

**12 January 2026**

**Budget Report 2026-27 FINAL**

## **Contents**

1. Town Council Aims and Objectives
2. Reserves/Working Capital
3. Westmorland and Furness Unitary Council Tax Base
4. Staff and Pensions (*Dept. 1 Council, Dept. 2 Victoria Hall, Dept. 9 Music in the Park*)
5. Christmas Lights (*Dept. 1 – Council*)
6. Accountancy Service (*Dept. 1 – Council*)
7. Victoria Hall (*Dept. 2*)
8. Public Conveniences (*Depts. 4,5,6*)
9. Recreation Ground (*Dept. 7*)
10. Music in the Park Summer Band Concerts (*Dept. 9*)
11. Public Domain Maintenance (*Dept. 10*)

### 1. Town Council Aims and Objectives

The budget is set to fulfil the Town Council's Aims and Objectives, which were last resolved in November 2025, and are published on the Town Council's website.

### 2. Reserves/Working Capital

The Reserves Policy is reviewed annually and published on the website.

At the June 2025 Town Council meeting, the reserves allocation at the opening of the new financial year was approved as below.

Total Victoria Hall Support Group donations stood at £15,717.33 in November 2025 and the total Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) reserve is now £33,280.01.

<b>Opening Reserves 2025 - 2026 JUNE 2025</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>General Reserve</b>	
Council	88,307
<b>Earmarked Reserve</b>	
Victoria Hall	140,000
Public Conveniences	20,000
Recreation, Play and Culture	35,000
Allotments	12,000
Public Domain	10,000
Professional Fees	5,000
<b>Restricted (ring-fenced) Reserve</b>	
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	12,696
Victoria Hall Support Group donations	6,553
<b>Reserves as AGAR Box 7 March 2025</b>	<b>329,556</b>

### 3. Westmorland and Furness Unitary Council Tax Base

This determines the effect of the Council Tax demand on households. It changes each year, increasing as houses are built, and decreasing when more residents claim discount or homes are empty.

The Council Tax base for 2026-27 has decreased by 50.50 properties, from 2,391.90 to 2,341.40.

**This means that to keep the same level of income to the Town Council from Council Tax, there would have to be a 2% increase to residents' Council Tax bills.**

**4. Staff and Pensions (Dept. 1 Council, Dept. 2 Victoria Hall, Dept. 9 Music in the Park)**

To give an indication of the true cost of operating the Hall and providing the Music in the Park events, apportioned salaries are shown. Employers NI is included in salaries. Grange Town Council started to provide pensions in 2017. The budget amount represents the costs as defined by the Local Government Pension Scheme.

**5. Christmas Lights (Department 1 – Council)**

The current 5-year contract with LITE Ltd. ends after Christmas 2026. The budget has been increased as the Town Council resolved in 2025 to increase the Christmas lights display along Main Street.

**6. Accountancy Service Fees (Department 1 – Council)**

These include PAYE, payroll, pensions, and VAT.

**7. Victoria Hall (Department 2)**

The budget allows £17,000 for Maintenance, Repairs and Renewals. £1,500 provision has been made for website and promotions development.

**8. Public Conveniences (Departments 4,5,6)**

This is a subsidised service, costing £22,157 in 2024-25. SLDC (now WAF) devolved providing public conveniences to the Town Council in 2011 and an annual grant was given. This has now been withdrawn.

Healthmatic Ltd. clean the facilities on a contract which ends March 2027. The facilities are deteriorating and will need refurbishing in due course. The entrance fee was increased from 30p to 40p in July 2024.

**9. Recreation Ground (Department 7)**

The Recreation Ground is leased by GTC from WAF who gave up running the facility, in around 2009, as it was not viable.

From March 2016 until October 2024 Horton Landscapes were contracted to operate the site. It was not possible for Horton Landscapes to operate the site successfully in 2024 due to the Unitary Council's refurbishment works on the Prom and Lido.

The contract was not renewed in October 2024 due to uncertainty about the site's viability. Negotiations are underway with WAF about the future of the facilities, the Lido, and the southern end of the Prom.

The Town Council has responsibility to maintain the site and the maintenance budget has been increased by £3,000 to cover this. An invitation to tender for the grounds work from March 2026 has been put out.

The Town Council remains responsible for infrastructure maintenance, WAF annual inspection fee and monthly inspections.

**10. Music in the Park Summer Band Concerts (*Dept. 9*)**

The budget for this department has increased to allow for the fact that these events are now managed, and provided, by Town Council staff.

**11. Public Domain Maintenance (*Department 10*)**

This includes the Lengthsman services and skips. The budget is increased for 2026-27 to keep the Lengthsman hourly rate at the same grade as the Hall Team staff.

**ENDS**