



## EXPENSES POLICY

### **Purpose**

This policy sets out the Council's rules on how employees and councillors can claim for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Council. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees and councillors are properly reimbursed for legitimate business expenses and to ensure that these expenses are treated appropriately for tax purposes. However it must always be borne in mind that the Town Council is a financially small membership organisation.

### **General procedure**

The Council will reimburse you for actual expenditure that is incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in connection with authorised duties that you undertake in the course of your employment or membership of the council. To claim for expenses, you must use the Council's expenses claim forms and set out the reasons why the expense was incurred on the claim form. If you are unsure whether an expense can be claimed, you must seek prior written authorisation from the RFO / the Chair.

Expenses will not be paid unless supporting evidence is provided, together with a completed expense claim form. This should include original receipts or invoices with the date and time of the transaction (unless you are claiming for mileage). When claiming for travel expenses on public transport, you should enclose the tickets showing the departure point and destination of your journey, where possible. Credit and debit card statements will not be accepted. Where you are submitting a VAT receipt, you should set out:

- the name and VAT registration number of the retailer or service provider;
- the goods and services provided; and
- the amount of VAT payable.

Once completed and signed, you should submit your expense claim form to the Clerk / the Chair for approval. Once approved the claim form should be sent to the RFO for payment.

Expenses claims must be submitted within 30 days of the expense being incurred. If this is not practical, written approval for any extension will be required from the Clerk / the Chair. The Council reserves the right to withhold any payment where prior written approval has not been given.

The Council may return an expense claim form to you without payment if it is completed incorrectly or lacks supporting evidence.

The Council will pay claims for authorised expenses by cheque / BACS transfer into the same bank account into which your salary is paid.

In general, you should not incur expenses other than in the categories listed here:

- a. Travel to and from meetings of outside bodies which are limited to the Town Council representative(s) to those bodies.

- b. Travel to and from training sessions held by NALC or other approved organisations.
- c. Travel expenses when delivering Council documents or carrying out Council business.
- d. Other expenses as agreed, in advance, at full Council.

There may be other incidental expenses incurred by members/staff that are not covered by these rules such as stationery, phone calls etc. However, if you have claims for expenditure other than for those categories listed, you should seek written approval from the RFO / the Chair before incurring the expense.

The Council will accept email as written approval where it is required in this policy.

Any queries in relation to this policy should be directed to the RFO / the Chair.

It is important that employees and elected members keep full records of expenses claimed and the reasons the expenses were incurred so that they can provide appropriate evidence, if requested, to the HMRC. In respect of car travel, members should keep a log showing where journeys commenced and ceased and the number of miles travelled.

### **Training**

When attending training courses all employees are able to claim travel expenses for the difference in the usual home to work costs. Where the training takes place outside contracted daily hours, part-time employees should be paid on the basis as time spent on training is working time. Some training can be very expensive and as a condition for funding training, the council requires repayment of all costs incurred for any training course should an employee not complete the training. Should an employee leave employment, repayment of costs is on a sliding scale dependent upon cost and time worked since commencement of the training. Councillors can claim for travel to training from either home or the council office, whichever is the least.

### **Travel**

Employees should consider whether or not travel is necessary or if there are more appropriate means (for example tele-conferencing or video-conferencing).

### **Rail**

You may claim for standard class rail fares only. Where possible, rail journeys should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

### **Use of your own car**

It may be appropriate and cost-effective to use your own car when travelling on council business, for example if you are travelling with other staff or councillors, delivering documents or, where there is limited public transport to your destination, or the journey time is significantly shorter than using public transport.

Any use of your own car on business is subject to you:

- holding a full UK driving licence;
- ensuring that your car is roadworthy and fully registered; and
- holding comprehensive motor insurance that provides for business use.

Prior authorisation should be sought from the Clerk, or the Chair in the case of the Clerk, before using your own car on business. The Council accepts no liability for any accident, loss, damage or claim arising out of any journey that you make on business. The Council will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on your own car.

To claim for petrol expenditure, you should set out the distance of the journey undertaken on your expenses claim form. The Council will pay you a mileage allowance of 45p per mile for mileage under 10,000 miles and 25p per mile for mileage over 10,000 miles, or such other rate as set out from time to time by HM Revenue and Customs. The Council will pay for tolls, congestion charges and parking costs incurred, where applicable.

#### Use of bicycle or Motorcycle

If use of your bicycle or motorcycle is approved, you can claim a mileage allowance of 20p or 24p per mile respectively. Any use of your own motorcycle on business is subject the same requirements as a car (see above).

#### Taxis

Any use of taxis will require prior approval and only in limited circumstances. These are:

- where taking a taxi would result in a significantly shorter travel time than using public transport;
- where there are several employees travelling together; or
- where personal security and safety of employees is an issue, for example taxis may be permitted after 9.30pm.

You must obtain a receipt with details of the date, place of departure and destination of the journey.

#### Overnight accommodation

As a guideline for travel on council business you should book accommodation equivalent to three-star standard or less. You may book hotel accommodation of up to £120 maximum in a major city and £100 elsewhere. It is your responsibility to ensure that any hotel reservations are cancelled within the required cancellation period if they are no longer required.

#### Meals

If you are required to be away from home on council business for more than 6 hours (including travel time), you may claim up to:

- £10 for breakfast (if this is not included in the hotel room rate);
- £15 for lunch;
- £20 for dinner; and

The maximum amounts above are inclusive of drinks. Alcohol cannot be reclaimed under any circumstances.

You should supply receipts and invoices for all hotel and meal expenses other than for the daily allowance, where no receipt is required.

#### Entertainment/gifts

The Council has strict rules about offering or receiving both entertainment and gifts.

Any gifts, rewards or entertainment offered to you should be reported immediately to the Clerk, or the Chair in the case of the Clerk. As a general rule, small tokens of appreciation, for example flowers or a bottle of wine, may be retained by employees.

#### Annual events

The Council may decide to hold a staff event, such as a Christmas meal or other celebration.

Except where agreed to the contrary, attendance is not compulsory, and you will remain responsible for any expenses you incur.

### **Members Printing**

Printing expenses will be reimbursed provided that the elected Member has consented to receive all council documentation electronically. A maximum of £50 per year per elected Member is available however VAT receipts must be submitted to the Town Council as proof of expenditure.

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

The Council will not reimburse you for:

- the cost of any travel between your home and usual place of work (except in exceptional circumstances for early morning/late night transport as set out above);
- 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.

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.

### **False claims**

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 as it sees fit. It may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided.

Where payment has been made to you prior to the discovery that the claim was not legitimate or correct, it may deduct the value of that claim from your salary.

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.

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

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

<b>Date:</b>	<b>May 2023</b>	<b>Approving:</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Policy effective:</b>	<b>Immediate</b>	<b>Date for next review:</b>	<b>May 2025</b>

# Amble Town Council

## Expenses Claim

Name: _____	Date: _____
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Journey From/To	Purpose of Journey	Date	Miles Claimed	Amount
				£
				£
				£
				£
				£
				£
				£
				£
Total Mileage Claimed				£

Other Expenses <span style="float: right;">(Please attach receipts for all stationery and miscellaneous expenses)</span>			
Printing	Dates	Details	Amount
	Dates	Details	Amount
Miscellaneous	Dates	Details	Amount
Total Amount of Expenses Requested:			

<p><b>Signature</b></p> <p><b>Councillor/Clerk:</b></p>	<p><b>Approved:</b></p> <p><b>Chair of meeting</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b></p>
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Payment made:	Date:
	Cheque Number:

