



Financial controls tighten at start of 2019-20

At the end of the 2018-19 financial year, the Trust is facing a deficit of £3million. This is despite additional investment a year ago from our commissioners, following the Independent Service Review (ISR).

As we begin the new financial year for 2019-2020, we have calculated that we will need an extra £5million above ISR funding. Again, this is despite the fact we have received extra income from our commissioners.

As a result, our regulators have requested that we work hard to stay within the funds we have.

Everyone within the Trust needs to ensure that we spend our money as carefully as possible.

You must make sure that you:

- Plan ahead to gain the approvals needed
- Are familiar with the Trust's Standard Financial Instructions (SFIs) and Scheme of Delegation
- Ensure that your manager is aware of and approves any planned spend
- Speak to procurement in advance regarding your needs so they can provide proactive support.

We have put in place some further controls over our expenditure and everyone is expected to work within these. These include:

1. Vacancy controls

All requests for recruiting to vacant roles will need to go to the vacancy panel. The only exceptions are new frontline staff on bands 3 - 6, that are centrally recruited. All other posts will need to be considered by the panel, including secondments. The panel will meet every Monday and will update the Executive team (ELB) at its Thursday meetings for decisions on whether posts should go forward at that time or not. The vacancy panel will then communicate the decisions taken.

2. Agency staff

All agency staff requests (excluding front line paramedics) will continue to go to the vacancy panel.

For frontline paramedic agency staff, you will need the approval of your Sector Head. A record of shifts will be kept and submitted to Robert Abery, in Finance following the end of each month for invoicing and forecasting.

3. Consultancy and professional fees

You will need ELB approval before you engage any external consultancy or professional expertise. All requests will be submitted to Procurement who will look at companies and individuals available and the potential costs and compile a weekly list of requests on a Tuesday to be put to ELB at the Thursday meetings. The Finance Team will communicate the decision from ELB following the Thursday meeting.

4. All non-pay requisitions

All requisitions to Procurement will be approved on a weekly basis on a Thursday by ELB. They will need to be submitted at the latest Monday am by budget holders with all approvals in place in order to be approved the Thursday of the same week.



5. Stationery orders

Our stationery provider (Lyreco) provides access to a range of goods. Orders should only be for small items of stationery required. Anything other than this, such as items of furniture, white goods, electrical goods, catering supplies etc. must be ordered via procurement from an approved provider and will not be approved on the stationery order. Please order the most cost effective type of paper, pens, notebooks etc. The Procurement Team will advise on any queries.

6. Hotels, courses and travelling

If you are booking hotels, courses or travel using the Capita system (or an alternative source) you will require authorisation from your Sector Head, Head of Department and the Executive before you make the booking. Currently such items are subject to the Discretionary Spend Policy (available on EEAST24) and they require finance sign off from the Finance Team before any online booking. Please continue to submit to the Procurement Team in the usual way once you have that senior level authorisation and a list will then be sent for ELB to consider at the Thursday meetings. Decisions from the meeting will be communicated back weekly by the end of Friday. Please note that accommodation costs should not be put through expense claims.

7. Stock control

Year-end stocktakes have shown wastage, poor stock rotation and excess stock. When reordering stock for your bases, make sure items are rotated in order that we minimise our levels of waste.

8. Fuel

Ensure you use our bulk fuel facilities whenever possible so that we source the lowest cost fuel. If you cannot avoid buying fuel while on duty please use the Premier fuel sites where we obtain the greatest discount from Allstar, or alternatively use supermarkets which again offer competitively priced fuel. Currently only around 10% of our fuel from Allstar is at the lowest rate.

9. Private ambulance services

A level of core PAS has been pre-booked from April 2019 to March 2020 for Emergency Operations. This increases the daily PAS hours from 2600 to 5444 per week. There is no further budget to pay for additional PAS and additional PAS can thus only be booked following approval by Gold Commanders in accordance with the agreed PAS booking process.

For PTS PAS, refer to Procurement who will procure via the framework in place. Please ensure Sector Head authorisation is gained prior to interim COO authorisation to Procurement

10. Catering

We aim to minimise offsite room bookings and catering for meetings. Please make every effort to use Trust facilities, keep meetings short. Any catering or lunches will be subject to ELB approval. This will require early planning in order that time is available for the Executive consideration.



11. Engage procurement early

Before buying goods and prior to any commitment with a supplier, remember that all staff have a responsibility to act within the confines of the Trust's Standard Financial Instructions (SFIs). This means ensuring that you obtain a minimum number of quotes based on the cost of the goods or service you intend to buy.

It is best practice to always get two quotes regardless of the spend level to ensure the goods or service offers value for money. The SFIs confirm that all staff should obtain at least one written quote for items under £5k, two quotes for items under £20k and three quotes for items between £20k and £50k. Anything over this requires a formal tender to be conducted by procurement or an alternative compliant route to purchase using a suitable framework.

12. Staff contractual documentation and timesheets

You must check the timesheets you submit and, Managers, you must check timesheets submitted by your staff in order that they are paid correctly.

All Managers must make sure any necessary HR forms required are treated as a high priority and completed correctly and submitted on time. Pay errors are not acceptable and many are due to late, incomplete or incorrect paperwork. It will save a great deal of time and money if we reduce these errors.

Please note, Finance or Procurement will be happy to help with any queries you may have.