

Councillor Allowances & Expenses Policy

1. Introduction

It is the policy of Haslemere Town Council ("the Council") that Councillors should not be financially disadvantaged in the performance of their role.

This policy will apply to all Councillors, including co-opted Members, and any non-councillor members of a committee or sub-committee of the Council.

2. Councillor Allowances

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 apply to those parishes that pay members' allowances. Haslemere Town Council makes no provision for allowances but does make provision for reimbursement of expenses as detailed below.

3. Mayor's Expenses

Each year in the budget a Mayor's allowance is set to cover:

- (a) Reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses to attend events to which the Mayor has received an official invitation through the Council office.
- (b) Small gifts, tokens of appreciation and donations to charity and other out of pocket expenses, for instance purchase of tickets to local events.
- (c) Stationery, printing and postage.
- (d) Other such expenses as the Council thinks reasonable.

At the end of the Mayoral year, the balance of the Mayor's allowance will be paid to their nominated charities.

4. Councillor Expenses

Each year the Council sets a budget for Members travel and training. These costs will be paid for by the council on receipt of proof of expenditure, or in the case of travel by car, a mileage claim form which can be obtained from the council's website.

Mileage for travel outside the town's boundary (only) will be reimbursed according to the HMRC approved rates in force at the time, currently 45p per mile for private vehicles.

The Council will also reimburse Members for reasonable expenses wholly, necessarily, and exclusively incurred in connection with its business. Where possible, purchases must be made in the name of the Council and a VAT receipt obtained, in accordance with Section 6 below.

Members should check with the Town Clerk before incurring any expenditure which has not already explicitly been agreed by Council.

5. Value Added Tax

For VAT purposes, Councillors are considered as employees when carrying out their official duties. As a result, any VAT incurred in the course of their official duties can be recovered subject to the following conditions:

- (a) the Council accepts responsibility for the actual expenses incurred and includes them in its normal accounts
- (b) the goods or services are ordered in the name of the Council and invoices are addressed to it, and
- (c) adequate documentation is retained to support the claim for refund of the VAT.

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