



OBS Financial Controls Policy

Financial Records and Accounts

1. Financial records must be kept so that:

The organisation meets its legal and other statutory obligations, such as the Fundraising Regulator's [Code of Fundraising Practice](#), Charity Acts, His Majesty's Revenue & Customs and common law.

The trustees have proper financial control of the organisation.

The organisation meets the contractual obligations and requirements of funders.

The books of accounts must include:

A cashbook analysing all the transactions appearing on the bank accounts

The charity does not use cash to make any payments and any cash receipts are immediately banked into the charity's bank account.

2. Accounts must be drawn up at the end of each financial year within 6 months of the financial year end and presented to the next Trustee Meeting.
3. At the start of each financial year, the trustees will approve a budgeted income and expenditure account for the following year.
4. A report comparing actual income and expenditure with the budget should be presented to the Trustees every quarter.
5. The Trustees will appoint an appropriately independent examiner to examine the accounts before presentation to the next AGM.
6. The Charity uses Liberty Accounting software in order to maintain its accounting records. This includes the cashbook, supplier liabilities, amounts due from donors, adjustments for prepayments and accruals and records of restricted and unrestricted funds.
7. Liberty Accounts is cloud based accounting software and access is limited by password to the Charity Administrator, Bookkeeper and certain named Trustees. Passwords must be kept secure and not written down or shared.

Banking

1. OBS will bank with the Co Operative Bank, or its successors, or any other bank that the Trustees feel is appropriate, and accounts will be held in the name of Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support.
2. The bank mandate (list of people who can sign cheques and authorise online payments on the organisations behalf) will always be approved and minuted by the Trustees, as will any changes to it.
3. OBS will require the bank to provide statements every month and these will be reconciled with the cash book at least every three months.
4. The charity will not use any other bank or financial institution or use overdraft facilities or loan without of the agreement of the Trustees.

Income

1. All monies received will be recorded promptly in the cash analysis book and banked without delay. The Charity will maintain files of documentation to back up all income received including any requirements attached to specific grant awards. All money received by BACS will be agreed, promptly, to appropriate supporting documentation. Interim financial statements will include up to date income and expenditure reports on any restricted reserves held.
2. Cash will be counted by two people and banked as soon as possible. A cash collection sheet will be filled in recording the source of income and no payments will be made for expenses out of cash.
3. Gift Aid records will be maintained and a central listing kept for all donations given under the Gift Aid scheme. The Treasurer and the Charity Administrator will be responsible for submitting an annual Gift Aid return to HMRC and following up on receipt of the claim into the charity bank account.

Payments (Expenditure)

1. The aim is to ensure that all expenditure is on the charity's business and is properly authorised and that this can be demonstrated. The latest approved budget provides the cheque/BACS signatories with authority to spend up to the budgeted expenditure, not beyond it.
2. The Treasurer will be responsible for holding the cheque books (including unused and partly used cheque books) which should be kept under lock and key. Passwords and log in for BACS payments will be kept securely and never written down or disclosed to anyone.
3. Blank cheques will NEVER be signed.
4. The relevant payee's name will always be inserted on the cheque before signature and the cheque stub will always be properly completed.

5. No cheques should be signed or BACs payments authorised without original documentation (see below).

Payment Documentation

1. Every payment out of the Charity's bank accounts will be evidenced by an original invoice (never against a supplier's statement or final demand). That original invoice will be retained by the Charity and filed. The cheque signatory should ensure that it is referenced with:
 - Cheque number
 - Date cheque drawn
 - Amount of cheque
 - Or with appropriate BACs details and payment reference number
2. Expenses will be reimbursed for volunteers and trustees to cover such out of pocket items as car parking, mileage etc. Fares should be evidenced by tickets, car mileage based on local authority scales and other expenditure evidenced by original receipts.

Payroll

1. Payroll records are maintained on the cloud based HR software, SafeHR. Access is password protected and limited to the Charity Administrator and two named Trustees.
2. Once an employment contract is signed, the Charity Administrator enters details, including contracted pay rates to SafeHR. Similarly once an employee's contract ends the Charity Administrator enters the end date promptly into the SafeHR database.
3. The payroll is run monthly from the SafeHR system; all overtime and expense payments are approved by a Trustee.
4. Once the payroll is run by the Charity Administrator, it is checked and approved by a Trustee and the payroll report kept as supporting documentation to the monthly bank transfers that are then set up and approved online from the bank account.
5. Monthly contributions for PAYE/NI and pension contributions are calculated by SafeHR, these are reviewed by the Trustee before payment is then set up online from the bank account.

Cheque Signatories / BACS Authorisation

Each cheque or BACS payment will be authorised by a Trustee.

Other

1. The Charity does not accept liability for any financial commitment unless properly authorised. Any orders placed or undertakings given which are likely to cost the Charity in excess of £500 must be authorised and minuted by the Trustees.
2. In exceptional circumstances such undertakings can be made with the Chair's approval who will then provide full details to the next meeting of the Trustees.
3. All fundraising and grant applications undertaken on behalf of the organisation will be done in the name of the Charity with the prior approval of the Trustees or in urgent situations the approval of the Chair who will provide full details to the next Trustees' meeting.
4. The Charity will adhere to good practice in relation to its finances at all times.

Reserves policy

OBS will review the level of reserves held, both restricted and unrestricted, at quarterly Trustee meetings. The Trustees consider that holding around six to nine month's expenditure in reserve will allow the charity to plan long term funding options and ensure that service levels can be adjusted in light of funding available.

**Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support
Policy revised: November 2024
Due for revision: November 2027**