

# ROPSLEY AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

## EXPENSES POLICY

**Date of adoption of policy:** 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Date for next review:** 2025

**Minute Ref:** 30/04 Minute 7.5

### 1. Introduction.

- 1.1 Ropsley Parish Council will make reimbursement for all or some of the expenses the Chairman or Councillors, Clerk, and other members of the Parish, when incurred in performing the duties required by the Council.
- 1.2 The policy sets the entitlements and process for claiming expenses.

### 2. Process.

- 2.1 All expense claims must be submitted using the Ropsley Parish Council Travel and Expenses Claim form and will be accompanied by receipts.
- 2.2 All expenses claims will be submitted to the clerk. They will have delegated authority to agree the expenses up to £25, with expenses over £25 to be agreed at a Council meeting by the Chairman and one other Councillor. The Clerk will then raise electronic bank payments to recipients, all payments will be scrutinised by bank signatories. In the case of expenses claimed by the clerk the claim form will be scrutinised and considered by the Chair of the parish. The clerk cannot approve their own expenses.
- 2.3 No expenses will be reimbursed in cash.
- 2.4 **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; and

- receipt of hospitality and/or gifts from contacts that may be perceived to influence a councillor or officer's judgment.

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

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

### **3. Travel Expenses.**

3.1 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.

3.2 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. The Council will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on a private vehicle.

3.3 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.

3.4 **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 to the same requirements as a car (see above).

3.5 **Taxis:** Any use of taxis will require prior approval from the clerk and only in limited circumstances.

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

### **4. Overnight Accommodation.**

4.1 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. 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.

#### **5. Chairman's Expenses.**

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 Additionally, the chairman can claim reimbursement of all milage, 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.

#### **6. Councillor's Expenses.**

- 6.1 Parish Councillors can claim reimbursement of all milage, 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.

#### **7. Clerk Expenses**

- 7.1 The Clerk will be able to claim the following expenses:
  - Travelling to and from council meetings and associated travel expenses on journeys on council business to include mileage at current National Joint Council for Local Government Services: England, Wales and Northern Ireland (NJC) rates and parking.
  - Subsistence which may include overnight accommodation and meals incurred in the performance of Council business ("other expenses") provided that the other expenses have been receipted and approved by the Chair of the Parish Council.
  - Small purchases such as postage or supplies in accordance with Financial Regulations.
  - A fixed rates for homeworking as agreed by HMRC: This has been set at £6.00 per week by HMRC and is un-receipted. To be paid quarterly.