Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

DATE: 03 November 2026

NOTICE OF MEETING

This is a meeting in public, not a public meeting.

MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr. Burgin, Cllr. Jackson Cllr. D. Jayson, Cllr. Kenyon Cllr. Lawson, Cllr. Rudhall Cllr. Shepherd.

Are hereby summoned to attend the following meeting:

Meeting: Finance Committee

Date: Monday 09 November 2026 at 17:15 to 19:15

Place: The Board Room, Unit 1, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR

Please inform the Clerk to the meeting if you are unable to attend.

V. Tunnadine

Mrs V. Tunnadine, Town Clerk

Members of the public are welcome to attend. Details about how to attend the meeting remotely, and how to comment on an agenda item are available on the Town Council Website.

Please note that this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the internet or social media. the Town Council does not record or live stream meetings. Penrith Town Council fully supports the principle of openness and transparency and has no objection to filming and reporting at its Full Council, and Committee meetings that are open to the public. Filming will only commence at the beginning of a meeting when the Chair opens the meeting with apologies and will finish when the meeting is closed or when the public may be excluded from an exempt item. The Chair has the power to control public recording and/or reporting to ensure it does not disrupt the meeting. Recording must be visible to anyone at the meeting and must not be edited and published in such a way as to impact upon the accuracy of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. You are asked to act reasonably, for example not to disrupt the meeting by using intrusive lighting and using flash photography. Please be mindful that members of the public may attend the meeting and may not consent to being recorded.

AGENDA

FINANCE COMMITTEE 09 NOVEMBER 2026

1. Apologies

Receive Apologies for Absence.

2. Minutes

Authorise the Chair to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on Monday 14 September 2026.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests, including disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

4. Public Participation

Receive questions or representations from members of the public. A period of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments.

5. Excluded Item: Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

Determine whether any items should be considered in detail, without the presence of the press and public, pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, as publicity relating to that (any of those) matter/s may be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for the other special reasons noted in relation to that matter on the agenda.

6. Payments for Approval

a) Note that Cllr. Burgin and Cllr. Jackson accessed the banking system to reconcile the weekly report of all payments made and are able to recommend that each payment aligned with the invoices.
b) Agree two Members to undertake the payments for approval reconciliation for the meeting of Finance Committee on 14 December 2026.
c) Consider the monthly report of payments for September and October 2026.

7. Bank Reconciliation
Review and approve the bank reconciliation as of 30 September and 31 October 2026 as a correct record.

8. Budgetary Control Statement
Review and approve the Budgetary Control Statement for the period 31 October 2026 and recommend the statement go forward to be ratified by Full Council.

9. Resolutions Report
Note the Report.

10. Elections Recharging Policy Consultation
Consider the Westmorland and Furness Council Election Recharging Policy 2027/28 onwards consultation.

11. Financial Regulations
Consider the reviewed Financial Regulations and recommend they go forward to Full Council for ratification.

12. Reserves Policy
Consider the reviewed Reserves Policy and recommend that the policy with any amendments go forward to Full Council for ratification.

13. Investment Strategy
Consider the reviewed Investment Strategy 2027/28 and recommend that the Strategy with any amendments go forward to Full Council for ratification.

14. Banking
Note that £50,000 was withdrawn from the CCLA account on the 07 October 2026 and deposited in the HSBC account.

15. Seats on the Pategill estate
To consider the adoption of three seats on the Pategill estate.

16. Work Plan
Note the report.

17. Meeting Date Change
Consider a change of date for the meeting of the Finance Committee scheduled for 26 April 2027 to be brought forward to 19 April 2027 to better facilitate the end of year budget cycle.

18. Next Meeting

Note the next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for 14 December 2026 at 5.15pm at the Board Room, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR.

General Power of Competence

The Town Council resolved from 15 May 2023, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

FOR THE ATTENTION OF
ALL MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
& FOR INFORMATION FOR TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Access to Information

Copies of the agenda are available for members of the public to inspect prior to the meeting. Agenda and Part I reports are available on the Town Council website:
https://www.penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk/

Background Papers

Requests for the background papers to the Part I reports, excluding those papers that contain exempt information, can be made between the hours of 9.00 am and 3.00 pm, Monday to Wednesday via office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

DRAFT Meeting Minutes: Finance Committee

Date: Monday 14 September 2026 at 17:15 to 18:25

Place: The Board Room, Unit 1, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR

Present: Chair: Cllr. Shepherd, Cllr. Burgin, Cllr. D. Jayson, Cllr. Kenyon, Cllr Jackson.

Officers: Business Services Manager, Responsible Finance Officer

Public: 0

Meeting opened at:

FIN26/14 Apologies
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Lawson and Rudhall.

FIN26/15 Confirmation of the Minutes
Members authorised the Chair to sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on Monday 22 June 2026.

FIN26/16 Declarations of Interest
No Declarations of interest were received.

FIN26/17 Public Participation
There were no representations from the public.

FIN26/18 Excluded Item: Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960
Members considered whether any items on the agenda should be considered without the press and public, pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960 and agreed that there were no items to be considered without the press or public.

FIN26/18 Excluded Item: Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, continued

RESOLVED THAT:
Item 20 Staffing Report be considered in Part Two, private session without the presence of the press and public as this item of business related to the financial and personal affairs of a particular person, in this instance members of staff.

FIN26/19 Payments for Approval
Members noted that Cllr. D. Jayson and Cllr. Kenyon accessed the banking system and reconciled the weekly report of all payments made and confirmed that each payment aligned with the invoices.

RESOLVED THAT:
i. Councillors Burgin and Jackson undertake the payments for approval reconciliation for the meeting of Finance Committee on 09th November 2026.
ii. The monthly report of payments for June, July and August 2026 be approved.

FIN26/20 Bank Reconciliation
Members reviewed the bank reconciliations.

RESOLVED THAT:
The bank reconciliations as of 30 June, 31 July and 31 August 2026 be approved and signed as a correct record.

FIN26/21 Budgetary Control Statement
Members reviewed the Budgetary Control Statement for the period 31 August 2026.

RESOLVED THAT:
The Budgetary Control Statement for the period 31 August 2026 be approved and go forward to be ratified by Full Council.

FIN26/22 Resolutions Report
Members noted the report.

FIN26/23 Risk Assessments
Members considered the corporate risk assessments for:

i. Allotments
ii. Bandstand
iii. Business Continuity
iv. Fairhill
v. Finance
vi. Fire

FIN26/23 Risk Assessments, continued

vii. GDPR
viii. Governance
ix. IT & Website
x. Lone Working
xi. Musgrave Monument
xii. Office
xiii. Street Furniture
xiv. Thacka Beck Field
xv. War Memorial (St Andrews)

RESOLVED THAT:
The corporate risk assessments be approved and go forward for ratification by Full Council.

FIN26/24 Internal Audit Plan 2026-27
Members considered the scope of Internal Audit coverage for 2026-27.

RESOLVED THAT:
The scope of Internal Audit coverage for 2026-27 be approved and go forward for ratification by Full Council.

FIN26/25 External Audit
Members received the external auditors report (AGAR Section 3) noting that the Council's external auditors, Moore UK, had signed off the accounts ending 31 March 2026 with no qualifications stating that the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability return is in accordance with the proper practices and that no other matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern and resolved that the External Audit report go forward for ratification by Full Council.

FIN26/26 Budget Process 2027-28
Members considered the process for preparing the 2027-28 budget.

RESOLVED THAT:
The process and the budget timetable for preparing and agreeing the 2027-28 budget be approved.

FIN26/27 Allotments
Members considered the Allotments report.

RESOLVED THAT:

i. The Solicitor and Business Services Manager commence the preparation of a new Allotment Lease between the Council and the Penrith Allotment Association and bring a copy of the draft lease to a future meeting of the Finance Committee for approval.
ii. The Council approves the commissioning of a pest control contract, traffic control at Brackenber allotments, hedge and tree pruning works and repairs to the access track at Salkeld Road allotments and a gate repair at Folly Lane

FIN26/28 Banking
Members noted that £200,000 was withdrawn from the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund on the 09 July 2026 and deposited in the HSBC account.

FIN26/29 Staff Training
Members noted that the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer have completed the Principles of Internal Auditing Local Councils (PIALC) qualification, and the Community Services Manager passed the RPII Routine Play Area Inspection training course.

FIN26/30 Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2026-27
Members noted that The Local Government Association, acting on behalf of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) have reached an agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. The settlement provides for a 3.3% increase in pay rates and allowances with effect from 01 April 2026. The new rates of pay and backdated increases would be paid to Council staff at the end of October. Members noted that the 2026-27 approved budget provides fully for the new rates of pay and this go forward for ratification by Full Council.

FIN26/31 Employment Contract Review
Members considered the inclusion of the extra content from the NALC new Model Employment Contract.

RESOLVED THAT:
The extra content from the NALC New Model Contract dated the 3 July 2026 be included into the Councils approved employee's contract of employment template and this go forward to Full council for ratification.

FIN26/32 Next Meeting
Members noted the next meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled for 09 November 2026 at 5.15pm at the Board Room, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR.

PART II PRIVATE SECTION
The following is exempt information as item 20 Staffing Report relates to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and personal sensitive information relating to members of staff.

FIN25/33 Staffing Report
Members considered the Staffing Report.

RESOLVED THAT:
The recommendations set out in the report be approved.

CHAIR SIGN:

DATE:

General Power of Competence
The Town Council resolved from 15 May 2023, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

FOR THE ATTENTION OF
ALL MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
& FOR INFORMATION FOR TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Access to Information
Copies of the agenda are available for members of the public to inspect prior to the meeting. Agenda and Part I reports are available on the Town Council website:
https://www.penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk/

Background Papers
Requests for the background papers to the Part I reports, excluding those papers that contain exempt information, can be made via:
office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Item 6ci

Penrith Town Council

Payments Schedule September 2026

Date	Ref	Details	Net £	VAT £	Total £	Budget
02/09/2026	26-166	FCC Waste Management Limited - Community Caretaker May 2026	661.88	132.38	794.26	Community Caretaker
02/09/2026	26-167	Carlisle DBF Ltd - Room Hire	64.00	12.80	76.80	Room Hire/Meetings
02/09/2026	26-167	Carlisle DBF Ltd - Room Hire	102.63	-	102.63	Service Charges
02/09/2026	26-168	Walton Goodland - office rent 29/09 - 24/12/26	2,062.50	-	2,062.50	Rent
02/09/2026	26-169	Gale Little - Cleaning Services	60.00	-	60.00	Service Charges
02/09/2026	26-170	Aindale KTD - Internet Service	79.00	15.80	94.80	IT
02/09/2026	26-171	Team Autism CIC - Grant	1,274.84	-	1,274.84	Large Grants
02/09/2026	26-172	Stomping Ground - Penrith Wild Play Day x3	6,000.00	-	6,000.00	Arts & Culture Development
02/09/2026	26-173	Penrith Methodist Church - Armed Forces Week Event	88.50	-	88.50	Civic Functions
02/09/2026	26-174	Milnthorpe Steel Band - The Great Penrith Picnic 2026	375.00	-	375.00	Summer Event
02/09/2026	26-175	Milnthorpe Steel Band - Penrith May Day 2026	375.00	-	375.00	May Day 2026
02/09/2026	26-176	Turnstone HR - HR Services	150.00	30.00	180.00	Legal & Professional Fees
02/09/2026	26-177	FCC Waste Management Limited - Community Caretaker July 2026	683.72	136.74	820.46	Community Caretaker
02/09/2026	26-178	FCC Waste Management Limited - Community Caretaker June 2026	661.88	132.38	794.26	Community Caretaker
02/09/2026	26-179	Penrith Linking Lives - Grant	499.00	-	499.00	Large Grants
02/09/2026	26-180	Aindale KTD - IT Services	77.00	15.40	92.40	IT
02/09/2026	26-181	Aindale KTD - IT Services	58.25	11.65	69.90	IT
02/09/2026	26-182	Aindale KTD - Managed Print Use	78.55	15.71	94.26	Printing, Postage & Stationery
07/09/2026	26-183	Penrith Rotary Club Business Account - May Day 2026 Support	350.00	-	350.00	May Day 2026
07/09/2026	26-184	Aindale KTD - Compliance test Penrith Arts and Culture	195.00	39.00	234.00	IT
07/09/2026	26-185	The Outside Club CIO - Grant	2,000.00	-	2,000.00	Large Grants
08/09/2026	CCR26-62	Post Office Ltd	25.20	-	25.20	Printing, Postage & Stationery
08/09/2026	DD	Bright HR	85.93	17.19	103.12	IT
14/09/2026	26-186	Aindale KTD - Microsoft 365 Subscriptions	24.26	4.85	29.11	IT
14/09/2026	26-187	Starboard Systems Limited - Civic.ly Set Up	999.00	199.80	1,198.80	Town Projects
14/09/2026	26-188	Carlisle DBF Ltd - Room Hire	32.00	6.40	38.40	Room Hire/Meetings
15/09/2026	CCR26-63	Post Office Ltd	1.82	-	1.82	Printing, Postage & Stationery
15/09/2026	CCR26-66	Amazon - Stationery	19.09	3.82	22.91	Printing, Postage & Stationery
16/09/2026	CCR26-64	Marks and Spencer	18.60	-	18.60	Community Engagement
16/09/2026	CCR26-67	Amazon - Stationery	53.47	10.69	64.16	Printing, Postage & Stationery
17/09/2026	CCR26-68	Amazon - Stationery	11.30	2.26	13.56	Printing, Postage & Stationery
17/09/2026	DD	British Gas - Bandstand	15.74	0.79	16.53	Bandstand
18/09/2026	BP	HMRC PAYE/NIC	8,425.05	-	8,425.05	Staffing - Salaries
18/09/2026	BP	Cumbria Local Gov Pension	3,884.46	-	3,884.46	Staffing - Salaries
19/09/2026	DD	Bright HR Limited	43.20	8.64	51.84	IT
22/09/2026	26-189	Living Wage Foundation - Accreditation	100.00	20.00	120.00	Subscriptions
22/09/2026	26-190	Aindale KTD - 365 Subscriptions	61.86	12.37	74.23	IT
22/09/2026	26-191	Aindale KTD - IT Services	10.13	2.03	12.16	IT
22/09/2026	26-192	Aindale KTD - Internet Services	79.00	15.80	94.80	IT
22/09/2026	CCR26-70	Post Office Ltd	43.20	-	43.20	Printing, Postage & Stationery
24/09/2026	CCR26-69	Amazon - Stationery	5.82	1.16	6.98	Printing, Postage & Stationery
28/09/2026	BP	Net Pay	17,381.50	-	17,381.50	Staffing - Salaries
28/09/2026	CCR26-65	Post Office Ltd	36.40	-	36.40	Printing, Postage & Stationery
29/09/2026	26-193	Nick Oliver Pest Control - Rat Clearance	700.00	-	700.00	Allotments
29/09/2026	26-194	Walton Goodland- service charge	77.76	15.56	93.32	Service Charges
29/09/2026	26-194	Walton Goodland- Water	98.45	-	98.45	Heat, Light & Water
29/09/2026	26-194	Walton Goodlland - electricity	112.19	5.61	117.80	Heat, Light & Water
29/09/2026	26-194	Walton Goodland - gas	21.50	4.30	25.80	Heat, Light & Water
29/09/2026	26-194	Walton Goodland - fire alarm	34.91	-	34.91	Service Charges
29/09/2026	26-195	Barrnon Media - Advertorial	418.00	83.60	501.60	Community Engagement
29/09/2026	26-196	Aindale KTD - IT Services	137.50	27.50	165.00	IT
29/09/2026	26-197	Aindale KTD - IT Services Webex	94.00	18.80	112.80	IT
29/09/2026	26-198	Aindale KTD - IT Services	77.00	15.40	92.40	IT
29/09/2026	26-199	Aindale KTD - Software Services	59.30	11.86	71.16	IT
29/09/2026	26-200	Aindale KTD - Domain Services	158.00	31.60	189.60	IT
29/09/2026	26-201	Penrith Tool Hire Ltd - Quarterly Oct to Dec 2026	364.00	72.80	436.80	Room Hire/Meetings
29/09/2026	CCR26-71	Adobe	101.10	20.22	121.32	Licences
29/09/2026	CCR26-72	Amazon - Stationery	7.44	1.49	8.93	Town Projects
29/09/2026	CCR26-73	Amazon - Stationery	32.71	6.54	39.25	Town Projects
29/09/2026	CCR26-74	Amazon - Stationery	23.03	4.60	27.63	Printing, Postage & Stationery
29/09/2026	CCR26-75	Amazon - Stationery	29.29	5.86	35.15	Town Projects
29/09/2026	DD	Vodafone Ltd	258.00	51.60	309.60	IT
		Total	**50,057.96**	**1,225.00**	**51,282.96**	

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Item 6cii

Penrith Town Council

Payments Schedule October 2026

Date	Ref	Details	Net £	VAT £	Total £	Budget
01/10/2026	CCR26-76	Yorkshire Trading	10.11	2.02	12.13	Town Projects
05/10/2026	CCR26-77	Royal British Legion - Poppy Wreath	31.50	-	31.50	Civic Functions
05/10/2026	CCR26-80	Solicitors Regulation Authority - L Guthrie	552.00	-	552.00	Legal & Professional Fees
06/10/2026	26-202	Turnstone HR - HR Services	150.00	30.00	180.00	Legal & Professional Fees
06/10/2026	26-203	Trueform Engineering Ltd - Wayfinding	13,933.32	2,786.66	16,719.98	Wayfinding and Interpretation
06/10/2026	26-204	SLCC Enterprises Ltd - Planning Policy Framework Training	58.50	11.70	70.20	Staff Training
06/10/2026	26-205	Aindale KTD - Managed Print Use	146.15	29.23	175.38	Printing, Postage & Stationery
06/10/2026	26-206	Armstrong Rural Ltd - Professional Fees	315.00	-	315.00	Legal & Professional Fees
06/10/2026	26-207	Signs of Cheshire - Noticeboard Keys	28.50	5.70	34.20	Signage, Etc
06/10/2026	26-208	AST Signs Limited - Fairhill Brass Plaque	450.00	90.00	540.00	Town Projects
06/10/2026	26-209	Carlisle BDF Ltd - Room Hire	64.00	12.80	76.80	Room Hire/Meetings
06/10/2026	26-209	Carlisle DBF - cleaning	81.15	-	81.15	Service Charges
06/10/2026	26-210	Gale Little - Cleaning Services	100.00	-	100.00	Service Charges
06/10/2026	CCR26-78	Marks and Spencer	6.90	-	6.90	Town Projects
06/10/2026	CCR26-79	Vodafone	25.00	5.00	30.00	IT
07/10/2026	CCR26-81	Post Office	28.50	-	28.50	Printing, Postage & Stationery
07/10/2026	DD	Bright HR	85.93	17.19	103.12	IT
09/10/2026	CHG	Bank Charges	61.50	-	61.50	Bank Charges & Interest
12/10/2026	26-211	FCC Recycling (UK) Limited - Community Caretaker August 26	683.72	136.74	820.46	Community Caretaker
12/10/2026	26-212	Westmorland and Furness Council - Play Area Scaws	15,000.00	-	15,000.00	Play Area Development
12/10/2026	26-213	Westmorland and Furness Council - TTRO Advert May Day 26	450.00	-	450.00	May Day 2026
12/10/2026	26-214	Penrith Posters Ltd - Replacement Roller Banner Graphic	65.00	13.00	78.00	Community Engagement
16/10/2026	BP	HMRC PAYE/NIC	9,610.51	-	9,610.51	Staffing - Salaries
16/10/2026	BP	Cumbria Local Gov Pension	4,365.04	-	4,365.04	Staffing - Salaries
16/10/2026	DD	Sage Software	576.00	115.20	691.20	Licences
19/10/2026	26-215	Penrith Hockey Club - Grant	1,225.19	-	1,225.19	Grants
19/10/2026	26-216	Aindale KTD - Microsoft 365 Subscriptions	24.26	4.85	29.11	IT
19/10/2026	26-217	Aindale KTD - IT Managed Services	58.00	11.60	69.60	IT
19/10/2026	26-218	FCC Recycling (UK) Limited - Community Caretaker September 26	683.72	136.74	820.46	Community Caretaker
19/10/2026	26-219	Penrith Allotment Association - Grant	902.24	-	902.24	Grants
19/10/2026	DD	British Gas - Bandstand	17.30	0.87	18.17	Bandstand
20/10/2026	CCR26-82	St John Ambulance	28.45	5.69	34.14	Repairs & Renewals
20/10/2026	DD	Bright HR Limited	43.20	8.64	51.84	IT
28/10/2026	BP	Net Pay	19,202.48	-	19,202.48	Staffing - Salaries
28/10/2026	CCR26-83	Adobe	101.10	20.22	121.32	Licences
28/10/2026	CCR26-84	Amazon - IT	29.16	5.83	34.99	IT
29/10/2026	DD	Vodafone Ltd	315.00	63.00	378.00	IT
		Total	**69,508.43**	**3,512.68**	**73,021.11**	

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Date: 05/10/2026

Penrith Town Council
Bank Reconciliation

Bank Ref:	1205	**Date To:**	30/09/2026
Bank Name:	HSBC	**Statement Ref:**	1205 2026-09-22 01
Currency:	Pound Sterling		

Balance as per cash book at	**31/08/2026**	£87,668.81
Payments in month		£51,282.96
Transfer in month		£0.00
Receipts in month		£16,923.65
Balance as per cash book at	**30/09/2026**	£53,309.50

Add: Unpresented Payments

Tran No	Date	Ref	Details	£	
					£0.00

Less: Outstanding Receipts

Tran No	Date	Ref	Details	£	
					£0.00

Reconciled balance :	£53,309.50
Balance as per statement :	£53,309.50
Difference :	£0.00

HSBC UK

Contact tel 03457 60 60 60
see reverse for call times
Text phone 03457 125 563
used by deaf or speech impaired customers
www.hsbc.co.uk

3 September to 2 October 2026

Your Statement

Account Name	Sortcode	Account Number	Sheet Number
Penrith Town Council	[redacted]		323

Your BUSINESS CURRENT ACCOUNT details

Date	*Payment type and details*		*Paid out*	*Paid in*	*Balance*
		BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD			**53,766.46**
	)))	POST OFFICE COUNTE			
		PENRITH	36.40		
	VIS	AMAZON* N47S79V74			
		LONDON	102.03		53,628.03
30 Sep 26	DD	VODAFONE LTD	309.60		
	VIS	AMAZON UK* N41KW6Q			
		LONDON	8.93		53,309.50
02 Oct 26	CR	CCLA Investment Ma			
		PS3078714, PENRITH		2,156.47	
	)))	YTC PENRITH			
		PENRITH	12.13		55,453.84
02 Oct 26		**BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD**			**55,453.84**

Credit Interest Rates	*balance*	*AER variable*
Credit interest is not applied		

Debit Interest Rates	*balance*	*EAR variable*
Debit interest		21.34%

Date: 02/11/2026

Penrith Town Council
Bank Reconciliation

Bank Ref:	1205	**Date To:**	31/10/2026
Bank Name:	HSBC	**Statement Ref:**	1205 2026-10-26 01
Currency:	Pound Sterling		

Balance as per cash book at 30/09/2026	£53,309.50
Payments in month	£73,021.11
Transfer in month	£0.00
Receipts in month	£53,441.47
Balance as per cash book at 31/10/2026	£33,729.86

Add: Unpresented Payments

Tran No	Date	Ref	Details	£	
					£0.00

Less: Outstanding Receipts

Tran No	Date	Ref	Details	£	
					£0.00

Reconciled balance :	£33,729.86
Balance as per statement :	£33,729.86
Difference :	£0.00

HSBC UK

Contact tel 03457 60 60 60
see reverse for call times
Text phone 03457 125 563
used by deaf or speech impaired customers
www.hsbc.co.uk

3 October to 2 November 2026

Your Statement

Account Name	Sortcode	Account Number	Sheet Number
Penrith Town Council	[redacted]		326

Your BUSINESS CURRENT ACCOUNT details

Date	*Payment type and details*		*Paid out*	*Paid in*	*Balance*
		BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD			**36,951.89**
	[redacted]				
	VIS	AMAZON* B29O636W4			
		LONDON	34.99		
	VIS	INT'L 0099947532			
		ADOBE			
		8000289094	121.32		33,669.86
30 Oct 26	CR	RED BULL CO. LTD		60.00	33,729.86
02 Nov 26	DD	GOCARDLESS	273.60		
	DD	TV LICENCE DDA	180.00		33,276.26
02 Nov 26		**BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD**			**33,276.26**

Credit Interest Rates	*balance*	*AER variable*
Credit interest is not applied		

Debit Interest Rates	*balance*	*EAR variable*
Debit interest		21.34%

MEETING: FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 09 NOVEMBER 2026

REPORT: Budgetary Control Statement 2026-27, Expenditure to 31 October 2026

AUTHOR: Responsible Finance Officer

ITEM NUMBER: 08

Does the report contain information which has been identified as confidential?

☐ Yes ☑ No

PUBLIC REPORT

1. Recommendations/Decision Required:

The Committee is recommended to approve the budgetary control statement and forward it, with any comments, to Council for ratification.

2. Council Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the monitoring performance theme in that the Council will produce regular finance figures.

3. Report Details

A. 2026-27 Outturn Statement: Income and Expenditure Account (Appendix A)

The attached outturn statement shows the following information, analysed over the most detailed budget headings:

- The actual outturn figures for the preceding financial year 2025-26, for reference only.
- The full year's Approved Budget for 2026-27, which was ratified by Council on 15 December 2025.
- Actual outturn income and expenditure to 31 October 2026.
- The variance between the actual outturn income and expenditure and the profiled latest budget for the period. Variances are expressed as favourable (positive) where there was an underspending or increased income, and as adverse (negative and bracketed) where there was an overspending or reduced income.
- The position and transactions on the Council's reserves.

B. Commentary

The statement shows under spendings on a number of budget headings. The following comments concentrate on unusual or unexpected variances.

B.1 Income

Overall income of £323,698 is £678 greater than the profiled budget of £323,020.

B.2 Planning Committee

Planning Committee expenditure is £3,805 less than budget so far this year.

B.3 Communities Committee

Net spend of £58,397 is shown against the budget of £92,291, an underspending of £33,894.

This underspend should reduce later in the year due to anticipated increases in expenditure for items such as branding, marketing and grants.

B.4 Finance Committee

Net expenditure of £293,770 is shown against the budget of £307,038, an underspend of £13,268.

This underspend is expected to be reduced as the year progresses.

B.5 Total Expenditure & Increase/(Decrease) in General Reserve

- The individual variances result in an underspending of £50,697 against the profiled total expenditure budget of £392,326. As there is £678 more income, there is a net variation of £51,645 on the profiled amount transferrable to the General Reserve.

B.6 Reserves

- The General Reserve is profiled to decrease by £69,306 in the period, it has actually decreased by £17,661.
- The Asset Reserve opened the year with a balance of £200,000 and there has been no change in the year.
- The Election Reserve opened the year with a balance of £45,000, an amount of £5,000 is budgeted to be added at the end of the financial year.
- The Play Area Reserve opened the year with a balance of £46,354, £30,000 of which has been spent so far this year.
- The Pump Track Reserve has a balance of £50,000 which is unlikely to be spent this year.

C. Balance Sheet (Appendix B)

Appendix B shows the Council's balance sheet as at 31 October 2026. The following points may be noted:

- Investments with two organisations total £723,191, with the majority being held in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. An amount of £50,000 was transferred from the CCLA account to the HSBC account in October 2026.
- The VAT Debtor of £3,513 represents October's transactions and has been reclaimed from HMRC.
- Prepayments of £122,782 include adjustments for grants receivable, insurance, office rent, IT support agreements, and licences and subscriptions.
- The Cash at Bank balance of £33,730 is held at HSBC.
- Accruals of £20,367 comprise of goods and services received by 31 October, but unpaid at that date.
- The Receipts in Advance figure represents income for the period 1 November 2026 to 31 March 2027 already received from Westmorland and Furness Council as precept.

D. Conclusion

The budgetary control statement shows that net spending to 31 October 2026 was around £51,000 below the Latest Budget for the period. It is often the case to see an underspend at this stage in the year after the summer period and it is too soon to predict any trends for future months.

Finally, there are no issues arising from the Council's balance sheet at 31 October 2026.

Implications

4. Legal

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5. Resources

This report is concerned solely with financial management.

6. Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

7. Biodiversity & Climate Change

There are no biodiversity and climate change implications associated with this report.

8. Risks and other Considerations

The Council may fail to receive expected income or may incur unexpected overspending, potentially leading to the curtailment of planned expenditure. Adverse criticism of over or underspending. To address these risks the Council ensures a sound budgetary control system with regular reporting and identification of issues.

9. Background Information/Documents

Transaction and trial balance reports from the Sage accountancy system

Budgetary Control working papers.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Budgetary Control Statement Seven Months Ended 31 October 2026.

Appendix B – Balance Sheet as at 31 October 2026.

Penrith Town Council

BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENT SEVEN MONTHS ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2026

Actual 2025-26	Approved Budget 2026-27	Heading	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance
£	£		£	£	£
		INCOME			
		Precept:			
514,740	526,749	Council Tax	307,270	307,270	0
		Other Income:			
32,500	27,000	Investment Income	15,750	16,428	678
547,240	**553,749**	**TOTAL INCOME**	**323,020**	**323,698**	**678**
		EXPENDITURE			
		PLANNING COMMITTEE:			
		Planning:			
4,044	5,000	Planning	2,917	292	2,625
0	20,080	Public Realm	20,080	18,580	1,500
13,421		Wayfinding and Interpretation	0	113,308	(113,308)
(13,421)		Wafinding Grant Receivable	0	(112,988)	112,988
4,044	25,080		22,997	19,192	3,805
4,044	**25,080**	**Planning Committee Total**	**22,997**	**19,192**	**3,805**
		COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE:			
		Climate Change:			
10,625	7,500	Climate Efficiency	4,375	500	3,875
10,625	7,500		4,375	500	3,875
		Town Projects:			
5,246	10,000	Town Projects	5,833	1,384	4,449
	4,000	Town Centre Greening	4,000	4,000	0
	10,000	Castle Park Support	5,833	0	5,833
5,246	24,000		15,666	5,384	10,282
		Arts & Entertainment:			
7,256	10,000	Arts & Culture Development	5,833	9,025	(3,192)
20,268	20,000	May Day	20,000	13,786	6,214
355	1,000	Events Development	583	0	583
	20,000	Town Dressing and Event Support	11,667	5,734	5,933
	5,000	Summer Event	5,000	4,467	533
27,879	56,000		43,083	33,012	10,071
		Grants:			
28,725	35,000	Grants	20,417	11,610	8,807
10,000	5,000	Signature Grants	2,917	0	2,917
38,725	40,000		23,334	11,610	11,724
		Corporate Communications:			
9,375	10,000	Communications	5,833	7,891	(2,058)
9,375	10,000		5,833	7,891	(2,058)
91,850	**137,500**	**Communities Committee Total**	**92,291**	**58,397**	**33,894**

Actual 2025-26	Approved Budget 2026-27	Heading	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance
£	£		£	£	£
		FINANCE COMMITTEE:			
		Staffing:			
263,749	292,220	Salaries	170,462	168,943	1,519
34,308	37,785	National Insurance	22,041	22,714	(673)
56,706	35,130	LG Pension Scheme	20,493	17,494	2,999
0	300	Recruitment Expenses	175	0	175
490	600	Staff Training	350	593	(243)
701	200	Conferences	117	0	117
104	200	Staff Expenses	117	27	90
356,058	366,435		213,755	209,771	3,984
		Accommodation:			
8,250	8,250	Rent	4,813	4,813	0
1,973	2,400	Heat, Light & Water	1,400	790	610
2,353	2,520	Service Charges	1,470	1,098	372
676	1,400	Room Hire & Meetings	817	2,114	(1,297)
481	480	Insurances	480	495	(15)
13,733	15,050		8,980	9,310	(330)
		Civic Functions:			
445	400	Civic Functions	233	370	(137)
700	700	Mayoral Expenses	408	0	408
300	300	Deputy Mayor's Expenses	175	0	175
2,584	200	Civic Regalia	117	0	117
4,029	1,600		933	370	563
		Cost of Democracy:			
50	100	Annual Meeting	58	71	(13)
0	0	Elections	0	0	0
195	500	Members' Training	292	145	147
0	100	Members' Expenses	58	0	58
197	200	Notice/Honours Board	117	0	117
442	900		525	216	309
34,016	29,000	**IT**	16,917	14,895	2,022
		Assets:			
8,475	5,200	Allotments	3,033	3,436	(403)
0	160	War Memorial	93	0	93
3,796	2,500	Benches	1,458	0	1,458
905	1,500	Bus Shelters	875	0	875
3,972	2,000	Bandstand	1,167	1,069	98
699	700	Musgrave Monument	408	40	368
5,521	5,500	Fairhill Park	3,208	4,576	(1,368)
2,493	2,000	Thacka Beck Field	1,167	1,508	(341)
1,150	200	Signage, etc	117	29	88
8,424	8,000	Community Caretaker	4,667	4,697	(30)
	52,500	Pump Track	0	0	0
	4,500	Wayfinding Maintenance	2,625	0	2,625
10,909	0	Contribution to/(from) Asset Reserve	0	0	0
46,344	84,760		18,818	15,355	3,463
35,646	45,000	Play Area Development	30,000	30,000	0
804	6,500	Benches and Bus Shelters	3,792	909	2,883
		Other Overheads:			
5,277	3,300	Printing, Postage & Stationery	1,925	1,341	584
1,797	1,850	Audit Fees	1,079	1,084	(5)
4,980	4,400	Insurance	2,567	3,041	(474)
52	180	Bank Charges & Interest	105	63	42
4,244	2,300	Accountancy Fees	1,342	950	392
3,357	2,500	Legal & Professional Fees	1,458	2,030	(572)
2,304	1,800	Licences	1,050	1,586	(536)
2,906	4,500	Subscriptions	2,625	2,038	587
895	2,000	Repairs & Renewals	1,167	811	356
25,812	22,830		13,318	12,944	374
516,884	**572,075**	**Finance Committee Total**	**307,038**	**293,770**	**13,268**

Actual 2025-26	Approved Budget 2026-27	Heading	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Favourable/ (Adverse) Variance
£	£		£	£	£
0	0	**Contingency**	0	0	0
5,000	5,000	**Transfer to/(from) Election Reserve**	0	0	0
(35,646)	(45,000)	**Transfer to/(from) Play Area Reserve**	(30,000)	(30,000)	0
50,000	(50,000)	**Transfer to/(from) Pump Track Reserve**	0	0	0
632,132	644,655	**TOTAL EXPENDITURE**	392,326	341,359	50,967
(84,892)	(90,906)	**INCREASE/(DECR) IN GENERAL RESERVE**	(69,306)	(17,661)	51,645
		RESERVES:			
		General Reserve:			
422,091	302,227	Balance brought forward 1 April 2026	302,227	337,199	34,972
(84,892)	(90,906)	Increase/(decrease) in year	(69,306)	(17,661)	51,645
337,199	211,321	**Balance carried forward**	232,921	319,538	86,617
		Asset Reserve:			
189,091	200,000	Balance brought forward 1 April 2026	200,000	200,000	0
10,909	0	Contribution from/(to) 2026-27 Budget	0	0	0
200,000	200,000	**Balance carried forward**	200,000	200,000	0
		Election Reserve:			
40,000	45,000	Balance brought forward 1 April 2026	45,000	45,000	0
5,000	5,000	Contribution from/(to) 2026-27 Budget	0	0	0
45,000	50,000	**Balance carried forward**	45,000	45,000	0
		Play Area Reserve:			
82,000	45,000	Balance brought forward 1 April 2026	45,000	46,354	0
(35,646)	(45,000)	Contribution from/(to) 2026-27 Budget	(30,000)	(30,000)	0
46,354	0	**Balance carried forward**	15,000	16,354	0
		Pump Track reserve			
0	50,000	Balance brought forward 1 April 2026	50,000	50,000	0
50,000	(50,000)	Contribution from/(to) 2026-27 Budget	0	0	0
50,000	0	**Balance carried forward**	50,000	50,000	0
678,553	461,321	**TOTAL RESERVES**	542,921	630,892	86,617

Appendix B

Penrith Town Council

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2026

	£	£
Investments		
Penrith Building Society	93,191	
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Account	630,000	
		723,191
Current Assets		
Debtors	3,500	
Debtor - VAT	3,513	
Prepayments	122,782	
HSBC Bank Account	33,730	
	163,525	
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	0	
Accruals	20,367	
Payroll Control	15,977	
Receipts in Advance	219,480	
	255,824	
Net Current Assets		(92,299)
		630,892
Represented by:		
Reserves		
General Reserve		319,538
Asset Reserve		200,000
Election Reserve		45,000
Play Area Reserve		16,354
Pump Track Reserve		50,000
		630,892

FINANCE COMMITTEE 09 NOVEMBER 2026 **ITEM: 09**

RESOLUTIONS REPORT

This report shows the progress made against resolutions from the Council's Finance Committee this municipal year and those carried forward from previous years. Members are asked to note the report.

On hold - Not commenced
Completed
In progress - Started and ongoing

Reference	Activity	Status	Supporting Notes
Brought Forward from Previous Year			
FIN25/12	Play Area reserve – progress schemes as set out in the report		Over the term of Council
FIN25/30	Seats and Shelters Budget – Progress the Sainsbury scheme		Awaiting approvals.
FIN25/50	Cycle Parking Cornmarket		MofA sent to WFC / awaiting start dates.
Finance Committee 22 June 2026			
FIN26/08	Budgetary Control Statement to 31 May 2026 to Full Council		September's Full Council meeting
Finance Committee 14 September 2026			
FIN26/21	Budgetary Control Statement to 31 August 2026 to Full Council		September's Full Council meeting
FIN26/23	Risk Assessments to Full Council		September's Full Council meeting
FIN26/24	Internal Audit Plan 2026-27 to Full Council		September's Full Council meeting
FIN26/25	External Audit Certificate to Full Council and published for public		September's Full Council meeting and on website / noticeboard
FIN26/27	Allotment Lease to be drafted and work progressed		
FIN26/30	Pay Agreement 2026-27 to Full Council rates/backdated paid		
FIN26/31	Draft new Employment Contract to Full Council		
FIN25/33	Recommendations from Staffing Report implemented		

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

MEETING: FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 09 November 2026

REPORT: Elections Recharging Policy 2027/28 Consultation

AUTHOR: Business Services Manager

ITEM NUMBER: 10

Does the report contain information which has been identified as confidential?

☐ Yes ☑ No

PUBLIC REPORT

1. Recommendations/Decision Required:

The Committee is recommended to determine the Council's response to the Westmorland and Furness Council Elections Recharging policy 2027/28 onwards consultation.

2. Council Plan priorities

This report contributes to the Performance theme in that the Council will be professional, open and accountable with sound financial management of Council resources.

3. Report Details

Westmorland and Furness Council intends to introduce a policy for the recharging of costs associated with parish elections. Prior to Local Government Reorganisation, parish and town councils were, in the majority of cases, charged for the costs of their elections. After vesting day, Westmorland and Furness Council did not charge for parish elections in order to support parishes whose elections were no longer combined with other elections.

A community governance review was conducted to align parish council elections with local and combined mayoral elections, and now that alignment is complete, and given Westmorland and Furness council's difficult financial position, they are proposing to reintroduce charging for elections in accordance with the policy attached at Appendix A.

Westmorland and Furness Council are seeking the views of parish and town councils on the attached draft policy which has been developed to provide clarity, consistency and transparency regarding the costs that may be recharged in future. The policy sets out:

- The principles underpinning cost recovery.
- The types of costs that may be recharged.
- How costs would be apportioned where elections are combined with other polls

Before the policy is introduced, Westmorland and Furness Council wish to understand the views of parish, town and community councils on the draft policy and welcome any comments on the proposals.

The policy does not contain estimates for each parish, town or community council, however indicative costs can be requested separately from the Electoral Services team, based on the draft policy nearer the time when elections take place.

Westmorland and Furness Council are writing to the Council now so that the Council can plan to incorporate these costs into the budget setting processes for next financial year, as there are all out elections along with the Cumbria Combined Authority Mayoral election scheduled for May 2027.

Members are advised to note that the Council has already established an earmarked Elections reserve to meet the costs of election recharges. The Reserves Policy currently has and is being reviewed later within this agenda.

The consultation remains open to Friday 6 November 2026, yet the Council has requested an extension to accommodate this meeting to consider the consultation document.

Implications

4. Legal

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5. Resources

The Council has an established Elections Reserve. The reserve supports the costs of future Parish Council Elections and any one off by election costs and recharges. An allocation of £30,000 met from underspends was transferred into the reserve in the 2022-23 financial year, and thereafter a contribution of £5,000 per annum over the full term of the MTFP has been maintained. The Election Reserve opened the year with a balance of £45,000, an amount of £5,000 is budgeted to be added at the end of the 2026/27 financial year.

The draft Elections Recharging policy does not set out specific costs for Penrith Town Council but provides an indication that the scheduled elections for May 2027 which will include elections for the Combined Mayoral authority, local government and parish elections costs will be shared

equally and are estimated to be in the region of £40,000 for larger Town Councils. Since the consultation document has been published Westmorland and Furness Council has provided the Council with an estimate for the May 2027 elections of £15,416 if contested.

The draft policy estimates that by election costs per ward could be in the region of £12,000 to £20,000 meaning that the Council may need to consider its future annual contributions to the Elections Reserve.

The policy outlines that the Council would be invoiced for recharges within three months after the election date via an itemised invoice.

6. Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

7. Biodiversity & Climate Change

There are no biodiversity and climate change implications associated with this report.

8. Risks and other Considerations

The main identified risks are financial and as such this report asks Members to consider its response to the consultation and be mindful of the effect on the Councils Reserves Policy, precept considerations and the ongoing Medium Term Financial Plan.

9. Background Information/Documents

None.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Westmorland and Furness Council Elections Recharges to Parishes, Recharging Policy 2027/28 onwards.

Elections Recharges to Parishes

Recharging policy 2027/2028 onwards

This document sets out the approach for recharging parish and town councils for necessary costs incurred in running their elections, whether scheduled elections or by-elections.

The intention is to bring this in for the 2027/2028 financial year, which would include scheduled elections in May 2027.

Why do we recharge?

Since Westmorland and Furness Council came into being no charges have been made to parishes for any election held.

Barrow Town Council was created by a Community Governance Review in 2022 and held its first elections in May 2023. Westmorland and Furness Council agreed to cover the cost of these elections up to £100,000[1].

Different approaches were taken by the legacy local authorities prior to 2023. It is now Westmorland and Furness Council's intention to review recharges to parish and town councils for their elections.

The Returning Officer for Westmorland and Furness Council is responsible for organising and delivering elections for all parishes within Westmorland and Furness. Section 36 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 allows the council to recover administration fees and costs incurred at parish and town council elections. These costs are to be paid by the relevant parish council.

Most principal area councils that have large numbers of parish councils make recharges to parishes for their elections, particularly large unitary councils.

Recharging parishes is proposed on a cost recovery basis only, and no surplus will be generated by Westmorland and Furness Council.

Parishes in Westmorland and Furness

There are 115 parish councils in Westmorland and Furness, and 955 seats on those parish councils. All 115 are up for election in May 2027. By-elections can happen at any time when an existing councillor resigns, dies or is disqualified, except for within six months of a scheduled election. Some parishes do not have enough candidates to hold elections; and sometimes have difficulty finding sufficient candidates to be co-opted.

The parishes range from large town councils such as Barrow, Penrith and Kendal to very small rural parishes, some with electorates of less than 200.

When parish council elections occur, the Westmorland and Furness Council Returning Officer is responsible for running the election, and they incur costs.

[1] https://westmorlandandfurness.moderngov.co.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=457

Approach to recharging

Westmorland and Furness Council will recover all necessary costs incurred by the Returning Officer in planning and delivering polls for parish councils.

Recharges will apply for all parish elections and by-elections, including uncontested polls.

The costs associated exclusively with a parish election or by-election will be recharged in full to the parish council.

Where a parish election is combined with any other poll, the cost of delivering the election will be shared equally by the number of polls combined on the same day. That share will be determined by the particular cost element, and examples of combined costs are given below.

What will be recharged?

There are three main electoral events that incur cost:

- Polling day
- Postal vote opening
- Verification and count

The list below is not exhaustive, but costs for parish elections fit into the categories below:

Hire of venues	Polling stations, count venues and postal vote opening venues
Delivery of equipment to venues	Polling booths and other equipment, if required
Equipment and stationery	For nominations, polling, postal vote opening and verification and count
Printing	Poll cards, postal votes, ballot papers
Postage and delivery costs	Poll cards and postal votes, delivery of ballot papers, incoming postal vote costs
Staffing	Polling station staff, count staff, postal vote opening staff, general administrative and logistical roles, mileage
Administration	Uncontested election costs
Comms and engagement	Parish engagement costs, advertising relevant to parish council elections

At larger, scheduled elections, there may be extra costs relating to the scale of the event that would not be required for a by-election.

Poll cards

The issue of poll cards is optional for parish elections but is strongly recommended. Poll cards remain a very effective way of people finding out about any elections, particularly by-elections.

For elections combined with a Parliamentary Election poll, MHCLG guidance states that parish elections should not be included in any apportionment of costs for poll cards. We use this approach with local government polls too, and a poll card is issued which will alert the voter that parish elections may also be taking place.

For standalone parish by-elections, we would request a decision from the parish council as to whether they wish us to issue poll cards. If they choose to issue poll cards, this cost will be recharged.

Combination of polls

Where a parish election is combined with another poll many costs can be shared amongst each type of poll. In May 2027, parish elections are due to be shared with a Combined Authority Mayoral election, and a principal area local government election. This means most costs will be shared three ways.

There will still be some costs that relate entirely to the parish election, e.g. the costs of printing ballot papers.

Combined costs will be calculated for each parish. Where a cost is attributable to a parish council, they will be shared equally with other polls. Individual parishes will only be charged for the costs relating to their parish.

Combined costs

At a combined election or by-election, costs are typically shared as below.

Chargeable item	Combined element	Parish element
Hire of polling stations	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of polling stations with combination
Hire of verification and count venue	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of ballot papers at verification and count
Hire of postal vote opening venue	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of incoming postal votes that include the parish combination
Delivery of equipment to venues	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of polling stations with combination
Equipment and stationery	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of polling stations with combination
Printing of poll card	Not charged to parishes at combined elections	N/A
Postage of poll card	Not charged to parishes at combined elections	N/A
Printing of postal votes	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of outgoing postal votes that include the parish combination
Postage of postal votes	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of outgoing postal votes that include the parish combination
Return postage costs of postal votes	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of incoming postal votes that include the parish combination
Printing of ballot papers	Standalone cost for each poll	Based on actual cost from print invoice
Polling station staff costs	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of polling stations with combinations

Postal vote opening staff	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of incoming postal votes that include the parish combination
Verification and count staff	Shared equally with other polls	Based on number of ballot papers at verification and count

Non-combined costs

Usually, the only non-combined costs are for ballot papers and poll cards. However, the Returning Officer reserves the right to make decisions that may mean certain elements of the election are charged on a standalone basis.

These could include:

- Standalone postal packs where combinations are not possible, or where snap elections are called
- Standalone parish counts could be held, where the full cost would be borne by parishes.
- Equipment required to count multi-member wards could be purchased on a standalone basis for parishes, depending on the method used to count

The Returning Officer will always look to make decisions that save costs for all authorities involved. They will determine the appropriate apportionment of costs having regard to the circumstances of the election and any relevant guidance. We will look to communicate with parishes around any decision that will have an impact on costs.

Uncontested poll costs

Polls that are scheduled to take place, or called at a by-election, are uncontested if fewer people stand than there are vacancies. Whilst this means that the cost of a full election is not required, there are still resources used by Westmorland and Furness Council to prepare for these elections, run the nomination process and prepare and publish statutory notices, including the results notice.

To cover the nomination process we will charge an administration fee. These fees are charged to all parish councils, but if the poll is uncontested, this will be the only charge.

Admin fee per parish council - £100

Additional uncontested ward fee - £50 per additional ward

Staffing costs

Staffing costs will be recharged based on the current scale of fees in place at the time of the election. These rates of pay are informed by MHCLG guidance. Our current fees are outlined below.

Staffing requirements vary according to the size and complexity of the election and not all roles will be required at every poll. Costs will be charged on the basis of actual appointments made and work undertaken.

Our current staffing fees are outlined below:

Role	MHCLG pay band	Hourly rate	Total payment
Polling station staff			
Polling station inspector	D	£18.50	£314.50 / £377.40 for a combined poll
Presiding Officer	C	£18.50	£314.50 / £377.40 for a combined poll
Poll Clerk	A	£14.80	£236.80 / £284.16 for a combined poll
Training Fee	Other rates	£30.00	£30.00
Travel	Other rates	£0.45p per mile	
Verification and count – Day time count			
Verification/Count Manager (DRO)	D	£25.80	
Verification/Count Supervisor	C	£17.75	
Verification/Count Assistant	A	£15.00	
IT Support	B	£17.75	
Comms/Media officer	C	£17.75	
Verification and count – Overnight count			
Verification/Count Manager (DRO)	D	£38.70	
Verification/Count Supervisor	C	£26.63	
Verification/Count Assistant	A	£22.50	
IT Support	B	£26.63	
Comms/Media officer	C	£26.63	
Postal vote opening			
Postal vote manager	D	£20.00	
Postal vote signature adjudicator	C	£16.80	
Postal vote supervisor	B	£16.80	
Postal vote assistant	A	£13.80	
Other fees			
Ballot box issuing supervisor	B	£15.80	
Ballot box issuing assistant	A	£15.80	

Printing and postage costs

Westmorland and Furness Council has a contract with a specialist print supplier. Our fees for printing are set within this contract. This contract will be in place for elections in 2027 but will be reviewed after this.

Postage costs are set by Royal Mail and are not set within the contract. Royal Mail costs can increase at any time and there are discounts available for bulk mailings compared to smaller runs.

Costs shown below are indicative and may vary in line with contractual arrangements and supplier charges.

Item	Printing Cost	Postage Cost (bulk)	Postage cost (small run)
Poll Cards	£0.0515 per unit[2]	0.82p per unit[3]	1.13p per unit
Postal vote stationery	£0.2678 per unit	0.82p per unit	1.13p per unit
Ballot papers	£3.4608 per book of 100 papers	n/a	

There will also be shared costs for postal packs returned in Business Reply Envelopes.

What will not be recharged?

We will follow the Elections Claims Unit guidance on what is a necessary cost for running a poll. This is not an exhaustive list but items we would not expect to recharge would be:

- Any costs relating to electoral registration, which are the responsibility of the Electoral Registration Officer
- Costs for audio-visual equipment, beyond what is required to communicate with candidates, agents and observers within the verification and count venue
- Costs for comms or advertising that are not attributable to parish council elections
- Any costs solely attributable to the Combined Mayoral or Westmorland and Furness Council elections

How much could be recharged?

The exact fee will vary depending on parish size and whether the poll is shared or a by-election.

At scheduled elections for Combined Mayoral, local government and parish council elections, costs will be shared equally. A large town council could cost around £40k, with smaller councils around £2-6k.

At a by-election the estimate for a large town council ward would be £12k-20k, whilst for smaller rural by-elections an estimate is £2-5k.

These figures are illustrative examples only and in each case, the Electoral Services team will be able to provide an estimate to the parish ahead of their by-election.

Paying the recharges

Parishes will need to factor the contingency cost of scheduled elections and by-elections into their budget setting activity and ensure they have sufficient funds to cover elections.

Invoices for recharges will be sent within three months of the election date to ensure all rechargeable invoices are included. Invoices will be itemised.

[2] A fee of at least £400 is payable for very small runs at by-elections

[3] Royal Mail costs will be actual based on their current charges, which change from time to time

Any queries regarding an invoice should be raised with the Electoral Services team as soon as possible.

Invoices will include payment terms and methods of payment.

Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email:office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

1. General

1.1 These Financial Regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial Regulations are one of the Council's governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for Councillors and officers. Financial Regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders.

1.2 Councillors are expected to follow these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.

1.3 Wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

1.4 In these Financial Regulations:

"Accounts and Audit Regulations" means the Regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.

a. "Authorise" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
b. "Approve," or "ratify" refers to a decision by the Council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
c. "Proper practices" means those set out in The Practitioners' Guide Practitioners' Guide refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
d. "Must" and bold text refer to a statutory obligation the Council cannot change.
e. "Shall" refers to a non-statutory instruction by the Council to its Members and staff.

1.5 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the Council who:

a. Acts under the policy direction of the Council.
b. Administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations, and proper practices.
c. Determines on behalf of the Council its accounting records and control systems.
d. Ensures the accounting control systems are observed.
e. Ensures the accounting records are kept up to date.
f. Seeks economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of Council resources.
g. Produces financial management information as required by the Council.

1.6 **The Council must not delegate any decision regarding:**

a. **Setting the final budget or the precept (Council tax requirement).**
b. **The outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls.**
c. **Approving accounting statements.**
d. **Approving an annual governance statement.**
e. **Borrowing.**
f. **Declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence.**
g. **Addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors.**

1.7 In addition, the Council shall:

a. Determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts.
b. Authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £15,000.

2. **Risk management and internal control.**

2.1 **The Council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**

2.2 The Business Services Manager with the RFO shall prepare, for approval by the Council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the Council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.

2.3 When considering any new activity, the Clerk, and/or the Business Services Manager with the RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the Council.

2.4 **At least once a year, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**

2.5 **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**

a. Ensure that risk is appropriately managed.
b. Ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions.
c. Prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud.
d. Allow the reconstitution of any lost records.
e. Identifying the duties of officers dealing with transactions.
f. Ensure division of responsibilities.

These Financial Regulations demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

2.6 At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a Member other than the Council Chair shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations for all accounts produced by the RFO. The Member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to, and noted by the Finance Committee and ratified by Full Council. The approval of the reconciliations shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

2.7 Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any Council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The Council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any Council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

3.1 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office and is appointed by the Council. All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations. The Council employs external payroll services who are responsible for the administration and processing payroll, pensions, and HMRC, providing information for associated payments for the Council.

3.2 **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**

a. **Day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the Council and the matters to which they relate.**
b. **A record of the assets and liabilities of the Council.**

3.3 The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

3.4 The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the Council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the Council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.5 **The Council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practice.**

3.6 **Any officer or member of the Council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the Council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Council considers necessary.

3.7 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by the Council and shall conduct their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's risk management, control, and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.

3.8 The Council shall ensure that the Internal Auditor:

a. Is competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council.
b. Reports to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year.
c. Can demonstrate competence, objectivity, and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships.
d. Is not involved in the management or control of the Council.

3.9 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

a. Perform any operational duties for the Council.
b. Initiate or approve accounting transactions.
c. Provide financial, legal, or other advice including in relation to any future transactions.
d. Direct the activities of any Council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

3.10 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.

3.11 The RFO shall plan for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

3.12 The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all Councillors any ~~correspondence~~ report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

4.1 Before setting a precept, the Council shall calculate its Council Tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.

4.2 Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed the Chair of the Council. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft their budgets.

4.3 No later than December each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all receipts and payments/income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following four financial years, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

4.4 Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the Town Clerk. Transfers to and from earmarked reserves shall be approved by Council in accordance with its Reserves Policy.

4.5 Each Committee shall review its medium-term financial forecast of income and expenditure. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the Council not later than the end of December each year, including any proposals for revising the forecast.

4.6 The draft budget with any committee proposals and ~~three~~ four-year forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance Committee and a recommendation made to Full Council. The Council shall consider annual budget proposals in the context of the Council's medium-term financial forecast, including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding, and update the forecast accordingly.

4.7 Having considered the proposed budget and ~~three~~ four-year forecast, the Council shall determine its Council tax budget requirement by setting a budget. The Council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of ~~December~~ January for the ensuing financial year.

4.8 **Any member with Council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**

4.9 The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of ~~December~~ January and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.

4.10 The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned. As part of the budget process, the Council shall approve a Reserves Policy which sets out the purpose and financial limits for each of its financial reserves.

4.11 Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve ~~shall be agreed by the Council~~ will be supported by a written report.

4.12 In setting the budget, the Council shall have regard to the opinion of the RFO concerning the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves.

4.13 The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year, subject to any amendments authorised by Council.

5. Procurement

5.1 **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.

5.2 The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.

5.3 Every contract shall comply with ~~these~~ the Council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations, and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.

5.4 **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award, and notification of that contract.**

5.5 Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the Council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:

a. For contracts estimated to exceed £15,001 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Council OR advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with the Councils Procurement Policy.
b. For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the Council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.
c. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT officers shall seek at least three fixed-price quotes.
d. Where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, officers shall try to obtain three estimates or quotes which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
e. For smaller purchases, officers shall seek to achieve value for money.
f. Any renewal of a contract, purchase or service in excess of £1,000 should have a formal Single Source Justification form completed and signed by the Town Clerk.

5.6 **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**

5.7 The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these Regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (a) to (d) below:

a. Specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes.
b. Repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment.
c. Works, goods, or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract.
d. Goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

5.8 When applications are made to waive this Financial Regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the Council or relevant committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

5.9 The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote, or estimate.

5.10 Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure are appended at A: Scheme of Delegation - Responsibility for Spending & Signatories and Budget Holders.

5.11 No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the Council or make any contract on behalf of the Council

5.12 No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the Council or a duly delegated committee acting within its terms of reference except in an emergency. Any report or proposal to a Committee or Council that would result in expenditure exceeding the appropriate budget shall not be considered until it has been reviewed by the RFO and their comments considered in making the decision on the proposal.

5.13 In cases of serious risk to the delivery of Council services or to public safety on Council premises, the Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £25,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement, or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Town Clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council which, in the Clerk's judgement, is strictly necessary where, for reasons of extreme urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by the authority, the time limits for the open or restricted procedures or competitive procedures with negotiation cannot be complied with. For the purposes of this paragraph, the circumstances invoked to justify extreme urgency must not in any event be attributable to the Council. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter. The Town Clerk shall record such expenditure within the payments schedule and, where there is no budgetary provision for the expenditure, report the expenditure and its purpose in writing to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.14 No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into, or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.15 A Purchase Order shall be issued for all work, goods, and services above £1000 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared, or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.16 During the budget year, the RFO, having considered fully the implications, a supplementary estimate may be allocated from any unspent and available budgets which may be transferred to other budget headings ('virement'); however, no virement shall be permitted from salaries budgets. All proposed budget virements to or from reserves will be reported to Finance Committee for approval and ratified by Full Council.

5.17 Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the Business Services Manager.

5.18 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council and Committees with a statement of expenditure and income for the financial year to date against each head of the budget, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against the expected proportion of the budget. Statements are to be prepared at least quarterly and shall show explanations of material variances from budget.

6. Banking and Payments (This section has been reviewed in full)

6.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO, and approved by the Council. Banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. The arrangements shall be regularly reviewed for security and efficiency.

6.2 Council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments. The Council Officers shall have delegated authority to process payments in respect of all authorised items of expenditure as and when, and on a timely basis, to ensure that all invoices are paid in accordance with terms as far as is practicable. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation/dual control or dual payment checking. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised, and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.

6.3 Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses, and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.

6.4 All payments shall be made by online banking/cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the Council or duly delegated committee or a delegated decision by an officer, unless the Council resolves to use a different payment method.

6.5 For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the Council or a duly delegated committee may authorise in advance for the year. Direct debits and Standing Orders are reviewed at each meeting of the Finance Committee.

6.6 The RFO, Business Services Manager, Community Services Manager and Town Clerk shall:

a. Have delegated authority to process all payments in respect of all authorised items of expenditure as and when, and on a timely basis, to ensure that all invoices are paid in accordance with terms as far as is practicable.
b. In exceptional circumstances where payment is required by cheque, these shall be signed by two approved signatories these being the RFO, Business Services Manager, Community Services Manager, two named councillors and the Town Clerk.
c. Any transfer of monies between bank accounts shall be made by any combination of two officers of the Council: the RFO, Business Services Manager, the Town Clerk, the Community Services Manager

7. Electronic payments (This section has been reviewed in full)

7.1 For HSBC internet business banking the Town Clerk shall be appointed as the Primary User. The bank mandate agreed by the Council shall identify three officers who will be Secondary Users. Any of the four officers will have authority to upload and confirm payments on the account. A minimum of two people will be involved in any online payment process. All Secondary Users have access to view the council's bank accounts online.

7.2 The online users are also the account signatories along with two Members of the Finance Committee. As signatories the Councillors do not have online access to view the account. Councillors are provided with a copy of the transactions made from the HSBC after the payments are made and/or can view the online bank account with a Secondary User by appointment.

7.3 HSBC Users are required to use the HSBC app that provides security codes. No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the Council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the Council or a duly delegated committee.

7.4 All invoices where practicable shall be paid by electronic payment.

7.5 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified, and certified for arithmetical accuracy by the relevant budget holder in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation of Financial Responsibility to Spending Officers, or the RFO as appropriate, and to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received.

7.6 Budget holders shall state on the invoice the budget expenditure code and pass the invoice to the RFO or Business Services Manager.

7.7 A Secondary User shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of authorised payments together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to two Members of the Finance Committee and the Town Clerk, Business Services Manager, Community Services Manager and RFO. A combination of any two persons shall verify the payments for accuracy. Evidence shall be retained showing which Members reviewed the payments.

7.8 Two members of staff shall process the electronic payments and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payments had been made shall be retained on the Councils network for audit purposes.

7.9 The officers that have processed the payments, shall confirm by email with two Members of the Finance Committee and the Town Clerk, Community Services Manager, Business Services Manager and RFO that the payments have been made.

7.10 Two Members of the Finance Committee will be required to access the banking system to reconcile the report of all payments made during a given period and recommend to the next meeting of the Finance Committee that each payment made aligns with the invoices and the bank statement. This shall also include card payments, direct debit and

standing order payments for compliance. The Chair of the meeting shall sign a copy of the bank statements for the period being checked.

7.11 A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next Finance Committee meeting. A detailed list of all payments made shall be published on the Councils website after the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee.

7.12 With the approval of the Finance Committee in each case, regular payments (such as rent, Non-Domestic Rates, pension contributions, and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised signatories. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee at least every two years.

7.13 Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the Council provided that each payment is approved by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained, and any payments are reported to the Finance Committee at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the Council as required.

7.14 Regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed by two authorised signatories' evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to Council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee at least every two years.

7.15 Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk and the RFO. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.

7.16 Members and officers shall ensure that any computer or mobile phone used for the Council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

8 Cheque payments

8.1 Cheques for payment made in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two signatories.

8.2 A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3 To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

8.4 Cheques shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a Council or committee meeting. Any

signatures obtained away from Council meetings shall be reported to the Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting.

9 Payment cards

9.1 Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Councils senior officers and will also be restricted to an agreed single transaction maximum value of £250.

9.2 A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Council.

9.3 Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the Council will be specifically restricted to use by the Councils senior officers and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

9.4 Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with Council policy.

9.5 The use of payment cards is appended to this policy at B.

10 Petty Cash

10.1 The Council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash, for example for postage or minor stationery items shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

11 Payment of salaries and allowances

11.1 **As an employer, the Council must plan to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**

11.2 **Councillors' allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**

11.3 Under section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the "power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as authority thinks fit".

11.4 In determining the pay and remuneration of all of its employees, the Council will comply with legislation such as, but not exclusively, the:

- Equality Act 2010.
- Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000.
- Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations.

11.5 The Council aims to pay the Real Living Wage as a minimum.

11.6 The Council adheres to the national pay bargaining for local government employees, and staff pay is determined by the National Joint council (NJC) for Local Government Services and national pay awards are effective from 1 April each year (NJC Green Book) which are agreed by national negotiation between the employers and the trade unions.

11.7 Following the annual National Joint Council's pay agreement the Council's Finance Committee will consider the change to staff hourly pay rates. This is not a review of pay scale point or grade. The agreement is a national recommendation that should be applied, and the matter is progressed forward to Full Council for ratification.

11.8 No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Council or Finance Committee.

11.9 Pay grades are determined in line with the job description of the post. In determining its pay and grading structure and setting remuneration levels for all posts, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure, balanced against the need to be able to recruit and retain employees who are able to meet the requirements of providing high-quality services to the community.

11.10 New appointments will normally be made at the minimum of the relevant grade, although this can be varied where necessary to secure the best candidate, and to recognise continuous service. From time to time, it may be necessary to take account of the external pay market in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills, and capacity. Where necessary, the Council will ensure the requirement for such is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using appropriate data sources available from within and outside the local government sector.

11.11 Council is responsible for recruiting and agreeing the terms of the Town Clerk position. The Finance Committee are responsible for decision making in relation to the recruitment, terms, and conditions in relation to all other employees of the Council. The Scheme of Delegation sets out the various delegations.

11.12 Employees can progress to the salary range maximum of their grade subject to satisfactory work performance or completing sector specific qualifications.

11.13 Subject to qualifying conditions, all employees have a right to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. In addition, the Council operates pensions 'Auto Enrolment' as required by the Pensions Act 2008

11.14 All salaries shall be calculated in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating.

11.15 Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts provided that each payment is reported to the next available Finance Committee meeting.

11.16 Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these Regulations above.

11.17 Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:

a. By any Councillor who can demonstrate a need to know.
b. By the internal auditor.
c. By the external auditor or
d. By any person authorised under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 or any superseding legislation.

11.18 The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have been paid.

11.19 The Council's payroll service shall, on instructions from the RFO, calculate, and provide records for all salaries and related costs for Council Officers. The payroll service shall deal with all relevant correspondence and complete all required forms relating to the Council's payroll and pensions. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the Finance Committee to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

11.20 Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the Council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full Council.

11.21 Before employing interim staff, the Council must consider a full business case.

12 Loans and investments

12.1 Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

12.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the Full Council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

12.3 The Council shall consider the requirement for an investment strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant Regulations, proper practices, and guidance. Any strategy and policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

12.4 All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the Council.

12.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

12.6 Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these Regulations.

13 Income

13.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

13.2 The Council will review all fees and charges at least annually. Fees and charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be reviewed and agreed annually by Full Council, following a report by the Business Services Manager. Charges shall be notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of accounts due to the Council.

13.3 Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The Council’s approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

13.4 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be deposited intact with the Council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

13.5 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

13.6 The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the Council's accounting software promptly and complete any claim for the refund of VAT that is required. Such repayment claims, due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33, shall be made at least quarterly, including the financial year end.

13.7 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO, who shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

13.8 The Council shall not accept the receipt of sums of cash more than £250, nor smaller amounts which have been disaggregated to avoid this limit.

14 Payments under contracts for building or other construction works.

14.1 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.

14.2 Any variation of addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk or Business Services Manager to the contractor in writing, with the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

14.3 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to the retention of any percentage withheld as may be agreed in the particular contract).

15 Stores and equipment

15.1 The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment appropriate to their section.

15.2 Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.

15.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

15.4 The Business Services Manager shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

16 Assets, properties, and estates

16.1 The Councils solicitor shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Council.

16.2 The Councils solicitor and RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date of all properties held by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

16.3 The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

16.4 No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

16.5 No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased, or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £25,000.

17 Insurance

17.1 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the Council's review of risk management. The Town Clerk/Services & Contracts Manager/RFO shall ensure that all assets for which they are responsible are protected against loss or damaged, maintained appropriately and subject to periodic safety inspections.

17.2 The Clerk and officers shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

17.3 The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage, or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the Council at the next available meeting. The RFO/Business Services Manager shall negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.

17.4 All appropriate members and employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the Council, following advice from the RFO.

18 Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

18.1 The Council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk and RFO shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the Council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

18.2 The Council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the Council to act unlawfully.

18.3 The Council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions, or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendices:

A. Scheme of Delegation – Authority to spend and signatories
B. Budget Holders
C. Debit and Credit Card Policy

Adopted: 2015

Version Control Table

Title	Financial Regulations V1.052015			
Description	Governance Policy – requires annual review			
Created By	Town Clerk			
Date Created	May 2015			
Maintained By	Town Clerk/Legal/RFO/SCM			
Version Number	**Modified By**	**Modifications Made**	**Date Modified**	**Status**
V1	T/C, RFO & SCM	Changes to banking operations and electronic payments	25/11/25	Live

Penrith Town Council
Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

Scheme of Delegation of Financial Responsibility for Spending & Signatories/Secondary Users

This Council delegates spending responsibilities to certain officers, and with certain limits. This list has recently been reviewed and is as follows:

Officer	Limit
Town Clerk Signatory/PU/Card holder	Any expenditure that is within the budgets approved by Full Council
Responsible Finance Officer Signatory/SU	Any expenditure that is within the budgets approved by Full Council
Business Services Manager Signatory/SU/card holder	Any expenditure that is within the budgets approved by Full Council
Solicitor	Any expenditure that is within the budgets approved by Full Council
Community Services Manager Signatory/SU/Card holder	Any expenditure that is within the budgets approved by Full Council
Events Manager	Any expenditure that is within the budgets approved by Full Council

Where an authorisation would result in an individual budget being overspent then the necessary virement should be approved and actioned before authorisation takes place by the RFO and Town Clerk.

1. It is an expressed requirement of this Protocol that all Officers abide by the following:
    a) Standing Orders
    b) Financial Regulations.
    c) Procurement Strategy particularly in respect of the threshold figures for seeking quotations.
    d) Any expenditure must be authorised from an approved budget.
    e) Any leasing of equipment can only be entered into with the specific approval of the Responsible Financial Officer or the Town Clerk.
2. Any breach of any aspect of this Protocol will lead to action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Penrith Town Council
Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

APPENDIX B

Budget Holders

ASSETS SERVICES	Business Services Manager
FINANCE COMMITTEE • Legal matters	Town Clerk Solicitor
PLANNING COMMITTEE	Planning Committee Clerk
COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE: • Town Project • Climate Change • Corporate Communications • Grants • Town Projects	Community Services Manager
• Arts, Culture & leisure	Events Manager

Penrith Town Council
Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

APPENDIX C

Debit And Credit Card Policy

Wherever possible an order should be made and paid for with an invoice. However, it is recognised that this may not always be the most efficient option in relation to low value spend and so, the use of debit and cards is permitted but must only be used to acquire goods and services for approved Council business.

This policy is intended to provide detailed guidance and assistance in obtaining and using Penrith Town Council debit and credit cards and describes the responsibilities and restrictions which cardholders must accept before being provided with any such card.

Any attempt by the cardholder to make changes to the Councils terms and conditions of the card or the associated bank account will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

1. Obtaining Cards

a) All cards are issued for the sole purpose of facilitating the conducting of Council business that cannot be paid for by invoice.
b) Debit and credit cards must only be used by the authorised signatory named on the card and must not be used by any other person.

2. Use of Cards

a) Cards can be used for on-line and point of sale transactions in accordance with this policy document, within the pre-defined limits of the accounts.
b) A receipt must be obtained and provided, together with an expense sheet (where appropriate), to the Town Clerk.
c) The cardholder must ensure that the correct amount is received at the point of receipt and register any discrepancies with the bank/store immediately, or the following working day if out of normal business hours.
d) If any purchase contains any charges for VAT, a proper VAT receipt or invoice should be obtained.
e) Transactions and supporting documents (such as receipts) must be kept for a period of six years plus the current financial year by the relevant department for audit and HMRC purposes.

f) Payments made via debit card are limited to the cleared funds available in the pre-paid account.

3. **Reconciliation and Inspection**

a) All debit card transactions will appear on the bank account's bank statement, the receipts/invoices obtained must be reconciled to the statement, monthly as a minimum.
b) All credit card transactions will appear on the credit card account statement, the receipts/invoices obtained must be reconciled to the statement, on a monthly basis as a minimum.
c) All receipts and the reconciliation schedule must be checked and authorised by the RFO, Business Services Manager, and Town Clerk. A segregation of duties by a minimum of two persons must be maintained at all times.

4. Restrictions

a) Debit and credit cards must not be used for any non-Council business or personal expenses.
b) Only secure sites should be used to make purchases via the internet with a web address beginning HTTPS.
c) The only person authorised to use the card is the cardholder. Card details are NOT to be retained by an online website.
d) The cardholder shall not make any attempt to change the terms and conditions on which the card is held.
e) The cardholder must not share any account details or passwords in respect of transactions with anyone else.

5. **Security**

a) The card will only ever be used by the person named on the card.
b) It is the personal responsibility of the card holder to ensure the card is kept secure at all times and cannot be accessed by any other persons. Reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the card details cannot be viewed or overheard by any other persons.
c) Passwords or other details relating to the debit card or cardholder must not be written down.
d) Debit cards details must not be stored where others may have access to them.
e) It is recommended for security reasons that wherever possible transactions are processed by the cardholder being physically present at the point of sale.
f) The card's Security PIN number must be kept secure and not disclosed to anyone else, under any circumstances.
g) The bank must be notified immediately if the card is lost or stolen, or fraudulent use is suspected.
h) The cardholder will surrender their card to the Town Clerk when the cardholder leaves the employment of the Council, or if circumstances change so that a card is no longer required. The card should then be destroyed by the Town Clerk and the provider notified.
i) Staff will be held personally liable for any transactions processed through the card until the time when the card is physically surrendered.

j) If the cardholder misuses the card or fraudulently uses the card or knowingly permits any other person to use the card, this will result in disciplinary action being taken against the cardholder.

Version Control Table Template

Title	Financial Regulations			
Description	Financial Governance Policy – requires annual review			
Created By	Town Clerk			
Date Created	May 2015			
Maintained By	Town Clerk/RFO/BSM			
Version Number	**Modified By**	**Modifications Made**	**Date Modified**	**Status**
V2.0052015	TC/RFO/SCM	Payments process and banking procedures	November 2025	Live
V3.	TC	Roles title and staff changes	March 26	Live

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

MEETING: FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 09 November 2026

REPORT: Reserves Policy

AUTHOR: Responsible Finance Officer

ITEM NUMBER: 12

Does the report contain information which has been identified as confidential?

☐ Yes ☑ No

PUBLIC REPORT

1. Recommendations/Decision Required:

The Committee is recommended to consider the Reserves Policy and:

i. approve for the uncommitted budget of £15,000 in the Play Area Reserve allocated for Penrith South to be retained for a further 12 months to May 2028.
ii. approve for the £50,000 to create a new Pump Track, enabling the Council to make a future capital contribution to Westmorland and Furness Council be retained for a further twelve months to May 2028.
iii. Forward the draft Reserves Policy, with any amendments, to Council for ratification.

2. Council Plan priorities

This report contributes to the Performance theme in that the Council will comply with all financial and legal requirements for the lawful of the Council.

3. Report Details

Legislation recognises that local councils require financial reserves and must take account of them in determining their precept, and as such the Council reviews its Reserves Policy annually.

Types of Reserve and Accounting Framework
Two types of reserve are relevant to the Town Council:

The general reserve or general fund working balance, which is used to provide working capital, smooth the impact of uneven cash flows to avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing and act as a contingency in the event of sharp budgetary changes or unexpected events or emergencies. The availability of resources also offers scope to pursue opportunities when they are recognised. Unless allocated for a specific purpose, revenue

budget underspending and windfalls are added to the working balance. The size of the general reserve should be set at a prudent level based on a risk assessment.

Earmarked reserves, which are set aside for a specific purpose, being used to build up funds to meet known, planned or predicted spending requirements.

In accounting terms, similar to the legal position, all reserves belong to the general fund and are interchangeable, unless restricted by deed or covenant. Distinct book entries in the budget and accounts should be made to record the transactions to and from reserves. It should also be noted that the terms "reserve" and "fund" are interchangeable, and it is common to refer to each by either name.

Accounting convention does not permit the payment of interest directly to reserves. If it is decided that interest should be allocated to a reserve, the mechanism is for an equivalent contribution to be made from the revenue account (where the interest is earned) to the reserve.
Similarly, expenditure should not be charged directly to a reserve; the expenditure is accounted for in the revenue account and an equivalent amount transferred from the reserves to replenish the revenue account.

Creation and Use of Reserves

As a general and prudent rule, reserves should not be used to fund recurring expenditure (i.e. the day-to-day operational costs of running the Council) as this could lead to funding problems in subsequent years when the expenditure continues after the reserve has been exhausted. An exception is the general reserve, which can be used as a regulator to limit precept and council tax increases or to avoid an unacceptably high level being carried forward.

Because they have a potential to affect the Council's budget, the creation of reserves and the transfers between the revenue account and those reserves should be explicit and conscious decisions taken by the Council as a whole, as should any decision to allocate interest to a reserve.

Draft Policy

The attached draft policy summarises the principles from this report and suggests target levels for each of the Council's reserves. The 2025-26 Policy reduced the target balance for the General Reserve to 30% of net expenditure, to be achieved by 31 March 2027. Members should note that the JPAG accounting guidance suggests that, for an authority with a budget over £200,000, a general reserve of 3 months' net expenditure (i.e. 25%) should be appropriate, depending on its circumstances. The RFO's view and Members previous views have been that this percentage level would be inappropriate in the context of the Council's ambitions and potential risk.

The Assets Reserve is money set aside to include the risk of new or existing devolved assets requiring refurbishment or repair costs. Full Council approved 15 December 2025, that contributions to the reserve cease at the 31 March 2026 and the budget is capped at £200,000.

The elections earmarked reserve will continue to have a £5,000 annual contribution to meet the costs of Parish Council elections scheduled for May 2027 and any one off by elections where Westmorland and Furness Council would recharge the Council, although this may need to be reviewed in the future on the finalisation of the new Westmorland and Furness Council elections recharging policy consultation.

The Play Area earmarked reserve is established for the term of this Council and allocates £90,000, being £15,000 per ward. Heading into the new term of Council five of the six wards has benefitted from the reserve allocation other than Penrith South where a balance of £15,000 remains uncommitted. It is recommended that a reserve budget of £15,000 allocated for Penrith South remains and be retained for a further 12 months to May 2028.

A new Pump Track earmarked reserve has been created. The reserve has an allocation of £50,000, which would be used as a capital contribution payable to Westmorland and Furness Council towards a proposed new pump track facility in Penrith. The reserve was created by a transfer of funds from the General Reserve. Full Council, 21 May 2025, Minute PTC25/08 considered and supported a motion to progress with a Pump Track project in Penrith. A reserve of £50,000 is initially earmarked for the remaining term of this Council, however due to delays in progressing the project it is recommended that the reserve be retained for a further 12 months to May 2028.

Implications

4. Legal

The Council is required, under statute, to maintain adequate financial reserve to meet the needs of the organisation.

The requirement for financial reserves is acknowledged in statute. Sections 31A, 32, 42A and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require billing and precepting authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.

For best practice the Council has referred to the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners Guide March 2025.

5. Resources

The approach to reserves is a fundamental aspect of the financial management of the Council.

6. Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

7. Biodiversity & Climate Change

There are no biodiversity and climate change implications associated with this report.

8. Risks and other Considerations

The Council is unable to meet regular or unforeseen expenditure due to a lack of readily available funds which may result in overspendings leading to unwelcome curtailment of spending programmes; possible unpalatable council tax increases; potential reputational damage. Controls required to mitigate the risk is an analysis of the financial risks and the maintenance of adequate reserves to meet all reasonably foreseeable eventualities.

9. Background Information/Documents

JPAG Practitioners Guide.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Reserves Policy.

Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

RESERVES POLICY

PURPOSE

The Town Council maintains two types of reserves, for differing reasons:

- a General Reserve (the General Fund working balance), which provides working capital and a buffer against financial risks; and
- earmarked reserves to meet known, planned or predicted spending requirements which have been identified specifically.

The Council acknowledges that there is a balance to be struck between holding excessive reserves raised from public monies and retaining a prudent level of funds. It will therefore take advice from its Responsible Finance Officer on the adequacy and appropriateness of its reserves, primarily when setting its revenue budget.

1. GENERAL RESERVE

This reserve represents the balance on the Council's revenue account, i.e. the account which records all its financial transactions. Unless allocated for a specific purpose, revenue budget underspending and windfalls are added to the working balance, while overspendings are taken from the balance.

The balance provides working capital to assist the Council's cash flow, acts as a buffer against unexpected events or expenditure and provides funds for opportunities to be pursued. The optimum level for the working balance is determined by an assessment of the Council's potential exposure to financial risks, together with a judgement of the extent to which earmarked reserves can support its cash flow on a temporary basis.

The medium-term target for the reserve is to accumulate a balance equivalent to 30% of net revenue expenditure by 31 March 2027 (Full Council, 13 January 2025. Minute PTC24/83i). This is to be achieved by regular annual contributions from the revenue account, where necessary. The level of contributions will be determined annually, taking account of the impact on council taxpayers and the availability of earmarked reserves.

2. EARMARKED RESERVES

Other than any funds governed by legal conditions, the earmarking of reserves is at the discretion of the Council and monies can be moved from one to another if required. Reserves do not generally accrue interest on the investment of their funds.

In order to avoid future over-commitment, the day-to-day operational costs of running the Council are to be met from the revenue budget and reserves shall not be used to fund recurring expenditure.

Assets Reserve (formerly Devolution): This reserve is credited with the difference (while positive) between the council tax income equivalent to the special expenses previously levied in Penrith and the net cost of the assets transferred. The reserve provides a cushion against the full cost of those assets being higher than expected renovation and/or improvements. The reserve has been capped at £200,000 as from the 31 March 2026.

Elections Reserve: This reserve supports the costs in the future of Parish Council Elections and any one off by election costs and recharges. An allocation of £30,000 met from underspends in the 2022-23 financial year, and thereafter a contribution of £5,000 per annum over the full term of the MTFP. The annual contribution may need to be reviewed in the future on the finalisation of the new Westmorland and Furness Council elections recharging policy consultation.

Play Area Reserve: This reserve has been established to fund the improvement and enhancement of new or existing play areas and multi-use games areas in Penrith over the remaining term of this Council. An uncommitted budget of £15,000 allocated for Penrith South remains and be retained for a further 12 months to May 2028.

Pump Track Reserve: This reserve would enable the Council to make a capital contribution towards a Pump Track facility which would be commissioned by Westmorland and Furness Council. A reserve of £50,000 is initially earmarked for the remaining term of this Council, however due to delays in progressing the project the reserve be retained for a further 12 months to May 2028.

3. ESTABLISHMENT AND USE OF RESERVES

The Annex to this policy provides further details of the Council's current reserves with a target range for each one.

The establishment or closing of an earmarked reserve requires a formal decision of Council. Similarly, the approval of Council is required for all contributions and transfers to reserves, and all use of reserves to fund expenditure.

Review: This policy will be subject to annual review.

Last Review: December 2025

Reserve	Purpose	Target level
General Reserves		
General Reserve (General Fund Working Balance)	• Provision of working capital. • Buffer against uneven cash flows, inflationary pressures, sharp budgetary changes, unexpected events or emergencies. • Ability to pursue opportunities when identified.	• Assessed primarily on the basis of financial risks to the Council. • Medium-term target to be 30% of net revenue expenditure by 31 March 2027. • Minimum level: £150,000 • Range: £150,000 to £300,000
Earmarked Reserves		
Assets Reserve	• Accumulation of funds in the early years of devolved asset transfers. • Cushion against the longer-term full costs of devolved assets being higher than expected renovation and/or improvements.	• Based on the allocation of the difference (while positive) between the income equivalent to the special expenses previously levied in Penrith via council tax and the net cost of devolved assets. • Typical Range: £50,000 to £200,000
Elections Reserve	• To meet the costs of Parish Council Elections in 2027 and any one off by elections and general election recharges.	• £30,000 met from underspends in 2022-23 financial year. • A contribution of £5,000 per annum over the full term of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, 31 March 2030. • Range: £30,000 to £60,000

Reserve	Purpose	Target level
Play Area Reserve	• To fund the improvement and enhancement of new or existing play areas and multi-use games areas in Penrith. over the remaining term of this Council.	• £15,000 towards Penrith South • Allocated to May 2028. • Range: £0.01 to £15,000
Pump Track	• To make a capital contribution towards the proposed new Pump Track which Westmorland and Furness Council will be leading.	• Aim to be spent by May 2028. • Range: £0.01 to £50,000

MEETING: FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 09 November 2026

REPORT: Investment Strategy 2027-28

AUTHOR: Responsible Finance Officer

ITEM NUMBER: 13

Does the report contain information which has been identified as confidential?

☐ Yes ☑ No

PUBLIC REPORT

1. Recommendations/Decision Required:

The Committee is recommended to consider the draft Investment strategy 2027-28 and forward it, with any amendments, to Council for ratification.

2. Council Plan priorities

This report contributes to the Performance theme in that the Council will comply with all financial and legal requirements for the lawful operation of the Council.

3. Report Details

Background

The detailed rationale for the policy is described here so that Members are fully aware of the considerations underlying investment decisions, notably the risks involved with investing funds with other organisations.

The statutory guidance details safeguards for financial and non-financial investments, focusing on:

- Excessive exposure to financial risk through borrowing and investment decisions;
- Insufficient transparency to understand that exposure; and
- Councillors' understanding of complex financial transactions.

Types of Investment

The guidance classes investments into two main categories:

- Investments held for treasury management purposes; and
- Other investments, including non-financial assets.

In each case, the Council must state the contribution that the investment makes to its objectives; for the first category, it is sufficient to state that

they support effective treasury management activities. Those activities should then follow the principles set out in the Treasury Management Code.

The Town Council does not have any investment in non-financial assets and has no plans to acquire any (operational assets used in service delivery are not considered to be investments). The remainder of this report therefore deals solely with investments managed as a treasury activity; should the Council decide to invest in non-financial assets, the guidance will need to be revisited and the Strategy revised.

Principles

Prudent investment has two underlying objectives, in this order:

- **Security** – protecting the capital sum invested from loss; and
- **Liquidity** – ensuring the funds are available when needed.

Only when these objectives have been fulfilled, should **yield** be considered. An individual investment must be assessed in terms of the Council's appetite for risk, within the parameters stated in the strategy.

The Committee should note that the Financial Services Compensation Scheme no longer applies to the Council, however its compensation value of £120,000 should continue to be used in the Council's strategy as a workable limit which accepts a reasonable degree of risk for investments in suitable organisations.

Financial Investments

These can be categorised as:

- Specified investments.
- Loans; and
- Other, non-specified investments.

Specified investments are in sterling, repayable within 12 months and made with a high-quality investment scheme, the UK Government or another local authority.

The guidance outlines controls on loans made by authorities; again, these do not affect this Council.

Non-specified investments are any other financial investment; these carry a higher level of risk and would need specialist advice. For 2027-28, the Council's strategy should exclude this type of investment.

Capacity and Skills

The strategy should include a description of the steps taken to ensure that elected members and statutory officers have the appropriate capacity and skills to enable them to make informed decisions.

Investment Prospects 2027-28

Members will realise that interest rates have stabilised this year, with the latest bank rate at 3.75%. Economic observers predict that rates will continue to slowly fall next year.

These interest rates reflect the level of inflation, which was 2.9% in July 2026. Observers suggest that inflation levels will fall back in 2027 working towards the Governments 2% target, albeit there is some uncertainty partly due to ongoing global factors.

The Council's income from investments has reduced this year and next years budget expects this to reduce again from the present level.

Draft Strategy

The attached draft strategy is unchanged from the existing policy, other than the section relating to 2027-28 activities. It sets out the approach that the Town Council should take in respect of financial investments. The Committee should consider particularly the section on risk parameters and the suggested organisations with which the Council should invest, so the following paragraphs repeat the advice given in previous years.

The Council invests with the Penrith Building Society. Building societies are not credit rated so it is difficult to assess the risk attached to investing in an individual society, therefore the draft policy generally excludes smaller building societies.

Penrith Building Society has assets of around £130 million and is the smallest of 43 societies in the country; although a rigid policy would exclude it as a counterparty because of its small size, Members have previously felt that it is a well-run organisation which they would wish to support. The draft strategy acknowledges this and whilst limits the investment to £85,000 recommends that the RFO, in consultation with the Town Clerk, will place funds in other investments available through the Penrith Building Society which may earn a higher interest return.

(Members should note that the £85,000 limit refers to the principal investment of funds; interest will accrue in these accounts and may increase the investment above the limit by a modest amount.)

The Council's main investment is in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund, which is a pooled investment available to local authorities. The Fund currently has a value of over £1.35 billion, invested in a range of high-quality institutions, and itself has the highest credit rating for a money market fund. By investing in the Fund, an authority has the benefit of buying into a share of that pool, with a consequent reduction in risk.

The RFO, in consultation with the Town Clerk Council will place funds in other UK banks or building societies subject to the parameters set out in the Investment Strategy.

Implications

4. Legal

The Council has the power to invest for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment, or for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs (section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003, the '2003 Act').

Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments (3rd Edition) issued under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003 is effective from 1 April 2018 and provides guidance on investments. The Guidance has statutory force and is mandatory where the investments of a town council exceed or are expected to exceed £100,000 at any point in a financial year. Town councils where investments are expected to exceed £10,000 are encouraged to adopt the principles in the Guidance.

Where the Guidance is mandatory, or where a council has adopted the principles in the Guidance, the Council must, at a Full Council meeting, adopt an investment strategy for each financial year. Where a material change is proposed during the year, a revised strategy must be approved before the change is implemented.

The Guidance encourages transparency and local accountability in investment management.

Two codes of practice issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) contain investment guidance which complements the Government guidance. These publications are:

- Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross- Sectoral Guidance Notes
- The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

5. Resources

The Council's reserves and surplus working capital are invested pending their use and therefore need to be protected against loss. The income earned from investment is of secondary importance.

6. Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

7. Biodiversity & Climate Change

There are no biodiversity and climate change implications associated with this report.

8. Risks and other Considerations

The main identified risks are failure of an investment counterparty leading to the loss of Council funds and non-compliance with legal requirements or statutory guidance. The consequence of the risks may be unwelcome curtailment of spending programmes; possible unpalatable council tax increase; potential reputational damage leading to criticism from internal/external audit; reputational damage. To mitigate these risks the Council shall adhere to a robust and prudent investment strategy which incorporates the safeguards in the Government's guidance.

9. Background Information/Documents

- Building Societies Association factsheet
- CCLA website.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Investment Strategy 2027-28

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Appendix A

DRAFT INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2027-28

PURPOSE

The Town Council invests reserves and surplus funds which are not immediately required to meet expenditure.

This strategy provides a framework for the secure and prudent investment of those monies and adopts the relevant principles of statutory guidance issued under the Local Government Act 2003 and of CIPFA codes of practice.

INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

The Council invests monies for treasury management purposes.

Its priorities in investing surplus funds are:

- **Security** (protecting the investment from loss).
- **Liquidity** (ensuring the money is available for expenditure when needed).
  and, providing the above objectives have been met,
- Obtaining the best **Yield**.

Investment opportunities are assessed in terms of these objectives; the Council aims to obtain the best possible return commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.

TYPES OF INVESTMENT

The Council will not invest in non-financial assets such as commercial property.

The Council will only place funds in specified investments, as defined by the Secretary of State, which offer high security and high liquidity. These investments are made in the Council's name and are:

- made in sterling;
- have a maturity of no more than one year; and
- with a counterparty which is the UK Government, a local authority or a body of high credit quality.

For the 2027-28 financial year, the Council does not intend to use non-specified investments (i.e. those which do not meet these criteria) as these are generally considered to be of higher risk and would require specialist advice.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council's investments no longer qualify for the Financial Services Compensation Scheme up to £120,000; however, this is considered to be an acceptable limit for investments in organisations of good credit quality. Larger amounts can be invested with organisations of high credit quality.

The Council does not employ external treasury advisors or subscribe to a credit rating agency. It bases its assessment of the risk attaching to potential investments with counterparties on their publicly available information, organisational structure and asset size.

The Council will also have regard to the amount of funds placed with a single institution.

APPROVED COUNTERPARTIES

The following counterparties are approved for the investment of surplus funds by the Council, with a duration of no longer than twelve months:

- HM Government and its agencies
- Local Authorities
- UK Clearing Banks
- Building Societies with an asset base in excess of £1,000 million or smaller societies where there are strategic or local considerations, limited to a principal investment of £85,000 with a single society.
- UK FCA regulated qualifying money market funds with an AAA rating (Fitch credit rating).

TREASURY MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All new investments are made in the name of the Town Council and will be approved by Full Council, having taken advice from the Responsible Financial Officer, who has knowledge and experience of the CIPFA codes of practice.

The Finance Committee oversees investment activities and the drafting of changes to this strategy.

Members of the Committee are suitably experienced and understand the nature of investment risks. Where necessary, their knowledge will be supplemented by formal or informal training.

ACTIVITIES FOR 2027-28

The Town Council plans to maintain its investments in the Penrith Building Society up to £85,000. The RFO, in consultation with the Town Clerk, will have authority to place funds in other investments available through the Penrith Building Society which may earn a higher interest return.

As it receives its full annual precept income early in the financial year, the Council will have surplus funds for most of the year, and these will be invested in the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund until needed.

At the discretion of the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO), in consultation with the Town Clerk, Council will place funds in other UK banks or building societies subject to the parameters in this strategy.

As the Council does not have a long history of managing its cash flow actively, it will adopt a cautious approach to investing surplus monies to ensure that its bank account balance is always sufficient to meet short-term requirements.

REVIEW

This strategy will be subject to annual review in advance of each financial year.

REVIEW: ANNUAL

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

MEETING: FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 09 November 2026

REPORT: Seats on the Pategill Estate

AUTHOR: Business Services Manager

ITEM NUMBER: 15

Does the report contain information which has been identified as confidential?

☐ Yes ☑ No

PUBLIC REPORT

1. Recommendations/Decision Required:

The Committee is recommended to approve the adoption of three seats on the Pategill estate and if minded to support to determine whether to approve a budget for the repair or replacement of the seats.

2. Council Plan priorities

This report contributes to the Place theme in that the Council will invest and manage assets.

3. Report Details

Background

Cllr Bowen, the member for the Pategill Ward has requested that the Council consider whether to adopt and either repair or replace three seats on the Pategill estate.

The three seats are all located on Pategill Road and despite enquiries with potential owners of the seats including the Pategill Tenants and Residents Association, Westmorland and Furness Council and Eden Housing Association there are no known and confirmed persons or organisations responsible for the ownership and upkeep.

Cllr Bowen has had further discussions with the Pategill Tenants and residents Association who would support the Council being responsible for the seats going forward.

With this being the case, it is recommended that the Council adopt the seats and add them to the Council's Asset register. The Council would be responsible for insurance and future maintenance.

Given that the seats were installed around the millennium period and are showing signs of ageing this report asks Members to consider approving a budget to either repair or replace the seats.

Implications

4. Legal

The Council would add the seats to its Asset Register and update its insurance schedule.

5. Resources

The costs to replace the seats with the Council's preferred design and style would be in the region of £900 per unit. Repair costs would be subject to quotations based on an assessment of the needs for each seat.

6. Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

7. Biodiversity & Climate Change

There are no biodiversity and climate change implications associated with this report.

8. Risks and other Considerations

The main identified risks are financial and as such this report asks Members to consider the budget implications as part of the report recommendations.

9. Background Information/Documents

None.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Seat Locations

Appendix A – Seat Locations

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date: 09 November 2026

Public Report

Matter: Finance Committee Workplan Report

Item no: 16

Author: Business Services Manager and Responsible Finance Officer

Supporting Member: Cllr Shepherd, Chair of Finance Committee

Purpose of Report: To inform and update members on the progress of the Finance Committee Work Plan.

Background:

This report provides an update on the progress of various areas of work related to budgets associated with the Finance Committee work for the 2026/27 year.

Penrith Town Council Business Plan 2025-2028			Finance Committee Workplan 2025/26				
Priority	**Action**	**Lead**	**Service Area**	**Action**	**Officer**	**Progress**	**Status**
Place	The Council will invest and mange our own assets whilst supporting key partners and community groups to invest in their own.	BSM	Assets	Manage and improve community assets and amenities.	BSM CSM CSO	Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2026 season monitored. Community Caretaker contract being delivered. Asset Services scheduled.	Complete In Progress In Progress
				Work with the principal authority to devolve assets and amenities to Penrith Town Council.	BSM	Carleton Park letter sent to W&F	In Progress
	Work with Westmorland and Furness Council and stakeholders to have a safe, healthy, clean, green, and tidy town.	BSM	Assets	Via an earmarked reserve for play areas work in partnership to maintain and make improvements to these valuable community spaces.	BSM	£15,000 ringfenced for the Scaws Recreation Group Play Area project.	In Progress
						£9,000 committed to improvements at Milton St (Penrith North).	Complete
						Play Area improvements scheduled for Fairhill.	Complete
						£15k commence discussions for £15k Penrith South Play scheme.	No progress
				Implementation of Signage and Wayfinding services project.	BSM, CSM	Contractor appointed and scheme of work progressing. Defects period	In Progress
	Work with Westmorland and Furness Council and stakeholders to have a safe, healthy, clean, green, and tidy town.	BSM	Assets	Maintain provide, and support schemes for additional equipment, bins, resources, benches to improve the street scene.	BSM	Seats and Shelters Service Development budget, resolution to explore new bus shelter at Sainsbury.	In Progress
						Approval given to Westmorland and Furness Council for installation of cycle storage facilities at Cornmarket.	In Progress

Penrith Town Council Business Plan 2025-2028			Finance Committee Workplan 2025/26				
Priority	**Action**	**Lead**	**Service Area**	**Action**	**Officer**	**Progress**	**Status**
Partnership	The Council will collaborate with and support stakeholder groups and community organisations that provide a community benefit.	BSM	Assets	Encourage and support Penrith Allotment Association to have fully occupied and well-maintained allotments, providing funding for improvements.	BSM	Allotments Service Development budget approved. Schemes of work progressing in partnership with PAA.	In Progress
						PAA Committee meetings held at PTC office. Lease review.	In Progress
			Assets	Seek to take forward and support the installation of a new pump track in Penrith	BSM, CSM CSO	Awaiting site confirmation.	In Progress
Performance	The Council will be professional, open, and accountable with sound financial management of Council resources.	RFO	Finance	Comply with all financial and legal requirements for the lawful operation of the Council and its organisations.	RFO, TC	Internal Auditor appointed, with approved internal audit plan.	Complete
				Source locally wherever possible and achieve value for money	All	Procurement Policy to be reviewed. IT contract to be reviewed.	In Progress
		RFO	Finance	Meet financial and risk management requirements including the assessment of risk for significant projects.	RFO, BSM	Corporate risk assessments to be approved in September.	Complete
		RFO	Finance	Approve, deliver and monitor a budget including reserves and investments.	RFO	Budgetary control reports to Committee. Payments report to Committee. Bank Reconciliations to Committee	In Progress

Penrith Town Council Business Plan 2025-2028			Finance Committee Workplan 2025/26				
Priority	**Action**	**Lead**	**Service Area**	**Action**	**Officer**	**Progress**	**Status**
Projects	The Council will provide consistent, quality services and strive for continuous improvement for all activities, processes, operations, policies and decisions.	RFO	Finance	Regularly review policies and strategies. Identify potential use of Artificial Intelligence for business efficiency.	RFO, BSM	JPAG Guidance adopted Staff training course attended. Use of Co-Pilot	Complete In Progress