



Business Services
Organisation

Standing Orders

Business Services Organisation

May 2025

Board Approved: 29/05/25



Working together



Excellence



Openness & Honesty



Compassion

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1. Foreword

The *Business Services Organisation* needs to have Standing Orders (SOs) and Schedules on:

- Powers reserved to the Board; and
- Powers delegated by the Board.

The Standing Orders, Reserved and Delegated powers and Standing Financial Instructions provide a comprehensive business framework for the *Business Services Organisation*.

These documents fulfil the dual role of protecting the *Business Services Organisation's* interests (ensuring, for example, that all transactions maximise the benefit to the *Business Services Organisation*) and protecting staff from any possible accusation that they have acted less than properly (provided of course that staff have followed the correct procedures outlined in the relevant documents).

All Executive Directors, Non-Executive Directors and all members of staff shall be aware of the existence of these documents and, where necessary, be familiar with the detailed provisions required to comply fully with the regulations.

The *Business Services Organisation* is committed to conducting its business and its meetings as publicly and openly as possible. It is intended that people shall be able to know about the services provided in the *Business Services Organisation's* area and, particularly, be able to contribute to discussion about changes, which may affect them or their dependants.

The Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions were approved by the Board as follows and subsequently submitted to the Department for information:

Standing Order (Dated)	Version No	Approved at Board Meeting
April 2009	1	1 April 2009
March 2010	2	25 February 2010
October 2011	3	27 October 2011
February 2013	4	28 February 2013
October 2015	5	29 October 2015
October 2016	6	27 October 2016
February 2018	7	22 February 2018
October 2019	8	24 October 2019
October 2020	9	29 th October 2020
October 2021	10	28 th October 2021
January 2023	11	26 th January 2023
September 2024	13	24 October 2024
May 2025	14	May 2025

Chairperson

Chief Executive

Dated

2. Introduction – Contents

- 2.1 Statutory Framework
- 2.2 Functions of the *Business Services Organisation*
- 2.3 Health and Social Care Framework
- 2.4 Financial Performance Framework
- 2.5 Delegation of Powers
- 2.6 Interpretation of Terms Used

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2.1 Statutory Framework

The Health and Social Care *Business Services Organisation* is a statutory body which came into existence on 1 April 2009.

The principal place of business of the *Business Services Organisation* is at 2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ.

The *Business Services Organisation* is governed by Statutory Instruments: HPSS (NI) Order 1972 (SI 1972/1265 NI14), the HPSS (NI) Order 1991 (SI 1991/194 NI1) and the Audit and Accountability (NI) Order 2003, the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009, the Health and Social Care (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Health and Social Care Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Their provisions are incorporated in these Standing Orders.

As a statutory body, the *Business Services Organisation* has specific powers to contract in its own name and where appropriate act as a regulator if directed by the Department. The *Business Services Organisation* is accountable to the Minister responsible for Health, for all funds allocated to it for the purposes of carrying out its core functions.

2.2 Functions of the Business Services Organisation

The BSO has a range of statutory duties and shall, as a body corporate, exercise the functions assigned to it by the Department of Health (DoH), including those set out in Article 15 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009 and any other statutory provisions deemed by DoH to be functions of the BSO, including the Governance Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

2.3 Health and Social Care Framework

In addition to the statutory requirements, the Minister, through the Department of Health (DoH), issues instructions and guidance. Where appropriate these are incorporated within the *Business Services Organisation's* Standing Orders or other Corporate Governance documentation. Principal examples are the Codes of Conduct and Accountability and the HPSS Code of Practice on Openness.

The Code of Accountability requires the Board of the *Business Services Organisation* ('the Board') to adopt Standing Orders (SOs) for the regulation of its proceedings and business and also to adopt Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs) as an integral part of SOs, setting out the financial responsibilities of budget-holders and individuals. Additionally, it specifies that the Board shall draw up a Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board, and a Scheme of Delegation to enable responsibility to be clearly delegated to senior executives. The Code further requires the establishment of Audit and Remuneration Committees with formally agreed Terms of Reference.

The Code of Conduct and Code of Accountability draw attention to the public service values required by all staff and specifically defines measures to deal with possible conflicts of interest of Board members. It makes various requirements concerning such possible conflicts of interest of members including Employment Related Legal Cases.

The Code of Practice on Openness in the HSC sets out the requirements for public access to information on the HSC and for the conduct of the Board's meetings. The *Business Services Organisation* is required to ensure appropriate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

2.4 Rebuilding HSC Services Strategic Framework

In June 2020 the Minister announced temporary amendments to the Framework Document and established a new Management Board for a two year period. The Chief Executive of the BSO is a member of the Management Board. These amendments are detailed in the Department of Health's 'Strategic Framework for the Rebuilding of Health and Social Care Services'.

2.5 Financial and Performance Framework

The Management Statement establishes the framework agreed with the Department of Health within which the Business Services Organisation operates. The associated Financial Memorandum sets out in detail certain aspects of the financial provisions which the BSO observes.

A copy of the Partnership Agreement will be given to all newly appointed Business Services Organisation board members and senior executive staff on appointment. Additionally, the Partnership Agreement will be tabled for information of board members at least annually at a full meeting of the Business Services Organisation board. Amendments made to the Partnership Agreement will also be brought to the attention of the full Business Services Organisation board on a timely basis.

The BSO has a number of financial targets and policies within which it is obliged to operate. These are as follows:

- To break even on its Income and Expenditure Account year on year and to maintain its Net Current Assets;
- To promote financial stability in the HSC;
- To operate within the Resource Limits, both Capital and Revenue set by the Department; and
- To comply with Better Payments Practice Code which advocates:

- Explaining payment procedures to suppliers;
- Agreeing payment terms at the outset and sticking to them;
- Paying bills in accordance with agreed terms, or as agreed by law;
- Telling suppliers without delay when an invoice is contested; and
- Settling quickly when a contested invoice gets a satisfactory response.

The Code requires payments to be made within 10 days of the receipt of goods or valid invoice.

2.6 Delegation of Powers

Under the Standing Orders relating to the Arrangements for the Exercise of Functions of the Board by Delegation (SO.4), the Board is given powers as follows:

"Subject to such directions as may be given by the Department of Health, the Board may make arrangements for the exercise, on behalf of the Business Services Organisation, of any of its functions by a Committee, sub-Committee or joint Committee, appointed by virtue of SO 5.1 below, or by an officer of the Board, in each case subject to such restrictions and conditions as the Board thinks fit."

Delegated Powers are covered in separate sections of this document entitled Powers Reserved to the Board (SO.3) and Powers Delegated by the Board (SO.4).

2.7 Interpretation of Terms Used

Save as permitted by law, at any meeting the Chairperson of the Board shall be the final authority on the interpretation of Standing Orders (on which they shall be advised by the Chief Executive and/or Secretary to the Board.)

Any expression to which a meaning is given in the Health and Personal Social Services Orders 1972 or 1991, the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009, the Health and Social Care (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Health and Social Care Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 shall have the same meaning in this interpretation and in addition:

“Accounting Officer” shall be the HSC Officer responsible and accountable for funds entrusted to the Board. They shall be responsible for ensuring the proper stewardship of public funds and assets. For this Board it shall be the Chief Executive (as specified by the DoH Permanent Secretary as Accounting Officer).

“Agency” or **“Public Health Agency”** means the Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Well-being.

“Board” shall mean the Chairperson, and Non-Executive (or non-officer) members, appointed by the Minister with responsibility for Health and Social Care and the Executive (or officer) members appointed by the Board.

“Budget” means a resource, expressed in financial terms, approved by the Board for the purpose of carrying out, for a specific period, any or all of the functions of the Board.

“Chairperson” is the person appointed by the Minister to lead the Board and to ensure that it successfully discharges its responsibility for the *Business Services Organisation* as a whole. The expression the ‘Chairperson of the Board’ shall be deemed to include the member of the Board deputising for the Chairperson if they is absent from the meeting or is otherwise unavailable.

“Chief Executive” means the chief officer of the *Business Services Organisation*.

“Chief Legal Adviser” means the properly qualified person appointed by the BSO to provide legal advice.

“Contracting and procurement” means the systems for obtaining the supply of goods, materials, manufactured items, services, building and engineering services, works of construction and maintenance and for disposal of surplus and obsolete assets.

“Committee” shall mean a Committee created by the Board either for its own good governance or by Departmental direction or by legislation.

“Committee members” shall be persons formally appointed by the Board to sit on or to chair specific Committees.

“Department” means the Department of Health (DoH). This was previously referred to as the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). The term Department does appear as part of the title of other Government organisations and in these instances the title is given in full.

“Director” – there may be three categories: Executive Director means an officer member of the Board, Non-Executive Director means a non-officer member of the Board, and the term Director may also be applied to a functional Director of the Organisation.

“SPPG” means the Strategic Performance and Planning Group. (This was previously known as HSCB and references to HSCB relate to previously published documents).

“Member” shall mean non-executive Director and/or Executive Director of the Board and does not include its Chairperson.

“Nominated officer” means an officer charged with the responsibility for discharging specific tasks within Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions.

“Non-officer member” means a member of the Board appointed under the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009.

“Officer” shall mean employee of the HSC Organisation. In certain circumstances, officer may include a person who is employed by another HSC organisation or by Third Party contracted to or by the Organisation who carries out functions on behalf of the Organisation.

“Officer member” means a member of the Board who is a member by virtue of or appointed under the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009.

“PCC” means the Patient and Client Council.

“Public” means any person who is not a Board member or a member of staff servicing the Board meeting and shall include any person with the status of observer.

“SFIs” is an abbreviation for Standing Financial Instructions.

“SOs” is an abbreviation for Standing Orders.

“Sub-Committee” means a committee of a committee created by the Board.

“Vice-Chairperson” means a non-officer member who may be appointed by the Board to take on the Chairperson’s duties if the Chairperson is absent for any reason.

3. Powers Reserved to the Board – Contents

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Key Functions of the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

3.2.1 Set Strategic Direction

3.2.2 Monitoring Performance

3.2.3 Financial Stewardship

3.2.4 Corporate Governance and Personal Behaviour and Conduct

3.2.5 Appoint, Appraise and Remunerate Senior Executives

3.2.6 Public Engagement

3.2.7 Additional Functions

3.1 Introduction

The matters reserved to the Board of each HSC Organisation are derived from the Code of Conduct and Code of Accountability for Board members of Health and Social Care Bodies issued under cover of a letter dated 18 July 2012 from Dr Andrew McCormick, Permanent Secretary and HSC Chief Executive.

Section 7 of the Code directs that:

“HSC Boards have corporate responsibility for ensuring that the organisation fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Department/Minister and for promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources. To this end the board shall exercise the following key functions:

- To establish the overall strategic direction of the organisation within the policy and resource framework determined by the Department/Minister;
- To oversee the delivery of planned results by monitoring performance against objectives and ensuring corrective action is taken as necessary;
- To ensure effective financial stewardship through value for money, financial control and financial planning and strategy;
- To ensure that high standards of corporate governance and personal behaviour are maintained in the conduct of the business of the whole organisation;
- To appoint, appraise and remunerate senior executives;
- To ensure that there is effective dialogue between the organisation and local community on its plans and performance and that these are responsive to the community’s needs; and
- To ensure that the HSC body has robust and effective arrangements in place for clinical and social care governance and risk management.”

In fulfilling these functions, the BSO Board should:

- specify its requirements in terms of the accurate and timely financial and other information required to allow the Board to discharge its responsibilities;
- be clear what decisions and information are appropriate to the Board and draw up Standing Orders, a Schedule of Decisions reserved to the Board and Standing Financial Instructions to secure compliance with the wishes of the Board;
- establish performance and quality targets that maintain the effective use of resources and provide value for money;
- ensure that proper management arrangements are in place for the delegation of programmes of work and for performance against programmes to be monitored and senior executives held to account;
- establish Audit and Remuneration Committees on the basis of formally agreed terms of reference which set out the membership of the Committee, the limit to their powers, and the arrangements for reporting back to the main Board; and
- act within statutory, financial and other constraints.

3.2 Key Functions of Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

The attached 'Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board' is sub-divided to correspond with the key functions specified above.

These matters are to be regarded as a guideline to the minimum requirement and shall not be interpreted so as to exclude any other issues which it might be appropriate, because of their exceptional nature, to bring to the Board.

The Chairperson, in consultation with the Chief Executive, shall determine whether other issues out with the following schedules of reserved powers shall be brought to the Board for consideration.

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Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.1 Set Strategic Direction To set the <i>strategic direction</i> of the BSO within the policy and resources framework determines by the Department/Minister.			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Strategic Direction	Approve Corporate Plan Strategic Orientation, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Risks	As appropriate	Chief Executive
Strategy Plans and Budgets	Agree Annual Plan including Key targets and milestones for year ahead. Resources allocated to specific objectives and highlighted in budget.	By 31 March each year or as soon as practicable thereafter	Chief Executive
Income and Budget Plans	Approve Income Estimates and Annual Budgets (Revenue and Capital)	By May/June each year consistent with DoH principles of 'Promoting Financial Stability'	Director of Finance
Capital Expenditure	Consider Capital Programme and Authorise Expenditure	In line with Departmental timetable consistent with DoH principles of 'Promoting Financial Stability'	Director of Finance

Disposal of Assets	Consider submission and authorise disposal	Items over £20,000 and up to the value of £250,000 require Board Approval. Items under £20,000 may be authorised for disposal by the Chief Executive.	Director of Finance
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Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.2 Monitoring Performance To oversee the delivery of planned results by <i>monitoring performance</i> against objectives and ensuring corrective action is taken as necessary.			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Performance report on Service Level Agreements / Contract Performance	Monitor performance of providers against service level agreements, ensure corrective action is taken and ensure appropriate action plans are pursued with providers	Monthly and quarterly reports supplemented by additional monitoring of specific issues on an as-needs basis	Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement
Staffing	Monitor Staffing levels Monitor Performance	Funded Staffing levels Performance Management Processes	Director of People and Place

Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.2 Monitoring Performance To oversee the delivery of planned results by <i>monitoring performance</i> against objectives and ensuring corrective action is taken as necessary.			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Complaints	Monitor complaints handling and contribute to regional policy and approve annual report	Quarterly Annual report	Chief Executive / Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement
Equality Scheme Report	Monitor staffing levels and approve submission to Equality Commission	Annual Return Submission of three yearly returns	Director of People and Place

Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.3 Financial Stewardship To ensure effective <i>financial stewardship</i> through value for money, financial control and financial planning and strategy.			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Financial Performance Framework	To ensure that the BSO achieves its financial performance targets	As determined by the Department	Director of Finance
Reporting	Monthly monitoring reports covering: Internal Reports External Reports to Department	Monthly	Director of Finance
Annual Accounts	Approve for submission to Department and for inclusion in Annual Report	Recommended for approval by Governance and Audit Committee. To include detailed scrutiny of reconciliation to Board approved Financial Plan	Chief Executive Director of Finance Chair of Audit Committee

<p>Assurances on Internal Control</p>	<p>Establish and maintain a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the organisation's policies, aims and objectives whilst safeguarding public funds and assets,</p> <p>Annual statement on internal control</p> <p>Mid year assurance statement on control</p>	<p>Annual Report from Governance and Audit Committee</p> <p>Consideration by the Governance and Audit Committee as part of the Annual Accounts and recommended for approval by the Board</p> <p>Approval by Governance and Audit Committee</p>	<p>Chief Executive Director of Finance Chair of Audit Committee</p>
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Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
<p>3.2.3 Financial Stewardship To ensure effective <i>financial stewardship</i> through value for money, financial control and financial planning and strategy.</p>			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Fraud Prevention and Detection	Receive assurance from the Governance and Audit Committee	Annual report to Committee	Director of Finance
Report to those charged with Governance	Consider recommendations and approve requisite action plan and response to External Auditor	Each year following recommendation by Governance and Audit Committee	Director of Finance
VFM	Consider areas for VFM Investigations	Benchmarking	Chief Executive Director of Finance Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.4 Corporate Governance and Personal Behaviour and Conduct To ensure that high standards of <i>corporate governance and personal behaviour</i> are maintained in the conduct of the business of the whole organisation.			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Standing Orders	Approve new or revised versions	Following consideration and approval by Governance and Audit Committee	Chief Executive
Schedule of Matters Reserved to Board	Approve new or revised versions	Following consideration and approval by Governance and Audit Committee	Chief Executive
Scheme of Delegation of Powers	Approve new or revised versions	Following consideration and approval by Governance and Audit Committee	Chief Executive
Standing Financial Instructions	Approve new or revised versions	Following consideration and approval by Governance and Audit Committee	Chief Executive
Board Committees	Approve Establishment, Terms of Reference and reporting arrangements to Board	Following recommendations for approval – outlined in Terms of Reference	Chief Executive
Board Sub Committees*	Approve Establishment, Terms of Reference and reporting arrangements to Board	Following recommendations for approval – outlined in Terms of Reference	Chief Executive

Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.4 Corporate Governance and Personal Behaviour and Conduct To ensure that high standards of <i>corporate governance and personal behaviour</i> are maintained in the conduct of the business of the whole organisation.			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Declaration of Chairperson and Members' Interests	Board Members' Interests to be declared and recorded in minutes	Within 4 weeks of a change or addition; to be entered in Register available for scrutiny by public in BSO offices or at Board meetings	Board Members
Code of Conduct and Code of Accountability	Approve measures to ensure that all Directors and staff are aware of the public service values which must underpin their conduct	Corporate Governance (eg. Hospitality) / HR Policies	Chief Executive
Concerns of Staff and Others (Whistleblowing)	Ensure arrangements are in place to guarantee that concerns expressed by staff and others are fully investigated and acted upon as appropriate and that all staff are treated with respect	Annual Report From Governance and Audit Committee	Chief Executive
Anti-Bribery Programme	Approve measures to ensure that all members, Directors and staff are aware of the implications of the 2010 Bribery Act	Annual Report From Governance and Audit Committee	Chief Executive

ALB Board Governance Self-Assessment Tool	Agree Board Governance self-assessment	Approval of ALB Board Governance Self-Assessment tool and action plan	Board Members
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Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.5 Appoint, Appraise and Remunerate Senior Executives To put in place systems to <i>appoint, appraise and remunerate senior executives</i> .			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Executive Director Appointments	Ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the composition of interview panels for the appointment of Executive Directors	Panel composition in accordance with BSO selection and recruitment policies	Chief Executive
Terms and Conditions	Scrutinise decisions of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee	Minutes of Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee	Chairperson of Board
Remuneration	Scrutinise decisions of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee for the total remuneration package of Executive Directors to assure compliance with Ministerial / Departmental direction	Annually In line with current approved terms including Salary review and Performance Related Pay arrangements Including any termination payments	Chairperson of Board ¹

¹ The Chair is one of only 2 members of this Committee and, therefore, cannot scrutinise decisions. This is due to a number of gaps on the board for NEDs at present.

Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
<p>3.2.6 Dialogue with Local Community To ensure that there is <i>effective dialogue between the organisation and the local community</i> on its plans and performance and that these are responsive to the community's needs.</p>			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Board Meetings	To hold meetings in public	Monthly or as agreed by Board Only exceptional categories of items to be considered in a section of the meeting not open to the public	Chairperson
Consultation	Invite and receive views from the public on proposals for strategic change	Consistent with Departmental guidance on consultation and processes	Appropriate Director
Annual Report	Approve report	To be signed by Chairperson and Chief Executive	Director of Finance Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement

Monitoring of Services	Ensure that issues raised by stakeholders in response to BSO service monitoring are pursued	Appropriate reports and follow up of specific issues on an as needs basis	Chief Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement ELT
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Standing Orders

Schedule of Powers Reserved to the Board of Directors of the *Business Services Organisation*

ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
3.2.7 Additional Functions			
ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY/TASK	CONTROLS	LEAD PERSON
Statutory Responsibilities All responsibilities placed upon the Board through statute for which a formal Scheme of Delegation is not in place	As defined in statute	As relevant to specified statutory responsibilities	Appropriate Director

4. Powers Delegated by the Board – Contents

4.1 Arrangements for Delegation by the Board

4.1.1 Introduction

4.1.2 Delegation to Committees

4.1.3 Delegation to Officers

4.1.4 Decision Tree – Flowchart

4.2 Chief Executive's Scheme of Delegation

4.3 Administrative Schemes of Delegation

4.3.1 Custody of Seal

4.3.2 Sealing of Documents

4.3.3 Register of Sealing

4.3.4 Signature of Documents

4.4 Financial Schemes of Delegation

4.1 Arrangements for Delegation by the Board

4.1.1 Introduction

Subject to such directions as may be given by the Department of Health, the Board may make arrangements for the exercise, on behalf of the BSO, of any of its functions by a Committee, sub-Committee or joint Committee, appointed by virtue of SO 5.1 or by an officer of the BSO, or by another, in each case subject to such restrictions and conditions as the Board thinks fit.

The Regional Business Services Organisation (Membership and Procedures) Regulations (N.I.) 2009 (the 2009 Regulations), HPSS (NI) Order 1972, the HPSS (NI) Orders 1991 and 1994 and the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009, the Health and Social Care (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Health and Social Care Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 allow for functions of the BSO to be carried out on behalf of the Board by other people and bodies, in the following ways:

- i. by a Committee or sub-Committee or officer of the BSO;
- ii. by a joint Committee or joint sub-Committee of the BSO and one or more other organisations.

Where functions are delegated, this means that although the carrying out of the function (i.e. day to day running) is delegated to another body, the BSO Board retains the responsibility for the service.

The Board shall, in accordance with Para 5 of Schedule 3 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009, appoint a prescribed number of Committees.

The BSO has established the following Committees:

- Governance and Audit Committee;
- Remuneration and Terms of Service;
- Business and Development Committee

The Board shall approve the constitution and Terms of Reference of these Committees, those appointed by the direction of the Minister or Department of Health, sub-Committees, or Joint Committee, and their specific executive powers. Terms of Reference for each of the Committees above are set out in appendices 6,7 and 8.

The BSO has a requirement to ensure that three Practitioner Committees with remits relating to Dental, Ophthalmic and Pharmaceutical Services can operate effectively in undertaking their role as specified in legislation.

The Committees are statutory and their duties and constitutions are determined by 2009 Regulations underpinned by the Health and Social Services Order 1972 and promulgated by the Department of Health (DoH).

The statutory practitioner committees are not part of the formal committee structure of the BSO.

4.1.2 Delegation to Committees

The Board shall agree any amendment to the delegation of executive powers to be exercised by Committees, or sub-Committees, or joint Committees, which it has formally constituted, as part of the annual review of Standing Orders, or as required. The Board shall approve the constitution and terms of reference of these Committees, or sub-Committees, or joint Committees, and their specific executive powers.

4.1.3 Delegation to Officers

The Chief Executive shall exercise those functions of the Board which are not reserved to the Board or delegated to a Committee, sub-Committee or joint Committee, on behalf of the Board. The Chief Executive shall determine which functions they shall perform personally and shall delegate to nominated officers the remaining functions for which they shall still retain accountability to the Board.

The Chief Executive shall prepare a Scheme of Delegation identifying her/his proposals which shall be considered and approved by the Board, subject to any amendment agreed during discussion. The Chief Executive may periodically propose amendment to the Scheme of Delegation, which shall be considered and approved by the Board as indicated above.

Nothing in the Scheme of Delegation shall impair the discharge of the direct accountability to the Board of the Director of Finance or any other officer to provide information and advise the Board in accordance with statutory requirements. Outside these statutory requirements the roles of the Director of Finance and all other officers shall be accountable to the Chief Executive for operational matters.

The arrangements made by the Board as set out in the 'Powers Reserved to the Board' and 'Powers Delegated by the Board' (Sections 3 and 4) shall have effect as if incorporated in these Standing Orders.

4.2 Chief Executive's Scheme of Delegation

The Chief Executive will delegate specific areas of the Board's responsibility which are not reserved to the Board and may be delegated to a Director, group or officer. The Scheme of Delegation is detailed in Appendix 5.

4.3 Administrative Scheme of Delegation

4.3.1 Custody of Seal

The Common Seal of the BSO shall be kept by the Chief Executive in a secure place.

4.3.2 Sealing of Documents

The Seal of the BSO shall not be fixed to any documents unless the sealing has been authorised by a resolution of the Board or of a Committee, thereof or where the Board has delegated its powers. Before any building, engineering, property or capital document is sealed it must be approved and signed by the Director of Finance (or an officer nominated by her/him) and authorised and countersigned by the Chief Executive (or an officer nominated by her/him who shall not be within the originating directorate).

4.3.3 Register of Sealing

An entry of every sealing shall be made and numbered consecutively in a book provided for that purpose, and shall be signed by the persons who shall have approved and authorised the document and those who attested the seal. An annual report of all sealings shall be made to the Board. (The report shall contain details of the seal number, the description of the document and date of sealing).

4.3.4 Signature of Documents

Where the signature of any document shall be a necessary step in legal proceedings involving BSO it shall be signed by the Chief Executive unless any enactment otherwise requires or authorises, or the Board shall have given the necessary authority to some other person for the purpose of such proceedings.

The Chief Executive or nominated officers shall be authorised by resolution of the Board to sign on behalf of the Board any agreement or other document not requested to be executed as a deed, the subject matter of which has been approved by the Board or any Committee, sub-Committee or standing Committee thereof or where the Board has delegated its powers on its behalf.

4.4 Financial Schemes of Delegation

The Financial Schemes of Delegation for Section 4 is outlined in Appendix 5.

5. Board Committees – Contents

5.1 Appointment of Committees

5.2 Committees

5.1 Appointment of Committees

Subject to such directions as may be given by the Minister, the Board may and, if directed by the Department, shall appoint Committees of the Board, or together with one or more other bodies appoint Joint Committees consisting, in either case, wholly or partly of the Chairperson and members of the Board or other bodies or wholly of persons who are not members of the Board or other bodies in question.

A Committee or Joint Committee appointed under this Standing Order may, subject to such directions as may be given by the Minister, the Board or other bodies, appoint sub-Committees consisting wholly or partly of members of the Committee or joint Committee (whether or not they are members of the Board or other bodies in question) or wholly of persons who are not members of the Board or other bodies or the Committee of the Board or other bodies in question.

The Standing Orders of the Board, as far as they are applicable, shall apply, as appropriate, to meetings of any Committees established by the Board.

Each Committee shall have such terms of reference and powers, membership and be subject to such reporting back arrangements as the Board shall decide. Such terms of reference shall have effect as if incorporated into the Standing Orders.

Where Committees are authorised to establish sub-Committees they may not delegate executive powers to the sub-Committee unless expressly authorised by the Board.

The Board shall approve the appointments to each of the Committees, which it has formally constituted. Where the Board determines, and regulations permit, that persons, who are neither members nor officers, shall be appointed to a Committee, the terms of such appointment shall be within the powers of the Board as defined by the Minister. The Board shall define the powers of such appointees and shall agree the terms of their remuneration and/or reimbursement for loss of earnings and/or expenses.

Where the Board is required to appoint persons to a Committee and/or to undertake statutory functions as required by the Minister, and where such appointments are to operate independently of the Board, such appointment shall be made in accordance with the regulations laid down by the Minister.

See also Section 6.2.23 on Conflicts of Interest.

5.2 Committees

The Board Committees, other Committees, and advisory Committees established by the Board are:

Board Committees

- Governance* and Audit Committee(s) – see Appendix 6
- Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee – see Appendix 7
- Business and Development Committee – see Appendix 8

Sub-Committees

- * To be determined

Joint Committees

- * To be determined

6. Conduct of Board Business – Contents

6.1 Constitution and Remit of Board

6.1.1 Constitution

6.1.2 Remit

6.1.3 Composition of the Board

6.1.4 The Board's Executive Leadership Team

6.1 Constitution and Remit of Board

6.1.1 Constitution

All business shall be conducted in the name of the BSO.

All funds received in trust shall be held in the name of the BSO as corporate trustee.

6.1.2 Remit

The powers of the BSO established under statutory instruments shall be exercised by the Board meeting in public session except as otherwise provided for in Standing Order 4.

The Board shall define and regularly review the functions it exercises on behalf of the Minister.

The Board has resolved that only the Board may exercise certain powers and decisions in formal session. These powers and decisions are set out in 'Powers Reserved to the Board' (Section 3) and have effect as if incorporated into the Standing Orders.

6.1.3 Composition of the Board

The Department of Health determines the composition of the Board which is currently as follows:

- a) A Chairperson appointed by the Minister;
- b) A prescribed number of persons appointed by the Minister;
- c) Chief Executive of the BSO;
- d) Such other officers of the BSO that may be prescribed; and

- e) Not more than a prescribed number of other officers of the BSO appointed by the chair and members specified in b) and c) above.
- f) Under Regulation 2(1) of the 2009 Regulations the prescribed number of members for the purposes of Paragraph b) shall be 8.
- g) Under Regulation 2(2) of the 2009 Regulations the prescribed officers shall be:
 - (i) Executive Director of Operations
 - (ii) Executive Director of People and Place
 - (iii) Executive Director of Finance
 - (iv) Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement
 - (v) Executive Director of Digital Operations

Except insofar as regulations otherwise provide, no person who is an officer of BSO may be appointed under a) or b) above. Regulations may provide that all or any of the persons appointed under b) above must fulfil prescribed conditions or hold posts of a prescribed description.

6.1.4 The Board's Executive Leadership Team comprises:

- a) the Chief Executive;
- b) the Executive Director of Finance, the Executive Director of People and Place, Executive Director of Operations, Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement, and the Executive Director of Digital Operations.
- c) and any other Officer whom the Chief Executive determines should be a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

6.2 Procedures for Meetings

- 6.2.1 Code of Practice on Openness
- 6.2.2 Open Board Meetings
- 6.2.3 Conduct of Meetings
- 6.2.4 Calling of Meetings
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- 6.2.18 Suspension of Standing Orders
- 6.2.19 Minutes
- 6.2.20 Committee Minutes
- 6.2.21 Variation and Amendment of Standing Orders
- 6.2.22 Appointments
- 6.2.23 Potential Conflict of Interests
- 6.2.24 Board Secretary

6.2.1 The Board shall pursue the aims of the **Code of Practice on Openness**: “...to ensure that people may easily obtain an understanding of all services that are provided by the HSC and, particularly, changes to those services that may affect them or their families”.

The Board shall accept the strong duty imposed on it by the Code to be positive in providing access to information; the presumption shall be in favour of openness and transparency in all its proceedings.

6.2.2 Open Board Meetings – The Board shall hold all its Board meetings in public, although, in exceptional circumstances (SO.6.2.14), certain issues may be taken in a confidential section of the meeting. The agenda for the Board is available on request to members of the public in advance of the meetings. Notice of meetings and agenda shall be posted on the BSO website

Public meetings shall be held in easily accessible venues within Northern Ireland and at times when the public are able to attend. (Code of Practice on Openness; Annex A, para 3.1).

6.2.3 Conduct of Meetings – Proceedings shall be in accordance with section 54 (1) and (2) of the Health and Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 which provides that sections 23 to 27 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 (c9) shall also apply. This is specified in the Guidance on Implementation of the Code of Practice on Openness, Annex A, para. 2.3.

The Code of Practice on Openness is not statutory, it does not set aside restrictions on disclosure, which are based in law and decisions shall rest on judgement and discretion (See Guidance on implementation of the Code of Practice on Openness, para 9.3).

6.2.4 Calling of Meetings – Ordinary meetings of the Board shall be held at such times and places as the Board may determine although, as good practice, some meetings may be held outside normal working hours to facilitate wider attendance by the general public. The Board shall pay particular attention to the commitments within its Equality Scheme when calling meetings.

The Chairperson may call a meeting of the Board for a special purpose (including in the event of an emergency) at any time.

The notice, agenda and papers for such a meeting shall be conveyed to members and the public as far in advance of the meeting as the circumstances shall allow. Notice of meetings and agenda shall be posted on the BSO website.

If requested by at least one third of the whole number of members, the Chairperson shall call a meeting of the Board for a special purpose. If the Chairperson refuses to call a meeting or fails to do so within seven days after such a request, such one third or more members may forthwith call a meeting.

6.2.5 Setting the Agenda – The Board may determine that certain matters shall appear on every agenda for a meeting of the Board and shall be addressed prior to any other business being conducted. If so, determined these matters shall be listed as an appendix to the Standing Orders.

A member desiring a matter to be included on an agenda shall normally make his/her request in writing to the Chairperson at least 14

clear days before the meeting. The request may include appropriate supporting information and a proposed motion. It may also note any grounds which would necessitate the item of business being dealt with in a confidential section of the meeting. Requests made less than 14 days before a meeting may be included on the agenda at the discretion of the Chairperson.

Agendas shall be sent to members 6 clear days before the meeting and supporting papers, whenever possible, shall accompany the agenda, but shall certainly be despatched no later than 3 clear days save in an emergency.

The agenda for each meeting shall be published on the BSO website. On request from the press or a member of the public, a copy of the agenda as circulated to the Board shall be supplied with the omission of any items during which the meeting is not likely to be open to the public.

6.2.6 Petitions – Where the Board has received a petition the Chairperson shall include the petition as an item for the agenda of the next meeting, providing it is appropriate for consideration by the Board. The Chairperson shall advise the meeting of any petitions that are not granted and the grounds for refusal.

6.2.7 Notice of Meetings – Before each meeting of the Board, a notice of the meeting, specifying the business proposed to be transacted at it, and any motions relating to it, and signed by the Chairperson or by an officer of the Board authorised by the Chairperson to sign on his/her behalf shall be delivered to each member and to everyone on the

Board distribution list and hosted on the BSO website at least 12 clear days before the meeting.

Absence of service of the notice on any member shall not affect the validity of a meeting.

In the case of a meeting called by members in default of the Chairperson, those members shall sign the notice and no business shall be transacted at the meeting other than that specified in the notice.

6.2.8 Notices of Motion – With reference to matters included in the notice of meetings, a member of the Board may amend or propose a motion in writing at least 10 clear days before the meeting to the Chairperson. All notices so received, shall be inserted in the agenda for the meeting subject to the notice being permissible under the appropriate regulations. This paragraph shall not prevent any motion being moved during the meeting, without notice, on any business mentioned on the agenda.

6.2.9 Deputations and Speaking Rights

(i) Deputations from any meeting, association, public body or an individual may be permitted to address a meeting of the Board, subject to the following conditions:

- The subject is on the agenda;
- The Board Secretary has received 7 working days' notice, in writing, of the intended deputation, its purpose and a brief synopsis of content.

(ii) The specified notice may be waived at the discretion of the Chairperson. Any deputation will be confined to a presentation by not

more than 2 persons, per agenda item, and not to exceed 10 minutes duration. The Chairperson may at his/her discretion vary the number of members permitted to address the meeting.

6.2.10 Admission of the Public and Media

(i) Reserved sections

BSO Board meetings are held in public to openly demonstrate how decisions within the BSO are made and recorded. On occasion, there may be issues which the Board requires to discuss in private and in this case a “confidential session” may be convened with a separate agenda which is not made public.

These may include subjects that are:

- a) Demonstrably protected in terms of the Data Protection Act / GDPR (i.e. staff or service user personal information); or
- b) Commercially sensitive; or
- c) Constituted information intended for publication at a later date.

Where a meeting or part of a meeting is dealing with a potentially sensitive or confidential issue, the Chairperson of the meeting should inform those present that the item under consideration is confidential and a reserved section is required. The public shall be required to withdraw upon a resolution of the BSO Board.

(ii) General disturbances

The Chairperson (or Vice-Chairperson if one has been appointed) or the person presiding over the meeting shall give such directions as they think fit with regard to the arrangements for meetings and accommodation of the public and representatives of the press such as to ensure that BSO business shall be conducted without

interruption and disruption and, without prejudice to the power to exclude on grounds of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public will be required to withdraw upon the BSO Board resolving.

(iii) Business proposed to be transacted when the press and public have been excluded from a meeting

Matters to be dealt with by the BSO Board following the exclusion of representatives of the press, and other members of the public, as provided in (i) and (ii) above, shall be confidential to the members of the Board.

Members and Officers or any employee of the BSO in attendance shall not reveal or disclose the contents of papers marked 'In Confidence' or minutes headed 'Items Taken in Private' outside of the BSO, without the express permission of the BSO. This prohibition shall apply equally to the content of any discussion during the Board meeting which may take place on such reports or papers.

(iv) Use of Mechanical or Electrical Equipment for Recording or Transmission of Meetings

Nothing in these Standing Orders shall be construed as permitting the introduction by the public, or press representatives, of recording, transmitting, video or similar apparatus into meetings of the BSO or Committee thereof. Such permission shall be granted only upon resolution of the BSO.

6.2.11 Chairperson of Meeting – At any meeting of the Board, the Chairperson, if present, shall preside. In the absence of the Chairperson the Vice-Chairperson, if previously appointed, shall preside, if not previously appointed then such member (who is not

also an officer of the Board) as the Chairperson may nominate shall preside or if no such nomination has been made, such non-executive member as those members present shall choose, shall preside.

If the Chairperson is absent temporarily on the grounds of a declared conflict of interest such non-executive member as the members shall choose shall preside.

6.2.12 Quorum –

No decisions may be taken at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of the Chairperson and voting members appointed, (including at least one non-officer member and one officer member) are present. Members may receive items for information, which are included on the agenda, providing this is also recorded in the minutes.

An officer in attendance for an officer member but without formal acting up status may not count towards the quorum. If the Chairperson or member has been disqualified from participating in the discussion on any matter and/or from voting on any resolution by reason of the declaration of a conflict of interest, they shall no longer count towards the quorum. If a quorum is then not available for the passing of a resolution on any matter, that matter may be discussed further but not voted upon at that meeting. Such a position shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

6.2.13 Record of Attendance – A record of the names of the Chairperson, and members present at the meeting shall be noted in the minutes and, if necessary, the point at which they join, leave or resume their place at the meeting shall also be noted.

6.2.14 Confidential Section of Meetings – The Board may by resolution exclude the public or representatives of the press or broadcasting media from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings at the meeting) on one or more of the following grounds:

- a) by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting;
- b) when publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest;
- c) for such special reasons as may be specified in the resolution being reasons arising from the exceptional nature of the business to be transacted or of the proceedings at the meeting.

6.2.15 Motions – The mover of a motion shall have a right of reply at the close of any discussion on the motion or any amendment thereto.

When a motion is under discussion or immediately prior to discussion it shall be open to a member to move:

- An amendment to the motion;
- The adjournment of the discussion or the meeting;
- That the meeting proceed to the next business (+);
- The appointment of an ad hoc Committee to deal with a specific item of business;
- That the motion be now put (+);
- A motion resolving to exclude the public (including the press).

In the case of sub-paragraphs denoted by (+) above: to ensure objectivity, only a member who has not previously taken part in the debate may put motions.

No amendment to the motion shall be admitted if, in the opinion of the Chairperson of the meeting, the amendment negates the substance of the motion.

When an adjourned item of business is re-commenced or a meeting is reconvened, any provisions for deputations or speaking rights, not previously undertaken, or other arrangements shall be treated as though no interruption had occurred.

Withdrawal of Motion or Amendments – The proposer may withdraw a motion or amendment once moved and seconded with the concurrence of the seconder and the consent of the Chairperson.

Motion to Rescind a Resolution – Notice of motion to amend or rescind any resolution (or the general substance of any resolution) that has been passed within the preceding 6 calendar months, shall bear the signature of the member who gives it and also the signature of 4 other Board members.

When any such motion has been disposed of by the Board, it shall not be appropriate for any member other than the Chairperson to propose a motion to the same effect within 6 months, however the Chairperson may do so if they consider it appropriate.

Chairperson's Ruling – Statements of members made at meetings of the Board shall be relevant to the matter under discussion at the material time, and the decision of the Chairperson of the meeting on questions of order, relevancy, regularity and any other matters shall be final.

6.2.16 Voting – Every item or question at a meeting shall be determined by the Chairperson seeking the general assent of voting members or the expression of a wish to proceed to a vote. A vote shall be determined by the majority of the votes of the Chairperson of the meeting and members present and voting on the question; in the case of the number of votes for and against a motion being equal, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

All questions put to the vote shall, at the discretion of the Chairperson of the meeting, be determined by oral expression or by a show of hands. A paper ballot may also be used if a majority of the members present so request.

If at least one third of the members present so request, the voting (other than by paper ballot) on any question may be recorded to show how each member present voted or abstained.

If a member so requests, his/her vote shall be recorded by name upon any vote (other than by paper ballot).

In no circumstances may an absent member vote by proxy. Absence is defined as being absent at the time of the vote.

An officer who has been appointed formally by the Board to act up for an officer member during a period of incapacity or temporarily to fill an officer-member vacancy shall be entitled to exercise the voting rights of the officer member. An officer attending the Board to represent an officer member during a period of incapacity or temporary absence without formal acting up status may not exercise the voting rights of

the officer member. An officer's status when attending a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.

6.2.17 Joint Members – where more than one person shares the office of a member of the Board jointly:

- either or both of those persons may attend or take part in meetings of the Board;
- if both are present at a meeting they shall cast one vote if they agree;
- in the case of disagreement no vote shall be cast;
- the presence of one or both of those persons shall count as the presence of one person for the purposes of a quorum.

6.2.18 Suspension of Standing Orders – Except where this would contravene any statutory provision or any direction made by the Department, one or more of the Standing Orders may be suspended at any meeting, provided that at least two thirds of the Board are present, including one officer and one non-officer member, and that a majority of those present vote in favour of suspension.

A decision to suspend Standing Orders shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

A separate record of matters discussed during the suspension of Standing Orders shall be made and shall be available to the Chairperson and members of the Board.

No formal business may be transacted while Standing Orders are suspended.

The Governance and Audit Committee shall review every decision to suspend Standing Orders.

6.2.19 Minutes - The minutes of the proceedings of a meeting shall be drawn up and submitted for agreement at the next ensuing meeting where the person presiding at it shall sign them.

No discussion shall take place upon the minutes except upon their accuracy or where the Chairperson considers discussion appropriate. Any amendment to the minutes shall be agreed and recorded at the next meeting.

Minutes shall be circulated in accordance with members' wishes. Where providing a record of a public meeting, the minutes shall be made available to the public upon request as required by Code of Practice on Openness in the HPSS and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

6.2.20 Committee Minutes - The minutes of all Board Committee meetings shall be brought to the Board for information,

1. A summary report of the Committee meeting will be presented to the next Board meeting following the date of the meeting; and
2. The approved minutes shall be presented to the public Board meeting immediately following the committee approval except where confidentiality needs to be expressly protected.

6.2.21 Variation and Amendment of Standing Orders – These Standing Orders shall be amended only if:

- a notice of motion under the appropriate Standing Order has been given;

- no fewer than half the total of the Board's non-officer members vote in favour of amendment;
- at least two thirds of the Board members are present; and
- the variation proposed does not contravene a statutory provision or direction made by the Department.

6.2.22 Appointments - Appointment of the Chairperson and Members, and

Terms of Office – The legislative provisions governing the appointment of the Chairperson and members, and their terms of office, are contained in Schedule 1, paras 3-6 of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009. Non-Executive appointments are made in accordance with the Code of Practice, issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland. Regulation 6 of the 2009 Regulations specifies the tenure of office for members of the Board.

Appointment of Vice-Chairperson – Subject to the following, the Chairperson and members of the Board may appoint one of their number, who is not also an officer member of the Board, to be Vice-Chairperson, for such period, not exceeding the remainder of his/her term as a member of the Board, as they may specify on appointing him/her.

Any member so appointed may at any time resign from the office of Vice-Chairperson by giving notice in writing to the Chairperson. The Chairperson and members may thereupon appoint another member as Vice-Chairperson in accordance with the provisions above.

If no Vice-Chairperson is available and the Chairperson is unable to conduct a Board meeting, members shall appoint one from among the

Non-Executive members present to act as Chairperson for that meeting.

If no meeting is scheduled or the Chairperson is not available and the Chief Executive needs to take advice on an urgent matter, the Chief Executive may obtain the agreement of the Chairperson and Non-Executive members to appoint one of their number as Chairperson for this purpose. The Non-Executive members can if necessary, empower the Chief Executive to take urgent action on behalf of the Board.

Where the Chairperson of the Board has died or has ceased to hold office, or where they have been unable to perform his/her duties as Chairperson owing to illness, absence from Northern Ireland or any other cause, the Vice-Chairperson, if previously appointed, shall act as Chairperson until a new Chairperson is appointed or the existing Chairperson resumes his/her duties, as the case may be. If not previously appointed the Board may appoint one of their number, who is not also an officer member of the Board, to be Chairperson, for such period. References to the Chairperson in these Standing Orders shall, so long as there is no Chairperson able to perform his/her duties, be taken to include references to the Vice-Chairperson.

Joint Members – Where more than one person is appointed jointly to a post in the Board which qualifies the holder for officer membership or in relation to which an officer member is to be appointed, those persons shall become appointed as an officer member jointly, and shall count for the purpose of Standing Orders as one person.

6.2.23 Potential Conflict of Interests – Subject to the following provisions of this Standing Order, adhering to the DAO (DoF) 07/21 - Guidance on Conflicts of interest HSC(F) 31-2021, if the Chairperson or a Board member has any potential conflict of interest, direct or indirect, in any

contract, proposed contract or other matter and is present at a meeting of the Board at which the contract or other matter is the subject of consideration, they shall, at the meeting, and as soon as practicable after its commencement, disclose the fact. It shall be disclosed in a manner that cannot be perceived to influence subsequent discussion or decision, and shall withdraw from the meeting while the consideration or discussion of the contract or other matter and the vote is being taken.

In exceptional circumstances the individual who has declared a potential conflict of interest may be permitted to remain for the discussion where their expertise is specifically required to inform the other members in their discussions. This expert advice shall be restricted to the giving of factual and objective information before withdrawing while the decision and vote is taken.

The Department may, subject to such conditions as the Department may think fit to impose, remove any disability imposed by this Standing Order in any case in which it appears to be in the interests of the HSC that the disability shall be removed.

The Board may exclude the Chairperson or a Board member from a meeting of the Board while any contract, proposed contract or other matter in which they have a pecuniary interest, is under consideration. Any remuneration, compensation or allowances payable to the Chairperson or a Board member shall not be treated as a pecuniary interest for the purpose of this Standing Order.

For the purpose of this Standing Order, the Chairperson or a Board member shall be treated as having indirectly a pecuniary interest in a contract, proposed contract or other matter, if:

- (a) they, or a nominee of his/her, is a director of a company or other body, not being a public body, with which the contract was made

or is proposed to be made or which has a direct pecuniary interest in any other matter under consideration; or

- (b) they are a partner of, or is in the employment of a person with whom the contract was made or is proposed to be made or who has a direct pecuniary interest in any other matter under consideration; and in the case of persons living together, the interest of one partner shall, if known to the other, be deemed for the purposes of this Standing Order to be also an interest of the other.

The Chairperson or a Board member shall not be treated as having a pecuniary interest in any contract, proposed contract or other matter by reason only:

- (a) of his/her membership of a company or other body, if they have no beneficial interest in any securities of that company or other body;
- (b) of an interest of his as a person providing Family Health Services which cannot reasonably be regarded as an interest more substantial than that of others providing such of those services as they provide; or
- (c) of an interest in any company, body or person with which they are connected as mentioned in Standing Orders above which is so remote or insignificant that it cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to influence a member in the consideration or discussion of or in voting on, any question with respect to that contract or matter.

Where the Chairperson or a Board member has an indirect pecuniary interest in a contract, proposed contract or other matter by reason only of a beneficial interest in securities of a company or other body, and the total nominal value of those securities does not exceed

£5,000 or one-hundredth of the total nominal value of the issued share capital of the company body (whichever is the less), and if the share capital is of more than one class, the total nominal value of shares of any one class in which they have a beneficial interest does not exceed one-hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class, this Standing Order shall not prohibit him/her from taking part in the consideration or discussion of the contract or other matter or from voting on any question with respect to it, without prejudice however to his/her duty to disclose his/her interest.

This Standing Order applies to a Committee or Sub-Committee and to a Joint Committee or Sub-Committee as it applies to the Board and applies to a member of any such Committee or Sub-Committee (whether or not they are also a member of the Board) as it applies to a member of the Board.

6.2.24 Potential Conflict of Interest – Commercial Cycle

In line with the Procurement Act 2023, conflict of interest must be considered throughout all phases of the Commercial Cycle taking account of actual, potential or perceived conflicts.

An interest includes a personal, professional or financial interest which may be indirect or direct.

Conflicts of Interest should be mitigated and a Conflict Assessment must be undertaken and required throughout the implementation and contract management phases.

Records must be kept, in accordance, with BSO Conflict of Interest Policy at all phases of the Commercial Cycle.

Conflicts of Interest must be managed throughout the contract period.

6.2.25 Board Secretary

The Board Secretary shall be appointed by the Chair.

The Board Secretary shall have the following responsibilities:

- supporting the Chair and Chief Executive and acting as a primary point of contact between Board members and the rest of the organisation, thereby facilitating good communication and mutual understanding.
- ensuring that the governance framework and levels of delegated authority are comprehensive and up to date.
- ensuring that the Board follows due process and adheres to relevant policies and governance principles, and advising Board members on matters of governance, procedure and propriety.
- developing and keeping up to date a programme of Board induction and development activities.
- putting in place and enforcing a disciplined process for the timely preparation, quality assurance and circulation of Board agendas and papers.
- ensuring that committee meetings are held at the required intervals, that the activities of the Board and its sub-committees are synchronised and that links between the Board and committees are well-developed and effective.
- maintaining a forward planner which sets out, for the year ahead, the matters the Board and its committees will discuss and the key dates for meeting statutory and other reporting requirements.
- ensuring that Board and committee minutes are circulated quickly, that they are accurate and require minimal redrafting and that action points are followed up.

The record of the minutes shall include:

- (a) the names of -
 - every member of the Board present at the meeting of the Board
 - any other person present;
 - any apologies tendered by an absent member of the Board
- (b) the withdrawal from a meeting of any member on account of an actual or appearance of a conflict of interest
- (c) any declaration of interest.

7. Powers and Duties

The powers and duties of individuals within the *Business Services Organisation* are generally set out in the relevant job descriptions and contracts of employment. All individuals are expected to behave at all times in accordance with the Standing Orders.

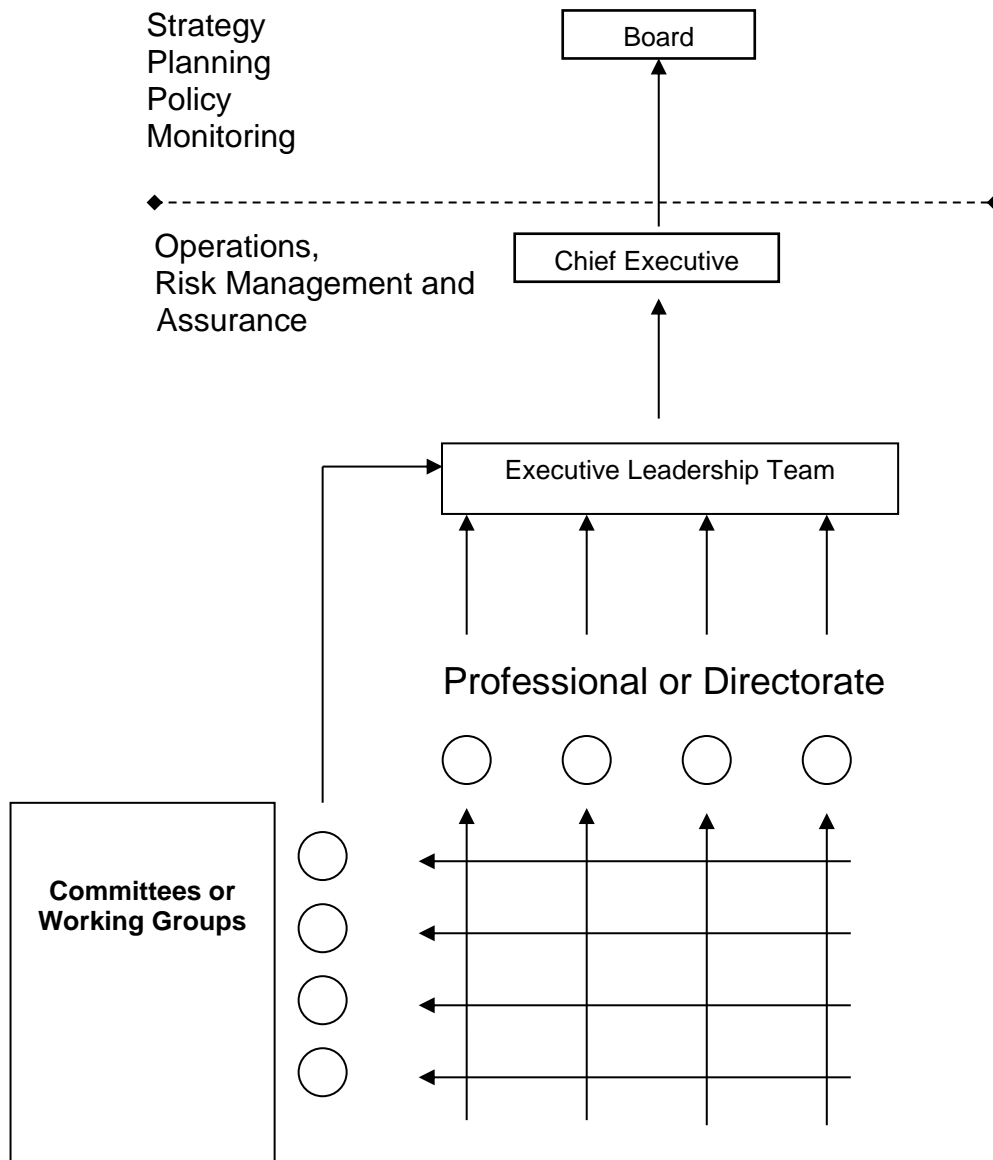
Those individuals who comprise the Board, that is the Chairperson, Executive and Non-Executive Board members, shall pay regard to SO.3, which sets out the main functions of the Board and those matters that are reserved to the Board.

When acting in the capacity of a member of a Board Committee, those individuals shall pay regard to the appropriate Scheme of Delegation which sets out those matters which have been delegated by the Board.

The Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Directors, Assistant Directors, heads of Service Areas, and other staff shall pay regard to any appropriate Scheme of Delegation either by the Board or by the Chief Executive. This may delegate responsibility to the individual in a personal capacity or as a member of a planning group or other multidisciplinary group.

Individuals are accountable through their professional or directorate management structure as well as through any participation on a multidisciplinary group or functional role. This accountability is to the Chief Executive through the Executive Leadership Team as illustrated in the following diagram.

Accountability Structures



8. Standing Financial Instructions

Foreword

8.1 Core references in these SFIs (and Standing Orders) are the Code of Conduct, Code of Accountability and the Code of Practice and Openness.

8.2 The Codes of Conduct and Accountability issued under Circular HSS (PDD) 8/94 require the BSO to adopt Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs) setting out the responsibilities of individuals.

8.3 SFIs form part of the Standing Orders of the BSO, which are laid down by the Codes. In addition, there are financial procedures and systems' manuals as well as other instructions and guidelines, which are promulgated from time to time by the Director of Finance. Collectively, these must cover all aspects of financial management and control. They are the 'business rules' that Directors and employees (including employees of third parties contracted to the BSO) must follow when acting on behalf of the BSO.

8.4 SFIs adopted by the BSO are mandatory on all Members, Directors and employees of the BSO.

8.5 Failure to comply with SFIs is a disciplinary matter which could result in dismissal.

8. Standing Financial Instructions – Contents

8.1 Introduction

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8.8 Income, Fees and Charges and Security of Cash, Cheques and other Negotiable Instruments

8.9 Terms of Service and Payment of Directors and Employees

8.10 Non-Pay Expenditure for *Business Services Organisation* Administration including procurement procedures.

8.11 Capital Expenditure, Fixed Asset Registers and Security of Assets

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8.14 Information Technology

8.15 Payments to Independent Contractors

8.16 Retention of Documents

8.17 Risk Management

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 General

8.1.1 These Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs) are issued for the regulation of the conduct of the *Business Services Organisation* in relation to all financial matters. They shall have effect as if incorporated in the Standing Orders of the *Business Services Organisation*.

8.1.2 These SFIs detail the financial responsibilities, policies and procedures to be adopted by the *Business Services Organisation*. They are designed to ensure that its financial transactions are carried out in accordance with the law and Government policy in order to achieve probity, economy, efficiency, effectiveness and accuracy of accounting. They should be used in conjunction with the Schedule of the Powers Reserved to the Board and the Scheme of Delegation adopted by the Board.

8.1.3 These SFIs identify the financial responsibilities that apply to everyone working for the *Business Services Organisation*. They do not provide detailed procedural advice. These statements shall therefore be read in conjunction with the detailed departmental and financial procedure notes. The Director of Finance must approve all financial procedures.

8.1.4 Should any difficulties arise regarding the interpretation or application of any of the SFIs then the advice of the Director of Finance or their nominee must be sought before you act.

8.1.5 Failure to comply with SFIs is a disciplinary matter which could result in dismissal.

8.1.2 Terminology

8.1.2.1 Any expression to which a meaning is given in the Health and Personal Social Services Orders of 1972 or 1991 and the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009 shall have the same meaning in these SFIs and in addition:

“**Accounting Officer**” shall be the HSC Officer responsible and accountable for funds entrusted to the Board. They shall be responsible for ensuring the proper stewardship of public funds and assets. For this Board it shall be the Chief Executive (as specified by the DoH Permanent Secretary as Accounting Officer).

“**Business Services Organisation**” means the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care *Business Services Organisation*.

“**Board**” shall mean the Chairperson, and Non-Executive (or non-officer) members, appointed by the Minister with responsibility for Health and Social Care and the Executive (or officer) members appointed by the Board.

“**Budget**” means a resource expressed in financial terms, proposed by the Board for the purpose of carrying out, for a specific period, any or all of the functions of the *Business Services Organisation*.

“Budget Holder” means the Director or employee with delegated authority to manage finances (income and expenditure) for a specific area of the *Business Services Organisation*.

“Chief Executive” means the chief officer of the *Business Services Organisation*.

“Chief Legal Adviser” means the properly qualified person appointed by the BSO to provide legal advice.

“Department” means the Department of Health DoH. The term Department does appear as part of the title of other Government organisations and in these instances the title is given in full.

“Director of Finance” means the chief financial officer of the *Business Services Organisation*.

“Nominated officer” means an officer charged with the responsibility for discharging specific tasks within Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions.

“SFIs” is an abbreviation for Standing Financial Instructions.

“SOs” is an abbreviation for Standing Orders.

8.1.2.2 Wherever the title Chief Executive, Director of Finance, or other nominated officer is used in these instructions, it shall be deemed to include such other directors or employees who have been duly authorised to represent them.

8.1.2.3 Wherever the term “**employee**” is used it shall be deemed to include employees of third parties contracted to the *Business Services Organisation* when acting on behalf of the *Business Services Organisation*.

8.1.3 Responsibilities and Delegation

8.1.3.1 The Board of Directors exercises financial supervision and control by:

- (a) formulating the financial strategy;
- (b) requiring the submission and approval of budgets within approved funding/overall income;
- (c) defining and approving essential features in respect of important procedures and financial systems (including the need to obtain value for money); and
- (d) defining specific responsibilities placed on directors and employees as indicated in the Scheme of Delegation Documents.

8.1.3.2 The *Business Services Organisation* shall delegate responsibility for the performance of its functions in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation Document adopted by the Board of Directors. (The Board of Directors shall keep the extent of delegation under review.)

- 8.1.3.3** Notwithstanding the SFIs, the Chief Executive is ultimately accountable to the Board of Directors for ensuring that the *Business Services Organisation* meets its obligation to perform its functions within the available financial resources. The Chief Executive has overall executive responsibility for the *Business Services Organisation's* activities and is responsible to the Board of Directors for ensuring that its financial obligations and targets are met.
- 8.1.3.4** The Chief Executive is nominated by the Department as the Accounting Officer who is responsible (through the Accounting Officer nominated by the Secretary of State) to the Northern Ireland Assembly or Parliament. The Accounting Officer Memorandum issued by the Department's Permanent Secretary to the Chief Executive refers.
- 8.1.3.5** The Chief Executive and Director of Finance shall, as far as possible, delegate their detailed responsibilities but they remain accountable for financial control.
- 8.1.3.6** It is a duty of the Chief Executive to ensure that existing directors and employees, and all new appointees are notified of and understand their responsibilities within these instructions.
- 8.1.3.7** The Director of Finance is responsible for:
- (a) implementing the *Business Services Organisation's* financial policies and for co-coordinating any corrective action necessary to further these policies;

- (b) maintaining an effective system of internal control including ensuring that detailed financial procedures and systems incorporating the principles of separation of duties and internal checks are prepared, documented and maintained to supplement these instructions;
- (c) ensuring that sufficient records are maintained to show and explain the *Business Services Organisation's* transactions, in order to disclose, with reasonable accuracy, the financial position of the *Business Services Organisation* at any time;

Without prejudice to any other functions of directors and employees of the *Business Services Organisation*, the duties of the Director of Finance include:

- (d) the provision of financial advice to the *Business Services Organisation* and its directors and employees;
- (e) the design, implementation and supervision of systems of financial control; and
- (f) the preparation and maintenance of such accounts, certificates, estimates, records and reports as the *Business Services Organisation* may require for the purpose of carrying out its statutory duties.

8.1.3.8 All directors and employees, separately and collectively, are responsible for:

- (a) the security of the property of the *Business Services Organisation*;
- (b) avoiding loss;
- (c) exercising economy and efficiency in the use of resources; and
- (d) conforming with the requirements of Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions, Financial Procedures and the Scheme of Delegation.

8.1.3.9 Any contractor or employee of a contractor who is empowered by the Business Services Organisation to commit the Business Services Organisation to expenditure or who is authorised to obtain income shall be covered by these instructions. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to ensure that such persons are made aware of this.

8.1.3.10 For any and all directors and employees who carry out a financial function, the form in which financial records are kept and the manner in which directors and employees discharge their duties must be to the satisfaction of the Director of Finance.

8.2.0 Audit

8.2.1 Governance and Audit Committee

8.2.1.1 In accordance with Standing Orders (and as set out in guidance issued by the Management Executive under HSS (PDD) 8/94), the Board of Directors shall establish an Audit Committee, which shall provide an independent and objective view of internal control by:

- (a) overseeing Internal and External Audit services;
- (b) reviewing financial systems;
- (c) ensuring compliance with Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions; and
- (d) reviewing schedules of losses and compensations and making recommendations to the Board of Directors.

8.2.1.2 Where the Governance and Audit Committee feels there is evidence of *ultra vires* transactions, evidence of improper acts, or if there are other important matters that the committee wish to raise, the Chairperson of the Governance and Audit Committee shall raise the matter at a full meeting of the Board of Directors. Exceptionally, the matter may need to be referred to the Department.

8.2.1.3 It is the responsibility of the Director of Finance to ensure that an adequate Internal Audit service is secured and the Governance and Audit Committee shall be involved in the selection process when an

Internal Audit service is put out to tender by the *Business Services Organisation*.

8.2.1.4 The Governance and Audit Committee shall carry out the functions of an Audit Committee as set out above along with other functions in relation to Governance as set out in the Standing Orders.

8.2.2 Director of Finance

8.2.2.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for:

- (a) ensuring there are arrangements to review, evaluate and report on the effectiveness of internal financial control by the establishment of an independent internal audit function;
- (b) ensuring that the Internal Audit is adequate and meets the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards;
- (c) in conjunction with the Assistant Director of Counter Fraud and Probity Services, deciding at what stage to involve the police in cases of fraud, misappropriation, and other irregularities; and
- (d) ensuring that an annual audit report is prepared for the consideration of the Governance and Audit Committee on behalf of the Board of Directors. The report must include:
 - (i) a clear statement on the effectiveness of Internal Control;
 - (ii) progress against plan approved by the Governance and Audit Committee;

- (iii) major internal financial control weaknesses discovered;
- (iv) progress on the implementation of internal audit recommendations;
- (v) strategic audit plan covering the coming three years; and
- (vi) a detailed plan for the coming year.

8.2.2.2 The Director of Finance and/or designated auditors are entitled, without necessarily giving prior notice, to require and receive:

- (a) access to all records, documents and correspondence relating to any financial or other relevant transactions, including documents of a confidential nature;
- (b) access at all reasonable times to any land, premises or employee of the *Business Services Organisation*;
- (c) the production of any cash, stores or other property of the *Business Services Organisation* under an employee's control; and
- (d) explanations concerning any matter under investigation.

8.2.3 Role of Internal Audit

8.2.3.1 Internal Audit shall review, appraise and report upon:

- (a) the extent of compliance with, and the financial effect of, relevant established policies, plans and procedures;
- (b) the adequacy and application of financial and other related management controls;
- (c) the suitability of financial and other related management data; and
- (d) the extent to which the *Business Services Organisation's* assets and interests are accounted for and safeguarded from loss of any kind, arising from:
 - (i) fraud and other offences;
 - (ii) waste, extravagance, inefficient administration; and
 - (iii) poor value for money or other causes.

8.2.3.2. Whenever any matter arises which involves, or is thought to involve irregularities concerning cash, stores or other property or any suspected irregularity in the exercise of any function of a pecuniary nature, the Director of Finance must be notified immediately.

8.2.3.3 The Director of Finance has responsibility for securing an independent Internal Audit service. They, and the Head of Internal Audit Services, shall normally attend Governance and Audit Committee meetings and both have a right of direct access to all Governance and Audit Committee Members, the Chairperson and Chief Executive of the Board of Directors.

8.2.3.4 The reporting system for internal audit will be set out in a good practice guide reflecting the BSO processes and will include:

- an urgent interim report is to be made orally or in writing to alert management to the need to take immediate action to correct a serious weakness in performance or control or where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion of malpractice;
- on completion of an audit, a report is to be sent to the Director or manager who has a direct responsibility for the activity being audited and who has the authority to take action on internal audit recommendations;
- interim reports are also to be made where it is necessary to make a significant change in the scope of the assignment or where it is desirable to inform management of progress;
- the appropriate Director or manager shall produce a timely management response to each internal audit report; and
- the Internal Audit reports and management responses must be submitted to the Governance and Audit Committee for consideration.

8.2.4 External Audit

8.2.4.1 External audit services are provided under Articles 90 (2) (a) and 91 (1) (a) of the HPSS (NI) Order 1972 and the Audit and Accountability Order 2003, in particular Section 6 thereof.

8.2.4.2 The Northern Ireland Comptroller and Auditor General is the appointed External Auditor of the *Business Services Organisation*, who may outsource the External Audit programme to appropriately qualified private sector organisations.

8.2.4.3 Value for Money Audit work is directed by the nominated DoH Senior Officer. The BSO shall be funded for 100% of each study done in the BSO and of any later work to follow-up completed studies.

8.3.0 Revenue Resource Limit Expenditure Limit Control

8.3.1 The Business Services Organisation is required by the DoH to break even in-year, not to exceed its annual revenue resource expenditure limit, with a further requirement to declare all in-year easements to the Department. The Chief Executive has overall executive responsibility for the Business Services Organisation's activities and is responsible to the Board of Directors for ensuring that it stays within its revenue resource expenditure limit and any in-year or cumulative deficits are eliminated.

8.3.2 The Director of Finance shall:

- (a) provide monthly reports in the form required by the Department;
- (b) ensure money drawn from the Department of Health against the Revenue Resource Expenditure Limit is required for approved expenditure only, and is drawn down only at the time of need;
- (c) be responsible for ensuring that an adequate system of monitoring financial performance is in place to enable the *Business Services Organisation* to fulfil its statutory responsibility not to exceed its Annual Revenue and Capital Resource Limits; and
- (d) be responsible for the Financial Risk Register and ensure that the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team are advised of potential financial problems to ensure timely action is taken so that Departmental Expenditure limits are not breached.

8.3.3 The Executive Leadership Team shall ensure that adequate information is provided in a timely way to the Director of Finance to enable reliable financial projections to be made, and necessary advice provided to the Chief Executive on any financial risk to the break-even position.

8.4.0 Promoting Financial Stability

8.4.1 The *Business Services Organisation* has an obligation, along with all other HSC Organisations, to contain expenditure within the resources available. Deficits should not be allowed to develop, and where they do threaten to arise, the *Business Services Organisation* must work with customers to agree appropriate contingency arrangements are put in place.

8.4.2 The principles set out in circular HSC(F) 37-2023, “ HSC Break-Even and Financial Recovery” and subsequent related circulars must be adhered to. In particular, no service developments should be initiated without the prior securing of recurrent funding.

8.5.0 Funding, Business Planning, Budgets, Budgetary Control and Monitoring

8.5.1 Funding

8.5.1.1 The Director of Finance of the *Business Services Organisation* shall:

- (a) periodically review the bases and assumptions used for distributing funding and ensure that these are reasonable and realistic and secure the *Business Services Organisation's* entitlement to funds through negotiation of income;
- (b) at the start of each financial year submit to the Board for approval a Financial Plan showing the total planned income

notified and proposed planned expenditure including any sums to be held in reserve;

- (c) regularly update the Board of Directors on significant changes to the initial funding and the uses of such funds;
- (d) be involved in challenging those assumptions made regarding the financial implications of all policy changes and assisting in their evaluation; and
- (e) advise the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team on need for contingency reserve in the light of known Budget uncertainties.

8.5.2 Preparation and Approval of Business Plans and Budgets

8.5.2.1 The Chief Executive shall compile and submit to the Board an Annual Business Plan, which takes into account financial targets and forecast limits of available resources. The annual plan shall contain:

- (a) a statement of the significant assumptions on which the plan is based, including a proposed deployment of resources across business areas or services for the following period; and
- (b) details of major changes in workload, delivery of services or resources required to achieve the plan.

8.5.2.2 Prior to the start of the financial year the Director of Finance shall, on behalf of the Chief Executive, prepare and submit budgets for consideration by the Executive Leadership Team and approval by the Board. Such budgets shall:

- (a) be in accordance with the aims and objectives set out in the business plan;
- (b) accord with workload and manpower plans;
- (c) be produced following discussions with other relevant HSC Organisations;
- (d) be prepared within the limits of available funds; and
- (e) identify potential risks.

8.5.2.3 The Director of Finance shall monitor financial performance against budgets and plans, periodically review them, and report to the Executive Leadership Team and the Board. The Director of Finance shall advise the Chief Executive and the Executive Leadership Team on the need to apply any contingency reserve.

8.5.2.4 All budget holders must ensure that the necessary Business Case preparation and approvals, for expenditure decisions, have been obtained before committing to recurrent revenue expenditure in new service commissioning. Failure to obtain the required approvals will mean that the expenditure has been incurred without the required authority and is a serious matter. (DAO (DFP)08/21 and HSC(F) 09-2024 refers).

8.5.2.5 *Business Services Organisation* budget holders shall provide information and estimates as required by the Director of Finance to enable budgets to be compiled.

8.5.2.6 The Director of Finance has a responsibility to ensure that adequate training is delivered on an ongoing basis to *Business Services Organisation* employed budget holders to help them manage their budgets successfully.

8.5.3 Budgetary Delegation

8.5.3.1 The Chief Executive may delegate the management of a budget to permit the performance of a defined range of activities. This delegation must be in writing and be accompanied by a clear definition of:

- (a) the amount of the budget;
- (b) the purpose(s) of each budget heading;
- (c) individual and group responsibilities;
- (d) authority to exercise virement, only within total Revenue or total Capital (no virement between revenue and capital);
- (e) achievement of planned levels of service; and
- (f) the provision of regular reports.

8.5.3.2 The Chief Executive and delegated budget holders must not exceed the budgetary total or virement limits set by the Board.

8.5.3.3 Any budgeted funds not required for their designated purpose(s) revert to the immediate control of the Chief Executive, subject to any authorised use of virement. Where DoH resources

allocated for a particular purpose are not required or not required in full for that purpose, they must be returned to the Department for potential redistribution.

8.5.3.4 Non-recurrent funds shall not be used to finance recurring expenditure without the authority in writing of the Chief Executive.

8.5.3.5 All budget holders are required to regularly review all projected expenditure and identify to the Director of Finance, on a timely basis, where unavoidable expenditure has the potential to breach their delegated budget.

8.5.4 Budgetary Control and Reporting

8.5.4.1 The Director of Finance shall devise and maintain systems of budgetary control. These shall include:

- (a) monthly financial reports to the Board of Directors in a form approved by the *Business Services Organisation* containing:
 - (i) income and expenditure to date showing trends and forecast year-end position;
 - (ii) movements in working capital;
 - (iii) material capital project spend and projected outturn against plan;
 - (iv) explanations of any material variances from plan; and

- (v) details of any corrective action where necessary and the Chief Executive's and/or Director of Finance view of whether such actions are sufficient to correct the situation;
- (b) the issue of timely, accurate and comprehensive advice and financial reports to each budget holder, covering the areas for which they are responsible;
- (c) investigation and reporting of variances from financial, workload and manpower budgets;
- (d) monitoring of management action to correct variations; and
- (e) arrangements for the authorisation of in-year budget transfers.

8.5.4.2 Each budget holder is responsible for ensuring that:

- (a) any likely overspending should not be incurred without the prior consent of the Chief Executive or Director of Finance;
- (b) the amount provided in the approved budget is not used in whole or in part for any purpose other than that specifically authorised;
- (c) all estimated budgets are reviewed regularly especially where there is a projected impact on their delegated budget;
- (d) no employees are appointed without the approval of the Chief Executive and confirmation by the Director of Finance that

sufficient funds are available within the *Business Services Organisation's* budget to meet the full cost of employment;

- (e) they have access to adequate management information and financial advice to ensure that they manage budgets effectively within delegated limits.

8.5.4.3 The Chief Executive is responsible for identifying and implementing cost improvements and income generation initiatives in accordance with the requirements of the annual business plan and maintenance of a balanced budget.

8.5.5 Capital Expenditure

8.5.5.1 The general rules applying to delegation and reporting shall also apply to capital expenditure. The particular matters relating to capital are contained in SFI.11 together with the provisions of the Capital Investment Manual for NI.

8.5.6 Economic Appraisals for Capital and Current Expenditure Projects

8.5.6.1 Where the *Business Services Organisation* proposes to incur/commit expenditure it is essential that a robust evaluation and decision making process is undertaken. The prescribed method is a proportionate economic appraisal. The detail for such appraisals is included in:

- DoH Capital Investment Manual;
- Better Business Cases NI);

- HM Treasury Green Book; and
- HM Treasury Orange Book introduction of five main principles of risk management

8.5.6.2 For Business Cases and economic appraisals prepared and submitted after a project has commenced or is completed, the Department cannot guarantee that approval will be granted either by them or at DoF level.

8.5.6.3 One essential element of the economic appraisal process is the requirement for a robust post-project evaluation and dissemination of lessons learned.

8.5.7 Financial Monitoring Returns

8.5.7.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate monitoring forms are submitted to the appropriate directorate within the Department of Health

8.5.7.2 These monitoring returns must include estimated monthly movement on the cost of Capital and Provisions (including provisions for clinical negligence; employers and public liability and early retirement liabilities).

8.6.0 Annual Accounts and Reports

8.6.1 The Director of Finance, on behalf of the *Business Services Organisation*, shall:

- (a) prepare Annual Accounts and financial reports in accordance with the Resource Accounting guidance provided by the Department, the *Business Services Organisation's* accounting policies, and generally accepted accounting principles;
- (b) prepare, certify and submit audited Annual Accounts to the Department in accordance with current prescribed guidelines and timetable; and
- (c) submit the prescribed financial returns to the Department for each financial year in accordance with the prescribed timetable.

8.6.2 The *Business Services Organisation's* Annual Accounts must be audited by the NI Comptroller and Auditor General or his authorised Auditor and adopted by the Board of Directors at a meeting held in public.

8.6.3 In accordance with Section F of HSS(PDD)8/94, the *Business Services Organisation* shall publish an Annual Report and present it at a meeting held in public. *Inter alia* the document shall include or provide ready access to:

- (a) a summary financial statement consistent with the Annual Accounts of the *Business Services Organisation* supported by a statement from the External Auditor that this is so;

- (b) a note stating whether the External Auditor's report to the annual accounts was qualified or unqualified and, if qualified, set out the report in full together with any further material needed to understand the qualification;
- (c) remuneration of the Chairperson, the Chief Executive and other Directors in accordance with the guidance set out in Section C of HSS(PDD)8/94, updated by circular HSS(F)18/2004.
- (d) details of relevant directorship and other significant interests held by members of the Board of Directors;
- (e) Remuneration Report; and
- (f) all other specified disclosures consistent with best practice in the publication of Annual Accounts for a public service body.

8.7.0 Bank Accounts

8.7.1 General

8.7.1.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for managing the banking arrangements and for advising the *Business Services Organisation* on the provision of banking services and operation of accounts. This advice shall take into account guidance/direction issued from time to time by the Department.

8.7.1.2 The Board of Directors shall be notified of the banking arrangements put in place by the Chief Executive, on the advice of the Director of Finance.

8.7.2 Bank Account operation and maintenance

8.7.2.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for:

- (a) bank accounts;
- (b) establishing separate bank accounts as appropriate for the *Business Services Organisation's* non-exchequer funds;
- (c) ensuring payments made from bank accounts do not exceed the amount credited to the account except where arrangements have been made; and
- (d) reporting to the Chief Executive all arrangements made with the bankers for accounts to be overdrawn.

8.7.3 Banking Procedures

8.7.3.1 The Director of Finance shall prepare detailed instructions on the operation of bank accounts, which must include:

- (a) the conditions under which each bank account is to be operated;
- (b) the limit to be applied to any overdraft; and
- (c) those authorised to sign cheques or other orders drawn on the accounts.

8.7.3.2 The Director of Finance must advise the bankers in writing of the conditions under which each account shall be operated.

8.7.4 Tendering and Review

8.7.4.1 The Director of Finance shall review the banking arrangements of the *Business Services Organisation* at regular intervals to ensure they reflect best practice and represent best value for money by periodically seeking competitive tenders for the banking business in co-operation with other HSC organisations.

8.7.4.2 Competitive tenders for HSC banking services shall be sought at least every 8 years. The results of the tendering exercise shall be reported to the Board of Directors.

8.8.0 Income, Fees and Charges and Security of Cash, Cheques and Other Negotiable Instruments

8.8.1 Income Systems

8.8.1.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for setting the parameters in respect of Income systems and ensuring that there is compliance with agreed systems within Income Shared Services.

8.8.1.2 The Head of Shared Services is responsible for designing, maintaining and ensuring compliance with systems pertaining to the proper recording, invoicing, collection and coding of all monies due and providing an assurance to the DoF that processes are in place as part of the SLA with Shared Services.

8.8.1.3 The Head of Shared Services is also responsible for the prompt banking of all monies received.

8.8.2 Fees and Charges

8.8.2.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for approving and regularly reviewing the level of all fees and charges other than those determined by the Department or by statute. Independent professional advice on matters of valuation shall be taken as necessary.

8.8.2.2 All employees must inform the Director of Finance promptly of money due arising from transactions which they initiate/deal with, including all contracts, leases, tenancy agreements, and other transactions.

8.8.3 Debt Recovery

8.8.3.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for ensuring that Shared Services complies with appropriate recovery action on all outstanding debts.

8.8.3.2 Income due but not received shall be dealt with in accordance with the guidance on losses detailed in line with the requirements of circular HSC (F) circular 09-2024 and subsequent related circulars.

8.8.3.3 The Head of Shared Services is responsible for ensuring that overpayments shall be detected (or preferably prevented) and recovery initiated.

8.8.4 Security of Cash, Cheques and Other Negotiable Instruments

8.8.4.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for providing clarity to Shared Services on the systems for:

- (a) approving the form of all receipt books, agreement forms, or other means of officially acknowledging or recording monies received or receivable.
- (b) ordering and securely controlling any such stationery;
- (c) the provision of adequate facilities and systems for employees whose duties include collecting and holding cash, including the provision of safes or lockable cash boxes, the procedures for keys, and for coin-operated machines; and

- (d) prescribing systems and procedures for handling cash and negotiable securities on behalf of the *Business Services Organisation*.

8.8.4.2 Public Funds shall not, under any circumstances, be used for the encashment of private cheques.

8.8.4.3 All cheques, postal orders, cash etc, shall be banked intact. Disbursements shall not be made from cash received, except under arrangements approved by the Director of Finance.

8.8.4.4 The holders of safe keys shall not accept unofficial funds for depositing in their safes unless such deposits are in special sealed envelopes or locked containers. It shall be made clear to the depositors that the *Business Services Organisation* is not to be held liable for any loss, and written indemnities must be obtained from the organisation or individuals absolving the *Business Services Organisation* from responsibility for any loss.

8.9.0 Terms of Service and Payment of Directors and Employees

8.9.1 Remuneration and Terms of Service

8.9.1.1 The *Business Services Organisation* shall formally agree and record in the minutes of its meetings the precise terms of reference of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee, specifying which posts fall within its area of responsibility, its composition, and the arrangements for reporting. (The constitution of this committee is covered in the Standing Orders. See guidance in HSS (PDD)8/94 Section B).

8.9.1.2 The Committee shall:

- (a) inform the *Business Services Organisation* about appropriate remuneration and terms of service for the Chief Executive and other executive directors (and other senior employees) including:
 - (i) all aspects of salary (including any performance-related elements/bonuses);
 - (ii) provisions for other benefits, including pensions and cars; and
 - (iii) arrangements for termination of employment and other contractual terms;
- (b) advise the *Business Services Organisation* of the remuneration and terms of service of Executive Directors (and other senior

employees) to ensure they are fairly rewarded for their individual contribution to the *Business Services Organisation* – having proper regard to the *Business Services Organisation's* circumstances and performance and to the provision of any national arrangements for such staff or departmental guidance where appropriate;

- (c) monitor the evaluation of the performance of individual executive directors (and other senior employees); and
- (d) advise on and oversee appropriate contractual arrangements for such staff including the proper calculation and scrutiny of termination payments taking account of such national or Departmental guidance as is appropriate.

8.9.1.3 The Committee shall report through the minutes to the Board of Directors the basis for its recommendations. The Board of Directors shall use the minutes as the basis for the Committee's decisions, but remain accountable for taking decisions on the remuneration and terms of service of Executive Directors.

8.9.1.4 The Committee shall consider and approve proposals presented by the Chief Executive for the setting of remuneration and conditions of service for other employees.

8.9.1.5 The *Business Services Organisation* shall remunerate the Chairperson and Non-Executive Directors in accordance with the Payment of Remuneration to Chairmen and Non-Executive Members Determination by the Minister.

8.9.2 Funded Establishment

8.9.2.1 The manpower plans incorporated within the annual budget shall form the funded establishment.

8.9.2.2 The funded establishment of any department may not be varied without the approval of the Chief Executive.

8.9.3 Staff Appointments

8.9.3.1 No Director or employee may engage, re-engage, or re-grade employees, either on a permanent or temporary basis, or agree to changes in any aspect of remuneration:

- (a) unless authorised to do so by the Chief Executive or Director of People and Place; and
- (b) within the limit of his approved budget and funded establishment as confirmed by the Director of Finance.

8.9.3.2 The use of agency staff must be approved through the relevant processes operational at the time of engagement.

8.9.3.3 As an employee of the BSO you should:

- ensure that you are not perceived in any way as to using your influence directly or indirectly to enable a person to gain employment in the BSO;

- note that while you are free to do what you choose in your spare time, this freedom brings with it the responsibility of ensuring that you do not engage in any spare time activity or other employment which may compromise your ability to carry out your duties within the BSO. If you are in doubt about the propriety of engaging in any additional employment or other activity you should seek and accept the advice of the BSO. Initial enquiries should be made to your manager. Any payment, which you receive as a direct consequence of being a BSO employee, should be surrendered to the BSO, unless the BSO directs otherwise.

8.9.3.4 The Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee shall approve procedures presented by the Chief Executive or Director of People and Place for the determination of commencing pay rates, condition of service, etc, for managers.

8.9.4 Processing of Payroll

8.9.4.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for setting the parameters in respect of Payroll systems and ensuring that there is compliance with agreed systems within Payroll Shared Services.

8.9.4.2 The Head of Shared Services is responsible for designing, maintaining and ensuring compliance with systems for the proper processing of payroll.

8.9.4.3 The Head of Shared Services is responsible for:

- (a) specifying timetables for submission of properly authorised time records and other notifications;

- (b) the final determination of pay;
- (c) making payment on agreed dates; and

- (d) agreeing method of payment.

8.9.4.4 The Director of Finance will agree the issue of instructions, including by BSO Head of Shared Services where appropriate, regarding:

- (a) verification and documentation of data;

- (b) the timetable for receipt and preparation of payroll data and the payment of employees;

- (c) maintenance of subsidiary records for superannuation, income tax, social security and other authorised deductions from pay;

- (d) security and confidentiality of payroll information;

- (e) checks to be applied to completed payroll before and after payment;

- (e) authority to release payroll data under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR;
- (f)
- (g) methods of payment available to various categories of employee;

- (h) procedures for payment by cheque, bank credit, or cash to employees;
- (i) procedures for the recall of cheques and bank credits;
- (j) pay advances and their recovery;
- (k) maintenance of regular and independent reconciliation of pay control accounts;
- (l) separation of duties of preparing records and handling cash;
and
- (m) a system to ensure the recovery from leavers of sums of money and property due by them to the *Business Services Organisation*.

8.9.4.5 Appropriately nominated managers have delegated responsibility for:

- (a) submitted time records, and other notifications in accordance with agreed timetables;
- (b) authorising completed time records and travel claims of employees and agency staff and any other notifications in accordance with the instructions and in the form prescribed by the Head of Shared Services; and
- (c) submitting relevant notification forms in the prescribed format immediately upon knowing the effective date of an employee's resignation, termination, retirement or any other change to their

conditions of service. Where any employee fails to report for duty in circumstances that suggest they have left without notice, the Director of People and Place must be informed immediately.

8.9.4.6 Regardless of the arrangements for providing the payroll service, the Director of Finance shall ensure that the chosen method is supported by appropriate (contracted) terms and conditions, adequate internal controls and audit review procedures, and that suitable arrangements are made for the collection of payroll deductions and payment of these to appropriate bodies.

8.9.5 Contract of Employment

8.9.5.1 The Chief Executive shall delegate responsibility to the Director of People and Place for:

- (a) ensuring that all employees are issued with a contract of employment in a form approved by the *Business Services Organisation* and which complies with employment legislation; and
- (b) detailing with variations to, or termination of, contracts of employment.

8.9.6 Staff Training

8.9.6.1 Training is available for all staff and aims to encourage and support the personal and professional development of staff. Training

and personal development aims to create a learning culture and develop a competency-based approach. Individuals are encouraged to address their own training needs and the opportunity for this is within their annual performance appraisal meeting.

8.10.0 Non-Pay Expenditure for Administrative Purposes

8.10.1 Delegation of Authority

8.10.1.1 Within the administrative ceiling set by the Department, Executive Leadership Team shall approve the level of non-pay expenditure on an annual basis and the Chief Executive shall determine the level of delegation to budget managers.

8.10.1.2 The Chief Executive shall set out:

- (a) the list of managers who are authorised to place requisitions for the supply of goods and services; and
- (b) the maximum level of each requisition and the system for authorisation above that level.

8.10.1.3 The Chief Executive shall set out procedures on the seeking of professional advice regarding the supply of goods and services to ensure proper stewardship of public funds and assets.

8.10.1.4 The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that goods and services are correctly specified and that the Centre of Procurement Expertise (CoPE) provides value for money. In support of this, a Service Level Agreement should be put in place with the CoPE, requiring it to provide assurance that the systems and processes used in procurement ensure appropriate probity and propriety.

8.10.2 Choice, Requisitioning, Ordering, Receipt and Payment for Goods and Services

8.10.2.1 The requisitioner, in choosing the item to be supplied (or the service to be performed) shall always obtain the best value for money (VFM) for the *Business Services Organisation*, in line with monetary thresholds and corresponding tender requirements set out within BSO's Standing Financial Instructions. The concept of VFM, being the most advantageous combination of cost, quality and social value, is central to the procurement policy.

8.10.2.2 The NI Public procurement Policy Statement set outs four public procurement principles to adhere to which are:

- Transparency;
- Accessibility.
- Social Value; and Efficiency and Effectiveness.

8.10.2.3 Therefore the *Business Services Organisation* requires that the BSO Procurement and Logistics Service (PaLs), the Centre of Procurement Expertise (CoPE), is consulted in the first instance to ensure that procurement is carried out in a professional way. Where this advice is not acceptable to the requisitioner, the Director of Finance (and/or the Chief Executive) shall be consulted.

8.10.2.4 The Director of Finance is responsible for setting the parameters in respect of Payments' systems and ensuring that there is compliance with agreed systems within Payments' Shared Services.

8.10.2.5 The Head of Shared Services is responsible for designing, maintaining and ensuring compliance with systems for the proper processing of non pay expenditure.

8.10.2.6 The Head of Shared Services shall be responsible for the prompt payment of accounts and claims in accordance with applicable terms and appropriate Government Accounting guidance. Payment of contract invoices shall be in accordance with contract terms, or otherwise, in accordance with Department guidance.

8.10.2.7 The Director of Finance shall:

- (a) advise the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team regarding the setting of thresholds above which quotations (competitive or otherwise) or formal tenders must be obtained in compliance with NI Public Sector Procurement Control Limits , and any associated HSC derogation as applicable, which, once approved, thresholds shall be incorporated in standing orders and regularly reviewed;
- (b) prepare procedural instructions on the obtaining of goods, works and services incorporating the thresholds;
- (c) have responsibility for ensuring that systems are in place for the prompt payment of all properly authorised accounts and claims;
- (d) be responsible for designing and maintaining a system of verification, recording and payment of all amounts payable.
The system shall provide for:

- (i) a list of directors/employees (including specimens of their signatures) authorised to certify invoices;

- (ii) certification that:
 - goods have been duly received, examined and are in accordance with specification and the prices are correct;
 - work done or services rendered have been satisfactorily carried out in accordance with the order, and, where applicable, the materials used are of the requisite standard and the charges are correct;
 - in the case of contracts based on the measurement of time, materials or expenses, the time charges are in accordance with the time sheets, the rates of labour are in accordance with the appropriate rates, the materials have been checked as regards quantity, quality, and price and the charges for the use of vehicles, plant and machinery have been examined; and
 - where appropriate, the expenditure is in accordance with regulations and all necessary authorisation have been obtained.

8.10.2.8 The Director of Finance will agree and ensure the issue of instructions, including by BSO Shared Services where appropriate, to ensure:

- a) the account is arithmetically correct;

- b) the account is in order for payment;
- c) a timetable and system for submission of accounts for payment; provision shall be made for the early submission of accounts subject to cash discounts or otherwise requiring early payment;
- d) instructions to employees regarding the handling and payment of accounts within Payments Shared Services; and
- (e) be responsible for ensuring that payment for goods and services is only made once the goods and services are received (except as below).

8.10.2.9 Prepayments, or advance payment to suppliers, are only permitted where exceptional circumstances apply. This excludes normal regular expenditure such as rates, telephone, rentals, insurance or other rental agreements, in line with Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) A.4.6.6.

- (a) prepayments are only permitted where the financial advantages outweigh the disadvantages (i.e. cashflows must be discounted to NPV) and the intention is not to circumvent cash limits;
- (b) the appropriate Director must provide, in the form of a written report, a case setting out all relevant circumstances of the purchase. The report must set out the effects on the *Business Services Organisation* if the supplier is at some time during the source of the prepayment agreement unable to meet his commitments;
- (c) the Director of Finance will need to be satisfied with the proposed arrangements before contractual arrangements proceed and on occasions the Director of Finance may require a report to be presented to the Executive Leadership team; and

- (d) the budget holder is responsible for ensuring that all items due under a prepayment contract are received and they must immediately inform the appropriate Director/Director of Finance or Chief Executive if problems are encountered.

8.10.2.10 Official orders must: -

- (a) be consecutively numbered;
- (b) be in a form approved by the Director of Finance;
- (c) state the terms and conditions of trade; and
- (d) only be issued to, and used by, those duly authorised by the Chief Executive.

8.10.2.11 Managers must ensure that they comply fully with the guidance and limits specified by the Director of Finance and that:

- (a) all contracts, leases, tenancy agreements and other commitments which may result in a liability are notified to the Director of Finance in advance of any commitment being made;
- (b) Where a contract is to be awarded without competition, this should be done in accordance with DoH current guidance. Further delegation of the functions contained within this guidance shall be approved by the BSO Board and shall be subject to regular review;
- (c) contracts above specified thresholds are advertised ,awarded and contract managed in accordance with published Procurement Policy Notes as issued to DoH Arms' Length Bodies under HSC(F) circulars and the Procurement Act 2023 (other than specialist services sought from or provided by DoH) and for disposals, except where any of these goods and services are provided under existing contracts let by other

Public Bodies which can properly be used by and are available to the BSO;

- (d) Where payments to legal representatives for claims is made, the Chief Legal Adviser must ensure that claims are made in accordance with guidance issued under circular HSS (F) 67/2006, payments in respect of Litigation and Legal Services in the HPSS – Implementation of Controls.
- (e) where consultancy advice is being obtained, the procurement of such advice must be in accordance with current guidance issued on the use of Management Consultants by DoH, and must be within the delegated limits outlined in the Financial Memorandum.
- (f) no order shall be issued for any item or items to any firm which has made an offer of reward or benefit to Directors or employees, other than:
 - (i) isolated gifts of low intrinsic value (under £50) or inexpensive seasonal gifts, such as calendars; or
 - (ii) conventional hospitality, such as lunches in the course of working visits.
- (g) no requisition/order is placed for any item or items for which there is no budget provision unless authorised by the Chief Executive or the Director of Finance on behalf of the Chief Executive;
- (h) all goods, service, or works are ordered on an official order except works and services executed in accordance with a contract and purchases from petty cash;
- (i) verbal orders must only be issued very exceptionally – by an employee designated by the Chief Executive and only in cases of emergency or urgent necessity. An official order clearly marked 'Confirmation Order' must confirm these;

- (j) orders are not split or otherwise placed in a manner devised so as to avoid the financial thresholds;
- (k) goods are not taken on trial or loan in circumstances that could commit the *Business Services Organisation* to a future uncompetitive purchase;
- (l) changes to the list of directors/employees authorised to certify invoices are notified in a timely manner to the Director of Finance;
- (m) purchases from petty cash are restricted in value and by type of purchase in accordance with instructions issued by the Director of Finance;
- (n) petty cash records are maintained in a form as determined by the Director of Finance.

8.10.2.12 The Chief Executive must ensure that the BSO's Standing Orders are compatible with the requirements issued by the Department in respect of building and engineering contracts (the Estates Procurement Manual and Capital Investment Manual and published procurement guidance notes), and land and property transaction (Land Transaction Handbook). The technical audit of these contracts shall be the responsibility of the Director of Finance who shall ensure that the arrangements for financial control and financial audit of building and engineering contracts and property transactions comply with the guidance contained within these codes.

8.10.3 Gifts and Hospitality Policy

INTRODUCTION

8.10.3.1 This policy is intended to provide advice to all BSO staff who, in the course of their day to day work or as a result of their employment, either receive offers of gifts and hospitality or provide gifts and hospitality to others on behalf of the BSO.

8.10.3.2 All decisions by BSO staff on the provision or acceptance of gifts and hospitality must be able to withstand both internal and external scrutiny. They must be defensible as being in the direct interest of the organisation, as being proportionate to that interest and within limits that are acceptable to the BSO Board.

PURPOSE/PRINCIPLES

8.10.3.3 This policy is derived from the BSO Standing Financial Instructions (paragraph 10.3) and has been compiled to ensure compliance with the 7 principles of Public Life drawn up by the Nolan Committee (see Appendix 1). All BSO staff must therefore apply the following principles in the conduct of their employment:

- they must not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party which might be perceived as compromising their personal judgment or integrity.
- they must not make use of their official position to further their private interests or those of others.
- they must declare any private interests relating to their public bodies.

- they must base all purchasing decisions and negotiations of contracts solely on achieving best value for money for the tax payer.
- they must refer to their Head of Department when faced with a situation for which there is no adequate guidance.
- if in any doubt, they must seek advice from the appropriate Director who will consult with the Director of Finance on any matters in relation to gifts and hospitality which may sit outside this Policy.

The fundamental principle is that no member of staff should do anything which might give rise to the impression that they have been unduly influenced by a gift of hospitality or other consideration to show bias for, or against, any organisation while carrying out official duties.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.10.3.4 It is the responsibility of all BSO employees to notify their Director / Chief Executive (see para 10.3.22) regarding any offer of gift/hospitality by completing Part 1 of the Gifts and Hospitality Form (Appendix 2). Part 2 of the Form should be completed by the approving Officer.

8.10.3.5 Each Directorate should maintain a Gifts and Hospitality Register (Appendix 3). Registers will be subject to periodic review by ELT and also are subject to Freedom of Information queries.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

The Bribery Act 2010, introduced new statutory offences for activities in the public or private sector including a new corporate offence. It also places specific responsibility on organisations to have in place sufficient and adequate procedures to prevent bribery and corruption taking place.

8.10.3.6 Under the Bribery Act 2010, it is an offence to:

- Pay bribes – to offer or give a financial or other advantage with the intention of inducing that person to perform a relevant function or activity improperly or to reward that person for doing so.
- Receive bribes – to receive a financial or other advantage intending that a relevant function or activity should be performed improperly as a result.
- ‘Relevant function or activity’ includes any function of a public nature and any activity connected with a business.
- Fail to prevent bribery – an organisation is guilty of an offence if BSO personnel or a third party connected to it bribes another person intending to obtain or retain business or a business advantage.

8.10.3.7 The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for the BSO or under its control. The BSO expects all staff to perform their duties impartially, honestly, with integrity, and in good faith. All BSO staff are required to familiarise themselves and comply with the requirements of this Policy.

8.10.3.8 If a BSO employee is found to be in breach of the Gift and Hospitality Policy, they may be liable to disciplinary action under the BSO's Disciplinary Procedure, which may result in dismissal for gross misconduct. The BSO also reserves the right to terminate its contractual relationship with third parties if they breach this policy.

8.10.3.9 In addition to any disciplinary process and where the breach amounts to a criminal offence, this will be referred to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Conviction under the Bribery Act is punishable by imprisonment for a maximum term of 10 years for individuals and unlimited fines can be imposed both to individuals and the BSO.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

8.10.3.10 Cash or Cash Equivalents - Offers of cash or cash equivalents (e.g. lottery tickets, gift vouchers or gift cheques) made by suppliers, contractors, service users or their relatives to individual officers of the BSO should be declined.

8.10.3.11 Non Cash gifts - Gifts of a small or inexpensive nature (with an intrinsic value below £50) such as calendars or diaries, which bear the company logo and/or named or other simple or inexpensive items such as flowers and chocolates can be accepted. This type of gift can be easily distinguishable from more expensive or substantial items which cannot on any account be accepted. If there is any doubt as to whether the acceptance of such an item is appropriate, the matter should be referred to the BSO's Director of Finance.

8.10.3.12 Exceptional cases - It is recognised that there are exceptional cases where refusal of a gift will clearly offend a donor, cause embarrassment or appear discourteous. In these cases the donor should be advised that the permission of ELT will have to be sought as to whether or not the gift can be accepted. In the first instance, staff should advise their Director who will consult with the Director of Finance to decide whether to:

- allow the recipient to accept the gift; or
- return the gift to the donor with a suitably worded letter explaining why the gift cannot be accepted; or
- use or dispose of it, if possible, in or by the BSO.
- Donate the gift to a nominated charity

8.10.3.13 Any acceptance/decline of the gift must be recorded in the register and how it was disposed of using the forms set out at Appendices 2 and 3.

8.10.3.14 Lectures, conferences and broadcasts - Where gifts by the way of fees, ex gratia payments or book tokens for lectures, broadcasts or similar occurrences are offered, their acceptance should be based on how much of the preparatory work for the event was done in the employee's own time, how much in official working time and the extent to which the BSO resources, other than for example, use of an officially issued laptop at home, were used in the preparation. The guiding principle is that the BSO will seek to recover the costs of publicly funded resources used for any non-HSC events. The following examples, are by way of illustration:

- if the preparation was carried out entirely in the individual's own time (for example outside fixed sessional commitments for medical or other clinical staff) and the event took place in the employee's own time at no expense to the BSO, it would be acceptable for the individual officer to retain the whole fee, token or other gift;
- if the preparation was performed wholly on BSO time, with the use of BSO resources, the Director of Finance should be consulted to determine the need to charge the organisation or body a fee based on the salary costs of the individual and/or the use of resources. If the event is carried out in the employee's own time then in addition to any charge for the use of BSO resources, the individual officer may retain any fee, token or other gift for presenting at the event (with an intrinsic value below £50).
- if the preparation was carried out and the presentation delivered in the officer's own time but BSO facilities or equipment were used, then the Director of Finance should be consulted to determine the need to charge the organisation or body a fee based on the use of resources. In addition to any charge for use of any BSO resources, the individual officer may retain any fee, token or other gift presented at the event (with an intrinsic value below £50).

If further guidance is needed in this area, the Director of Finance should be consulted.

8.10.3.15 Trade or discount cards - Trade or discount cards, other than those negotiated by the BSO on behalf of its staff, by which an officer might benefit from the purchase of goods or services at a reduced price are classified as gifts and should be politely declined and, if already accepted, returned to the sender.

Frequent Flyer cards which are issued by airlines can be used to avail of special departure lounges and priority booking and check-in. Staff must not make private use of any air miles which derived from flights paid for by public funds.

8.10.3.16 HOSPITALITY RECEIVED FROM THIRD PARTIES

The handling of offers of hospitality is recognised as being much more difficult to regulate but it is an area in which staff must exercise careful judgment. It is recognised that it can be as embarrassing to refuse hospitality as it can be to refuse a gift. There is also a need to distinguish between simple, low cost hospitality of a conventional type, for example, a working lunch or evening meal compared with more expensive and elaborate hospitality. There is clearly a need for a sense of balance. There is concern that acceptance of frequent, regular or annual invitations to events or functions, particularly from the same source and where a considerable degree of hospitality is involved, may severely test the principles stated earlier and should be refused. However, there may be instances where staff receive invitations to events run by voluntary organisations such as annual conferences or dinners. Attendance at such events is considered an integral element in building and maintaining relationships with these sectors and any hospitality received is likely to be reasonable and proportionate, and therefore acceptable.

8.10.3.17 The main point is that in accepting hospitality staff need to be aware of, and guard against, the dangers of misrepresentation or perception of favouritism by a competitor of the host. It is obviously easier to justify meetings which relate directly to the work of the BSO but where these happen outside working hours and on purely social occasions then they need to be justified as not being a personal gift or benefit. Where a contract is being negotiated, hospitality of any kind, including attendance of staff at seasonal events hosted by suppliers or contractors, should not be accepted.

8.10.3.18 As a general rule, invitations of hospitality which are extended to the BSO as a whole, can be accepted by a nominated officer and are less likely to attract criticism than personalised invitations to individual officers.

8.10.3.19 When in doubt about accepting hospitality or an invitation you should contact your Director who will consult with the Director of Finance on any matters in relation to gifts and hospitality which may sit outside this Policy. In all instances where anything beyond conventional hospitality is offered, the approval of the Director or the Director of Finance should be sought. It is particularly important to ensure that the BSO is not over represented at an event or function and care should be taken to ensure that this does not happen, for example, by enquiring from the host as to other staff who have received similar invitations.

8.10.3.20 AWARDS OR PRIZES

Staff should contact their Director who will consult with the Director of Finance if they are offered an award or prize in connection with their official duties. They will normally be allowed to keep it provided:

- there is no risk of public criticism;
- it is offered strictly in accordance with personal achievement;
- it is not in the nature of a gift nor can be construed as a gift, inducement or payment for publication or invention to which other rules apply.

8.10.3.21 - SPONSORSHIP FOR ATTENDANCE AT COURSES AND CONFERENCES

The offer of financial assistance or sponsorship by commercial or other organisations to attend **relevant** courses or conferences must be highlighted to your Director in advance on the appropriate form normally used for applying for permission to attend such events. Such sponsorship is permitted on the understanding that its acceptance will not compromise in any way future purchasing decisions either directly or indirectly or lead to any other conflict of interest involving the individual or the BSO. The appropriate Director must review the nature and level of sponsorship being offered before approving applications to attend courses or conferences. Any sponsorship that could be construed to be in direct conflict with the HSC aim of promoting the health and social well-being of the Northern Ireland population should not be accepted in any circumstances. The Director of Finance should be consulted in cases of uncertainty.

8.10.3.22 REGISTER OF GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND INVITATIONS

In order to counter any possible accusations or suspicions of breach of the rules of conduct, a record will be kept by the BSO of all offers of gifts, (above £50, including multiple gifts from one source) awards and prizes made to members of the BSO Board, Directors, Assistant

Directors, Heads of Service Areas and staff. Invitations to functions or events, where a considerable degree of hospitality is involved should also be recorded.

It is the responsibility of each individual BSO officer to forward details using the prescribed template (Appendix 2) of offers for inclusion in the BSO's gifts and hospitality registers held at the following locations:

OFFICER:	REGISTER HELD:
Chairperson Non Executive Director Director Head of SS/ CEC/ LC and Chief Legal Adviser	Chief Executive's Office
All other bands	The Office of the appropriate Director or, Head of: Shared Services, Leadership Centre, Clinical Education Centre or Chief Legal Adviser

PROVISION OF HOSPITALITY, GIFTS AND AWARDS

8.10.3.23 - The use of public monies for hospitality purposes should be carefully considered and BSO needs to be able to demonstrate good value in expenditure of public funds. The following paragraphs provide a guide for staff when considering the provision of hospitality, gifts or awards. If in doubt, the Director of Finance should be consulted before any expenditure is committed.

8.10.3.24 - Internal Hospitality - This should only be considered in clearly defined circumstances. For example, where meetings outside of normal working hours cannot be avoided (early morning or after normal working hours) or where staff are required to travel to attend meetings in circumstances where a lunch time break is not possible or where the meeting is likely to last for more than 3 hours.

Where hospitality is to be extended for internal meetings, it should be reasonable and limited to light refreshments and written approval should be sought in advance from the appropriate Director if the costs exceed £5 per head.

In relation to residential training courses/conferences it is normal practice for meals and light refreshments to be provided for delegates. The provision of beverages, including alcohol, is permissible with evening meals up to a limit of one-third of the total cost of the meal.

In relation to non-residential events, lunch may be provided where it facilitates the running of the course or where alternative provision is not available. Written approval should be sought in advance from the appropriate Director. Beverages provided with lunches should be restricted to tea, coffee, water or fruit juice.

All hospitality expenditure should be allocated specific financial coding to assist in the collation of management information and to facilitate the monitoring and control of the use of this facility.

8.10.3.25 - External hospitality - The provision of hospitality by the BSO to representatives of other organisations should be modest and appropriate to the circumstances. In all instances, the expenditure involved must constitute good value for money.

Hospitality should not be offered solely as a return gesture or be automatically recurrent on a regular basis unless circumstances indicate that it is appropriate to do so.

The use of public monies for hospitality purposes at conferences and seminars should be carefully considered. The BSO needs to be able to demonstrate good value in committing public funds.

Expenditure on external hospitality should be clearly identified as such and charged to a specific hospitality expense code.

8.10.3.26 - Other circumstances - If situations arise that are not covered by the foregoing guidance, prior approval should be sought from the Chief Executive or Director of Finance before hospitality is provided and such approval should be formally documented. It is recognised that there may be cases when, in the interests of the service, flexibility in interpretation of the rules may be necessary. Prior approval for such situations should be obtained in writing from the Chief Executive. Any request for approval of such instances should state why the request falls outside the boundaries of what is normally

allowable and why it is considered necessary to provide such hospitality.

8.10.3.27 - Authorisation and approval of hospitality - The purchase of gifts and hospitality should follow the BSO's normal procurement procedures and should comply with the requirements of mini-code.

Notwithstanding those circumstances indicated above where specific approval is required from the Chief Executive or Director of Finance, authorisation for, and approval of, hospitality expenditure should be obtained in accordance with the BSO's Schedule of Delegated Authority.

Appropriate approvals should be obtained prior to the hospitality being provided. The provision of external hospitality should have the approval of the relevant Director who will consult with the Director of Finance on any matters in relation to gifts and hospitality which may sit outside this Policy.

8.10.3.28 - Provision of gifts or awards - Occasionally the BSO may wish to make a small presentation to speakers or other volunteers in acknowledgement of services provided to the BSO. Such gifts or awards should be of a token nature. Prior approval for the provision of gifts or awards is required from the appropriate Director and such approval should be formally documented.

8.10.3.29 - Review of Policy - This policy will be reviewed in three years following approval or sooner in the event of significant legislation guidance or BSO practices.

8.11.0 BSO's Capital Expenditure, HSC Organisations Capital Expenditure Submissions, Fixed Asset Registers and Security of Assets

8.11.1 BSO's Capital Expenditure

8.11.1.1 The Chief Executive or delegated officer:

- (a) shall ensure that there is an adequate appraisal and approval process in place for determining capital expenditure priorities and the effect of each proposal upon the revenue position;
- (b) is responsible for the management of all stages of capital schemes and for ensuring that schemes are delivered on time and to cost;
- (c) shall ensure that the capital investment is not undertaken without the resources to finance all revenue consequences, including capital charges; and
- (d) is required to seek Department approval for all capital projects.

8.11.1.2 For every capital expenditure proposal the Chief Executive or his/her nominee shall ensure:

- (a) All Capital Expenditure must be supported by a business case completed in accordance with Departmental Instruction as outlined in the Capital Accounting Manual and the Green Book:

Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government. The business case produced should include:

- (i) an option appraisal of potential benefits compared with known costs to determine the option with the highest ratio of benefits to costs; and
 - (ii) appropriate project management and control arrangements; and
- (b) that the Director of Finance is satisfied with the reliability of the estimated costs and resource consequences detailed in the business case;

8.11.1.3 For capital schemes where the contracts stipulate stage payments, the Chief Executive or his/her nominee shall issue procedures for their management, incorporating the recommendations of 'Estatecode'.

The Director of Finance shall issue procedures for the regular reporting of expenditure and commitment against authorised capital expenditure.

8.11.1.4 The approval of a capital programme shall not constitute approval for expenditure on any scheme.

8.11.1.5 The Director of Finance shall issue procedures governing the financial management, including variations to contract, of capital investment projects and valuation for accounting purposes.

8.11.2 Asset Registers

8.11.2.1 The Director of Finance is responsible for the maintenance of a register of assets, the decisions concerning the form of any register and the method of updating, and arranging for a physical check of assets against the asset register to be conducted at least once a year.

8.11.2.2 The *Business Services Organisation* shall maintain an asset register recording fixed assets. The minimum data set to be held within this register shall be as specified in the Capital Accounting Manual, issued by the Department.

8.11.2.3 Additions to the fixed asset register must be clearly identified to an appropriate budget holder and be validated by reference to:

- (a) properly authorised and approved agreements, architect's certificates, supplier's invoices and other documentary evidence in respect of purchases from third parties;
- (b) stores, requisitions and wages records for own materials and labour including appropriate overheads; and
- (c) lease agreements in respect of asset held under a finance lease and capitalised.

8.11.2.4 Where capital assets are sold, scrapped, lost or otherwise disposed of, their value must be removed from the accounting records

and each disposal must be validated by reference to authorisation documents and invoices (where appropriate).

8.11.2.5 The Director of Finance shall approve procedures for reconciling balances on fixed assets accounts in ledgers against balances on fixed asset registers.

8.11.2.6 The value of each asset shall be indexed to current values in accordance with methods specified in the Capital Accounting Manual, issued by the Department.

8.11.2.7 The value of each asset, where appropriate, shall be depreciated using methods and rates as specified in the Capital Accounting Manual, issued by the Department.

8.11.2.8 The Director of Finance of the *Business Services Organisation* shall calculate and pay capital charges as specified in the Capital Accounting Manual, issued by the Department.

8.11.3 Security of Assets

8.11.3.1 The overall control of fixed assets is the responsibility of the Chief Executive.

8.11.3.2 The Director of Finance must approve asset control procedures (including fixed assets, cash, cheques and negotiable instruments, and also including donated assets). This procedure shall make provision for:

- (a) recording managerial responsibility for each asset;
- (b) identification of additions and disposals;

- (c) identification of all repairs and maintenance expenses;
- (d) physical security of assets;
- (e) periodic verification of the existence of, condition of, and title to, assets recorded;
- (f) identification and reporting of all costs associated with the retention of an asset; and
- (g) reporting, recording and safekeeping of cash, cheques, and negotiable instruments.

8.11.3.3 All discrepancies revealed by verification of physical assets to fixed asset register shall be notified to the Director of Finance.

8.11.3.4 Whilst each employee has responsibility for the security of property of the *Business Services Organisation*, it is the responsibility of Directors and senior employees in all disciplines to apply such appropriate routine security practices in relation to *Business Services Organisation* property as may be determined by the *Business Services Organisation*. Directors or employees using portable *Business Services Organisation* assets are responsible for the safe custody of those assets and the secure storage of those assets when unattended. Any breach of agreed security practices must be reported in accordance with instructions.

8.11.3.5 Any damage to the *Business Services Organisation's* premises, vehicles and equipment, or any loss of equipment, stores or supplies must be reported by directors and employees in accordance with the procedure for reporting losses.

8.11.3.6 Where practical, assets shall be marked as *Business Services Organisation* property.

8.12.0 Stores and Receipt of Goods

8.12.1 The *Business Services Organisation's* need, to hold stores for its own administrative purposes shall be minimal and mainly comprise of office supplies.

Stores, defined in terms of controlled stores and departmental stores (for immediate use) shall be:

- (a) kept to a minimum;
- (b) subjected to annual stocktake; and
- (c) valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

8.12.2 Subject to the responsibility of the Director of Finance for the systems of control, overall responsibility for the control of Procurement and Logistics Service stores shall be delegated to Director of Operations by the Chief Executive. The day-to-day responsibility may be delegated by her/him to employees and stores managers/keepers, subject to such delegation being entered in a record available to the Director of Operations. The control of fuel oil shall be the responsibility of an appointed officer.

8.12.3 The responsibility for security arrangements and the custody of keys for all stores and locations shall be clearly defined in writing by the designated manager. Wherever practicable, stocks shall be marked as *Business Services Organisation* property.

8.12.4 The Director of Operations shall set out procedures and systems to regulate the stores including records for receipts of goods, issues, and returns to stores, and losses.

- 8.12.5** Stocktaking arrangements shall be agreed with the Director of Finance to ensure that all items of stock are counted at least once a year.
- 8.12.6** Where a complete system of stores control is not justified, alternative arrangements shall require the approval of the Director of Finance.
- 8.12.7** The designated manager shall be responsible for a system approved by the Director of Operations for a review of slow-moving and obsolete items and for condemnation, disposal, and replacement of all unserviceable articles. The designated officer shall report to the Director of Operations any evidence of significant overstocking and of any negligence or malpractice (see also 13, Condemnations, Losses and Special Payments). Procedures for the disposal of obsolete stock shall follow the procedures set out for disposal of all surplus and obsolete goods.
- 8.12.8** For goods supplied via the BSO Procurement and Logistics Service, the Chief Executive shall identify those authorised to requisition and accept goods from the store. The authorised person shall check receipt against the delivery note before forwarding this to the Director of Finance who shall satisfy themselves that the goods have been received before accepting the recharge.

8.13.0 Disposals and Condemnations, Losses and Special Payments

8.13.1 Disposals and Condemnations

8.13.1.1 The Director of Finance must prepare detailed procedures for the disposal of assets, including condemnations, and ensure that these are notified to managers.

8.13.1.2 When it is decided to dispose of a *Business Services Organisation* asset, the head of department or authorised deputy shall determine and advise the Director of Finance of the estimated market value of the item, taking account of professional advice where appropriate.

8.13.1.3 All unserviceable articles shall be:

- (a) condemned or otherwise disposed of by an employee authorised for that purpose by the Director of Finance; and
- (b) recorded by the condemning officer in a form approved by the Director of Finance which shall indicate whether the articles are to be converted, destroyed or otherwise disposed of. All entries shall be confirmed by the countersignature of a second employee authorised for the purpose by the Director of Finance.

8.13.1.4 The condemning officer shall be satisfied as to whether or not there is evidence of negligence in use and shall report any such evidence to the Director of Finance who shall take the appropriate actions.

8.13.2 Losses and Special Payments

8.13.2.1 The Director of Finance must prepare procedural instructions on the recording of and accounting for condemnations, losses, and special payments, in line with the requirements of Circular HSC (F) 1-09-2024 and subsequent related circulars.

8.13.2.2 Any employee discovering or suspecting a loss of any kind must immediately inform their line manager or Director, who must immediately inform the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance. Where a criminal offence is suspected, the Director of Finance must immediately inform the police if theft or arson is involved, but if the case involves suspicion of fraud, then the particular circumstances of the case shall determine the stage at which the police are notified.

8.13.2.3 Counter Fraud and Probity Services will notify the Department and the NI Audit Office of all fraud, in accordance with the Fraud Response Plan.

8.13.2.4 For losses apparently caused by theft, fraud, arson, neglect of duty or gross carelessness, except if trivial and where fraud is not suspected, the Director of Finance must immediately notify:

- (a) the Governance and Audit Committee; and
- (b) the BSO's Counter Fraud and Probity Services.

8.13.2.5 The write-off of losses and special payments shall be in accordance with the guidelines issued under Circular HSC (F) 09-

2024 and subsequent related circulars which draws on the manual 'Managing Public Money' issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

8.13.2.6 Within limits delegated to it by the Department, as defined in the BSO Financial Memorandum, the Governance and Audit Committee on behalf of the Board shall approve the write-off of losses. Losses and special payments in excess of the delegated authority must be referred to the Department's Finance Policy and Accountability unit.

8.13.2.7 The Director of Finance shall be authorised to take any necessary steps to safeguard the *Business Services Organisation's* interests in bankruptcies and company liquidations.

8.13.2.8 For any loss, the Director of Finance shall consider whether an insurance claim can be made against any applicable insurers.

8.13.2.9 The Director of Finance shall maintain a Losses and Special Payments Register in which write-off action is recorded.

8.13.2.10 The Governance and Audit Committee's approval shall be sought to the write-off action prior to their disclosure in the Notes to the Annual Accounts.

8.13.2.11 No special payments exceeding delegated limits shall be made without the prior approval of the Department.

8.14.0 Information Technology

8.14.1 The Director of Finance, who is responsible for the accuracy and security of the computerised financial data of the *Business Services Organisation*, shall in accordance with HSCIT Security Policy:

- (a) devise and implement any necessary procedures to ensure adequate (reasonable) protection of the *Business Services Organisation's* data, programs and computer hardware for which they are responsible from accidental or intentional disclosure to unauthorised persons, deletion or modification, theft or damage, having due regard for the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR;
- (b) ensure that adequate (reasonable) controls exist over data entry, processing, storage, transmission and output to ensure security, privacy, accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of the data, as well as the efficient and effective operation of the system;
- (c) ensure that adequate controls exist such that the computer operation is separated from development, maintenance and amendment; and
- (d) ensure that an adequate management (audit) trail exists through the computerised system and that such computer audit reviews as they may consider necessary are being carried out.

8.14.2 The Director of Finance shall satisfy themselves that new financial systems and amendments to current financial systems are developed in a controlled manner and thoroughly tested prior to implementation. Where this is undertaken by another organisation, assurances of adequacy shall be obtained from them prior to implementation.

8.14.3 In the case of computer systems which are proposed General Applications (i.e. normally those applications which HSC organisations wish to sponsor jointly) all responsible directors and employees shall send to the Director of Finance:

- (a) details of the outline design of the system; and
- (b) the operational requirement, in the case of packages acquired either from a commercial organisation, from the HSC, or from another public sector organisation.

8.14.4 The Director of Finance shall ensure that contracts for computer services for financial applications with another HSC organisation or any other agency shall clearly define the responsibility of all parties for the security, privacy, accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of data during processing, transmission and storage. The contract shall also ensure rights of access for audit purposes.

8.14.5 Where another health organisation or any other agency provides a computer service for financial applications, the Director of Finance shall periodically seek assurances that adequate controls are in operation.

8.14.6 Where computer systems have an impact on corporate financial systems the Director of Finance shall satisfy themselves that:

- (a) systems acquisition, development and maintenance are in line with corporate policies such as an Information Communications and Technology Strategy;
- (b) data produced for use with financial systems is adequate, accurate, complete and timely, and that a management (audit) trail exists;
- (c) Finance staff have access to such data;
- (d) such computer audit reviews as are considered necessary are being carried out; and
- (e) an outturn statement comparing actual with forecast performance is prepared. Special reference shall be made to any supplementary funding requirements.

8.15.0 Payments to Independent Contractors

8.15.1 The Director of Operations/ Assistant Director of FPS will be responsible for data handling and processing transactions, which need specialist professional knowledge, up to the stage where the amounts for payment become known.

From that point the Director of Finance is responsible for all processes leading to the final payment.

Furthermore, the Director of Finance will be responsible for the reconciliation of such payments to the relevant bank account and the reporting of the financial information to the Department, SPPG Boards and Local Commissioning groups (LCGs) as necessary.

The Director of Finance remains responsible for ensuring that the internal controls relating to the entire process are adequate and effective.

8.15.2 The Chief Executive shall put in place systems for the receipt and recording of monies due from Family Practitioner Services.

8.15.3 The Chief Executive shall ensure that Contractors are furnished with adequate financial statements in respect of their remuneration and payments.

8.16.0 Retention of Documents

8.16.1 Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923

All HSC records are public records under the terms of Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923. The Chief Executive and senior managers of the *Business Services Organisation* are personally accountable for records management within the *Business Services Organisation*. They have a duty to make arrangements for the safe keeping and correct disposal (under the Disposal of Documents Order (Northern Ireland) 1925) of those records under the overall supervision of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records whose responsibility includes permanent preservation.

8.16.2 The Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923 made the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) responsible for the records of any Court, Government Department, *Business Services Organisation* or Office in Northern Ireland over which the Parliament of Northern Ireland has the power to legislate. It is therefore a statutory requirement for the *Business Services Organisation* to implement records management as set out in the Act and in the Disposal of Documents (Northern Ireland) Order (1925). This Legislation means the PRONI has an overarching responsibility within the public sector in Northern Ireland to ensure that records are managed in accordance with agreed policies and procedures. In particular:

- PRONI must be involved in:
 - quality assurance of all Disposal Schedules;
 - the updating of Disposal Schedules;
 - the sampling of particular instance papers (case files);

- ensuring the proper use of microfilm and other non-paper based storage media.
- Officers in PRONI, the *Business Services Organisation*, and the Permanent Secretary of the sponsor Department for PRONI (Department for Communities), will be signatories to the Disposal Schedule;
- the *Business Services Organisation's* Data Protection Officer will monitor the implementation of an agreed Disposal Schedule and will advise PRONI if regular reviews are not being carried out;
- the *Business Services Organisation* is responsible for assessing the administrative need for the retention of records, the assessment of records for historical/research purposes is the responsibility of PRONI;
- PRONI will be responsible for the storage of records identified for permanent preservation and which are no longer required by the HSC for administrative purposes.

8.16.3 The Department's Guidelines for managing records, Good Management, Good Records, and the regular updates give an overview of the key issues and solutions, and best practice for HSC organisations to follow when preparing a records management strategy. It represents the joint DoH and PRONI view of how records should be administered and set the standards required of the HSC.

8.16.4 The Disposal Schedule in Good Management, Good Records has been approved by PRONI. It sets out minimum retention periods for HSC records of all types, except for GP medical records, and indicates which records are most likely to be appropriate for permanent preservation. It consolidates the guidance contained in Departmental circulars such as Retention of Personal Health Records (for Possible use in Litigation) – HSSE (sc) 3/96 and Preservation and Destruction of Financial and Associated Records – HSS (F) 14/2003. It also explains the reasoning behind the determination of minimum retention periods, including legal requirements where relevant.

8.16.5 The Schedule does not replace the requirements for the *Business Services Organisation* to develop and agree its own disposal schedule with PRONI; however, it should form the basis for such a schedule.

8.16.6 The following group of people must officially sign all disposal schedules and in this order:

- Head of Records Management PRONI;
- Chief Executive PRONI;
- Permanent Secretary Department for Communities;
- Chief Executive of the *Business Services Organisation*;
- Lead Senior Manager for Records Management; and
- Records Management Officer.

8.17.0 Risk Management

8.17.1 The Chief Executive shall ensure that the *Business Services Organisation* has a systematic programme of risk identification, assessment, management and quality improvement processes and procedures which shall be approved and monitored by the Governance and Audit Committee on behalf of the *Business Services Organisation*.

8.17.2 The programme of risk management which is detailed in the BSO Risk Management Strategy shall include:

- (a) a process for identifying and quantifying risks and potential liabilities;
- (b) engendering among all levels of staff a positive attitude towards the identification and control of risk;
- (c) management processes to ensure all significant risks and potential liabilities are addressed including effective systems of internal control;
- (d) contingency plans to mitigate the impact of adverse events;
- (e) audit arrangements including internal audit, clinical and social care audit, health and safety review;
- (f) A corporate risk register and assurance framework must be maintained and regularly reviewed on a quarterly basis.

The existence, integration and evaluation of the above elements shall provide assurance on the adequacy of internal controls as required by HSS(F)13/98, Supplement 1 and subsequent guidance.

The BSO Risk Management process is in accordance with the HM Treasury Orange Book Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts, as reviewed and updated in October 2022.

Appendices

Appendix 1	The Seven Principles of Public Life
Appendix 2	Gifts and Hospitality Form
Appendix 3	Gifts and Hospitality Register
Appendix 4	Chief Executive's Scheme of Delegation
Appendix 5	Financial Schemes of Delegation
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Appendix 7	Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee
Appendix 8	Business and Development Committee
Appendix 9	Scheme of Delegated Authority

APPENDIX 1

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Selflessness - Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Appendix 2 Gifts and Hospitality Form

<u>GIFT/HOSPITALITY FORM (GHF 1)</u> <u>(TO BE COMPLETED BY RECIPIENT)</u>	
Name of recipient:	
Name of ultimate recipient if not as above: (ie. if gift or hospitality has been passed on to some else)	
Date of Offer:	
Who made the Offer:	
Description of Offer:	
Estimated/actual value of Offer:	
State whether offer was accepted or declined and why:	
Is there a current/potential contract with the donor? If yes provide details:	
Signature of Recipient:	
Date:	

<u>GIFT/HOSPITALITY FORM (GHF 2)</u> <u>(TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPROVING OFFICER)</u>	
Reasons why approval has/has not been granted:	
Is the Gift being returned? If so a letter should be issued (Template at Annex B HSS (F) 35/2009 to be issued)	
Has the gift been used or disposed of? If so, give details:	
Has the gift been donated to a nominated charity? If so, give details:	
Has the Gifts and Hospitality register been updated? (Held in the relevant Director's Office/ CX's office)	
Signature of Recipient:	
Date:	

Appendix 4 – Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation

This appendix refers to Section 4.2 of the Standing Orders

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
SO 7.11	The Chief Executive is responsible for advising staff of their responsibilities in respect of pecuniary interests in contracts	Directors are responsible for ensuring that each member of their Directorate is aware of this responsibility
SO 4.3.4	Chief Executive to sign for sealed documents on behalf of BSO	No further delegation
SO 6.2.22	The Chief Executive is empowered to take urgent action on behalf of the BSO Board in matters which would normally have been considered by the Board itself but where no meeting of the Board is available for that purpose	No further delegation
Appendix 4	The Chief Executive is responsible for the provision of an Internal Audit service	The Director of Finance is responsible for the management of internal audit arrangements and for assessing the professional conduct of the auditors
SO 7.11	The Chief Executive should arrange to have published in the BSO's Annual Report up-to-date information about any Board members' directorships of companies likely or possibly seeking to do business with the HSC	The Director of Finance/Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement will ensure procedures are in place to collect relevant information
SO 3.2.1	The Chief Executive shall submit a statement of strategic direction for approval by the Board	No further delegation
SO 3.2.1	The Chief Executive shall submit an annual Business Plan to the Board	Directors are responsible for compiling their section of the Business Plan and agreeing the corporate objectives. The Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement is responsible for the collation of the annual Business Plan
SO 3.2.2	The Chief Executive shall submit an annual performance and quality report on Service Level Agreements to the Board by March each year.	Directors are to submit to the Chief Executive annual performance and quality reports on Service Level Agreements for their Directorate in a manner prescribed by the Chief Executive. The Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement is responsible for the collation of Performance Reporting to the Board

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
SO 3.2.2	The Chief Executive will identify issues and patterns of complaints and report on these matters quarterly to the Board	Directors are responsible for bringing to the Chief Executive's attention any complaints arising in their Directorate on a quarterly basis; the Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement is responsible for the collation of Complaints Reporting to the Board.
SO 3.2.3	The Chief Executive is responsible for submitting any amendments to Corporate Governance to the Board following consideration and approval by the Audit Committee and subject to DoH requirements	The Director of Finance, in conjunction, with the Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement will submit proposed changes to the Audit Committee
SO 3.2.3	The Chief Executive will submit an Annual Report for the BSO, in accordance with Departmental Timetable	Directors are responsible for compiling their section of the Annual Report under a timetable approved by the Chief Executive; the Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement is responsible for the collation and production of the Annual Report
SO 3	The Chief Executive has overall executive responsibility for the BSO's activities, is responsible to the Board for ensuring that its financial obligations and targets are met and has overall responsibility for the BSO's system of internal control. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the BSO stays within its cash limit	Directors have responsibility for the activities of their Directorate, the systems of internal control within their Directorates and for ensuring their Directorate meets its financial obligations and targets
	The Chief Executive may delegate the management of a budget to permit the performance of a defined range of activities	The Director of Finance is responsible for budgets
SO 3	The Chief Executive is responsible for identifying and implementing cost improvements and income generation initiatives in accordance with the requirements of the annual Business Plan and a balanced budget	Directors are responsible for identifying and implementing cost improvements and income generation initiatives in accordance with the requirements of the annual Business Plan
SFIs 16	The Chief Executive shall be responsible for maintaining archives for all documents required to be retained under current DoH guidance on the preservation and	Directors are responsible for maintaining archives for all documents required to be retained under current DoH guidance on the preservation and destruction of financial and associated records issued

	destruction of financial and associated records issued by the Department	by the Department for their own Directorate; The Director of People and Place is the SIRO for Information Governance. The Chief Legal Adviser is the Personal Data Guardian.
SFIs 9.2 SFIs 9.3	No director or employee may engage, re-engage, or re-grade employees unless authorised to do so by the Chief Executive	Other than new posts, the Chief Executive further delegates this authority to Directors, subject to the expenditure being within the limit of their approved budget
SFIs 14	The Chief Executive is responsible for the accuracy and security of all other computerised data, taking into account the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, and must ensure any new amendments to computer systems are properly controlled.	Directors are responsible to the Chief Executive for the accuracy and security of non-financial computerised data, taking into account the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, and ensuring that any new amendments to computer systems are properly controlled
SFIs 11	The Chief Executive is responsible for arrangements for the management of land and buildings belonging to or leased by the BSO	The Director of People and Place is the nominated Fire Officer for the BSO and also has responsibility for ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the management of premises used by the BSO with the following exceptions: PaLS Accommodation – Director of Operations Leadership Centre/CEC – Business Manager – Director of Operations
	The Chief Executive is responsible for health and safety arrangements for the BSO	The Director of People and Place is the BSO's Health and Safety Officer and is responsible for the day-to-day management of these arrangements.

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
	The Chief Executive is responsible for insurance arrangements	No further Delegation
SFIs 1.3.8	All Directors, severally and jointly, are responsible for the security of the BSOs property, avoiding loss, exercising economy and efficiency in the use of resources and conforming with the requirements of Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions, Financial Procedures and Scheme of Delegation	There is a duty of care on all employees for the security of the BSOs property, avoiding loss, exercising economy and efficiency in the use of resources and conforming with the requirements of Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions, Financial Procedures and Scheme of Delegation
SFIs 9	The Chief Executive shall be responsible for ensuring that all employees are issued with a contract of employment in a form approved by the Board and which complies with employment legislation, and dealing with variations to, or terminations of, contracts of employment	The Chief Executive shall further delegate this authority to the Director of People and Place
SFI 10.2.8	<p>In line with current circular on the use of Management Consultants, the Chief Executive shall approve procedures for the use of management consultants</p> <p>The Chief Executive shall approve procedures for the use of taxis and courier services</p>	The Director of Finance will ensure processes are in place in accordance with current circular on the use of Management Consultants.
SFIs 10.2	The Chief Executive shall set down delegated authority and financial limits for stock and non-stock requisitions for goods and services for non administrative purposes within the BSO	<p>The authority to approve expenditure is as follows:</p> <p>ELT Directors may approve expenditure within their Directorate/business unit in line with the BSO Scheme of Delegated Authority and may delegate authority to approve requisitions below this limit to designated staff in their Directorate/business unit as defined in the Scheme of Authorised signatories</p>

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation						
SFIs 10.2	<p>All Direct Award Contracts (DAC) relating to BSO directly will require the authorisation of the BSO Director of Finance or the Chief Executive</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="355 461 871 797"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="355 461 611 607">Authorised Personnel</th> <th data-bbox="611 461 871 607">Limit inclusive of VAT) Authorised for all DACs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="355 607 611 719">Director of Finance</td> <td data-bbox="611 607 871 719">Up to £1m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="355 719 611 797">Chief Executive</td> <td data-bbox="611 719 871 797">Up to £1m*</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>For DACs awarded in line with the Procurement Act 2023, which have a value higher than £5m, KPIs should be managed and reported on (i.e. published) in line with the Procurement Act 2023 *Where a goods and services DAC has been given a green, green conditional or amber RAG-rating by PaLS, they do not require Departmental Accounting Officer approval, therefore, authorised personnel's authority to approve extends beyond £1million in this instance.</p>	Authorised Personnel	Limit inclusive of VAT) Authorised for all DACs	Director of Finance	Up to £1m	Chief Executive	Up to £1m*	<p>No further delegation at lower thresholds to Members of BSO ELT</p> <p><i>All DACs over £1m (inclusive of VAT) require the authorisation of DoH; refer to DoH latest guidance on DACs (HSC(F) 03-2025.</i></p> <p><i>All DACs for management consultancy require the prior authorisation of DoH (consultancy with a value of £10,000 or more requires DoH Ministerial approval)</i></p>
Authorised Personnel	Limit inclusive of VAT) Authorised for all DACs							
Director of Finance	Up to £1m							
Chief Executive	Up to £1m*							
SFIs 10.2	<p>BSO PaLS DACs (in respect of multi-trust, regional and warehouse contracts managed by BSO on behalf of HSC bodies) will require authorisation by the Director of Operations and/or the Assistant Director of PaLS</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="355 1789 871 2047"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="355 1789 611 1935">Authorised Personnel</th> <th data-bbox="611 1789 871 1935">Limit (excluding VAT) Authorised</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="355 1935 611 2047">Director of Operations</td> <td data-bbox="611 1935 871 2047">UK Threshold</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Authorised Personnel	Limit (excluding VAT) Authorised	Director of Operations	UK Threshold	<p><i>All DACs over UK Threshold require the authorisation of DoH</i></p> <p><i>All DACs over UK Threshold must be countersigned by BSO Chief Executive (or in his absence the BSO Director of Finance) before submission to DoH for approval</i></p>		
Authorised Personnel	Limit (excluding VAT) Authorised							
Director of Operations	UK Threshold							

	Assistant Director of PaLS	>£5000 up to £100,000	
<p>For DACs awarded in line with the Procurement Act 2023, which have a value higher than £5m, KPIs should be managed and reported on (i.e. published) in line with the Procurement Act 2023</p>			

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation																														
SFIs 10.2	<p>The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring all purchases through the BSO Procurement and Logistics Service will be undertaken in accordance with the delegated expenditure limits agreed by the Department and the Department of Finance as outlined in the BSO Financial Memorandum Appendix A and in accordance with Procurement Act 2023, NI's Public Procurement Policy Statement and PPN 04/21 Procurement Control Limits.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="352 790 871 2080"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="352 790 612 938">Thresholds (excluding VAT)</th> <th data-bbox="612 790 871 938">No/Type of Tender Required</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="352 938 612 1308">Up to £20,000</td> <td data-bbox="612 938 871 1308">No Written Quotations necessary provide evidence that 2 prices have been sought where possible **</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="352 1308 612 1456">>£20,000 - £50,000</td> <td data-bbox="612 1308 871 1456">2Written Quotations, where possible**</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="352 1456 612 1677">>£50,000 to UK threshold</td> <td data-bbox="612 1456 871 1677">Publicly advertised tender competition via eTendersNI</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="352 1677 612 2080">Above UK threshold</td> <td data-bbox="612 1677 871 2080">Publicly advertised tender competition via eTendersNI and Find a Tender service (UK wide) contract management to be undertaken in compliance</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Thresholds (excluding VAT)	No/Type of Tender Required	Up to £20,000	No Written Quotations necessary provide evidence that 2 prices have been sought where possible **	>£20,000 - £50,000	2Written Quotations, where possible**	>£50,000 to UK threshold	Publicly advertised tender competition via eTendersNI	Above UK threshold	Publicly advertised tender competition via eTendersNI and Find a Tender service (UK wide) contract management to be undertaken in compliance	<p>The Chief Executive shall further delegate this authority to the Director of Operations / Assistant Director of Procurement and Logistics</p> <p>The following table details the authorisation limits for each grade of buyer:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="943 589 1481 1709"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="943 589 1177 663">Levels</th> <th data-bbox="1177 589 1481 663">Signed By</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 663 1177 736">Up to £5000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 663 1481 736">Band 4 Buyer</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 736 1177 810">Up to £10,000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 736 1481 810">Band 5 Senior Buyer</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 810 1177 943">Up to £30,000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 810 1481 943">Band 6 – Procurement Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 943 1177 1128">Up to £50,000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 943 1481 1128">Band 7 Supply Chain Manager / Specialist Procurement Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 1128 1177 1261">Up to £250,000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 1128 1481 1261">Band 8A - Senior Procurement Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 1261 1177 1370">Up to £350,000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 1261 1481 1370">Band 8B - Head of Procurement</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 1370 1177 1458">Up to £500,000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 1370 1481 1458">Band 8C - Head of Procurement</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 1458 1177 1612">£500,001 to £1,000,000</td> <td data-bbox="1177 1458 1481 1612">Band 8d Assistant Director of Procurement and Logistics</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="943 1612 1177 1709">£1,000,001 +</td> <td data-bbox="1177 1612 1481 1709">Director of Operations</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In respect of levels 4 to 6 it may be necessary to have additional authorisation carried out by a Trust Board member dependent on the Trusts own SFIs</p>	Levels	Signed By	Up to £5000	Band 4 Buyer	Up to £10,000	Band 5 Senior Buyer	Up to £30,000	Band 6 – Procurement Manager	Up to £50,000	Band 7 Supply Chain Manager / Specialist Procurement Manager	Up to £250,000	Band 8A - Senior Procurement Manager	Up to £350,000	Band 8B - Head of Procurement	Up to £500,000	Band 8C - Head of Procurement	£500,001 to £1,000,000	Band 8d Assistant Director of Procurement and Logistics	£1,000,001 +	Director of Operations
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	with Procurement Act 2023	<p>The figure of £20,000 applies only where procurements are handled by or advised by BSO's Procurement and Logistics Service otherwise the level of £10,000 per Department of Finance Control Limits applies.</p> <p>**If for specialist supplies or services there is only one supplier in the market then justification for inability to seek a second price should be documented.</p>
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Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
SFI 10.2	The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that all payments to legal representatives for claims are made in accordance with circular HSS (F) 67/2006; Payments in respect of Litigation and Legal Services in the HPSS – Implementation of Controls	The Chief Executive shall further delegate this authority to the Chief Legal Adviser who is required to provide an annual assurance that the BSO is compliant with HSS (F) 67/2006; Payments in respect of Litigation and Legal Services in the HPSS – Implementation of Controls
SO 3.2.2	The Chief Executive is responsible for the delivery of the Business Services Transformation Programme (BSTP) and delivery of the Benefits Realisation Programme	The Chief Executive shall further delegate this authority to the Director of Finance
SO 3.2.2	The Chief Executive is responsible for the HSC Leadership Centre and HSC Clinical Education Centre whose services are considered as “activities” of the BSO and will fall within the full remit of the BSO SOs/SFIs	The Chief Executive shall further delegate this authority to the Director of Operations
SO 3.2.4	The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of the implications of the 2010 Bribery Act	The Chief Executive shall further delegate this authority to the Director of Finance / Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement / CLA to develop an Anti-Bribery Programme

Appendix 5 – Director of Finance Scheme of Delegation

This appendix refers to Section 4.4 of the Standing Orders

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
SFIs 1.3.7 SFIs 2.2.1	The Director of Finance is responsible for implementing the BSO's financial policies and maintaining an effective system of internal financial control and ensuring that sufficient records are maintained to show and explain the BSO's financial position at any time	Assistant Directors of Finance will be responsible for maintaining appropriate controls systems so as to provide accurate records. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that assets are safeguarded and controls applied
SFIs 1.3.7	The duties of the Director of Finance include the provision of financial advice to the BSO, its Directors and employees	No further delegation
SFIs 1.3.7 SFIs 3.0	The Director of Finance will provide monthly reports in the form required by the Department, ensure money drawn from the Department against cash limit is required for approved expenditure only and is drawn down only at the time of need and will be responsible for ensuring that an adequate system of monitoring financial performance is in place to enable the BSO to fulfil its statutory responsibilities	Assistant Director of Finance will be responsible for effective cash management
SO 3 SFIs 5.1 SFIs 5.2	The Director of Finance will review the basis and assumptions used for distributing allocations/ income, will submit to the Board at the start of each year a report showing the total funding available and its proposed distribution and will regularly update the Board on significant changes to the initial funding and the uses of such funds	No further delegation

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
SO 3 SFIs 5.1 SFIs 5.2	The Director of Finance will prepare and submit budgets for approval by the Board at the start of each financial year, will monitor financial performance against budget and business plan and report to the Board	Budget holders must provide information as required by the Director of Finance to enable budgets to be compiled
SFIs 5.2.2	The Director of Finance will devise and maintain systems of budgetary control	Each budget holder is responsible for ensuring that any likely over-spending is not incurred and that the amount provided in the approved budget is only used for the matter specifically authorised
SFIs 6	The Director of Finance will prepare annual accounts and submit them to the Department in accordance with the prescribed timetable	No further delegation
SFIs 7	The Director of Finance is responsible for managing the BSO's banking arrangements	Officers named in the bank mandates will have authority within agreed levels
SFIs 8	The Director of Finance is responsible for designing, maintaining and ensuring compliance with systems pertaining to the proper recording, invoicing, collection and coding of all monies due and providing assurance to the DoF that processes are in place as part of the SLA with Shared Services.	Directors must take action in respect of money due arising from transactions which they initiate or deal with so that invoices may be raised promptly
SFIs 8 SFIs 10.2.6	The Director of Finance is responsible for systems in respect of the payment of monies due by the BSO Prepayments are only permitted in exceptional circumstances	Officers authorised within the authorisation framework will have delegated authority

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
SFIs 9.4	The Director of Finance is responsible for the payroll functions	Directors and managers are responsible for submitting timely approved notifications in accordance with instructions and in accordance with agreed timetables and in line with the authorisation framework
SFIs 11	The Director of Finance is responsible for ensuring that capital expenditure is within delegated limits defined in the BSO Financial Memorandum and that there are appropriate procedures and policies in place for all capital asset management and expenditure	Asset managers will be responsible for operational issues on capital assets
SFIs 12.2 SFIs 12.4	The Director of Finance is to set out procedures and systems to regulate stores	Subject to the responsibility of the Director of Finance for systems of control, the overall responsibility for control of stores is delegated to the Director of Operations / Asst Director of Procurement and Logistics
SFIs 13.2.6	The Director of Finance is responsible for ensuring payments are made to the correct person and they should make every effort to appraise himself as soon as possible of the bankruptcy, liquidation or receivership of any supplier	Directors and Managers are responsible for ensuring that payments authorised by them are made to the correct person/supplier.

Reference	Matters Delegated to Named Officers	Further Delegation
SFIs 13.2	<p>The Director of Finance is to prepare procedural instructions for recording losses and special payments made within delegated limits and is to maintain losses and special payments register</p> <p>Where theft or arson is involved the Director of Finance shall inform the Police</p> <p>Where fraud or suspected fraud is involved, Counter Fraud and Probity Services will notify the DoH and the NIAO</p>	<p>Directors are responsible for following the BSO's procedures for recording losses and special payments</p> <p>The BSO's Fraud Liaison Officer will act as the contact point between the Governance and Audit Committee and the Counter Fraud and Probity Services reporting on cases of possible fraud involving BSO</p>
SFIs 14	<p>The Director of Finance is responsible for the accuracy and security of computerised financial data, taking into account the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, and must ensure any new amendments to financial systems are properly controlled</p>	<p>There is a duty of care on all employees to protect data</p>

Appendix 6 – Governance and Audit Committee

- 1 Constitution
- 2 Membership of the Committee
- 3 Attendance and Secretariat
- 4 Frequency of Meetings
- 5 Authority
- 6 Roles and Responsibilities
 - 6.1 Governance and Internal Control
 - 6.2 Internal Audit
 - 6.3 External Audit
 - 6.4 Financial Reporting
 - 6.5 General Responsibilities
- 7 Reporting
- 8 Review of Effectiveness
- 9 Other Matters

1 Constitution

The Board has established a Committee of the Board to be known as the Governance and Audit Committee ('the Committee'). The Committee is a non-executive Committee of the Board and has no executive powers, other than those specifically delegated in these Terms of Reference.

2 Membership of the Committee

The Committee shall be approved by the Board from amongst the Non-Executive Directors of the BSO and shall consist of not less than three members. A quorum shall be two members. The Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee will be approved by the Board. The Chair of the organisation shall not be a member of the Committee.

Membership may be reviewed periodically by the Board. The Chair will serve for a period of four years or as long as they are a member of the Board, if shorter. The Chair may be permitted to serve a second term if approved by the Board.

The Committee has the ability to co-opt members for a period of less than one year to provide specialist skills that enhance the effectiveness of the Committee.

3 Attendance and Secretariat

The Director of Finance and appropriate Internal and External Audit representatives shall normally attend meetings. However, at least once a year the Committee will meet privately with the External and Internal Auditors.

The Governance and Audit Officer, Finance Directorate, shall be Secretary to the Committee and shall attend to take minutes of the meeting and provide appropriate support to the Chair and Committee members.

The Committee has the right to request the attendance of other Directors and staff from within the BSO should a relevant issue arise.

The Chair of the BSO will be invited to attend one Governance and Audit Committee per year.

The Chief Executive of the BSO should attend at least one Governance and Audit Committee meeting per year.

4 Frequency of Meetings

Meetings shall be held no less than four times in a financial year. The External Auditor, Head of Internal Audit or a Governance and Audit Committee Member may request a meeting if they consider that one is necessary.

5 Authority

The Committee is authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee and all employees are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee. The Committee is authorised by the Board to obtain outside legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of external parties with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary. To maintain confidentiality of BSO Business and, as directed by the GAC Chair, certain papers may be taken in a confidential section of the

meeting and records of these discussions will not be available publicly. Confidential discussions at GAC meetings will be reported to the BSO Board under the confidential section of the BSO Board meeting.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

The role and responsibilities of the Committee can be categorised as follows:

6.1 Governance and Internal Control

The Committee will:

- oversee the establishment and maintenance of an effective system of internal control;
- review the adequacy of all control related disclosure statements (in particular the Governance Statement), together with any accompanying Head of Internal Audit statement, external audit opinion or other appropriate independent assurances, prior to endorsement by the Board;
- review the adequacy of the policies for ensuring compliance with relevant regularity, legal and code of conduct requirements, including the BSO's Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions;
- review the adequacy of the policies and procedures for all work related to fraud and corruption as required by the DoH and the Fraud Response Plan;
- review the structures, processes and responsibilities for identifying and managing key risks facing the organisation, and receive regular reports and assurance on risk which contribute to the assurances required for the Board.

- provide scrutiny, challenge and support in ensuring organisational compliance with Information Governance (IG) legislation and adherence to IG policies and procedures including assessment of their adequacy to satisfactorily meet IG requirements.

In carrying out its work, the Committee will primarily utilise the work of Internal Audit, External Audit and other assurance functions, but will not be limited to these functions.

6.2 Internal Audit

The Committee shall seek to ensure that there is an effective internal audit function established by management that meets the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and provides appropriate independent assurance to the Governance and Audit Committee, Chief Executive and Board. This will be achieved by:

- formal consideration of the provision of the Internal Audit service;
- review and approval of the Internal Audit strategy and operational plan, ensuring that this is consistent with the audit needs of the organisation and consistent with the Assurance Framework;
- consideration of the Head of Internal Audit's annual report, major findings of internal audit work (and management's action), and encourage co-ordination between the Internal and External Auditors to optimise audit resources;
- monitoring the Internal Audit function to ensure it is adequately resourced and has appropriate standing within the organisation;
- review outcomes of external quality assessments;
- annual review of the effectiveness of internal audit.
- The Head of Internal Audit will have unfettered, confidential access to the Chair of the GAC

6.3 External Audit

The Committee shall review the work and findings of the External Auditor appointed by the Comptroller and Auditor General and consider the implications of, and management's actions to, their work. This will be achieved by:

- consideration of the performance of the External Auditor;
- discussion and noting with the External Auditor, before the audit commences, of the nature and scope of the audit as set out in the Annual Plan and of their coordination with External Auditors of third party organisations as appropriate;
- discussion with the External Auditors of their local evaluation of audit risks and assessment of the BSO;
- review of all External Audit reports, including consideration of the annual Report to those Charged with Governance (RTTCWG) before submission to the Board and any work carried out in addition to the annual audit plan, together with the appropriateness of management responses;

6.4 Financial Reporting

The Governance and Audit Committee shall be provided with the draft Annual Report and Accounts to allow adequate time for review before submission to the Board, focussing particularly on:

- the Letter of Representation which accompanies the draft final accounts;
- the assurances contained in the Governance Statement and other disclosures relevant to the Terms of Reference of the Committee;
- changes in, and compliance with, accounting policies and practices;
- unadjusted errors in the financial statements;

- major judgemental areas; and
- significant adjustments resulting from the audit.

The Committee should also ensure that the systems for financial reporting to the Board, including those of budgetary control, are subject to review as to completeness and accuracy of the information provided to the Board.

6.5 General Responsibilities

The Committee will also have a role in a number of areas where its independence, objectivity and skills are of importance:

- i. The Governance and Audit Committee shall oversee the adequacy of the BSO's arrangements for ensuring that value for money is obtained in the expenditure of all public funds entrusted to its care. This will include a review of the findings from, and management's response to, all value for money audit reports issued to the BSO as part of the regional VFM programme sponsored by DoH. These findings will be reported to the BSO Board;
- ii. Consider relevant reports from the Public Accounts Committee and any relevant circulars issued by the DoH and consider with management the implications for BSO;
- iii. Review proposed changes to Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions and the Scheme of Delegation and examine the circumstances where Standing Orders are waived;
- iv. Review all losses and compensation payments as part of the annual accounts process and recommend any appropriate actions;
- v. The Governance and Audit Committee chair will authorise the payment of any expenses of the Chair of the BSO, following validation of their accuracy by the Chief Executive of the BSO;
- vi. Consider any *ultra vires* transaction advised to them and recommend an appropriate course of action.

vii. Review the BSO Register of Direct Award Contracts

7 Reporting

The minutes of Governance and Audit Committee meetings shall be formally recorded by the Secretary to the Committee and submitted to the Board. The Chair of the Committee shall draw to the attention of the Board any issues that require disclosure to the full Board, or require executive action.

The Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee shall, on behalf of the Committee, prepare and publish an annual report on the activities of the Committee and this shall be presented to the Board of Directors.

8 Review of Effectiveness

The Governance and Audit Committee will, on an annual basis, review its effectiveness using an appropriate assessment methodology. It will also ensure that its members are kept up to date with developments in audit practice through accessing appropriate training.

9 Other Matters

The Committee shall be supported administratively by the BSO Director of Finance and the Governance and Audit Officer, whose duties in this respect will include:

- Agreement of agenda with the Chair and attendees;
- Collation and distribution of papers sufficiently in advance of each meeting to facilitate their full consideration and discussion at the meeting;
- Taking the minutes and keeping a record of matters arising and issues to be carried forward;
- Advising the Committee on pertinent areas.

Appendix 7 – Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee

1.0 Remit and Constitution

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Background

1.3 Role

1.4 Terms of Reference

1.5 Relationship with and Reporting to the Board

1.6 Composition of the Remuneration and Terms of Service
Committee

1.7 Establishment of Remuneration and Terms of Service
Committee

2.0 Conduct of Business

2.1 Attendance

2.2 Frequency of Meetings

1.0 Remit Constitution and Conduct of Business

1.1 Introduction – The Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009 applies

The Code of Conduct and Code of Accountability set out in Circular HPSS PDD 8/94 requires that a Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee be established.

1.2 Background

All staff are on the nationally-agreed terms and conditions of service. The work of the Committee must take place within this context.

1.3 Role

The primary responsibility of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee is to advise the Board about appropriate remuneration and terms of service for the Chief Executive and other Senior Executives. The Circular referred to above also indicates that the BSO Board may decide to extend the remit to include other Senior Managers' terms and conditions of service.

1.4 Terms of Reference

The main functions of the Committee are:

- (a) to make decisions on behalf of the Board of the BSO on the total remuneration and terms of service package for Executive Directors, senior executives and senior managers to ensure that they are fairly rewarded for their individual contribution to the organisation. This would include having proper regard to the organisation's circumstances and performance and to the provision of any national arrangements for such staff, where

appropriate. The Remuneration Committee shall also ensure that Board members' total remuneration can be justified as reasonable in accordance with Departmental limits and in the light of general practice in the public sector in Northern Ireland;

- (b) to oversee the proper functioning of performance and appraisal systems including the Knowledge and Skills Framework;
- (c) to oversee appropriate contractual arrangements for all staff. This would include a proper calculation and scrutiny of termination payments, taking account of such national guidance as is appropriate;
- (d) to agree and monitor a remuneration strategy that reflects national agreements and Departmental policy;
- (e) to monitor the application of the remuneration strategy to ensure adherence to all equality legislation.

1.5 Relationship with and Reporting to the Board

The Committee shall report, in writing, to the Board on the basis for its decisions. Minutes of the Board meeting shall record such decisions.

1.6 Composition of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee

The Committee shall comprise the BSO Chairperson and at least two Non-Executive Directors. None of these members should be members of the Governance and Audit Committee². A quorum shall be two members.

The Chief Executive and other senior executives shall not be present for discussions about their own remuneration and terms of service.

²

However, they can be invited to attend meetings of the Committee to discuss other staffs' terms as required.

The Chief Executive, Director of People and Place and the Director of Finance shall provide advice and support to the Committee.

1.7 Establishment of Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee

The Committee shall be constituted as a Committee of the Board with the power to make decisions on behalf of the Board of the BSO and where appropriate make recommendations to the Board. The Terms of Reference are to be approved by the Board and recorded in the Board minutes.

Committee meetings shall be conducted formally and minutes submitted to the Board at its next meeting in accordance with policy.

The Committee shall expect to meet at least once and/or up to three times per year. Agenda and briefing papers shall be prepared and circulated in sufficient time for members to give them due consideration.

2.0 Conduct of Business

2.1 Attendance

2.1.1 Only the members of the Committee, the Chief Executive, Director of People and Place and the Director of Finance shall attend the meetings as a matter of course.

Appropriate administrative support staff shall be in attendance to record the business of the meetings.

2.1.2 The Director of People and Place will be responsible for the implementation of remuneration and terms and conditions of service in the BSO. They shall deal with all matters affecting terms and conditions of service. They shall be present at every meeting.

2.1.3 Other Executive or Non-Executive Board members and officers may be invited to attend as required. The Director of Finance shall have a standing invitation to attend all meetings.

2.1.4 Any member of staff of the BSO may be required to attend a meeting of the Committee, as necessary.

2.1.5 The Committee Chair shall request fuller explanatory information in papers put before them, if there are any doubts or uncertainties and the issues discussed shall be summarised in the minutes.

2.2 Frequency of Meetings

2.2.1 Meetings should be held at least once and/or up to three times per year to review remuneration matters or deal with specific matters. Further meetings may be arranged at the discretion of the Chairperson, as necessary.

Appendix 8 – Business And Development Committee (BADC)

- 1 Constitution
- 2 Membership of the Committee
- 3 Attendance and Secretariat
- 4 Frequency of Meetings
- 5 Authority
- 6 Terms of Reference
- 7 Reporting
- 8 Review of Effectiveness

1 Constitution

The Board has established a Committee of the Board to be known as the Business and Development Committee ('the Committee'). The Committee is a non-executive Committee of the Board and has no executive powers, other than those specifically delegated in these Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference will be approved by the Board and recorded in the Board minutes.

Committee meetings shall be conducted formally and a report made to the Board at its next meeting. Agenda and briefing papers shall be prepared and circulated in sufficient time for members to give them due consideration.

2 Membership of the Committee

The Committee shall comprise of three Non-Executive Directors of the BSO. The quorum for meetings of the Committee shall be two members.

Membership may be reviewed periodically by the Chair of the Board. The Committee Chair will serve for an initial period of one year or as long as they are a member of the Board, whichever is shorter.

- ❖ The Chair of the Board shall designate a Chair of the Business and Development Committee from its members and has the power to co-opt members.

The Committee has the ability to co-opt members for a period of less than one year to provide specialist skills that enhance the effectiveness of the Committee.

3 Attendance and Secretariat

Only the members of the Committee, Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement (SP&CE), Director of Operations and Director of People and Place shall attend the meetings as a matter of course. Other Executive and Non-Executive Board members and officers may be invited to attend as required. The Chief Executive of the BSO should attend at least one Business and Development Committee meeting per year.

The Committee has the right to request the attendance of any member of BSO staff should a relevant issue arise.

The BSO Board Secretary shall be Secretary to the Committee and shall attend to take minutes of the meeting and provide appropriate support to the Chair and committee members.

4 Frequency of Meetings

The Committee shall meet up to 4 times per year for 2 hours per meeting. A fifth meeting may be arranged if needed. Further meetings may be arranged at the discretion of the Committee Chair as necessary.

5 Authority

The Committee is authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. The Committee Chair is authorised to seek any information required from any employee and all employees are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

The Terms of Reference will be kept under review in light of any emerging or changing accountability arrangements for the Business Services Organisation.

6 Purpose

The purpose of the Business and Development Committee is to support the effective operation of the BSO Board.

The Committee will:

- Review reports from officers on the BSO's handling of complaints, FOIs and other administrative matters and consequential actions with a view to ensuring they have been addressed in accordance with relevant policies and protocols and identify if there are any recurring themes which require to be brought to the attention of the Board;
- Review on behalf of the Board the handling of serious adverse incidents to ensure that lessons learned are acted upon and communicated where appropriate across the organisation and/or wider HSC;
- Review reports on People and Place matters with a view to supporting the management of the workforce in a manner conducive with organisation strategic plans and values and report significant matters to the Board
- Keep under review the organisation's performance in relation to delivery of Service Level Agreements;
- Monitor the progress of implementation of major change projects in BSO as delegated by and on behalf of the Board;
- Monitor and make recommendations where necessary and advise the Board on the organisational process for Information Management;

- Monitor and report on service development proposals between BSO and its customers in a twice-yearly report.
- Discuss opportunities for innovation in service delivery.
- Review on behalf of the Board customer survey and benchmarking results.

The Chair of the Board may use their discretion to refer to any relevant matter to the Committee.

7 Reporting

The minutes of the Business and Development Committee meetings shall be formally recorded by the BSO Board Secretary and submitted to the Board. The Chair of the Committee shall report to the full Board on the work of the Committee.

8 Review of Effectiveness

The BSO Board shall as part of its annual governance self-assessment review the effectiveness of the Business and Development Committee.

Appendix 9

Scheme of Delegated Authority with Business Services Organisation

The Scheme of Delegated Authority (SODA) aims to set out the limits of approval with BSO for both e-procurement and FPM based on the staff grade.

N.B. E-procurement approval limits will apply for requisitions only –with the exception of Procurement and Logistic Services (PaLS). PaLS are the only department which can approve invoices following requisition approval

E-procurement limits (those which have been procured and approved prior to order being placed with a supplier) will have different approval limits across BSO to account for the business needs of staff across the organisation. FPM approvals (where an order has been placed and invoiced prior to approval taking place) will remain consistent across all directorates below Director Level.

Table 1. Directors E-Procurement Delegated Limits

Director	Approval limit (£)	Notes
Chief Executive	25,000,000	
Director of Finance	15,000,000	
Director of Digital	5,000,000	ITS Programme cost centre and Regional Programmes
Programme Directors – currently encompass	5,000,000	Programme specific cost centres
Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement	1,000,000	All other cost centres
Director of Operations	1,000,000	
Director of People and Place	1,000,000	

Table 2 - Directors FPM Delegated Limits

Director	Approval limit (£)	Notes (£)
Chief Executive	750,000	
Director of Finance	750,000	
Director of Digital Operations	500,000	ITS Programme cost centre and Regional Programmes
Programme Directors – Currently encompass	500,000	Programme specific cost centres
Director of Strategic Planning and Customer Engagement	150,000	All other cost centres
Director of Operations	150,000	
Chief Legal Adviser	150,000	
Director of People and Place	150,000	

Table 3 – ITS and Encompass e-procurement requisition approval limits by staff band

Band	Approval limit (£)
Band 7	2,000
Band 8A	50,000
Band 8B	250,000
Band 8C	1,000,000
Band 8D	2,000,000

Table 4 – ITS and Encompass approval limits within FPM (Non-POP) by staff band

Band	Approval limit (£)
ITS Band 6	200
ITS Band 7	2,000
ITS Band 8A	20,000
ITS Band 8B	50,000
ITS Band 8C	100,000
ITS Band 8D	150,000
Encompass Band 8A	20,000
Encompass Band 8C	100,000

Table 5 – Finance, Legal services and Shared Services e-procurement requisition approval limits by staff band

Band	Approval limit (£)
Band 7	3,000
Band 8A	5,000
Band 8B	10,000
Band 8C	250,000
Band 8D	300,000

Table 6 – CCP, CEC, LC, FPS, People and Place, IA, Non-Pals Operations, FPS e-procurement requisition approval limits by staff band

Band	Approval limit (£)
Band 4	500
Band 5	750
Band 6	2,000
Band 7	3,000
Band 8A	5,000
Band 8B	10,000
Band 8C	15,000
Band 8D	20,000

Table 7 – PaLS E-procurement requisition and invoice approval limits

Band	Approval limit (£)
Band 3 PaLS	2,000
Band 4 PaLS	5,000
Band 5 PaLS	10,000
Band 6 PaLS	30,000
Band 7 PaLS	50,000
Band 8A PaLS	250,000
Band 8B PaLS	350,000
Band 8C PaLS	500,000
Band 8D PaLS	1,000,000

Table 8 – FPM approval limits for all Directorates

Band	Approval limit (£)
Band 6	500
Band 7	1,500
Band 8A	1,500
Band 8B	3,000
Band 8C	5,000
Band 8D	5,000

Payments to Primary Care Contractors

Family Practitioner Services within Operations Directorate of BSO are responsible for making payments to Primary Care Contractors on behalf of the Health and Social Care Board Northern Ireland. The Primary Care Contractors are divided into four groups, General Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists, Dentists and Ophthalmic Practitioners. Each of these Practitioner Groups is paid under different regulations and has a separate payment module within the Family Practitioner Payment System (FPPS).

Payments are made monthly for each practitioner group. Payments are interfaced to FPL Accounts Payable and made by Shared Services. The funds required to make the payments are drawn from a BSO bank account (No1 Account) and notified to SPPG Finance via a detailed journal which is posted to the SPPG General Ledger.

Payment process

The process to release payments to Practitioners from the 'No1 account' are as below

1. Practitioners submit claims to FPS
2. Each claim is reviewed and processed for payment

3. The approved claims are collated by Practitioner
4. The Data Analyst Team run validation and quality assurance checks on claims to ensure payment accuracy;
5. The Practitioner payments are reviewed and recommended for approval by a Payment Manager. The payments manager produces a payment summary for the practitioner area which is counter signed by a Service Manager
6. The Practitioner payments are interfaced to the FPL Accounts Payable
7. The Director of Operations or Band 8c FPS reviews the payments summary, confirms that it agrees to the detailed payment schedule and signs the document as authorisation to proceed to payment. A copy is sent to BSO Finance and Shared Services Accounts Payable
8. Shared Services Accounts Payable compare the Payment Authorisation to the sum of the interfaced values. If the values are in agreement a BACS run is produced for the Practitioner Group. Any queries/differences are notified to the relevant FPS area for action.

Table 9. Approval limits for the authorisation of payment release to Family Practitioners Services on behalf of the SPPG

Band	Approval Limit* (£)
Band 8C FPS	60,000,000
Director of Operations FPS Payments/Director of Finance	70,000,000

*Relates to the approval limit for practitioner group payment; not to individual payments. BSO is a pass through; this is a demand-led service provided on behalf of SPPG under SLA Agreement and does not form part of BSO budget or expenditure.