



Expense Claim Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy provides clear guidance for councillors, employees, and authorised volunteers who incur expenses while undertaking official Parish Council business. The Parish Council will reimburse all legitimate, reasonable, and evidenced expenses submitted in line with this policy.

Claimants must ensure that all costs represent value for money. The Parish Council reserves the right to refuse reimbursement where claims do not comply with this policy.

2. Definitions

Claimant – Any councillor, employee, or authorised volunteer who submits an expense claim.

RFO – Responsible Finance Officer.

Business Mileage – Travel undertaken solely and necessarily for council duties.

Original Receipt – A full VAT or itemised receipt showing the details of expenditure.

3. Monthly Expense Claims

3.1 All expenses must be submitted monthly using the approved council expense claim form or Microsoft Form. Claims must cover a full calendar month.

3.2 All claims must be accompanied by detailed VAT receipts. Digital receipts are acceptable; however, original receipts must be retained by the claimant for HMRC compliance.

3.3 Public transport should be used where it is the most cost-effective option. Only second-class rail travel will be reimbursed.

4. Claim Period

4.1 Claims must be submitted electronically to the RFO **at least 7 clear days** before the next Full Council meeting. Clear days exclude the day of submission and the meeting day.

4.2 The original claim form and physical receipts must be presented to the RFO at the next available Council meeting to enable prompt reimbursement.

5. Authorisation of Claims

5.1 All claims will be checked by the RFO for accuracy and compliance.

5.2 Claims will be authorised by the Chair and one other Councillor. Claims made by the Chair require authorisation by two Councillors.

5.3 Approvers must seek clarification or additional evidence where validity is unclear. Non-receipted items must include a written explanation and explicit authorisation in the claim body.

5.4 The RFO will seek primary approval within two working days of receiving a claim.

6. Reimbursement of Expenses

6.1 Expenses will only be reimbursed where they are:

- Submitted on the approved claim form.

- Supported by itemised VAT receipts.
- Submitted within the required timeframe.
- In accordance with this policy.

6.2 Claims submitted late may be delayed or refused.

7. Exclusions

The following items **will not** be reimbursed (list not exhaustive):

- Gifts.
- Traffic fines, parking fines, congestion charge fines, penalties, or associated costs.
- Costs for personal meals unless covered under Section 11.

8. Travel Expenses

8.1 Travel to off-site meetings must be undertaken using the most cost-effective and reasonable mode of transport, considering both time and cost. (Please refer to section 9 of this policy)

8.2 Travel arrangements should be booked early to obtain lower fares.

8.3 Claims must include the journey start point, destination, purpose, and receipt (where applicable).

8.4 Home-to-office travel is not reimbursable unless the claimant is required to travel directly from home for business purposes.

9. Motor Car, Motorcycle and Bicycle Mileage

9.1 Business travel by private vehicle should only occur where public transport is unavailable, impractical, or less cost-effective.

9.2 Claimants must ensure they have business-use insurance when using private vehicles for council duties. The Parish Council will not pay any insurance excess.

9.3 The following HMRC-compliant mileage rates apply:

- **Car:** 45p per mile
- **Motorcycle:** 24p per mile
- **Bicycle:** 20p per mile

9.4 Mileage claims must include:

- Start and end locations.
- Purpose of journey.
- Total miles claimed.

9.5 Claims for tolls, congestion charges or parking require receipts. Fines or late payment charges will not be reimbursed.

10. Subsistence

10.1 Personal meals will not be reimbursed.

10.2 When attending official events or functions as an approved representative of the Parish Council, reasonable costs may be reimbursed at the Council's discretion.

11. Subscriptions

11.1 Annual subscriptions to relevant and recognised professional bodies may be reimbursed if directly related to Council duties.

11.2 Pre-approval from the RFO or Council is required. Retrospective approval may be granted where early payment discounts apply but is not guaranteed.

12. Telephone Calls

12.1 Calls made on behalf of the Parish Council may be reimbursed with proof of call purpose and itemised billing.

12.2 Line rental and fixed charges are not reimbursable. Individuals who have been provided with council mobile phones may not be eligible for reimbursement.

13. Fraud Prevention Statement

The Parish Council adopts a zero-tolerance approach to fraudulent or misleading claims. Any false claims may result in disciplinary action or referral to the appropriate authorities.

14. Records Retention

All expense claims, receipts, and approval records will be retained securely by the RFO for a **minimum of six years**, in accordance with statutory financial regulations.

15. Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required by changes in legislation, financial regulations, or council procedures.

Document Approval

Approved at the Full Council Meeting held on **13 January 2020**.

Reviewed: **13 April 2026**.

Review due date: April 2028

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