



# **Cumberland Council**

## **Purchase Card User Manual**

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# Introduction

Where appropriate and necessary Cumberland Council staff can be issued with a Purchase Card to enable them to fulfil their role.

Authorised, appropriate use of a Purchase Card can be as classified below:

- Emergency adhoc purchases, e.g. purchasing of goods for Service Users in Crisis
- Purchasing goods online where Purchase Orders are not accepted by the Supplier
- Where there is no alternative option than to pay by card

Cards must only be used for payments relating directly to Cumberland Council business and must **NEVER** be used for personal payments.

The use of Cumberland Council Purchase Cards is restricted to the purchasing of goods only when the goods and services are not already covered by existing Supplier Contracts. Existing Contracts can be found using the following link:

[About procurement | Cumberland Council](#)

At the bottom of the page select the link as indicated below:

## Contract Register, Contract Pipeline details and spending by the council

Cumberland Council buys from external suppliers to provide a wide range of commercial opportunities.

- [spending by the council](#)
- [The Procurement Act 2023](#)
- [Contracts Register \(CSV 135KB\)](#)

If you have any queries around Contracts please contact:

[Procurement.mailbox@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Procurement.mailbox@cumberland.gov.uk)

This Manual has been produced to support the use of Purchase Cards and clearly sets out the procedures that must be followed.

**The Council retains the right to suspend or withdraw a card if the terms and conditions and procedures set out in this guide are not complied with.**

**Any misuse of a Purchase Card will result in the withdrawal of the card and may be deemed as a disciplinary offence for staff involved.**

**Random audits will be conducted by the Council to monitor Purchase Card activity and to ensure the procedures set out in this Guide are complied with. It is not possible to withdraw cash form the Purchase card.**

## **Overview of Purchase Cards**

### **What is a purchase card and when can it be used?**

A Purchase Card is a charge card that you can use to purchase goods and services, in only the following circumstances:

- An emergency/ reactive situation
- When a supplier will not accept a Purchase Order
- When there is no alternative option than to Pay by Card

The cards are provided by NatWest and MasterCard. Card transactions are reconciled through a management information system provided by NatWest known as Smart Data Online (SDOL). This system produces information about each card transaction. The Card Holder is responsible for Reviewing their own purchases and all Card Holders have an 'Approver' linked to them on SDOL. The approver will review the purchase and coding allocated to every transaction. This information is then uploaded into the Council's E5 ledger system monthly to appear on the monthly E5 budget monitoring report. For the Card Holder/ Reviewer and Approver SDOL User Manuals see **Appendix 1.**

In order to use Purchase cards, you are required to identify:

#### **1. A Cardholder/ Reviewer**

A cardholder is a person responsible for making purchases with the Purchase Card, and the card will be issued in their name. They are the only person permitted to use the Card. They are responsible for reviewing every purchase they make on the SDOL system to code purchase, complete vat categories and values and attach and retain appropriate receipts. The coding used will be recorded against the budget in E5, once a month.

#### **2. Approver**

The Approvers role is to access SDOL to approve each card purchase made by any card holders who are linked to them. The Approver must be named as an authoriser on the Scheme of Delegation.

The approver may also be a Card Holder, but will never be able or allowed to approve their own transaction.

The Approver will check that correct General Ledger coding has been applied, check vat categories used and ensure an appropriate vat receipt is attached.

**All staff carrying out these roles must follow the policies and procedures set out in this guide.** They will be issued with a copy of this guide and SDOL User Manual along with their purchase card.

All card-holders will also receive mandatory face to face training on card usage prior to being issued with their card. Cardholders are also required to confirm that they have read, understood, and agree to follow these procedures and to abide by the **terms and conditions of use** for Purchase Cards. This confirmation will be obtained in writing from all Cardholders **before** a Purchase Card is issued.

**The Purchase Card does not circumvent the department's internal purchasing authorisation process. In advance of a purchase being made using the Purchase Card the card holder must have the budget holder's approval.**

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Cardholders/ Reviewer Responsibilities

- ✓ To ensure the Card is only accessible to them as the named Cardholder. It must **never** be given to any one else to use.
  - ✓ Checking received goods and services and ensuring that receipts, including details of VAT and invoices are obtained
  - ✓ Ensuring the Purchase Card is not used for any personal purposes, including using it to gain points on personal loyalty cards (e.g. a Tesco card/Nectar).
  - ✓ Ensuring goods and services are **ONLY** delivered to the Council premises. You are never permitted to request delivery to a home address.
  - ✓ Ensuring that all receipts and invoices (must be vat receipts/ invoices where applicable) are attached electronically to SDOL so they are available to your designated Approver. You must also ensure that they are retained locally for a seven year period to comply with HMRC regulations.
  - ✓ **DO NOT** disclose their PIN to anyone.
  - ✓ The Purchase Card is kept **SECURELY**.
  - ✓ The PIN should be committed to memory and the letter it's received on should be destroyed confidentially.
  - ✓ Approval to purchase is always obtained from the budget holder before a purchase is made.<sup>1</sup>
  - ✓ When ordering via the internet **ONLY SECURE** websites are used.
- The Cardholder must check that:

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<sup>1</sup> In some cases Emergency payments may need to be made when the budget holder is not available. The budget holder should communicate expectations as to what is acceptable emergency spending to the card-holder for each specific service, including as a minimum the type and level of spending that can be incurred if deemed absolutely necessary.

- The address in the tool bar begins with 'https.' This may only appear on the ordering or payment screen.
- There is a picture of a closed padlock or an unbroken key symbol, usually in the bottom right hand of the screen. This may only appear on the ordering or payments screen.
- Contact details are available for the organisation from which it is intended to make a purchase i.e. a geographical address and telephone number.
- It's advised you use a known reputable Company.
- ✓ If a card is lost or stolen the Card Holder must immediately contact **NatWest Lost & Stolen Cards** on **0370 600 0459**.
- The linked Approver must also be informed as well as the Council Purchase Card Coordinator by telephoning Purchase to Pay on 01228 221077
- If a lost card is subsequently found it must not be used. It must be destroyed by being cut in half through the magnetic strip and the part containing the CHIP returned to the Council Purchase Card Coordinator see **Appendix 2**.
- ✓ If purchases appear in the SDOL list of transactions which the Cardholder did not purchase, and it is suspected that the Purchase Card details have been used fraudulently you must report the alleged fraud to the Natwest Bank 0800 161 5163, the linked Approver, and the Purchase Card Coordinator by calling 01228 221077.
- ✓ The Card Holder/ Reviewer must ensure **Smart Data On Line is kept up to date** and weekly allocate a cost centre, nominal code (a funding source, project code and detail code if applicable). Each transaction will appear in SDOL 4 days after the purchase has been made. Receipts must be attached to the SDOL system and also retained locally for a period of 7 years to comply with HMRC regulations.
- ✓ The Card Holder/ Reviewer must record VAT appropriately in SDOL to ensure the Council submits accurate Vat returns and can provide valid vat receipts should they ever be requested.
- ✓ The Reviewer/ Cardholder must provide a purchase description that explains clearly what the purchase is. This information is transferred to General Ledger in E5 so therefore must clearly explain the expense.
- ✓ The Card Holder/ Reviewer must ensure that all transactions for the reporting period have been reconciled on the SDOL system by the **10<sup>th</sup> of the month** following the reporting period (ie 10<sup>th</sup> May for transactions in the April reporting period (4<sup>th</sup> April – 3<sup>rd</sup> May).

## Approver Responsibilities - Smart Data Online (SDOL)

- ✓ The Approver must ensure **Smart Data On Line is kept up to date with all details completed comprehensively**. Review weekly and approve or query all purchases made and reconciled by any linked Card Holders.
- ✓ The Approver must check that the Cost Centre, Nominal and additional coding provided is correct and make any amendments as necessary.
- ✓ The Approver must check the vat value and vat receipt is accurate, and amend if necessary.
- ✓ The Approver must check that the purchase matches the attached receipt and that the purchase is genuine.
- ✓ The Approver must ensure that all transactions for the reporting period have been Approved on the SDOL system by the **20<sup>th</sup> of the month** following the reporting period (ie 20<sup>th</sup> May for transactions in the April reporting period (4<sup>th</sup> April – 3<sup>rd</sup> May).
- ✓ Report any named Cardholder misuse of the Purchase Card immediately to Natwest Bank 0800 161 5163 and the Purchase Card Coordinator by calling 01228 221077 and asking for the Management Team.
- ✓ Check the transactions against the purchase order commitments held in the department.
- ✓ Ensure that expenditure on purchase cards is incorporated into the monthly monitoring of the department's budget position.

## Becoming a Purchase Card holder

### New card holder terms and conditions agreement<sup>2</sup>

Where the need for a Purchase Card has been identified and agreed with line management, the new card holder must access the Terms and Conditions held on Intouch under the Purchase Card Scheme header [My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#) . The terms and conditions must be read, considered, and fully understood before signing the agreement document. If there are any queries around any points within the terms and conditions, clarification can be sought by contacting [purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk)

**By agreeing to the terms and conditions you are confirming you will not deviate from the guidance given in the terms and conditions agreement, and fully understand the roles and responsibilities outlined.**

### New Purchase Card application form and authorisation

The Corporate Purchase Card Application Form can be accessed under the Purchase Card Scheme header on [My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#) It needs to be completed by the new card holder. On completion, **the form and the signed terms and conditions agreement** must be emailed to the Budget holder for the service area. If you are unsure who the budget holder is, please use the

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<sup>2</sup> If you're unable to access links provided in this document please request a PDF copy from [purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk)



following link to view the 'List of payment Authorisers (Scheme of Delegation)' [My Finance - Requisitioning, Authorising and Key Contacts : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#)

The budget holder will review the form, the default cost centre, the credit limit and the single transaction limit. The budget holder will also nominate an appropriate Approver in line with the Scheme of Delegation. The budget holder will then email the approved **form and the signed terms and conditions agreement** to the Finance Manager for the service area.

Once approved by the Finance Manager, they will email the form and the signed terms and conditions of agreement to:

[purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk) using subject: New Purchase Card Request.

Online training sessions will be scheduled for the Card Holder/ Review and the nominated Approver.

## SDOL Site Access

A username and password will be emailed to you shortly before your card arrives by post. You will be invited to a mandatory training session which will cover the contents of this documents, as well as the SDOL user guidance manual. Please use this information received to access the SDOL website and familiarise your self with the system and the procedure documents which can be accessed under the Purchase Card Scheme header on [My Finance - Requisitioning, Authorising and Key Contacts : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#)

## Receiving the card

On receipt of the approved card request form and signed terms and conditions agreement Purchase to Pay will order the card from NatWest. The card will be delivered in approx 3 – 4 weeks to the Cardholders work address. As soon as the card is received it should be signed by the card holder.

## Activating the card

The card holder will be issued with a 4 digit PIN number via post, and will receive their purchase card separately by post.

To activate the card for use at a store till point the card holder will need to first visit a ATM machine. On inserting the card the ATM machine will prompt the 4 digit PIN number to be entered. After doing this the card will be ready to use at till point. **Cash withdrawals are prohibited and are blocked by Natwest.**

## Making a purchase for the first time

### Existing Procurement Contracts

If a contract exists (**see page 4**) for the goods or services you wish to purchase, you must only place the order with the specified Supplier via the E-Procurement process detailed in the Purchase to Pay Handbook which can be found under the 'Make, Process and authorise payments' section on [My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#) If you must deviate from this, authorisation **must** be obtained from

the relevant Contract Manager, who you can contact by emailing:  
[procurement.mailbox@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:procurement.mailbox@cumberland.gov.uk)

## Quotation requirements

Estimated Total Contract Value	Minimum Process	Method of Invitation
Up to £2,000	Responsible Officer must use a process which obtains best value for money.	One oral quotation (confirmed in writing where the quotation exceeds £500)
£2,001 - £50,000	2 written quotations	Invitation to submit a quotation in writing to at least 2 candidates

## Authorisation

Authorisation for Emergency purchases under £250 may be given verbally by an appropriate approver, based on the E5 Scheme of Delegation but must be followed up by an email confirming the approval within 48 hours.

If you don't know who you should be seeking authorisation from, the table below is an extract of the lookup tool you can access on the Intouch Intranet site under My Finance - Requisitioning, Authorising and Key Contacts : Cumbria County Council (intouch.ccc) and click 'list of payment authorisers'.

### Example of the list of authorisers lookup tool (for illustrative purposes only)

e-proc SoD				Accounts Payable			Budget Manager					
User ID	User Name	Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Level	Value	User ID	User Name	Level	User ID	User Name	Role	Cost Centre
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1571001	Child & Family Support ( A&F )	16	MAXIMUM	CURTIE	Elizabeth Anne Curtis	16 - Over £25,000	elizabeth.curtis	Liz Curtis	Dev/Authoriser	1573001
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1571501	Allid & Coplad Childcare Purch	16	MAXIMUM	CURTIE	Elizabeth Anne Curtis	14 - Up to £25,000	elizabeth.curtis	Liz Curtis	Dev/Authoriser	1573501
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1572001	Child & Family Support ( C&F )	16	MAXIMUM							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1572501	Carl & Edes Childcare Purch	16	MAXIMUM							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1573001	Child & Family Support ( S&F )	14	UP TO £25,000							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1573001	Child & Family Support ( S&F )	16	MAXIMUM							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1573501	5th Lakes Farm Childcare Purch	14	UP TO £25,000							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1573501	5th Lakes Farm Childcare Purch	16	MAXIMUM							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1662101	Carlton Road Fc	16	MAXIMUM							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1662201	Oremgill Road Fc	16	MAXIMUM							
POURTE	Liz Curtis	1662301	Botcherby Fc	16	MAXIMUM							

The lookup enables a search to be carried out by keying in the green box a cost centre, surname, or element (an element is at a higher level than a cost centre and will normally consist of several cost centres e.g. C12 is Children's Services)

The lookup will show authorisers within e-procurement, accounts payable and show the Budget Manager at the same time. **All those named as approvers linked to your default cost centre are able to approve your purchase card spend.**

## Inactive Cards

A monthly review of inactive cards will be carried out by the Purchase to pay team. You may be contacted to query whether your card is no longer required and therefore needs to be cancelled. If your card is inactive but may still be required you'll be asked to provide supporting information for this.

## **Becoming an Approver – SDOL**

### **Why am I an Approver?**

As part of the Purchase Card application form the Budget Manager nominates an appropriate Approver. The nominated Approver must be listed on the Scheme of Delegation and therefore must be someone who is able to approve spend in the Service Area.

### **Approver SDOL Site Access**

A username and password will be emailed to you shortly before the Card Holder receives their Card. You will be invited to a mandatory training session which will cover the contents of this documents, as well as the SDOL Approver user guidance manual. Please use this information received to access the SDOL website and familiarise yourself with the system and the procedure documents which can be accessed under the Purchase Card Scheme header on [My Finance - Requisitioning, Authorising and Key Contacts : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#)

## **Frequently Ask Questions**

### **Issues with Goods Purchased**

If the query relates to the goods purchased you should contact the supplier.

### **Incorrect Amount on Transactions Record**

If a Reviewer identifies a transaction that does not agree with the invoice it is the responsibility of the Cardholder to contact the relevant supplier to seek a resolution.

### **What is a VAT receipt?**

A receipt or invoice must obtained for all purchases. Where vat has been charged, for purchases over £250.00, the receipt or invoices must contain:

- 1. Details of sale, including the tax date**
- 2. Suppliers Vat Registration Number**
- 3. The amount of vat charged**

### **Account Charged but Goods Not Received**

If the Cardholder is invoiced for something that has not been received they should contact the supplier to ensure that the goods have been dispatched. It is a MasterCard regulation that the transaction is not processed until the goods are dispatched. The Cardholder should inform the Approver if this regulation has been breached.

## Rejection of Goods/ Incorrect Goods

If the Cardholder rejects the goods or service they should inform the supplier immediately. The supplier will have to arrange to make a credit to the card account. The credit will appear in list of transactions in SDOL and should be coded, reviewed and approved like all other transactions.

## Missing Transactions

Any purchases made just prior to 'statement' date (4<sup>th</sup> of the month) will appear in the following period. If transactions don't appear in the following month and are missing, the supplier may have forgotten to enter the purchase into the MasterCard system. This issue should be raised with the supplier.

## Adjusting the 4 weekly Credit Limit

Attempts to purchase in excess of the 4 weekly credit limit will result in the use of the card being declined.

If the 4 weekly credit limit is not sufficient to meet your department's needs, the Cardholder must complete the Purchase Card Amendment Form which can be found under the Purchase Card Scheme header on Intouch [My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#) The form must then be sent to the Budget Holder and Finance Manager for consideration and approval. The limit will only be increased if the form is approved and emailed to [Purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk).

## Holidays

SDOL must be updated by the **card holder/ reviewer** by the **10th** of the relevant month. Otherwise, transactions will be coded to default department and nominal codes and then the department will need to arrange with finance to recode these transactions.

SDOL must be updated by the **Approver** by the **20th** of the relevant month. Any purchases not approved will be highlighted on a report managed by the Purchase Card Coordinator.

## Change of Cardholder's Name

If the Cardholder's name changes (e.g. following marriage) the Cardholder must complete the Purchase Card Amendment Form which can be found under the Purchase Card Scheme header on Intouch [My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council \(intouch.ccc\)](#) The form lists the required supporting documents that are required. Once complete, the form must be submitted, along with copies of those supporting documents, by email to [Purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk).

A new Purchase Card can then be ordered under the new name.

The obsolete card must be cut in half across the magnetic strip and through the chip and returned to the Purchase Card Coordinator. The card number will not change.

## Travelling overseas

Cards should not be taken overseas during personal holidays, but should be safely and securely stored in the office or at home. If you need your Payment Card on an overseas work-related trip you must contact your Budget Holder to seek approval

prior to the trip. Once approval is given in writing you must forward it to [purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk) along with dates and location of your trip so that your card can be ready for international use.

### **Cardholder Leaving employment**

Before leaving, the Cardholder must complete the 'Purchase Card Cancellation Request' section of the Purchase Card amendment form. They must also cut the card in half through the magnetic strip and also through the part of the card containing the Chip, and return it to the Council Purchase Card Coordinator. **See Appendix 2**

### **Cardholder Changing Roles**

Before transferring internally, the cardholder must contact the Council Purchase Card Coordinator (**See Appendix 2**). With the new Line Manager a decision must be made to establish whether the Purchase Card is a requirement of the new role. If it is, the change of Department section of Purchase Card Amendment form must be completed and emailed to [Purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk)

### **Long Term Absence**

Any Card Holder or Approver on long term absence must be reported to the Council Purchase Card Coordinator (**See Appendix 2**).

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Links to Detailed Procedures and Guidance

Detail	Location
Terms And Conditions	Purchase Card Scheme header <a href="#">My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council (intouch.ccc)</a>
SDOL Card Holder/ Reviewer Guidance Document	Purchase Card Scheme header <a href="#">My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council (intouch.ccc)</a>
SDOL Approver Guidance Document	Purchase Card Scheme header <a href="#">My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council (intouch.ccc)</a>
New Purchase Card Application Form	Purchase Card Scheme header <a href="#">My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council (intouch.ccc)</a>
Purchase Card Amendment Form	Purchase Card Scheme header <a href="#">My Finance - Managing Finance : Cumbria County Council (intouch.ccc)</a>

## Appendix 2 – Useful Contacts

Name	Email, Phone number and Address information	Title / Area of Expertise
<p><b>NatWest</b></p> <p><b>NatWest</b></p> <p><b>Natwest</b></p>	<p><a href="mailto:Largemarketadmin@natwest.com">Largemarketadmin@natwest.com</a></p> <p><b>0370 600 0459</b></p> <p><b>0800 161 5163</b></p>	<p>General enquiries, card declines, limit enquiries</p> <p><b>Lost &amp; Stolen Cards</b></p> <p>Reporting Suspected Fraud</p>
<p><b>Purchase to Pay &amp;</b></p>	<p><a href="mailto:purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk">purchasetopay@cumberland.gov.uk</a></p> <p><a href="tel:01228221077">01228 221077</a></p> <p>Parkhouse Building, Baron Way, Kingmoor Business Park, Carlisle, CA6 4SJ</p>	<p>Sending approved forms and SDOL user support.</p>
<p><b>Purchase Card Coordinator</b></p>	<p><a href="tel:01228221077">01228 221077</a></p> <p>Parkhouse Building, Baron Way, Kingmoor Business Park, Carlisle, CA6 4SJ</p>	<p>Reporting cases of Fraud, requesting training or for clarification around any points raised in this document.</p>