Sturminster Newton Town Council

Expenses Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the arrangements for reimbursing reasonable expenses incurred on authorised Council business. It supports proper use of public money and should be read alongside the Council's Financial Regulations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Council employees and councillors who incur incidental expenses while carrying out authorised Council business. Expenses will usually relate to training, conferences, ordinary travel or small incidental purchases.

3. Approval

All expenses must be approved by the Town Clerk before payment. Where the Town Clerk is the claimant, the claim must be approved by the Chair of Finance & Policy Committee to ensure that no person approves their own expenses.

Training and conference attendance must be agreed in advance and be within an approved Council budget.

4. Allowable expenses

The Council may reimburse:

approved training and conference fees;

standard-class public transport fares;

necessary parking, tolls and similar travel costs;

business mileage in a private vehicle; and

reasonable incidental expenditure necessarily incurred for Council business.

First-class travel, flights, hospitality, accommodation, alcohol, fines, penalties and personal expenditure will not be reimbursed.

5. Mileage

Business mileage will be reimbursed at the Council's current approved rate of 55 pence per mile. The claimant must record the date, purpose, start point, destination and number of business miles travelled.

Normal travel between home and the usual place of work is not claimable. Anyone using a private vehicle for Council business must hold a valid driving licence and ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and insured for business use.

6. Claims and receipts

Claims must be submitted using the Council's approved form and should normally be made within one month of the expense being incurred.

Itemised receipts or equivalent evidence of purchase must be provided for all claims. Claims without appropriate supporting evidence will not be reimbursed. A claimant must not claim any cost reimbursed by another organisation.

7. Payment and records

Approved claims will be paid through the Council's normal payment process and charged to the appropriate budget. Claims, receipts and approvals will be retained in accordance with the Council's financial and records management arrangements.

8. Exceptions and misuse

Any exceptional expense must be agreed by the Town Clerk before it is incurred. False, duplicate or misleading claims may result in recovery of sums paid and, where appropriate, disciplinary or other formal action.

9. Review and approval

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if the Council's arrangements or mileage rate change.

Approved: October 26

Review due: October 28