



# EXPENSES POLICY

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# Clerk's Expenses Policy

## 1. Introduction

This policy provides for the claim and reimbursement of costs incurred by the Clerk that are directly attributable to carrying out their role.

## 2. Reimbursable expenses

The following will be reimbursed by the Council at the request of the Clerk: -

- Actual travel costs: -
  - To and from training funded by the Council.
  - From the Clerk's normal place of work (their home) to meetings or other events which they are required to attend in the course of their duties.
  - Parking charges (*But not penalties*)
- Use of own car for business travel. To be reimbursed at the current rate allowed by HMRC without incurring a tax charge. (*Note currently 45p per*)
- Telephone calls from home landlines and mobile phones
- Stationary, printing and IT costs.

# Councillor's Expenses Policy

## 3. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the reimbursement of travel, hotel, conference, training and out-of-pocket expenses. It is the Parish Council's policy to reimburse all necessary and reasonable expenses directly incurred by persons whilst on Parish Council business, excluding travel to and from PC meetings. The expectation is that individuals will neither gain nor lose financially and will exercise prudent judgement to keep expenses to a minimum.

## 4. Council Commitment

**4.1** Whilst there is no provision in law enabling Parish Councils to pay individual councillors a wage commensurate with work done by that individual nevertheless the council notes and recognises the time commitment of councillors as well as the many incidental costs they incur in carrying out council business.

**4.2** Such incidental expenses include:

- a. The use of their homes.
- b. Telephone calls from home landlines and mobile phones.
- c. Stationary, printing and IT costs.
- d. Use of car, motorcycle or bicycle to events that take them outside of their Parish area.

**4.3** Please note that this list is indicative and not meant to cover every circumstance in which incidental expenses may be incurred.

## 5. Travel

**5.1** Councillors should seek to choose a mode of transport that is both cost-effective and environmentally responsible, making an appropriate judgement between the cost and convenience of the mode of travel selected.

- a. **Public Transport** - the rate payable shall not exceed the amount of the ordinary standard class fare or any available cheap fare.
- b. **Own Vehicle** - A Councillor may use his or her car to travel to a conference, meeting or other approved Council business outside of the Parish.
- c. The rate claimed shall be the following rates approved by HMRC (Approved Mileage Allowance Payments). Cars - 45p per mile Motorcycles - 24p per mile Bicycles - 20p per mile Passengers - 5p per mile for each passenger (who must be a Councillor or officer of the Parish Council) carried.
- d. Parking and toll charges may be claimed provided these were necessarily incurred.
- e. **Travel by taxi** will only be paid in urgent or exceptional circumstances.
- f. **Start and finish points for a journey.** The starting and finishing point for any journey made by a Councillor shall be his/her home. If Councillors start and/or finish their journey from a place other than their home, the claim shall be in respect of the lesser of the cost of either the journey to/from that other place or to/from their home.

**6. Hotel costs-** will not be paid unless previously approved by Council.

## 7. Other Expenditure

Purchase of items for Council use in excess of £50 should be authorised in advance by the Clerk or Chairman. Where invoices are available it is important to ensure that they are addressed to the Clerk to enable the VAT incurred can be reclaimed.

# Clerk and Councillor Policy

## 8. Procedure for Reimbursement

- a. To obtain reimbursement of expenses incurred, individuals should complete a Parish Council Expenses Claim Form and attach all relevant supporting receipts. Specific details should be provided to support all expense claims e.g. purpose of incurring expenditure, names of people entertained.
- b. All claims should be made as soon as possible after the expenses have been incurred and submitted to the Clerk. Claims that are received six months after the date on which the expenditure was incurred will not be paid without the specific authorisation of the Parish Council.
- c. The Clerk should examine critically all expense claims submitted for payment and submit these to the following Council meeting. Expenses will be reimbursed by BACS payment by the Clerk following Council approval within fourteen days. Expenses will only be reimbursed if an original VAT receipt is attached to the claim form where appropriate.

- d. Claimants are not permitted to authorise their own expenses, or the claims of others from which they may benefit

### **9. Expenses that will not be reimbursed**

- a. The Council will not reimburse you for:
- the cost of any travel undertaken for personal reasons;
  - the cost of any travel for your partner or spouse;
  - any fines or penalties incurred while on council business for whatever reason, including penalties for not paying for a rail ticket in advance of boarding the train and penalties or fines associated with motoring offences, including speeding or parking fines, clamping or vehicle recovery charges;
  - alcohol; and
  - cash advances or withdrawals from an ATM machine.
- b. You are required to pay for any travel costs incurred by your partner or spouse in the event that he or she accompanies you on business. Your spouse or partner must have adequate travel insurance for that journey.

### **10. False claims**

**10.1** If the Council considers that any expenditure claimed was not legitimately incurred on behalf of the Council, it may request further details from you. The Council will thoroughly investigate and check any expenses claim and it may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided.

**10.2** Any abuse of the Council's expenses policy will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to:

- false expenses claims;
- claims for expenses that were not legitimately incurred;
- claims for personal gain;
- claims for hospitality and/or gifts without them having been declared; and
- receipt by you of hospitality and/or gifts from contacts that may be perceived to influence your judgment.

**10.3** The Council will take disciplinary action against employees where appropriate and, in certain circumstances, may treat a breach of this policy as gross misconduct, which may result in summary dismissal. In addition, the Council may report the matter to the police for investigation and criminal prosecution.

**10.4** This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.