

Reserves Policy

1. Introduction

Weston under Penyard Parish Council is required to maintain adequate Financial Reserves to meet the needs of the Parish Council. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Parish Council will determine and review the level of Reserves.

Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. However, there is no specific minimum level of reserves that an authority should hold, and it is the responsibility of the Responsible Financial Officer to advise the Parish Council about the level of reserves to ensure that there are procedures for their establishment and use.

2. Types of Reserves

Reserves may be categorised as General or Specific.

3. General Reserves

General Reserves are funds which do not have any restrictions as to their use. These reserves cushion the impact of uneven cash flows, offset budget requirements, if necessary, or can be held in case of unexpected events or emergencies.

Setting the level of General Reserves is agreed with the Annual Budget in the context of the three-year plan.

4. Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked Reserves are held for several reasons and shall only be used for the purpose for which they were created.

- Renewals – to enable services to plan and finance an effective program of equipment replacement and planned property maintenance. These reserves are a mechanism to smooth expenditure so that a sensible replacement program can be achieved without the need to vary budgets.
- Carry forward of underspend – expenditure committed to a project but not spent in the budget year. Reserves can be used as a mechanism to carry forward these resources.
- Other Earmarked Reserves may be set up from time to time to meet known or predicted liabilities.

Any decision to set up an Earmarked Reserve must be made by the Parish Council and these are to be reviewed annually when the budget is agreed or at year end.

Where the purpose of an Earmarked Reserve becomes obsolete, or where there is an over-provision of funds, the excess may, on the approval of the Parish Council, be transferred to other budget headings within the revenue budget or to General Reserves or to one or more other Earmarked Reserves.

5. Management and Control of Reserves

Movements in Earmarked Reserves and General Reserves shall be reported to the Parish Council at monthly meetings if required. The use of Reserves shall be approved by the Parish Council.

The level of General Reserves shall be reviewed on an annual basis during the annual budgetary review and three-year plan and agreed by the Parish Council.

The minimum level of General Reserves shall be recommended to the Parish Council by the Responsible Financial Officer. This will form part of the recommendations for the Annual Budget and Precept request by the Parish Council.

Earmarked Reserves shall be reviewed on an individual basis. This review will also be undertaken as part of the Annual Budgetary Review or at year end. Recommendations on creation, amendment, cessation, or continuation of Earmarked Reserves will be given by the Responsible Financial Officer to the Parish Council by way of a report forming part of the recommendations for the Annual Budget and Precept request by the Parish Council.

Approval for the creation, amendment, cessation, or continuation of Earmarked Reserves will be given by the Parish Council.

6. Current level of Financial Reserves (As of 31st March 2024)

The current total level of Reserves is shown below:

General Reserve	£18,873
Earmarked Reserves	
School Lane Project	£1,750
Election reserve	£3,608
Total	£13,515