



Controlled Document

Title	Expenses Policy
Author	Lenham Parish Council
Owner	Lenham Parish Council
Subject	Main Policy Documents
Government Security Classification	Official
Document Version	Version 1
Created	07.01.2025
Approved By	Full Council
Review Date	05.06.2028

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change	Sign
1	05.06.2025	Lenham Parish Council	Original Policy	S.Newell

Expenses Policy

Introduction

Lenham Parish Council believes that no employee or councillor should be financially disadvantaged when representing the Council.

This policy sets out the rules on how employees and councillors can claim for legitimate business expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Council and to ensure that these expenses are treated appropriately for tax purposes.

Lenham Parish Council will make reimbursement for all or some of the expenses the Chairman or Councillors, Clerk, and other staff, when incurred in performing the duties required by the Council.

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

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

Any mileage costs will be reimbursed at the current HMRC non-profit making rate, currently 45p per mile for cars.

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

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



Councillors Expenses

Parish Councillors are unpaid and do not receive an allowance. They are entitled to claim the following expense, provided they have first been approved by Council, and are supported by receipts, where appropriate.

Parish Councillors can claim reimbursement of all *mileage, hospitality, and home printing costs when incurred necessarily in performing the duties required by the Council. Other expenses can also be claimed at the discretion of the Clerk if incurred necessarily in performing the duties of officer or required by the Council.

*Travelling and associated travel expenses on journeys to Council business, not including the cost of travel between home and monthly Council meetings, e.g. training courses.

Chair's Allowance

Under the Local Government Act 1972, s15(5) '*a parish council may pay the chair for the purpose of enabling them to meet the expenses of their office such allowance as the council think reasonable*'. The Chair's allowance is set at £450.

The Chairman can receive an annual allowance to defray the expenses of his/her office. The annual sum will be agreed by a resolution of the council on an annual basis.

Additionally, the chairman can claim reimbursement of all mileage, hospitality, and home printing costs when incurred necessarily in performing the duties required by the Council. Other expenses can also be claimed at the discretion of the Clerk if incurred necessarily in performing the duties of officer or required by the Council.

Travel

The Council will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on a private vehicle. Claims for petrol expenditure, should set out the distance of the journey undertaken on the expenses claim form. The Council will pay 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. Fines for traffic or parking offences will not be reimbursed.

Rail

Standard class rail fares will only be reimbursed. Where possible, rail journeys should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.



Use of personal vehicle

Any use of a private vehicle on parish council business is subject to the claimant:

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

The Council accepts no liability for any accident, loss, damage, or claim arising out of any journey that is made on council business.

Use of Bicycle or Motorcycle

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

Taxis

Any use of taxis will require prior approval from the clerk 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.
- where personal security and safety of employees is an issue, for example taxis may be permitted after sunset or at any function where alcohol may be consumed.

Claimants 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 accommodation equivalent to three-star standard or less can be booked with the permission of the clerk. Hotel accommodation of up to [£120] maximum in a major city and [£100] elsewhere is acceptable. It is the claimant's responsibility to ensure that any hotel reservations are cancelled within the required cancellation period if they are no longer required.

In the UK an employee may claim for meals and beverages up to a maximum of £20 per day when travelling on Parish Council business. This is intended to reimburse the employee for additional expense as a result of having to travel on Parish Council business. Personal incidental expenses cannot be claimed where there is no overnight stay.



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 the claimant. The Council may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided.

Where payment has been made prior to the discovery that the claim was not legitimate or correct, the parish council will seek reimbursement to the value of that claim.

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
- receipt of hospitality and/or gifts from contacts that may be perceived to influence a councillors or officers 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.

