

Holbrook Parish Council Travel and Expenses Policy

1. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the reimbursement of travel, hotel, conference, training and out-of-pocket expenses. It is Holbrook Parish Council's policy to reimburse all necessary and reasonable expenses directly incurred by persons whilst on Parish Council business. The expectation is that individuals will neither gain nor lose financially and will exercise prudent judgement to keep expenses to a minimum.

Clerk's Expenses

2. The Clerk will be able to claim the following expenses:
 - Travelling and associated travel expenses on journeys on parish council business, to include mileage at current NJC rates. Parking and toll charges may be claimed provided these were necessarily incurred.
 - Subsistence which may include overnight accommodation and meals incurred in the performance of parish council business, provided that expenses have been receipted and approved by the parish council.
 - Contributions towards the cost of computer or other office equipment.
 - Stationery, postage and printing costs and other office consumables.
 - Council-provided mobile phone top-up and other associated costs.
 - Connection and rental of telephone line (if required and approved by the Council) and internet/broadband and the cost of telephone calls made by the Clerk from home on parish council business. This is where cost is incurred; for example, if the home contract includes free calls or unlimited internet then reimbursement would not be appropriate.
 - Reasonable sums to cover the extra costs of insurance, heating, lighting and electricity arising from the Clerk's use of home for council business, if required and approved by the Council.

Chairman's Expenses

3. The Chairman can receive an annual allowance to defray the expenses of their office in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, SI 2003/1021.
4. This allowance is intended to cover costs such as:
 - Stationery, postage and printing costs.
 - Phone calls.
 - Hospitality and gifts.
5. The Chairman's allowance has been set at £300 per annum. This is reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

Councillors' Expenses

6. Councillors are unpaid and do not receive an annual allowance.

Travel and Subsistence

7. Councillors (including the Chairman) may be reimbursed for expenses for travel and subsistence when carrying out previously approved duties. Approved duties generally mean the doing of anything approved by the parish council, or anything of a class so approved for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the parish council or any of its committees or working parties.

8. Councillors will not receive expenses for attendance at any meeting of Holbrook Parish Council or any work within the parish.
9. Councillors and employees of the Council should seek to choose a mode of transport that is both cost-effective and environmentally responsible, making an appropriate judgement between the cost and convenience of the mode of travel selected.
10. Public Transport - the rate payable shall not exceed the amount of the ordinary standard class fare or any available cheap fare.
11. Own Vehicle - A Councillor may use his or her car to travel to a conference, meeting or other approved Council business outside of the Parish.
12. The rate claimed shall be the following rates approved by HMRC (Approved Mileage Allowance Payments). Cars - 45p per mile; Motorcycles - 24p per mile; Bicycles - 20p per mile; Passengers - 5p per mile for each passenger (who must be a Councillor or officer of the Parish Council) carried.
13. Parking and toll charges may be claimed provided these were necessarily incurred.
14. Travel by taxi will only be paid in urgent or exceptional circumstances.

Start and finish points for a journey:

15. The starting and finishing point for any journey made by a Councillor shall be their home. If Councillors start and/or finish their journey from a place other than their home, 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.
16. In an emergency, such expenses *may* be approved after the event.
17. Any Councillor or other employee who is making a claim for travelling should ensure that their insurance policy covers them for business purposes. They should also note that they are personally responsible for any fines, penalties or accident claims incurred whilst driving on Holbrook Parish Council business.

Stamps and Stationery

18. Councillors may obtain these from the Clerk.

Items purchased specifically at the direction of the Parish Council

19. These shall be reimbursed. Claims shall be made on the appropriate forms available from the Clerk. Councillors shall endeavour to obtain a VAT receipt in the name of the Parish Council and pass this on to the Clerk.

Other expenses

20. Councillors will be expected to provide documentary evidence for expenses incurred on parish council-related expenditure.

Procedure for Reimbursement

21. To obtain reimbursement of expenses incurred, individuals should complete a Parish Council Expenses Claim Form, attach all relevant supporting receipts. Specific details should be provided to support all expense claims e.g. purpose of incurring expenditure, names of people entertained.

22. All claims should be made as soon as possible after the expenses have been incurred and submitted to the Clerk. Claims that are received six months after the date on which the expenditure was incurred will not be paid without the specific authorisation of the Parish Council.
23. The Clerk should examine critically all expense claims submitted for payment. Expenses will be reimbursed by cheque or BACs once approved at the Parish Council Meeting following receipt of a properly completed and supported Expenses Claim Form. Expenses will only be reimbursed if an original VAT Receipt is attached to the Claim Form where appropriate. **Please note that credit card slips are not VAT Receipts.**