



Version Number	2
Approved	18/09/23 by the Trustee Board
Next Review	August 2026

Finance Policy

1. Introduction

- a) The Trustees who serve on the Trustee Board of 1st Linslade Scout Group have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Group is well managed and that all Group income is managed properly and put to best use.
- b) The Treasurer, acting on behalf of the other Trustees, has *operational* responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance of Group finances.
- c) Financial records are kept so that the Group can:
 - a. meet its legal and other obligations, regarding the Policy, Organisation & Rules (POR), of The Scout Association, Charity Law, HMRC and common law.
 - b. enable the Trustees to be in proper financial control of the Group.
 - c. enable the Group to meet any obligations and requirements of any funders should there be any.
- d) Every Group, District and County is a separate unincorporated charity and is under a statutory obligation to keep proper books of account.
- e) The Trustee Board will ensure that appropriate financial records are kept, including:
 - a. an account book or computer printouts recording all the transactions in the Group's bank account(s). The Trustees agreed to use a web-based accounting package (Xero Accounting Software).
 - b. bank statements or equivalent
 - c. a petty cash book (for any cash payments)
 - d. details of all funds received
 - e. invoices and other receipts for all payments

2. Statement of Accounts

- a) Our financial year ends on 31 March.
- b) We will draw up accounts at the end of the financial year and have them examined by a suitable person who is independent of the Group. Our annual end of year accounts will be reviewed and approved by the Trustee Board and then presented at the

Group's Annual General Meeting.

- c) We will send a signed copy of the Trustees' annual report and accounts to the District Treasurer within the 14 days following the Annual General Meeting.
- d) A copy of the annual report and accounts will be submitted to the Charities Commission within ten months of the financial year end.
- e) The format will be in a model approved by the Scouts Association as described in the POR Chapter 5.5.

3. Setting and Monitoring the Budget

- a) Before the start of the financial year, we will set a budget for the following year which will be approved by the Trustee Board.
- b) We will discuss a financial report at each Trustee Board meeting showing income and expenditure against budget, an explanation of key variances and recommended actions and current bank balances. This will be a written report and will provide the Trustees with enough information to make good decisions. When possible, it will also show expected/forecast future receipts and payments.

4. Bank accounts

- a) The Group maintains its main current account with Barclays, Leicester, LE87 2BB.
- b) All bank transactions for the Group go through our current account. If we pay money into any other account, it will be as a transfer from the current account.
- c) Two or more members of the Trustee Board are signatories to the bank accounts one of whom must be the Treasurer.

The bank mandate lists the people who can sign payments. Changes to the bank mandate will be approved by the Trustee Board and minuted.

- d) Any withdrawals or transfers between accounts are signed or digitally authorized via online banking, by two of the signatories one of whom will be Treasurer.
- e) The bank provides monthly statements every month and we reconcile the statements against our online accounts.

5. Income

- a) If we receive *cash* we issue a receipt and keep a copy. Leaders are advised to avoid accepting cash payments from members where possible.
- b) Where we receive cash from the public e.g. at fundraising events, two members of the Group, who are authorised by the Trustee Board, will together count the cash, make a note of the total and sign for it.

- c) When the Treasurer collects cash from a Group member, the Treasurer issues a receipt.
- d) Details of cash received will be entered appropriately in the cashbook (or equivalent).
- e) We bank all cash received – we do not use it for cash payments. Cash over £100 is banked within a week.
- a) We record details of cheques received in the account book (or equivalent) and bank the cheques within two weeks.
- b) The Treasurer keeps files of paperwork (either in paper or electronic form) relating to the cheques (e.g. grant award letters or copies of receipts issued by the Group).
- c) All fundraising and grant applications undertaken on behalf of the Group are done in the name of 1st Linslade Scout Group with the prior approval of the Trustee Board or in urgent situations. the approval of the Group Scout Leader (GSL) and Group chair who will provide full details at the next meeting of the Trustee Board.

6. Expenditure: Buying goods and services

- a) Wherever possible, the Trustee Board agrees orders in advance. This will be either shown in the annual budget or discussed at a meeting during the year (and minuted).
- b) The levels for authorising payments from the Group's current account are included in Table 1 below.
- c) The latest approved budget provides the signatories with authority to spend up to the budgeted expenditure and not beyond it. Payments over £101, which are not included in the annual budget, will be reported at the next Trustee Board meeting.
- d) The Treasurer keeps a file of all the paperwork and checks invoices before making payments.
- e) Every payment out of the Group's bank accounts will be evidenced by an original paper or electronic invoice (never against a supplier's statement or final demand), or an expenses claims form with receipts.

The original invoice or claims form and receipts will be retained by the Treasurer and filed appropriately. The payment signatories should ensure that the paperwork is referenced with:

Cheque number / Date cheque drawn / Amount of cheque / Who signed the cheque OR
Date and authoriser if paid electronically

The only exceptions to cheques not being supported by an original invoice would be for such items as advanced booking fees or deposit for a venue etc.

When making electronic payments a clear payment reference must be used so that invoices can be reconciled.

- f) Our cheque book(s) (unused and partly used) is kept under lock and key. We will not sign a cheque without paperwork to support the payment. We will never sign a blank cheque. The relevant payee's name will always be inserted on the cheque before signature and the cheque stubs will be properly completed at the time of payment.
- g) Two signatories are required on each cheque or electronic payment.
- h) Two signatories are required to set up a direct debit or standing orders one of whom will be the Treasurer. We keep records of direct debit and standing orders as for cheque payments.
- i) Cash point cards are not used for the Group account and if issued by the bank they will be immediately cut up and disposed of appropriately. Cash point cards are permitted to be used by Section Leaders.

Table 1 Authorisation Levels

Amount	Signature Requirements	Authorisation <i>(if not previously approved in the annual budget)</i>	Supporting Documents
Up to £100	Treasurer and GSL	Treasurer and GSL	Invoice or expenses claim with receipts
£101 to £500	Treasurer and GSL or Chair	Trustee Board OR Treasurer, GSL, Chair and Secretary	Invoice or expenses claim with receipts
Over £501	Treasurer plus GSL or Chair	Trustee Board	Invoice or expenses claim with receipts

7. Sections

- a) Sections operate their own bank accounts in accordance with the guidance in this policy. They receive a payment from the Group Account at the start of every term for general scouting activities. The Trustee Board sets the level of payment when setting the annual budget.

Sections may request additional payments which will be considered in accordance with the authorisation limits in Table 1.

- b) The Treasurer undertakes a termly overview and a detailed reconciliation of Sections' Accounts at the year end.

8. Petty cash

- a) We do not hold petty cash but if we did, the following would apply:
- b) We would hold a petty cash float separate from incoming cash.
- c) Petty cash payments would not be made before we have entered the full amount of incoming cash into the petty cash book.
- d) We would record all payments on separate petty cash slips and keep documentation which will be presented to the treasurer at each Trustee Board meeting.

9. Membership Fees

- a) Membership fees are paid monthly by standing order monthly (12 payments per year) or annually by cheque, in advance.
- b) Membership fees are set by the Trustee Board and are reviewed as required by the needs of the Group.
- c) Membership fees for the child (ren) of Section Leaders (SL), Assistant Section Leaders (ASL) and Section Assistants (SA) may be discounted at a rate determined by the Trustee Board as an incentive to encourage more volunteers. On the advice of the Scout Association, this should not stop a SL, ASL or SA serving as a Trustee although their interest must be declared and minuted and they should not take part in any discussion concerning the level of discount.
- d) Gift Aid is claimed wherever possible.

10. Participation Fund

- a) A small amount of money is set aside for when any members or members' families are experiencing financial challenges. The aim of the fund is to help ensure that no Young People, whose families are suffering financial challenges, lose out from Scouting activities.
- b) The fund is explicitly to cover challenges in paying for Scouting equipment or activities, for example, it might be used for:
 - One-off uniform purchase/contribution.
 - Allow the Young person to attend a specific event.
 - A small reduction in subscription payments for a period
- c) In return parents / carers may be asked to volunteer some time to assist the Group.
- d) If any Group members (or their parents on their behalf) would like to access the fund, they should contact the GSL who will discreetly consider the request.

11. Expenses

- a) The Group does not expect a volunteer uniformed Leader or supporter of the Group to be out of pocket as a result of providing purchased items or services for the genuine and direct benefit of the Group and its young people or as required by the Scout Association. All such expenses will be reimbursed against receipts.
- b) In order to maintain financial control, all expenses (except petty cash items) should be approved by the GSL r or the Group Chair, as appropriate.

12. Camps, activities and excursions

- a) Camps, Beaver sleepovers and other residential experiences should cover their costs including an allowance for wear and tear.
- b) Outings, excursions and expeditions should break even financially. In some circumstances, the Trustee Board may approve a subsidy in advance.
- c) Some activities may be entirely funded by the Group (such as District organised competitions and outings).
- d) It is the responsibility of the Leader in charge of the event to ensure that it is properly budgeted and financed (including subsidy approvals) and that all required monies are collected prior to departure.

13. Supporting Adult Volunteers

- a) The Group shall encourage adults to apply for a full uniform Leadership Appointment and will provide the necessary financial support.
- b) The Group shall pay the annual Scout Association Membership fee (as charged by Leighton - Linslade Scout District) where appropriate.
- c) The Group shall fund training as specified by the Scout Association and will seek reimbursement from the District, County or Scout Headquarters if available.
- d) The Group shall ensure that each adult Leader holding, or applying for, a Scout Association Leader Appointment has a full and proper uniform. The Group, as a one-time payment, shall reimburse the cost of:
 - a. One uniform "dress" shirt or blouse (long or short sleeve)
 - b. One adult Group scarf and/or regulation tie (as appropriate)

14. Fixed Assets

- a) The Group will adhere to good practice in relation to its finances at all times, e.g. we will maintain a fixed asset register stating the date of purchase, cost, serial numbers and

normal location of the asset.

15. Reserves Policy

- a) Our Group, like most charities, holds some funds in reserve. Our level of reserves is set to ensure that there are sufficient resources to continue the core charitable activities of the Group should income and fundraising activities fall short.
- b) The Trustee Board considers that the Group should hold a sum equivalent to 6 months running costs. Should the level of reserves fall below the target level, the Trustee Board will make efforts to restore the level as soon as possible.

16. Partnerships

- a) The Group reserves the right to apply reasonable fees or charges to Parkers Pioneers Explorer Unit (for example, to cover the use of the hall) to be agreed from time to time by the Trustee Board.

17. Investment Policy

- a) The Trustee Board will regularly monitor the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the Group obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements.
- b) The Group will adopt a low-risk strategy to the investment of any surplus funds. All investments will be approved by the Trustee Board.

18. Fundraising

- a) Fundraising carried out on behalf of Scouting must be conducted in accordance with the principles embodied in the Scout Promise and Law. (Refer to POR 5.5)