



PATCHWAY TOWN COUNCIL



Financial Procedures

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INTRODUCTION

Patchway Town Council has developed a raft of financial procedure documentation detailing the procedures to be followed in processing transactions on the various financial systems. This document is in line with best practice recommendations from our Internal Auditor and will protect the council and its employees in the event that any untoward activity occurs either willfully or by accident. This document will act as a guide to councilors and staff on how to effectively manage and use the council's own financial procedures.

1. Purchasing

a) Purchase Order Forms

Patchway Town Council operates a purchasing system whereby an official order is raised and agreed by the Town Clerk before any order is placed. This is to ensure that there is sufficient enough budget for the items and that the council's money is being spent in the best possible way. These orders will then be sent to the supplier who will then subsequently return an invoice quoting the purchase order number on. The invoice will then be checked by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) for accuracy and signed accordingly. Once the goods have been received the invoice will also be signed as above.

b) Inputting the invoice

The invoice will then be put into the RBS Omega financial software and carry out the following using the purchase ledger.

- This can be found by logging into the RBS Software and on the left-hand side menu there is an option which will say 'Omega', double click this then 'Purchase Ledger', and click on 'Enter Invoice'.
- You then enter the invoice into the boxes on the software lifting the information from the supplier's invoice. The software will display a reference number which will then need to be written onto the invoice and filed in that order.
- Once the invoice details have been inputted and the correct VAT code applied on the system, the person inputting has to code the NET figure (cost to the council) using centre and nominal code. (N.B: The centre is the place in which the payment relates to i.e. establishment, scott park etc) and the nominal code is the budget heading it relates too (i.e. janitorial, maintenance). Once these codes have been added, they should then be written onto the invoice in order to track the spend. The person inputting should click save and complete the process for all invoices that need to be input.
- Once all invoices have been input, the person inputting should click on the left-hand menu 'post invoices', this will then process the invoices that are due for payment. The report should be printed off and filed into

the RBS trail file located in the Finance cupboard. That completes the purchasing procedure for all invoices that are to be paid.

- If the supplier you are inputting the invoice for doesn't appear on the supplier's list, you will have to create them a new code.
- Click the three dots next to 'supplier' and clicking the word 'create'. The code should be three letters followed by '001' which relates to the supplier, i.e. Patchway Town Council will be PTC001. The short name, long name, VAT number and company address should all be input as well on the same screen.

c) Paying Invoices

When the invoices are due to be paid at the meeting of the Full Council, the RFO should produce a list of invoices to be paid. This can be found on the RBS Omega software under 'Omega' // 'Purchase Ledger' // 'Ledger Reports' // Unpaid Invoices. In this report, the RFO will find all of the items that are listed to be paid and how much is due. If Patchway Town Council has the General Power of Competence, the RFO can just use this report to authorise payments at the council meeting. However, if the council does not have the General Power of Competence, then the power to spend for each item will have to be added accurately. This report is then sent to councillors and is a standing item of the full council agenda to authorise the spend. If councillors authorise the spend, then the preferred payment method is by using NatWest Bankline for BACS.

However, some smaller suppliers will only be paid via cheque. The procedure note below documents how Patchway Town Council should be paying invoices and the authorisation required to do so. The reference for any BACS payment will be a number format which reflect the month and year in which the payment was made, i.e. a payment made in January 2020 will carry its own reference of '01-20-001'. The reference for the cheque payments should always be the cheque number on the payment list. If multiple transactions are on one paying in slip, then the coding will have to be separated by inputting actual amounts from the invoices.

d) Procedure Note for Financial Checks

Under *Accounts and Audit regulations 2015* responsibility for financial governance lies with councillors. Patchway Town Council must demonstrate and carry out good practice measures to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.

Authorisation of Invoices

- **Check invoice for PAYEE name** – Does this agree with the cheque or BACS name?
- Check the **amount on the invoice** and check it **correlates with the cheque or BACS value?**

When you are satisfied payee and amounts are correct:

- **INITIAL** the **payment schedule**
- **INITIAL** the **invoice** by the '**Councillor Stamp**' and **date** the signature
- **SIGN** cheque or sign into NatWest Bankline to **authorise payments**.

In line with Patchway Town Council's standing orders, authorisation is as follows:

- Any **BACS** payment needs **TWO members** to authorise
- Any **cheque** payment **below £1000** needs **TWO members** to authorise
- Any **cheque** payment **above £1000** needs **THREE members** to authorise

Online Payment Authorisation

As of January 2020, Patchway Town Council will be paying almost every invoice by BACS. This is helped by NatWest Bankline, where it lets two members sign in to **authorise payments**. Below is how members should be authorising BACS payment.

- Sign into NatWest Bankline
- Click on the '**Authorise Payments**' tab
- Read the **payment schedule** (emailed to members who are authorising)
- Check payments are the **same** on the **online payment portal** as they are on the **signed schedule**
- Click '**Authorise**' and follow the instructions on the screen.
- You will need to sign the invoices in line with the signed payment schedule once these payments have been authorised.

Authorisation of Salaries

As Patchway Town Council have a duty to pay their employees, this authorisation control differs from the payment authorisation. These payments will be made **via BACS** at least **three clear working days** before the employee's pay date. Below is how members should be authorising salary payments:

- Sign into NatWest Bankline
- Click on the '**Authorise Payments**' tab
- Make sure the total for the salary payments and other associated payments come to the total amount emailed to the members.

- Click '**Authorise**' and follow the instructions on the screen.
- You will need to sign the salary report, pension report and PAYE report, once the payments have been authorised.

e) Paying Invoices on the RBS system

Once the payments have been agreed and sent via the preferred methods, the RFO will have to 'pay' the invoices on the RBS system. This is done by going to 'Omega' // 'Purchase Ledger' // 'Pay Invoices' // 'Enter Payments'. This portal will allow you to remit payment. The RFO will search for the supplier the payment is for and then enter the payment reference along with the amount and then pay these using the 'pay invoice' button. If the balance at the bottom of the screen is '0.00' then the payment has successfully matched the invoices, if it doesn't then double check the figures on the invoice and payment schedule. Once the payment run is complete, the RFO will then print off the report and file in the RBS trail file.

f) Direct Debits and Standing Orders

For direct debits and any standing orders that Patchway Town Council have agreed too, these are usually input into the system using the purchase ledger as above. However, if it is a regular amount and will never change these can be input onto the system by clicking on 'cashbook' // 'standing orders' // 'standing order payments'.

2) Invoicing

a) The Invoice

Patchway Town Council invoices regular hirers of facilities in advance of their booking in line with good practice. Due to the small amounts of income that Patchway Town Council receives, the process for invoicing is very straightforward. The invoices are run on a financial year consecutive basis with reference starting from '2019-20-001' and running consecutively. There is a master controls spreadsheet which all the invoices should be input onto. The invoice template is saved in the financial year folder under 'invoices. The template should be filled out in the highest detail with the VAT code being applied and the correct VAT amount being charged. These are then sent to the hirers for payment within 14 days in a PDF format.

b) Inputting the receipts into the RBS software

Once the invoice has been paid and is clearly shown on the bank statement, only then should the invoice be put into the system. It is bad practice to input the invoice when it has been created as if it is not paid, it will stay on the system until it is cancelled out. To input the invoice, the RFO will need to go to the 'cashbook' tab and click 'enter receipts'. This will take the RFO to the receipt

portal where the screen is self-explanatory. After entering all the information, the RBS software will need to code that transaction. Similar to expenditure coding however, all income codes are '1000'. Once the correct code is supplied, the transaction should be saved by clicking 'save receipt' // 'save slip'. If multiple transactions are on one paying in slip, then the coding will have to be separated by inputting actual amounts from the invoices.

c) Receipt Reporting

After the receipts have been input using the 'cashbook' facility, the RFO should print off the report under 'cashbook reports' entitled 'receipt by name' and file this in the RBS trail folder.

3) RBS Omega Software

a) Journals

If a transaction is entered incorrectly and the amount is coded to the wrong code, then the RFO must re-code the entry. This can be done via a 'Standard Journal' on the RBS Omega Software which can be found 'Omega' // 'Management Accounts' // 'Journal Entries' // 'Standard Journals'. To find where the transaction has been coded to, click 'view nominal' on the bottom of the page whereby you can see every transaction for every code. Once the incorrect code is known and the new code is found, then the RFO must create a journal to rectify this. The best way for this is to enter the wrong code and centre first and CREDIT that code with the amount you're moving. In the 'transaction description', the RFO must state the action that is being carried out in fine detail. The RFO will then put the correct code and centre in and DEBIT that code with the amount. At the bottom of the page, the narrative should be written to describe what has been moved and why. This journal should then be posted and printed and signed off by the Town Clerk or a member of the council for scrutiny.

b) Bank Reconciliations

At the end of each month, the RFO must reconcile the council's cashbooks and ensure they balance with the bank statement. To do this click on 'Omega' // 'Cashbook' // 'Reconciliation' // 'Update Reconciliation' and enter the date the reconciliation is too. It is best practice to reconcile one page of the bank statement at a time to ensure nothing is missed and a thorough reconciliation is carried out. The RFO can search by reference number or payment amount and then should go through the bank statement and reconcile both receipts and payments. If a payment does not appear, check the 'unpaid invoices' tab to see if it appears as it may have been entered wrong. If not, then enter the payment through the purchase ledger. Once the reconciliation is complete, the RFO should print off both reconciliation reports and file in the RBS trail folder. If the reconciliation does not balance, the RFO must investigate and ensure the

payments match each other, even if the reconciliation has to be started again.

c) VAT Returns

Patchway Town Council submits VAT returns quarterly throughout the year. Each transaction on the RBS system (if applicable) should have the correct VAT amount entered with the transaction. To process the VAT return, the RFO should go to 'Omega' // 'Management Accounts' // 'VAT Return' // Current VAT Return'. This will then display the VAT report for the period entered. The RFO will thoroughly check through all the transactions to ensure the VAT is correct and the council are only claiming what they should be. The RFO should then print off and sign the report and send to HMRC. If the council are on the MTD version (Making Tax Digital), the return can be submitted online by pressing the submit button.

d) Month End Processing

After the bank reconciliation is complete and all cashbooks have been reconciled and filed, the RFO needs to change the month on the RBS system. This is simply done by going to 'Omega' // 'Management Accounts' // 'Change Month'. Once a month is closed down, no information for that month can be entered or altered, therefore all essential procedures need to be followed before the month-end processing such as printing all reports and reconciling the cashbooks.

e) Backups

The RFO is responsible for ensuring that all RBS data is successfully backed up onto the system. This is done by going to 'Manage' // 'Database'. The RFO would then need to put the superuser password in and backup the software to the server or if unavailable a local PC. It is good practice to do this every time the RFO works on the software.

4) IRIS Payroll Software

a) Payroll Input

Patchway Town Council pays staff on or just before the 26th of each month using BACS. The council uses IRIS Payroll Software which is accessed on the RFO's laptop using a username and password. Once logged into the system, click 'Pay' to move to the payments tab. On this tab, the RFO can input people's hours and double check salaried payments and any deductions. This is the only tab where the RFO can check deductions, ensuring that any additional hours are calculated correctly and ensuring to submit HMRC reports.

b) Enter Variations

The first tab is called 'Enter Variations' and by clicking on this, the RFO can enter all the hourly paid staff's hours as well as double checking the salaried staff's figures and inputting additional hours. Any backdated pay or deductions are

listed and inputted in the 'Pay/Ded Name' box. If the person is hourly paid, the number of hours they are claiming on their timesheet should be input into 'Hours' tab on the line which states 'Basic Pay'. If the person is salaried then the RFO would check the 'salary' box and proceed. Once the information has been input, the 'preview' button will show all of that employee's payslip. This is where the RFO should check all figures and ensure they are all correct and then click save to proceed to the next employee, where the process is then carried out until the very last employee. Once all the employees have been entered, the tab can be closed.

c) Calculate

In order to calculate the salaries correctly and ensure they translate to the report, the RFO should press the 'Calculate' button, which will automatically calculate what has been entered onto the system.

d) Print Summaries

Good practice would be to print the following summaries and file them in the payroll folder:

- Pension Summary by Employee
- Pension Summary by Fund
- Payroll Summary
- Pension Summary for Period.

Once these have been printed, the RFO can move onto the next step.

e) Finalising the Payroll

When the above reports have been printed off, the RFO should press the 'finalise' button to finalise the whole payroll and close down the month. During this process a real time submission will be sent to HMRC which will automatically tell them the council's employers' deductions and amount the council owe them. Once that step has been done, the RFO should print off the 'Payroll Summary' and 'P30 Report', which will detail the amount owing to each employee and the P30 report will tell the RFO how much is owing to HMRC. After both of those reports are printed and filed, the RFO should follow the on-screen instructions to close down the month and move into the next month.

f) Alterations to the Payroll

If there is any mistake or alterations to the payroll, before the payment is made then the RFO can click the employee on the left-hand tab and then click 'Undo Payroll'. This will undo the current period for that employee and will delete all entered information for that month. The RFO would follow the on-screen

instructions to roll back the period and enter the new details and confirm this on the system. This may prompt the RFO to produce new pensions and PAYE reports, which should supersede the previous reports. If the payment of the salary has been made already, the difference should be worked out and then either paid back to the employer or given to the employee in the next period.

g) Year End

At the end of March and after the payroll run has been successfully completed for month 12, the RFO should perform the year end processing. This can be found under the 'yearend' tab and is a self-explanatory guide to the close down for the system.

h) Pension Deductions

Patchway Town Council and their employees are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme and Patchway Town Council is contractually obliged to pay this. The 'Pension Summary' reports by fund are key to this process. The council's payment is worked out on the Avon Pension Fund Website through a form called the LGPS50, which is a calculation of pensions, pension percentages and pensionable pay. The RFO should log in using the username and password and search for the relevant form (LGSP50). The form should then be populated from the 'Pension Summary' report and filled out accordingly. When it is submitted, the RFO should print out the LGPS50 form and file it in the payroll folder. The ICONNECT summary should also be entered onto a different website, which details the pensionable pay and the employer's deductions for the period.

i) HMRC Deductions

The automatic deductions are submitted from the payroll software, but the payment isn't. The P30 summary will show the amount that the council owe for that period.

j) Payslips

Patchway Town Council should aim to give employees their payslips at least 5 working days in advance of receiving the payment. These are printed off from the system under the 'print payslip's tab and are printed onto the perforated slips that are located in the RFO's desk. These should be printed and sealed in an envelope for each employee. The RFO should retain a copy of this and file it away.

k) P45's

When an employee leaves Patchway Town Council, they should be given a P45. These can be found on IRIS under 'Reports' // 'Employee Reports' // 'P45 Online' and should then be given to the employee in a sealed envelope.

l) P60's

Patchway Town Council's employees must receive a P60 at the end of each tax year. These can be found on IRIS under 'Reports' // 'Year End Report' // 'P60 Data mailer'

and print the report on the P60 paper.

Once all these steps are complete, the payroll should be paid via BACS on or around the 26th of each month.