and stores should be taken seriously. Where there is any suspicion that the discrepancy is a result of theft or fraudulent activity, this must be reported immediately to the Internal Auditor.

11. Budget information and variances.

11.1 For each finance year commencing 1 April the Council estimates and approves a budget of its income and expenditure. The budget is monitored on a monthly basis and management accounts reports are prepared for each budget area.

11.2 The Council will maintain a schedule of those managers with budget management responsibility. The list will be kept under review and may be amended this from time to time as the need arises. The budget is profiled across the 12 calendar months of the finance year to reflect the pattern of expenditure and income generated.

11.3 Budget managers are required to exercise budgetary control over their respective sections and are assisted in this by the production of timely and accurate management information from the Finance Section and in particular variance analysis.

11.4 The Senior Leadership Team will also conduct periodic reviews throughout the finance year of budget and variance reports to

- Highlight adverse budgets
- Establish the cause of variance from budget
- Consider corrective action and allocate who should carry forward such action
- Document the results of corrective action

Budget managers are responsible for:

- Regular communication with the Finance Service regarding information to control their budget out with the scope of the monthly variance reports
- Regular review of the monthly variance reports
- Delegation of control of individual budgets to budget holders as appropriate
- Profiling of budget expenditure and income over the finance year to reflect the pattern of expenditure that he/she anticipates
- Explanations for variances and develop corrective actions as appropriate for adverse variance
- Agree timescales and resources required to carry out corrective action
- Review corrective action to ensure its effectiveness
- Ensure adherence to the Procurement Policies and procedures of Council
- Cooperate with internal and external audit requests in a timely manner.

Each Directorate/Service area will have a designated Business Partner in Finance to assist, support and ensure the accuracy of the Monthly Management Accounts.

12. Budget Setting

12.1 The Chief Finance Officer following consultation with the Chief Executive will issue an estimates timetable to budget holders and finance staff in September/ October each year. The timetable will include deadlines for each stage and detailed procedures and information will be developed for Officers and Members to facilitate the budget setting process.

12.2 Consultation with Elected Members will commence from mid-October.

12.3 Payroll and capital expenditure is estimated by relevant finance staff at the initial stage of the timetable, in consultation with the Budget Centre Manager and Director. Other revenue expenditure and income plans will be estimated through November and December.

12.4 Workshops will be held with Elected Members before a final plan is agreed in advance of the deadline set by the legislation for striking a rate.

12.4.1 The Council will meet before the deadline set by legislation to strike the rate.

12.5 The relevant returns of the estimates will be forwarded to the Department by the deadline set by it and to budget holders before 1 April.

13. Payroll

- 13.1 Council operate both monthly and weekly payroll.
- 13.2 Weekly payroll records must be received by the payroll office no later than 10 am each Monday to facilitate weekly payroll processing.
- 13.3 Monthly overtime sheets/travel/sickness information must be completed and received in finance no later than the 5th of each month to facilitate processing.
- 13.4 Both weekly payroll records and monthly overtime sheets must be authorised by an appropriate senior officer before submission to finance for processing.
- 13.5 Weekly wages are ordinarily paid by BACS transfer three working days prior to the end of the pay period. Salaries are paid 5 working days before the end of the month
- 13.6 Payslips are usually distributed two days in advance of payment.
- 13.7 New employees must provide the payroll office with the following information on their commencement, in order that correct payment of wages/salaries can be made:
 - P45 from previous employer. If this is not available, the employee must complete HMRC form P46.
 - Pension Option Form.
 - Bank Credit Transfer Details

14. Travel and Subsistence

- 14.1 Please refer to the Travel and Subsistence policy for guidance in relation to travel and subsistence claims.