CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS

2024/25

TIMETABLE AND

PROCEDURES



Financial Services

January 2025

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KEY DATES

Creditor Payments

Deadline for submission of invoices relating to 2024/25 (to be received by the Creditors section):

* Friday 11th April 2025 P2P
* Wednesday 16th April 2025 (12pm) Back Office[[1]](#footnote-2) and for on-line direct entry by the

 Creditors section

* Wednesday 16th April 2025 (12pm) Deadline for receipt of file transfers[[2]](#footnote-3)

On-line invoice processing will be available to users up to **12pm** on **Thursday 17th** **April 2025.**

Sundry Debtors

* Friday 21st March 2025 Request forms to be received by Finance
* Thursday 27th March 2025 On-line requests to be submitted and approved
* Monday 31st March 2025 Final date for income banking

Accruals – Creditors and Debtors

* Wednesday 30th April 2025 All Creditor and Debtor accruals must be submitted to the relevant Accountancy section

Internal Service Providers

* Tuesday 15th April 2025 Final charges for 2024/25 to be raised
* Thursday 1st May 2025 All 2024/25 charges to be authorised
* Friday 2nd May 2025 All 2024/25 charges to be processed

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact your Accountancy Section for guidance and support.

# Introduction

In accordance with The Accounts & Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, from 2020/21 the statutory deadline for publication of the Statement of Accounts is 31st May, with audited accounts signed and approved by 31st July.

This year, following discussions with Audit Wales, we are aiming to produce the Statement of Accounts by 30th June. To ensure that this deadline is met, certain key dates in this document have changed. For ease of reference, a list of Key Dates is provided on [page 2](#_Key_Dates) of this document.

Prompt closure of accounts demonstrates that we take seriously our responsibility to account properly for the use of public funds and provides evidence of the operation of sound financial systems and procedures. Failure to meet this deadline could result in a negative audit report and reputational risk amongst our stakeholders.

**Implications for Directors, Heads of Service and Budget Managers**

It is important to recognise that the closure process is not just a Finance function. The key actions and the required information to deliver the closure of accounts come from the Directors, Heads of Service and Budget Managers.

It is essential that departments attach sufficient importance to the closure of accounts process and ensure that Officers and Managers are up to speed with their budget monitoring and financial management information production in order that the year-end is a seamless process.

Heads of Service have the responsibility for ensuring that their managers are briefed about the timescales for closure of accounts and that all issues are understood by the staff involved. Managers in turn must disseminate the requisite information to the relevant staff. All relevant staff should be given access to a copy of the Closure of Accounts Timetable and Procedure.

# The keys to delivering closure

Much of the work and delays encountered at year-end can be avoided if the financial aspects of service delivery are attended to promptly during the year.

Examples are:

* Obtaining and processing supplier invoices promptly.
* Raising external debtors at regular intervals during the year.
* Raising internal charges promptly during the year, and where necessary responding to queries from recipients as necessary.
* Working with contractors/partners on schemes and projects to ensure that valuations are processed at regular intervals and where necessary seeking valuations at the end of February which would reduce the work of verifying and processing a subsequent valuation at the end of March.

As well as being a statutory deadline, delivery of the closure of accounts is a key corporate priority.

To deliver our draft accounts in June, the dates outlined on the following pages **must be adhered to.**

**NB**: Transactions not processed by the set dates will be charged against your budget in the following financial year.

# Internal Adjustments

**Detailed procedures**

To minimise the workload at year-end, it is essential that any Internal Adjustments are initiated **immediately**. Internal arrangements should already exist with your Accountancy Section. If you have any concerns, please raise any queries as soon as possible directly with Accountancy.

# Creditors, Creditor Accruals & Prepayments

**Creditor Invoices**

It is essential that immediate action be taken to obtain invoices (where still outstanding) for all goods/services already received and for these to be passed for processing **now.** Please ensure that all P2P invoices have been authorised on the Financial Management System (FMS). During tight closure deadlines you may need to consider a substitute authoriser for P2P invoices.

**Creditor Payments Processed after 31st March 2025**

The following guidance should be followed to achieve effective creditor invoice processing during the closure period relating to 2024/25.

**Users should note that the system will be unavailable on Tuesday 1st April 2025 due to essential year end maintenance.**

**Batch Control Header and Payment Authorisation**

For ease of effective identification and speed of processing, all 2024/25 creditor payments batch control headers **must** be clearly marked "**2024/25**" on the top right-hand corner.

In the case of payments processed by means of a file transfer, users are required to clearly mark the payment authorisation with the financial year “**2024/25”** immediately next to the final approval signature.

In the case of on-line users, from Tuesday 1st April to 12pm on Thursday 17th April 2025, the Accounts Payable module will automatically default to the period 202413 (last posting period for 2024/25) when processing an invoice. In consequence, any expenditure requiring to be charged to 2025/26 during this period will require operators to overwrite the default period with 202501 (first field on invoice entry screen). From **Thursday 17th April 2025 (12 noon)**, the system will reflect the period 202501 and consequently all invoices processed under this period will be charged to 2025/26.

**Processing Deadlines**

Creditor Payments Section.

P2P batches must be submitted to the P2P Team by no later than **5pm** on **Friday 11th April 2025**.

All back-office creditor payment batches must be submitted to the Creditor Payments Section by no later than **12pm** on **Wednesday 16th April 2025**.

Invoices processed by means of file transfer

All file transfer payment notifications must be received by no later than **12pm** on **Wednesday 16th April 2025.**

Batched Creditor invoices processed by means of on-line entry

On-line invoice processing will be available to users up to **12pm** on **Thursday 17th** **April 2025**.

**Additional Information**

For any assistance or further information, please contact one of the following officers:

 Joanne Phillips Senior Purchase to Pay Officer (01267) 22**4996**

 Jessica Howells Senior Accounts Payable Officer (01267) 22**4646**

**Accruals**

There are two methods of accruing expenditure into 2024/25. The first method is a ‘purchase order’ accrual, the second method is a ‘scheduled creditor accrual’ (Appendix A).

**Purchase Orders**

For departments raising orders through the FMS purchase order systemplease note that all outstanding orders dated before 31st March 2025 and still outstanding as at 17th April 2025 will be rolled forward to the new financial year 2025/26. Budget Managers will need to advise whether the goods and services have been delivered by 31st March 2025 in order for the purchase order to be accrued, if not the purchase order will need to be rolled forward to 2025/26 or cancelled. These lists will need to be checked and certified by the Budget Manager in departments by **Friday 25th April 2025** at the latest. Orders on these lists will then be accrued automatically.

Please do not cancel a purchase order where the invoice has been passed for payment but, due to timing, has not yet been processed on the FMS.

**Scheduled Creditor Accruals**

After the 17th April 2024, any items properly chargeable to 2024/25 and that are not dealt with under the above paragraph will have to be scheduled and certified by the Budget Manager in departments and submitted to your Accountancy Section **no later than 5pm Wednesday 30th April 2025.**

**Appendix A** contains a blank creditor accrual form with an example entry for guidance. Forms should be completed and saved electronically (in excel format) and returned by the Budget Manager via e-mail. This acts as their authorisation. Forms sent electronically do not require a paper copy to follow.

For the setting up of accruals, dating an order 31st March 2025 is not sufficient evidence to raise a charge in 2024/25. **The governing criteria is “whether the goods, services or work to which the order relates have been delivered, rendered or carried out prior to 31st March 2025”.** Only then can the charge be properly accrued back to 2024/25. You **do not** need to have received a physical invoice to generate an accrual.

All relevant staff should be advised of the need to adhere rigidly to these criteria in order to minimise queries on the accounts by Audit Wales.

Every effort should now be concentrated on the payment of accounts. The greater the volume that can be cleared now, the less will be the manual task in relation to outstanding items.

**Prepayments (Prepaid Expenditure)**

Where expenditure has been incurred in 2024/25 but relates to 2025/26, the expenditure should be adjusted to the correct financial year. Please contact your Accountancy Section if this is the case.

# Capital Expenditure

Managers must ensure that all payments are processed as early as possible. Key dates for the processing of capital invoices are as outlined above in the [Creditor Invoice](#_Creditor_Invoices,_Accruals) section.

Please e-mail details of any capital expenditure accruals direct to the Capital section using the following email address: CRFinanceCapital@carmarthenshire.gov.uk by **5pm on** **Wednesday 30th April 2025.**

**NB:** the accruals form contained in Appendix A is for revenue payments only.

# Debtors, Debtors Accruals & Receipts in Advance

**(i) Debtors Invoices**

Income should be collected at regular intervals throughout the year, thereby avoiding last minute invoicing at the year-end. Managers should ensure that the raising of invoices for fees and charges is as up to date as soon as possible before the end of the financial year. Invoices should be raised in advance of the closure deadline where possible. Any accounts currently pending or awaiting processing should be actioned now.

In the event of any further debts arising thereafter, invoice request forms must reach the Debtors Section by **Friday 21st March 2025.**

The cut-off date for on-line processing (including approval) is **5pm** **Thursday 27th March 2025**.

 All debtor invoices that have not been raised by the year-end but relate to 2024/25 must be scheduled as in (iii) below.

 Owing to year-end procedures, the online facility will not be available during the first few working days of April. Please do not process any new accounts between 28th March and 2nd April without first contacting the Debtor Section (ext. 2730) to verify the position.

In relation to accounts where recovery has been suppressed at the request of the department, it is imperative that any disputes are resolved as a matter of urgency. This will allow recovery to be progressed or the account cancelled as appropriate by the year-end.

**(ii) Income**

As per the Financial Procedure Rules, all income should be banked promptly. Every effort must be made to ensure, where possible, that all cash and cheques received are banked either via Cash desk, Post Office Giro or Bank Credit system by **Monday 31st March 2025** and any associated E-Returns submitted by the same date.

 Any bankings that have not been made by **31st March 2025,** but which relate to 2024/25 must be scheduled in accordance with (iii) below and banked immediately.

**(iii) Scheduled Debtor/Income Accruals**

Unless a debtor’s invoice has been raised, any income due to the Authority that has not been received by 31st March 2025 must be accrued by completing a debtor’s accrual form. The forms must be returned to your Finance support section by no later than **5pm** on **Wednesday 30th April 2025.**

**Appendix B** contains a blank debtor accrual form and an example entry for guidance. Forms should be completed and saved electronically (in excel format) and returned by the Budget Manager via e-mail. This acts as their authorisation. Forms sent electronically do not require a signature.

**(iv) Receipts in Advance**

Where income has been received in 2024/25 but relates to 2025/26, the income can be adjusted into the correct financial year. Please contact your Accountancy Section if this is the case.

# Internal Service Providers

All Internal Service providers must ensure that their current invoicing is brought up to date immediately and prompt invoicing maintained through to year-end.

**Year-end Invoicing**

All charges in respect of 2024/25 must be issued by no later than **15th April 2025**. Any income not claimed by this date will be disregarded.

**Client Certification**

Client departments must clear all outstanding charges immediately and agree and process any further payments within the time specified on the e-mail from the Accountancy section.

All charges should be authorised by the 1st May 2025 at the latest. Any disputed invoices must be negotiated with the Service Provider concerned within this timetable. All charges will be processed on the FMS by 2nd May 2025 at the latest.

# Miscellaneous Advice

**PROCUREMENT ORDERS**

The last day for receipt of procurement orders for PC's, Printers and General IT Procurement will be **Friday 28th February 2025**. Where possible, all other procurement orders should also be processed by this date. Orders should only be placed in March when essential for service delivery in March and not for utilising a perceived budget ‘underspend’. Transactions will be reviewed and reported to DMTs where this is not adhered to.

**CREDIT CARD ORDERS**

The last day for receipt of credit card orders for miscellaneous spending for the 2024/25 financial year will be **Friday 28th February 2025**. Orders received after this date, may not be processed resulting in goods not being received before 31st March 2025. Orders for urgent accommodation etc will be processed as per usual.

**STOCK BALANCES**

The deadline for returning Stock Balances to your Finance support section is **4th April 2025**. The stock take should be undertaken on or before the **31st March 2025**.

**CERTIFICATE OF PETTY CASH/CHANGE FLOAT**

The deadline for returning petty cash balances to the P2P team is **4th April 2025**. The reconciliation should be undertaken on the **31st March 2025**.

**INSURANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT**

Please ensure that all documentation (including copy invoices) required for settling any insurance claims or obtaining risk management funding is submitted to the Risk Management section no later than the 7th April 2025. Any claims documentation received after this date may not be actioned until the new financial year.

**FINANCIAL CODING**

Please ensure that all “prime” documents e.g. expenditure invoices, payroll timesheets, income vouchers/debtor’s invoices and internal transfers are correctly coded before they are forwarded for processing. All Debtor invoices or invoice requests should clearly state the purpose of the invoice or description of the service, the date the service was provided in addition to the customer’s full name and address, correct values and VAT applicable.

At the best of times, the lack/absence of financial coding or incomplete / inaccurate documents affects both the accuracy and integrity of financial reports to Budget Managers or can result in lost income to the Authority. It can also lead to serious delays in processing time, which at this time of year can severely hinder the closure of accounts. Any problems may be directed to your respective Accountancy Sections.

Concern has been expressed in the past that items of expenditure have been charged to budgets without the prior approval of the Budget Manager. **Therefore, no item of expenditure should be committed without the prior agreement of the relevant Budget Manager**.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

As a consequence of essential year-end maintenance procedures, the Financial Management System (Ledger, Creditors, Debtors and Purchase Ordering) **will not be available on Tuesday 1st April 2025.** Notification confirming normal service will be sent via email as soon as the essential maintenance is complete**.**

1. Examples of Back Office payments include schedules such as Boarding Out, Shared Lives, Transport & Country cars. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Examples of file transfers include TASK, Supporting People. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)