Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
Email: office@hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01273 833264

Village Centre
Trinity Road
Hurstpierpoint
West Sussex BN6 9UY

Savings & Investments Policy

Presented to Council on 26 February 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council acknowledges the importance of prudently investing funds held which are not needed to support the daily cashflow requirements of the Parish Council.

1.2 This policy has been prepared using reference to:

- Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments: Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) under s.15(1)(a) of the LGA 2003
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Investment Guidance
- Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003
- Guidance on Local Government Finance issued by the Joint Practitioners' Advisory Group (JPAG)
- The Parish Council's adopted Financial Regulations.

1.3 The Local Government Act 2003 requires the council to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy which sets out the Parish Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. The Act provides the power to invest (a) for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment or (b) for the purpose of the prudent management of its financial affairs.

1.4 The Parish Council's Annual Investment Strategy is incorporated in this policy. The Parish Council will make investment decisions in line with the principles outlined in this policy and acknowledges its responsibilities regarding transparency and democratic accountability.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 A prudent savings and investment policy will have two underlying objectives – security (protecting the capital sum invested from loss) and liquidity (ensuring the funds invested are available for expenditure when needed).

2.2 Therefore, the Parish Council's priorities are, in the following ranking order:
(i) The security of capital to minimise the risk of losses
(ii) The liquidity of investments to meet the cash flow needs of the council
(iii) Maximising income within the framework of the national economic situation

2.3 The MHCLG maintain the position that the borrowing of money purely to invest or to lend and make a return is unlawful and the Parish Council will not engage in such activity. The Parish Council will not borrow more than, or in advance of their needs, purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed.

2.4 The Parish Council will aim to maximise the depositor protection available to it through the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) or subsequent scheme in force. From 1 April 2025 however, the FSCS no longer applies as the Parish Council's expenditure budget exceeds 500,000 Euros (when converted to Pounds Sterling).

2.5 When the FSCS does not apply, the Parish Council shall diversify its reserves between multiple relatively highly rated UK banks and/or building societies. The Responsible Financial Officer shall:

- Ensure all organisations are registered and authorised with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) https://register.fca.org.uk/s/

- Check if the organisations are registered with the Bank of England Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/prudential-regulation;
- review the status of these organisations on a six monthly basis by:
    - reviewing published credit ratings (A credit rating agency is one of the following: Standard & Poor's; Moody's Investors Services Ltd; and Fitch Ratings Ltd); and/or
    - the organisation's status on the Prudential Regulation Authority register

Any negative changes reported in the credit ratings, or the FCA/PRA registers will be brought back to the Finance, Governance and Estates Committee for consideration.

~~When the FSCS does not apply, the Parish Council shall diversify its reserves between multiple relatively highly rated UK banks and/or building societies. The Responsible Financial Officer shall review credit ratings of organisations in which the Council holds investments on a six monthly basis and take action as necessary. (A credit rating agency is one of the following: Standard & Poor's; Moddy's Investors Services Ltd; and Fitch Ratings Ltd). Any negative changes reported in the credit ratings will be brought back to the Finance, Governance and Estates Committee for consideration.~~

2.6 A significant percentage of the Council's reserves shall be placed in interest bearing deposit accounts such as fixed rate bonds, if available. To retain liquidity, fixed rate bonds should be placed with fixed end dates. No one investment shall be for longer than 12 months unless specifically approved by the Finance, Governance and Estates Committee.

2.7 The Parish Council will retain a minimum of three months estimated expenditure in current and deposit accounts giving immediate access, as per the Reserves Policy.

3. DEFINITION OF INVESTMENTS

3.1 **Short term investments** are those which have a maturity of 12 months or less. Investments will be regarded as commencing on the date on which the funds are invested. As a preference, the Parish Council will use deposits with banks or building societies for short term investments and may include instant access accounts where it is appropriate to do so. Short term investments are considered as bank accounts and remain on the Parish Council's balance sheet.

3.2 **Long term investments** are those which have a maturity of 12 months or more. On acquisition, long term investments will be recorded in the accounting records of the Parish Council as expenditure in the year and added to the Parish Council's asset register. At maturity the total proceeds will be recorded as income, and the long term investments will be removed from the Parish Council's asset register.

3.3 **Non specified investments** are those which have potential greater risk and include investments in the money market, stocks and shares. Given the unpredictability of such investments, and considering the objectives of this policy, the Parish Council will limit exposure to this type of investment to a maximum of 25% of all investments held. N.B. The CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund Shares are not the same as making a deposit with a bank or other deposit taking body, and are not a guaranteed investment. The CCLA Shares will be treated in the same way as long term investments.

4. ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

4.1 All short term investments and deposits will be made in pounds sterling with UK registered financial institutions covered by the depositor protection available through the FSCS (or subsequent scheme in force), and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

4.3 Investments and deposits to support the daily cashflow requirements of the Parish Council will be held in instant access current and/or savings accounts.

4.4 Investments and deposits not required to support daily cashflow requirements (general and/or earmarked reserves) may be placed in either short or long term investments, as defined within this policy.

4.5 All investments will be managed and administered by the Responsible Financial Officer, who will ensure that dates of maturity are advised to the Finance, Governance and Estates Committee to allow enough time for it to consider re-investment options.

4.6 The Parish Council does not currently employ in-house or externally any financial advisors but will rely on information which is publicly available supported by professional guidance as necessary. Any organisation, person or company, giving such advice, including suitable qualified professional financial advisors will be required to ensure that advice given complies with this policy.

4.7 The Parish Council has overall responsibility for savings and investment decisions. Councillors do not necessarily need formal training in understanding investment risks to satisfy the requirements of the statutory guidance. Depending on their level of expertise a presentation setting out the risks and opportunities of an investment strategy/specific investment in terms a layman would understand, will be enough to meet the requirements.

5. TREATMENT OF INTEREST RECEIVED

5.1 Interest received during the financial year on the combined current, savings and investment accounts held will be recorded in the council's accounts under the cost centre named 'interest received'.

5.2 On the 31 March each financial year, the total amount of interest received will be split proportionately compared to the year end balances held on general reserve, earmarked reserves and current year fund. The appropriate proportion of interest received will be added to the relevant earmarked reserve.

6. REVIEW

6.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Finance, Governance and Estates Committee on an annual basis and shall be submitted for approval of the Full Council prior to the start of the financial year.

6.2 The Parish Council reserves the right to make variations to the policy at any time. Where it is proposed to make a material change to the Annual Investment Strategy during the year, revisions should be presented to Full Council for approval before the change is implemented.

7. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

7.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this policy will be posted on the Parish Council's website and a hard copy will be available at the Parish Office.