



(Finance Manager) Annual Report for District Council – 10 October 2026

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Overview

My first quarter as District Finance Manager has centered on one priority: building a District 74 budget for 2026/27 that is compliant with Toastmasters International (TI) policy, protects the support we give to clubs and divisions, and that Council can approve with confidence.

Before drafting a single line, I reviewed the history behind the budget, including the reasons for the Travel Mandate vote taken by Council during the previous budget process, so that this year's travel provisions reflect what Council has already decided. In parallel, I completed the changeover of the district's finance banking arrangements to the 2026/27 team.

The work in this period covered three areas:

- **Budget creation** – consolidating inputs and a first draft built from the TI FY2026/27 revenue projection (7 September 2026)
- **Budget draft** – a revised budget incorporating TI's corrections (25 September 2026)
- **Finance operations** – banking changeover and the payments process

2. Budget Creation and Finalization

Timeline

Date	Milestone	What happened
July – August 2026	Groundwork	Ideation template to consolidate a view from different streams. Reviewed prior-year budget decisions, including the Council Travel Mandate vote; banking changeover
7 September 2026	First draft	Budget built from the TI revenue projection; showed a deficit of R22,686
September 2026	TI review	Feedback received from TI with corrections to apply
25 September 2026	Final budget	Corrections applied; budget returns to a R15,000 surplus and meets all policy limits
10 October 2026	Council	Final budget presented to District Council for approval

Revenue base

The budget is anchored on **R1,166,277 in membership dues allocation** from TI. Total revenue of **R2,287,176** also includes R1,012,500 for the District Conference (budgeted to break even) and R108,399 from the district store.

What changed between the first draft and the final budget

The final budget moves the district from a **R22,686 deficit to a R15,000 surplus**, an improvement of R37,686, without reducing any direct club-support line.

Budget line	Draft (7 Sep)	Final (25 Sep)	Effect on result
Travel and Lodging	R418,758	R253,066	+R165,692
Fundraising (net)	R96,000	–	–R96,000
District store (net)	–	R26,434	+R26,434
Marketing Outside Toastmasters	R60,328	R80,328	–R20,000
Administration	R49,253	R70,753	–R21,500
Food and Meals	R123,170	R140,411	–R17,241
Speech Contests	R58,301	R58,000	+R301
Net result	–R22,686	+R15,000	+R37,686

In summary, the final budget:

- **Removes the Contest Conference** Transport mandate as advised by TI and budgets for Area and Division contest supported by TI policy.
- **Replaces an untested fundraising line** (R98,000 income expected in February) with the district store, which carries less risk
- **Brings travel and lodging back to a sustainable level**, mainly by removing a R116,000 travel spike and R30,000 lodging provision in March
- **Rebalances speech contest spend towards March**, when the main contest activity takes place, while keeping the total at the 5% policy limit
- **Lifts Marketing Outside Toastmasters to R80,328**, giving more room above the 5% policy minimum

3. How the Budget Supports Clubs and Divisions

Protecting club support was a fixed principle through every revision. The four core club-facing programs were **left unchanged, month by month**, between the draft and the final budget:

Programs	Budget	% of dues	Policy limit
Club Growth	R153,563	13.2%	15% max
Education and Training	R144,955	12.4%	15% max
Recognition	R118,847	10.2%	20% max
Public Relations	R104,775	9.0%	10% max
Total club-facing support	R522,140	44.8%	

Alongside these programs:

- **Speech contests (R58,000)** fund the area, division and district contest pathway, with the largest allocation in March
- **Travel (R127,756) and lodging (R125,310)** still fund Division and Area Director visits to clubs throughout the year, at a leaner rate than the first draft
- **Club Growth spend peaks in October and June** to support the renewal cycles and year-end club strength

4. Policy Compliance

The final budget meets every TI policy requirement. Percentages are measured against total membership dues.

Expense type	% of dues	Policy	Status
Marketing Outside Toastmasters	6.9%	5% min / 10% max	Meets policy
Travel	11.0%	25% max	Meets policy
Lodging	10.7%	15% max	Meets policy

Expense type	% of dues	Policy	Status
Food and Meals	12.0%	15% max	Meets policy
Speech Contest	5.0%	5% max	At limit
Administration	6.1%	10% max	Meets policy
Conference / District Store	Break even / R26,434 net	Must not run at a loss	Meets policy

The **year-end reserve requirement of R291,569** (25% of dues) is a retention requirement and is not budgeted as an expense.

Challenges

Payments flow

The process for requesting, approving and making payments still relies on manual steps, which slows reimbursements and makes tracking harder. Streamlining this is a priority for the next quarter.

Accruals from the previous year

Accruals carried over from the 2025/26 year currently are 4 of them at **R 20,975.00**. These have been settled.

Budget alignment and detailed feedback

Aligning the budget across portfolios and getting detailed, line-level feedback in time was difficult. Several corrections only became clear after TI's review, which led to the second version of the budget.

Mid-year cash flow

Store stock (R81,966) and administration costs fall in January, before store and conference income arrives. On a budget-only basis, the cumulative position dips to about **–R100,000 in February** before recovering. Opening reserves must carry this while still protecting the 25% year-end retention.

Leadership skills developed in the role

- **Coordination** – bringing together inputs from district leaders across portfolios into one budget
- **Getting going with what is available** – building a credible draft from the TI revenue projection and the information at hand, then refining it as feedback came in
- **Responding to feedback** – turning TI's corrections into a revised, compliant budget within weeks
- **Making trade-offs visible** – showing Council clearly what changed and why, so decisions can be made with full information

Closing Remarks

The 2026/27 budget has been built, reviewed by TI, corrected and. It returns the district to a surplus, meets every policy limit and keeps every rand of direct club support intact.

I shared the **25 September 2026 budget to Council for approval**. My focus for the next quarter is to move from planning to stewardship: sound payment processes, external sponsorship and transparent reporting.