

1ST BURGFIELD AND SULHAMSTEAD SCOUT GROUP

Finance Policy

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Bank Accounts.....	3
3. Income	4
4. Expenditure: Buying goods and services (not sectional expenses)	4
5. Petty cash.....	5
6. Subscriptions.....	5
7. Bursary fund.....	5
8. Expenses.....	5
9. Camps, activities and excursions	6
10. Supporting Adult Volunteers	6
11. Fixed Assets.....	6
12. Reserves Policy.....	6
13. Investment Policy.....	6
14. Gift Aid	7

1. Introduction

- a) 1st Burghfield Scout Group has a trustee board which is elected each year at the Group's annual general meeting. The Trustee Board has 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 overall operational responsibility for the governance and maintenance of Group finances.
- c) Financial records are kept so that the Group can:
 - meet its legal and other obligations, regarding the Policy, Organisation & Rules (POR), of The Scout Association, the Charities Act (1992), HMRC and common law.
 - enable the trustees to be in proper financial control of the Group.
 - enable the Group to meet its obligations as necessary.
- d) The Treasurer will ensure that appropriate financial records are kept, including:
 - accounting records on QuickBooks
 - bank statements
 - details of all monies received.
 - invoices and other receipts for all payments
- e) Our financial year ends on 31 March.
- f) We will draw up accounts at the end of the financial year which in accordance with Charity Law are examined by an Independent Examiner. Our annual end of year accounts will be reviewed by the Trustee Board and then be recommended for approval to the Group at the annual general meeting.
- g) Before the start of the financial year, we will set a budget for the following year. The Trustee Board are responsible for approving the annual budget. The budget should be prepared for approval at the March Board meeting. This should take into account planned events and objectives for the group.
- h) A Financial Statement, showing the budgeted expenses verses actual expenses should be prepared by the Treasurer at least quarterly, and reviewed by the Trustee Board. This will include an explanation of key variances and recommended actions, and current bank balances. Where possible this will include the discussion of key expected future receipts and payments.

2. Bank Accounts

- a) We have two bank accounts with CAF Bank.
- b) All bank transactions will go through our Sections Account and funds will only be transferred if needed from our Gold Account Reserve.
- c) The bank mandate lists the people who can sign payments. Changes to the bank mandate will be approved by the Trustees and minuted.

d) Any withdrawals or transfers between accounts are set up by one person and electronically authorised via online banking by one of three authorised approvers.

e) The bank provides monthly statements, and we reconcile the statements against our accounting records.

3. Income

a) All parents and guardians are encouraged to pay for subscriptions and activities through OSM (BACS only where absolutely necessary), and leaders are encouraged to avoid accepting cash payments from members where possible. Where this is unavoidable leaders are required to bank immediately through liaison with the Treasurer. A receipt should be issued to the relevant party.

b) Amounts received through OSM are collected using GoCardless. GoCardless charge commission which is deducted from each receipt. These amounts are then received directly into the bank account.

c) All amounts received through GoCardless are entered on a monthly basis into QuickBooks together with amounts paid directly by BACS (from hirers).

d) The treasurer keeps files of paperwork (either in paper or electronic form) relating to the income. This includes any requests for bursaries, invoices in relation to hiring of the hut etc.

e) All fundraising and grant applications undertaken on behalf of the Group are done in the name of 1st Burghfield Scout Group. All applications are discussed at the Trustee Board meeting on a timely basis.

4. Expenditure: Buying goods and services (not sectional expenses)

a) The Treasurer monitors the expenditure of the group. In relation to larger items, e.g. for camps where this has been agreed as part of the budget, no further approval is required. Items which are deemed unusual or non-routine in nature, require prior approval before spending. The levels of approval are as follows:

- Items between £500 and £1,000 approval by GSL
- Items over £1,001 require to be presented to the Board for approval.

c) The Treasurer/expenses clerk keeps a file of all the paperwork and all those involved in the authorisation of payments checks invoices before making payments.

d) 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 expense claim with receipts.

e) The original invoice or expense claim and receipts will be retained by the treasurer and filed or attached to QuickBooks as evidence for our Independent Examiner.

f) Direct debits - we keep details of all direct debits and standing orders that are taken from the bank account.

5. Petty cash

a) We hold a minimal amount of petty cash. Any movement from this is duly recorded within QuickBooks and amounts are reconciled on a regular basis.

6. Subscriptions

a) Subscriptions are paid termly through OSM with some occasional manual payments being made.

b) Subscriptions are set by the Trustee Board and are reviewed as required by the needs of the Group.

c) Non-payment of subscriptions is dealt with by the membership secretary.

d) No refunds are made where a young person does not attend weekly meetings or other events and activities.

e) Gift Aid is claimed wherever possible (see below).

7. Bursary 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. It is intended to enable young people in a situation where funds are tight.

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) Parents are asked to contact the GSL to discreetly consider the request.

8. Expenses

a) The Group does not expect a volunteer 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) It is the responsibility of volunteers and staff to ensure that they use the most cost-effective method of delivering their responsibilities. The policy is designed to recompense out of pocket expenditure, but everyone should be mindful of the cost to Scouting of their actions.

9. Camps, activities and excursions

- a) Camps, Beaver sleepovers and other residential experiences should cover its costs including an allowance for wear and tear to group equipment used.
- b) Outings, excursions and expeditions should break even financially. In some circumstances, the GSL may approve a subsidy in advance.
- c) Some activities may be entirely funded by the Group (such as District organised competitions and outings).
- d) All sections will be allowed an adventurous activity budget of £10 per term per young person and an amount of £3 per beaver and £4 per cub, scout and explorer per term for incidental expenses (materials, food etc). It is understood that there may be occasions where more will be utilised in one term and as such, we ask that section leaders manage the budget across the financial year to March.
- e) 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.

10. Supporting Adult Volunteers

- a) The Group shall encourage adults to wear uniform and supply group polo shirts for all volunteers within the Group. The Group will contribute towards the group hoodies for volunteers.
- b) The Group shall fund training as specified by the Scout Association or where deemed appropriate.

11. Fixed Assets

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

12. Reserves Policy

- a) Our Group, like most charities, hold some funds in 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. Should the level of reserves falls below the target level, the Trustee Board will make efforts to restore the level as soon as possible.

13. Investment Policy

- a) The Group has adopted a low-risk strategy to the investment of its funds which are held in the Group account with CAF.

b) The Trustee Board regularly monitors the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the Group obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements. Occasionally this may involve using an account that requires a period of notice before funds may be withdrawn, before doing so the Trustee Board considers the cash flow requirements.

14. Gift Aid

a) The Group keeps records to comply with Gift Aid regulations as set out by HMRC. Charitable trusts should keep tax records (which includes Gift Aid Declarations and records) until the later of:

- 6 years after the end of the tax year they relate to
- 12 months after the charity makes a Gift Aid repayment claim for that tax year.

b) As a group we can only make a Gift Aid claim where the group has a Gift Aid declaration made by the donor which covers the subscription. Parents are asked to indicate their consent to Gift Aid within the OSM system and they are requested to update as necessary on an annual basis. When completing the Gift Aid claim we refer to records as retained in OSM.