

POLICY: COUNCILLORS AND STAFF EXPENSES POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the reimbursement of expenses. It is the Parish Council's policy to reimburse all necessary and reasonable expenses directly incurred by persons whilst on approved* Parish Council business. The expectation is that Councillors and employees will neither gain nor lose financially and will exercise prudent judgement to keep expenses to a minimum.

Expenses that can commonly be reclaimed are detailed below. This is not an exhaustive list. If in doubt Councillors or Staff should consult the Clerk or RFO before incurring an expense.

Breach of this policy, or fraudulent expense claims, may result in disciplinary action.

Travel Expenses

Councillors and Staff may claim travel expenses when carrying out approved duties on behalf of the Council. Examples of such duties may include attending training courses or representing the Council at meetings held outside the parish.

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

Own Vehicle – mileage can be claimed at the HMRC approved rates applicable at the time (currently 45p per mile for cars). The starting and finishing point for any journey made by a Councillor shall be their home and for Staff shall be either their home or the Parish Office, depending where they start the journey. If the journey is not made on an employee's usual working day the starting and finishing point will be their home. Should Councillors or Staff start and/or finish their journey from a place other than their home (or Parish Office), 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 (or Parish Office).

Councillors and Staff using their own vehicles must ensure they are adequately insured and must hold a valid licence.

Parking and toll charges – may be claimed providing they were necessarily incurred.

Public Transport – standard class return fare or any available cheaper fare.

Taxis – will only be paid in exceptional or urgent circumstances.

Hotels and accommodation – will not be paid without prior approval. Councillors and employees are expected to research hotel costs to ensure expenses are kept to a minimum.

Other Expenses

Other approved expenses e.g. certain telephone calls, Time Banking costs or items where it is most efficient for the Councillor or member of Staff to purchase it can also be reclaimed.

Such expenses are likely to be rare as most approved purchases can be made by the Parish Office. Printing, photocopying and postage can also be arranged via the Parish Office.

Members of staff may also be able to claim certain expenses as per their contracts of employment. They should refer to their contracts for details.

Reimbursement Procedure

Expense claims can be made by completing the Expenses Claim Form, available from the Parish Office, within 3 months of the date the expenses were incurred. Claims, other than mileage, must be supported by the relevant VAT receipts or tickets. If it is not possible to produce a receipt, an explanation must be written on the claim form. The Council reserves the right not to reimburse an expense in the absence of a receipt.

Approved expense claims will be reimbursed either from Petty Cash (for claims under £10) or by bank transfer.

*Approval should be obtained in advance from the Parish Council, an appropriately delegated Committee or the Parish Clerk's delegated authority.

Document Approval:

Date of Parish Council meeting:

Review Policy: Every 12 months