

Appendix to the Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions - COVID-19 related amendments.

1. Background

- 1.1. The national COVID-19 crisis has resulted in EPPR command and control being established within the Trust. In order to prepare and respond to the fast-changing situation, agile and responsive decision making processes are required, including decisions on financial investment.
- 1.2. The decisions implemented by the command and control structure will, in some cases, entail a deviation from the Trust's Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions.
- 1.3. This document sets out the areas of agreed deviation relating to COVID-19 related activity.
- 1.4. These specific authorities to deviate from Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions relate only to activities relating to COVID-19 activity and will be in place only for the duration of the COVID-19 response.
- 1.5. All activity not directly in support of the COVID-19 response must follow the standard Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions.
- 1.6. The Trust has been advised that revenue and capital expenditures relating to COVID-19 will be reimbursed nationally, and that financial constraints are not to stand in the way of taking immediate action. However, national guidance also stipulates that maintenance of financial control and stewardship of public funds remains critical, and that boards must continue to comply with all legal responsibilities and duties.

2. Command and Control Structure

- 2.1. The Trust's command and control structure comprises:
 - Strategic gold command chaired by the Chief Operating Officer;
 - Operational silver command chaired by the Deputy Chief Operating Officer;
 - A series of bronze command cells focusing on specific areas such as finance, procurement and logistics, workforce etc.; and
 - Expert reference groups and advisers.

- 2.2. The command and control structure has the following delegated financial decision-making powers for COVID-19 investment:

	Revenue*	Capital
Gold Chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, taking advice/recommendations from silver command	500k	250k
Silver Director of Operational Finance attends silver command	250k	250k
Bronze Finance Bronze Cell chaired by Director of Operational Finance	100k	100k
	*non-recurrent of full year impact	

- 2.3. Any individual expenditure over £500k will come with a gold command recommendation, and will be decided in line with the emergency powers in section 24.3 of the Trust's Standing Orders, which states:

“The powers which the Trust Board has retained to itself within these Standing Orders may in emergency be exercised by the Chief Executive and the Chair acting jointly and, if possible, after having consulted with at least two Non-Executive Directors. The exercise of such powers by the Chief Executive and Chair shall be reported to the next formal meeting of the Trust Board.”

- 2.4. All COVID-19 related spend is monitored through the finance team and is reported through the Finance, Procurement & Logistics cell reporting to silver command.

3. Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation (SBAR)

- 3.1. For COVID-19 related expenditure, the Trust's usual business case templates have been replaced with an EPPR “Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation” document (SBAR). An SBAR must be completed for each investment, and discussed/approved at the relevant command meeting (investment decisions made at bronze level are collated by the Finance, Procurement & Logistics cell). Meetings at silver and gold level are recorded via minutes/logging by an administrator, and key decisions, risks and issues are also captured at bronze cell level and recorded on a specific part of Datix.

4. Amendments to the Single Tender Action process

- 4.1. All COVID-19 investment is being managed via national frameworks and single tender actions (STAs). On 30 March 2020 a decision was taken by gold command to streamline the STA process to reduce the level of input required by end users, as this was being found to significantly slow down expenditure on much-needed COVID-19 supplies.
- 4.2. The changes to the STA process are:

4.2.1. Removal of the requirement for an STA for COVID-19 expenditure below £100k. Rigour and control is still exercised via a risk based approach with additional procurement controls at the front end:

- Expenditure approved by relevant bronze, silver, gold meeting;
- Approval and requirement or quotation provided to BWPC;
- BWPC sourcing undertakes review to ensure value for money (VFM) is being obtained, identifying and mitigating any risks where possible;
- Director of Procurement or delegated deputy reviews the proposal to provide assurance of VFM, communicating any risk to the Trust;
- Catalogue item made available on EROS for the requirement;
- Requisition raised and authorised by Division against COVID-19 branch code;
- Purchase order despatch to supplier again reference 'NBT COVID-19';
- BWPC provide weekly report to relevant Trust forums of purchase orders despatched against reference 'NBT COVID-19'.

4.2.2. Streamlined STA process for COVID-19 expenditure requirements above £100k. Rigour and control is still exercised via a risk based approach with additional procurement controls at the front end:

- Expenditure approved by relevant silver or gold meeting;
- Approval and requirement or quotation provided to BWPC;
- BWPC sourcing undertakes review to ensure value for money (VFM) is being obtained, identifying and mitigating any risks where possible;
- BWPC sourcing agent populates Trust STA form, attaching approval email in place of budget holder signature;
- STA submitted to Director of Procurement or delegated deputy for reviews to ensure compliance, provide assurance of VFM and communicate any risk to the Trust;
- STA submitted to Director of Finance or delegated deputy, including assurance and detail of any risks for final approval (this also goes to the Chief Executive, in line with our existing non-COVID-19 STA approval process under the SO/SFI);
- If STA is approved, STA reference created by BWPC;
- Catalogue item made available on EROS for the requirement;
- Requisition raised and authorised by Division against COVID-19 branch code;
- Purchase order despatched to supplier against STA reference.

4.3. This revised process ensures that any expenditure under £100k is subject to scrutiny by the Director of Procurement or delegated deputy, with the opportunity to communicate risks to more senior officers in the Trust. Any expenditure over £100k is still scrutinised by the Director of Operational Finance/Director of Finance/Chief Executive via the STA approval process.