

Hartley Wintney Parish Council – Expenses Policy & Procedure

1. Policy Purpose

1.1 To reimburse employees and Council Members for reasonable expenses incurred whilst carrying out duties required for Hartley Wintney Parish Council, such travelling to training or meetings for Council business, providing the expenditure has been authorised by the Council or Executive Clerk, is receipted, where possible, and approved in accordance with this policy.

1.2 Employees and Council Members should not be either financially disadvantaged due to genuine Council business expense claims. Conversely, employees and Councillors should not receive disproportionate benefit as a result of a business expense claim.

2. Authorised Activity

2.1 Expenses can be claimed for the following activities:

2.1.1 Business mileage and other travelling expenditure for journeys carried out for the Council, either using the employee / Councillor's own vehicle or public transport. Business mileage or travel costs cannot be claimed for an employee's commute to their normal place of work.

2.1.2 Travel to and from recognised training sessions as approved by the Council, either using the employee / Councillor's own vehicle or public transport.

2.1.3 Subsistence claims for the reasonable cost of meals and drinks (not exceeding £25 per Councillor or employee per day) whilst travelling on Council business. Personal incidental expenses cannot be claimed.

2.1.4 A claim for employee eye tests conducted by a suitably qualified optician must be approved for all employees using display screen equipment (DSE). The Council will only contribute towards one eye test in a twelve month period. Should the employee require spectacles exclusively for visual display unit work, these will also be paid for providing the spectacles are not also required for everyday use. Claims cannot be made for the supply of contact lenses.

2.1.5 Miscellaneous expenses not specified in this policy that have been incurred whilst carrying out Council business may be authorised at the Executive Clerk's discretion and should be agreed in advance of the expenditure, where possible. Such amounts should not exceed £150 without prior authorisation by the Council Chairman or the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

3. Business Travel Mileage Rates - Councillors / Employee's Using Their Own Vehicle

3.1 The following mileage rates can be claimed by employees and Councillors using their own vehicle for Council business journeys:

- Cars / vans – 45p per mile for the first 10,000 business miles*

*Please go to <https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-business-travel-mileage/rules-for-tax> for the current mileage rates.

3.2 It is the responsibility of the employee and Councillors to ensure that their vehicle is fit for use and complies with all legislative motoring requirements (i.e. valid MOT and Road Tax). The employee and Councillors must also ensure that their insurance is suitable for use for which the mileage is being claimed.

3.3 All employees and Councillors will sign to state that they have a Full and valid UK driving license, when claiming for mileage. (Please see note 5).

4. Rules & Process for Claiming Expenses

4.1 All expense claims must be made on the appropriate claims form, available from the Parish Office, with the relevant receipts attached, fully completed and signed by the claimant. All receipts submitted should be originals.

4.2 Claims for business travel mileage made in the employee or Councillor's own vehicle must show the date, start and end address locations, purpose of the journey and total mileage.

4.3 All expenditure to be claimed as a business expense should be agreed with the Executive Clerk prior to the expenditure being incurred.

4.4 Employees and Councillors should travel by the most cost effective mode of transport whilst making business journeys, taking into consideration journey time and the monetary cost.

4.5 All claims will be scrutinised by the Executive Clerk and, if allowed, the claims will be approved and paid. Payment will be made by BACS transfer or in cash as soon as the claim has been authorised.

4.6 If the employee or Council Member fails to submit a claim within a reasonable time after the business expense has been incurred, the Executive Clerk reserves the right to refuse the claim.

5. Abuse of this Policy

5.1 Employees - any deliberate abuse of this policy relating to falsification of expenses claims, receipts or validity of eligibility, will be considered as misconduct and will be dealt with under the Council's Disciplinary Policy, possibly resulting in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including dismissal. The definition of falsification includes the failure to pass on to the Council any beneficial discount in the course of incurring a business expense.

5.2 Councillors - any deliberate abuse of this policy relating to falsification of expenses, receipts or validity of eligibility will be dealt with under the Council's Code of Conduct for Members policy. The definition of falsification includes the failure to pass on to the Council any beneficial discount in the course of incurring a business expense.

Additional Information

For further information, please contact the Executive Clerk or the Chairman of the Policy Committee.

Amendment Record

Version 1: Initial Issue as Interim Policy – 21st January 2019
 Approved by Finance Committee – 19th October 2020
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