



PILLING PARISH

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 15th April 2026 at 6.00pm in Pilling Village Hall

Present: Councillors; Mr N. Cookson, Chairman,
Mrs. E. Cookson,
Mr G. Curwen,
Mr P. McWhirter,
Mr S. Phillpotts,
Mr A. Whiteside
Ms L Kiersey
Ms L Stanger
Julia Brewer, Clerk to the Parish Council

In attendance: Mr D. Wilkinson
Sergeant Elliott Jones
Katrina Bell
Lynne Allen
Emma Irvine
1 x member of the Public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were sent from Cllr J Savage, Cllr D Ponton and Wyre Councillor Adam Leigh.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 9th April 2025 having been circulated were agreed and signed as a true record.

Resolved; The Chairman signed the minutes.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Resolved: No matters were raised from the minutes.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman gave a report on the activities of the Parish Council during the last financial year. (Appendix A)

Resolved: The report was accepted.

5. REPORT FROM THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

A presentation highlighting the financial position of the Parish Council was presented by the Responsible Financial Officer. (Appendix B)

Resolved: The report was accepted.

6. REPORT FROM LOCAL POLICE

Sergeant Elliot Jones was in attendance and provided a verbal report regarding the incidence of crime in Pilling and the ongoing work of the police.

7. REPORT FROM LCC CLLR M SALTER

Cllr Salter updated those present on the current situation regarding Highways and

informed the meeting that Lancashire County Council were increasing spending from 47m to 72 million in this financial year to try to eradicate the backlog of potholes.

He also reported that since Reform had taken over the Council, the outstanding backlog of SEND cases had been significantly reduced.

8. REPORTS

NW in Bloom: Cllr Liz Kiersey gave an update on the recent initiatives regarding Pilling's application to the NW in Bloom competition. (Appendix C)

Over 60's Lunch: Cllr Elizabeth Cookson updated those present with the arrangements for the Over 60's Lunch to be held on Friday 12th June.

Pilling Village Hall: Cllr Paul McWhirter updated everyone with progress on the plans to extend the Village Hall.

Cubs and Scouts: Katrina Bell was in attendance and gave an update on the activities of the Cubs and Scouts. (Appendix D)

Brownies: Lynn Allen gave an update on the activities of the Brownies.

8. FLOOD MANAGEMENT - PILLING

David Wilkinson, Chair of the Broadfleet Outfall Farmers Flood Action Group, was in attendance and gave a presentation on progress to date with respect to flood management in Pilling.

9. MATTERS RAISED BY RESIDENTS

There was one resident in attendance who raised the following issues:

- **Speeding/Potholes on Garstang Road between Horse Park Lane and Jarvis Carr**

An issue was raised regarding speeding cars along this stretch of road and the lack of a footpath making it dangerous. It was also highlighted that there were a number of potholes which had been marked out with white lines a couple of years ago, but had never been filled in.

Cllr N Cookson responded and informed the resident that Pilling Parish Council were in constant dialogue with Lancashire County Council Highways regarding a number of issues including the state of the roads and the speed limit but were getting no satisfactory response, but would raise the matter again.

- **Advertising in the Green Book (Focus Magazine)**

The Parish Council were asked why they did not use the 'green book' more often to publicise information, as it was noted that the notice for the Annual Parish Meeting had been included within it, and other parish councils used it.

It was acknowledged that there was a cost to place an advert but that articles over 250(?) words were included for free and Cllr Kiersey had used this to publicise information regarding Pilling in Bloom.

It was highlighted that the Parish Council produced a Newsletter twice per year which was delivered by hand to every house within Pilling, however it was noted

that some households had reported that they had not received a copy of the last Newsletter.

- **Replacement of styles with gates on public footpaths**

Thanks were expressed to the Parish Council and the Parish Lengthsman for replacing styles with gates on public footpaths which were more user friendly to dog walkers.

There being no further business the meeting closed at approx. 7.25 pm.

Date

Chairman

DRAFT

Pilling Parish Council Report from the Chair

Well as I write, Spring has really arrived, the sun is shining and daffodils and tulips are in bloom, and not before time!!

Also change is in the air again for the Parish Council and our current clerk, Julia Brewer, is moving on to pastures new, and will be replaced by Emma Irvine at the end of May. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Julia for all her hard work, she leaves us with our finances in a strong position and we wish her well for the future.

Lancashire County Council/Highways

We continue to lobby Lancashire County Council about the state of the roads.

They have published their intended highways plan for the next year and once again Smallwood Hey has not been included, We have written to Lancashire County Council to ask for the rationale behind the decisions and are awaiting a reply.

The ongoing flooding at Damside is also their responsibility but despite repeated requests to fix it, they could not give an adequate response time and therefore the Parish Council took the initiative and employed a local contractor who resolved the problem within a week.

Broadfleet Outfall Gates

Unfortunately, the weather defeated the Environment Agency in their efforts to repair the outfall gates on the Broadfleet at the end of last year. However they have the funding to return to effect the repairs this summer and Cllr Alf Whiteside continues to push for this to be done as soon as possible.

Staffing

The Parish Lengthsman, Stan Raby, has unfortunately had to take a period of enforced sick leave, and therefore the Parish Council have employed local resident, Chris Hankinson, to cover some of Stan's duties.

Councillors have also been covering some of the routine jobs such as emptying the bins, checking defibrillators etc., and Councillor Liz Kiersey is heading up our Pilling in Bloom effort with the help of a small committee.

St Williamsgate/Create Homes

Cllr Dave Ponton continues to strive on behalf of the residents to achieve some resolution to the problems caused by Create Homes going into insolvency, together with both Wyre Council and Lancashire County Council refusing to engage any further regarding the current situation.

Defibrillators

We have also purchased another defibrillator which will be located in Scronkey. Thanks go to Ben and Sandra Carter for providing the site location.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I attended the opening of the new nursery at St John's School and was very impressed—it is a great asset for the village.

Cllr Neil Cookson
Chair

DRAFT

Appendix B

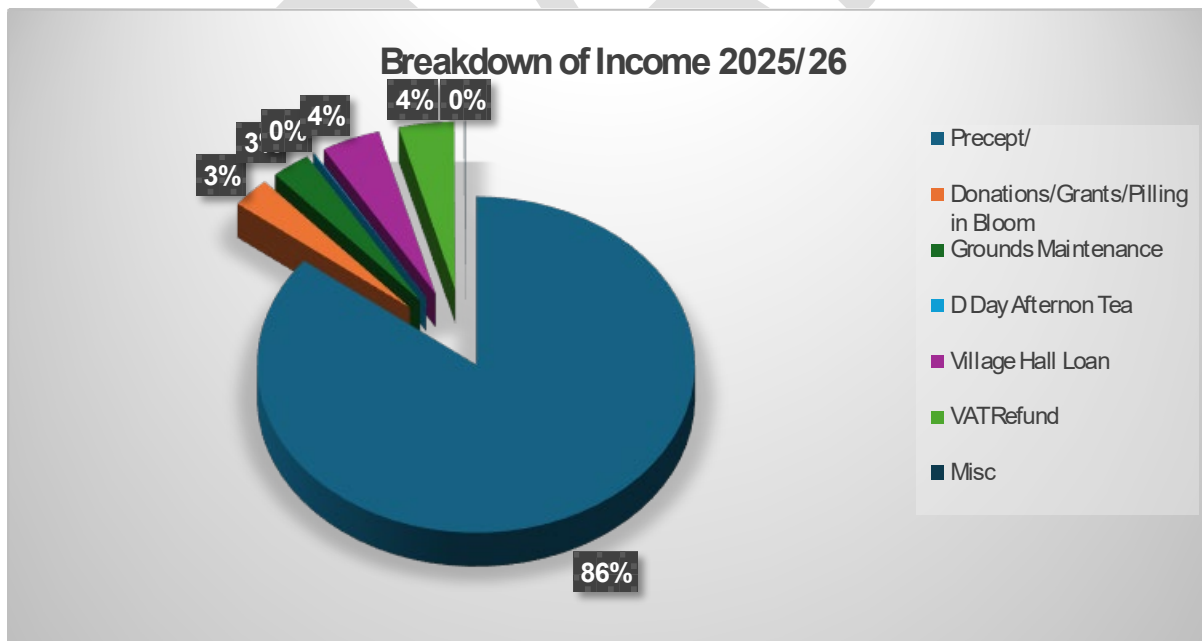


PILLING PARISH COUNCIL Finance Report from the Responsible Financial Officer Year Ending 31st March 2026

Brought forward 24/25		Year End 25/26	
Unity Trust	£ 6,593.38		£ 5,913.28
Furness Building Society	£ 84,488.51	Hinckley & Rugby Building Society	£ 60,458.47
Redwood Business Savings A/c	£ 1,000.00		£ 42,283.73
Total(s)	£94,023.15		£108,655.48

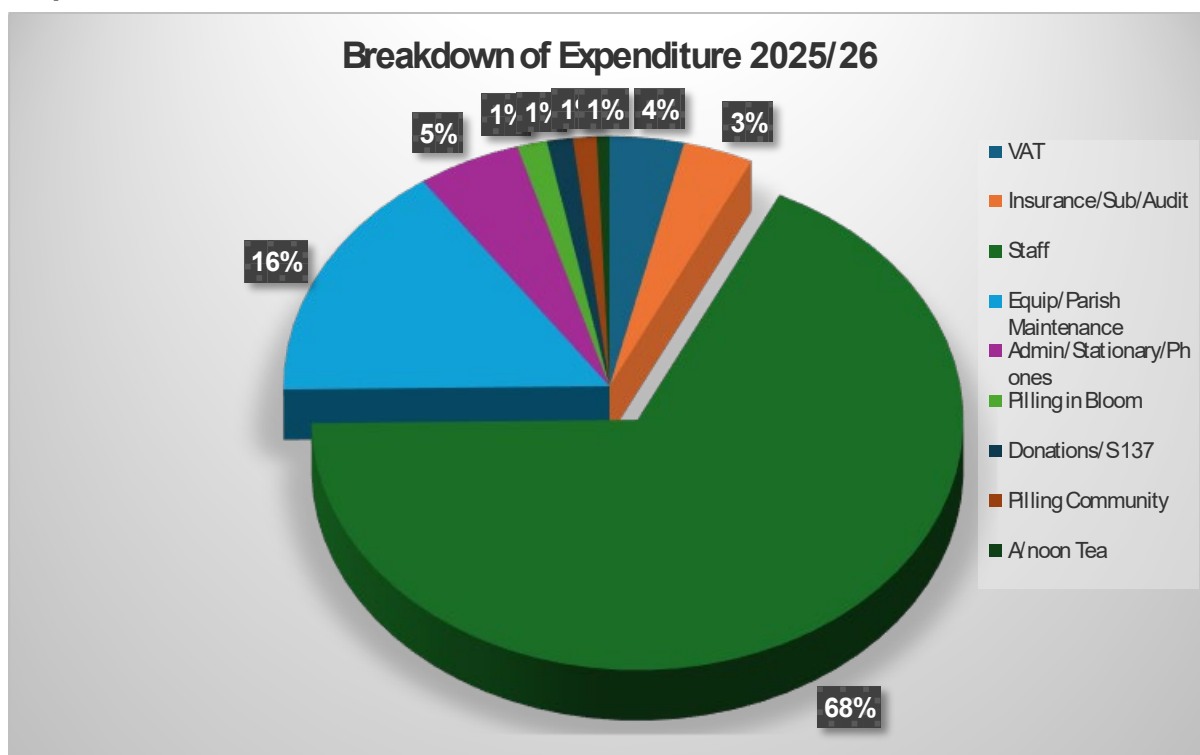
Income:

The Council received slightly less overall income than in previous years due to cuts in local authority funding for Public Rights of Way (PROW) and also non-participation in the NW in Bloom competition.



- **Precept:** (86%)
- **Grant Income/Donations (Pilling Bloom) :** (3%)
- **Grounds Maintenance Contracts:** (3%)
- **Loan Repayments (Village Hall):** (4%)
- **VAT:** (4%)

Expenditure:



- Staffing: (68%)
- Insurance/subscriptions/audit fees (3%)
- Equipment/Parish Maintenance (16%)
- Administration costs: (5%)
- Pilling in Bloom: (1%)
- Pilling Community Action: (1%)
- S137/Donations: 1%
- Afternoon Tea (1%)
- VAT: (4%)

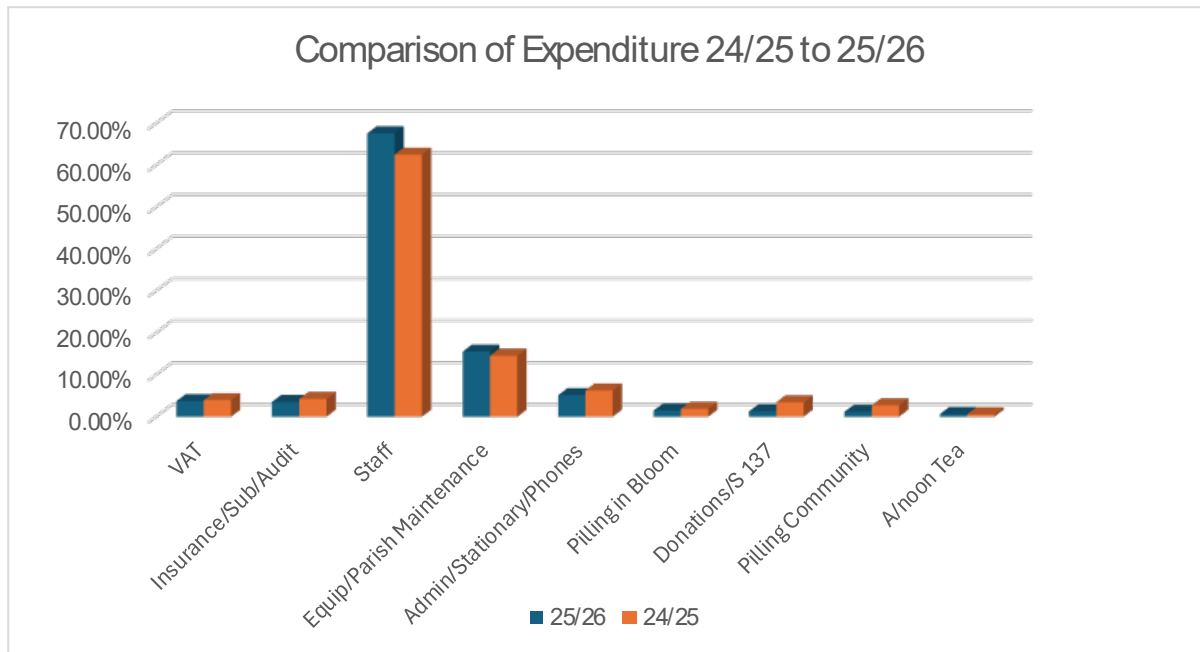
Staffing accounts for the greatest portion of expenditure with the Parish Council employing a part-time clerk on 17 hours and a Parish Lengthsman on 35 hours.

Staff costs have also increased slightly with a new pay deal of 3.2% (which was more than originally budgeted) together with the subsequent increase in Employers NI contributions.

Comparison with last year

In terms of comparison with previous year, expenditure is very much on a par with 2024/25. However, this year, the Parish Council have invested in purchasing 2 new Speed Indicator Devices (SPIDs) which are deployed on Garstang Road and Lancaster Road respectively. Funding was obtained from Grantscape for the purchase of the SPID on Garstang Road (located at Jarvis Carr).

Additionally, the Parish Council have purchased 2 new defibrillators, one to replace the current one located at Pilling Pottery, and the other to be located at Scronkey, taking the number of defibrillators within the parish to 10.



Reserves:

The Parish Council seeks to get the best possible return from investing its Reserves.

Currently the Parish Council has the following amounts held in reserve accounts:

- Hinckley & Rugby Building Society: £60,458.47 (2.8% interest)
- Redwood Bank: £42,283.72 (3.8% interest)

Looking forward to 26/27

Precept: As the Parish Council have undertaken not to increase the precept in the current economic climate but to fund any capital expenditure from Reserves the precept has been maintained at £80,000

Overall, the Council is in a sound financial position for 2026/27.

Julia Brewer
Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Report to Annual Parish Meeting Pilling In Bloom

The village is entering the Northwest in Bloom competition this year. We are currently a small but growing team of volunteers. The competition isn't just about horticulture, it's about community involvement and we'd like you to be involved.

So far, we have planted 9 fruit trees to create a community orchard all thanks to the generosity of donors. We have cleared two areas of weed and bramble at the village hall, covered them in cardboard and mulch which has been donated by Phil Lambert and RRS to suppress the weeds. One is going to be a community style garden for all to enjoy, this includes a fabulous new bug hotel kindly made and donated by Les Whiteside. The other area is being planted with various bulbs and wildflower seeds. We've held competitions for all school age children. The scout groups are getting involved filling the bug hotel and little picking and the brownie and guide groups are involved many initiatives to support us.

The gardening volunteers meet one or twice a week, weeding and preparing areas around the village ready for planting.

We currently have a plant drop in operation for any gardeners out there who have spare plants or cuttings they would like to donate. So far, we've had a couple of gooseberry bushes donated and many more plants promised which is very exciting.

Bonnie Winfield and her helpers are busy crocheting flowers and butterflies for post box toppers and decorations around the village. Pilling nursing home residents are colouring flower pictures which we will display on judging day.

We have secured grant funding for village rainwater harvesting initiatives including water butts for residents on a first come first served basis, please get in touch if you'd like to be added to the list for a water butt or if there is a planter near you that you can help water.

The Parish Council has led a litter pick with village volunteers, we will be holding another nearer the time of the competition.

Local businesses have been approached to see how they can help, if we've not got round to you yet, please contact us.

Hopefully the above has shown you there are many ways you can get involved in helping the village 'In Bloom' initiative even if you aren't a gardener. Please following the Pilling Community Action Facebook page to keep informed of what's happening. This is very much a community initiative and the more people doing their bit will benefit us all.

If you'd like to get involved in any way with the initiative, please contact cllr.kiersey@pilling-pc.gov.uk

Report to Annual Parish Meeting Girlguiding in Pilling

Girlguiding in Pilling has provided a Girls only space continuously for over fifty years. Even Covid didn't stop us as we met online!

We have three units, starting with Rainbows who can join at 4, going on to Brownies at 7 and Guides at 10. Numbers on roll fluctuate according to the numbers of girls in the village but at present we have healthy numbers in all our units and Guides, in particular, are thriving with 17 enrolled and meeting up weekly, showing that teens don't spend all their time at home on their phones!

The leaders and Young Leaders make a significant contribution to the success of our units. They give up their time to attend trainings and hold weekly meetings, making them lively and interesting. We adhere to the Girlguiding programme and keep up to date with changes, attend District events outside the village and even manage a trip or two, although the cost of transport is an issue.

We are proud of all our members who show up each week in uniform to work towards badges and contribute to village life. At present the units are involved with Pilling In Bloom, helping to grow plants, keep our village tidy and support the efforts to improve our local environment.

We are always looking for ways in which we can help. Last year, the Guides helped to serve the Remembrance Day lunch, alongside the Scouts. It was great to see them in their uniforms, giving up their Sunday to do this and their efforts were really appreciated by the fifty or so people who attended.

We are very grateful to Pilling Methodist Chapel who provide us with an excellent meeting space. They always make us welcome, are generous with heating in winter and put up with our occasional mess! They spend a great deal of time ensuring that we are well looked after.

We would like to continue to provide Girlguiding in the future and are always looking for volunteers to help on an occasional or more permanent basis. So if you want to know any more, just get in touch with one of the leaders.

Katrina Bell