Aldbourne Parish Council

EXPENSE POLICY
Adopted 2 March 2022

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

It is the policy of Aldbourne Parish Council to reimburse its Clerk and Councillors out-of-pocket expenses incurred in performing the duties required by the Council. The aims of the policy are to ensure that expenses incurred by the Clerk and Councillors are reimbursed in a fair and timely manner and to ensure that costs and expenses are controlled by the Parish Council.

Aldbourne Parish Council will not be held responsible for any fines incurred on Council business.

CLERK'S EXPENSES

The Clerk will be able to claim the following expenses when supported by receipts:

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- the cost of minor office consumables, including stationery, postage and printing costs, pay-as-you-go top ups for the Council's mobile telephone, and other office consumables.
- a yearly sum to cover the extra costs of space, lighting, heating and electricity arising from the Clerk's use of home for Council business. To be paid in quarterly instalments by Standing Order.
- any additional premium required by the Clerk's own home insurance provider in respect of the Clerk's private premises being the main place of work.
- all necessary computer software or upgrades required for the Clerk to fulfil the duties required by the Council.
- a reasonable proportion of home broadband service costs and, subject to prior approval by the Council, computer hardware, to reflect the proportion of such costs incurred in fulfilling the duties required by the Council.
- travelling expenses for journeys on council business, including travel to and from meetings, at the current HMRC non-profit making rate, currently 45p per mile.
- overnight accommodation, meals and fares, subject to prior approval by the Council

The Clerk will submit any expense claim, supported by original receipts or invoices*, for authorisation at the next Full Council meeting.

If the expense contains a VAT element, the Clerk will, wherever practicable, obtain a VAT receipt* and submit this with the expenses claim.

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES

Parish Councillors are unpaid and do not receive an annual allowance. They are entitled to claim the following expenses when supported by receipts*:

- 45p per mile (current Inland Revenue non-profit making rate) for travelling by car in connection with council business

- items purchased specifically at the direction of the Council. Councillors should make every effort to obtain a VAT receipt/invoice* in the name of the Council and pass this to the Clerk.

- other expenses, provided they have been approved in advance by the Council.

HOW TO CLAIM

Councillors making applications for the reimbursement of expenses will need to complete a claim form available from the Clerk.

Councillors' expense claims must be submitted to the Clerk within three months of the expense being incurred. After validation the claim will be presented at the next Full Council meeting for payment to be authorised.

Mileage claims will be based on AA route finder/Google Maps.

ABUSE OF THIS POLICY

Any abuse or allegations of the abuse in the application of this policy or any deliberate falsification of a claim or the evidence needed to make a claim by Aldbourne Parish Council Councillors may result in referral to the Standards Process as a contravention of the Members Code of Conduct.

"Falsification" includes the failure to pass on any discount obtained in the course of incurring an expense.

EXPENSES POLICY DOCUMENT

This policy shall be reviewed every four years or earlier if so required.

*Receipts, VAT receipts and invoices must be original documents, not photocopies, and obtained in the name of Aldbourne Parish Council wherever possible. It is recognised that this is impracticable in some situations, e.g. for small purchases carrying a till receipt only, and for on-line transactions where payment is possible only with use of a personal debit or credit card. Such items should nevertheless be endorsed in handwriting with the name of Aldbourne Parish Council.

If a VAT receipt cannot be provided, the Clerk shall consider the implication on overall cost of the purchase and whether on balance the Council's interests might be better served by choosing a different seller who will be able to supply a bona fide VAT receipt. The Clerk shall, if required by the Council, provide justification of the decision made.