

# COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

- ✉ **Postal Address:** Highfield Park Visitor Centre, Hill End Lane AL4 0RA  
☎ **Telephone:** (01727) 825 314  
💻 **Website:** <https://colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk>  
✉ **E-mail:** [clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk)



## MEMBERS ALLOWANCE POLICY

### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the reimbursement of travel, hotel, conference, training and out-of-pocket expenses for Councillors. It is Colney Heath 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.

### 1. Chairman's Allowance

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.

This allowance is intended to cover costs such as:

- Stationery, postage and printing costs.
- Phone calls.
- Hospitality and gifts.

The Chairman's allowance is currently £500 per annum. This is reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

The Chairman's allowance can be awarded as a lump sum at the start of the term of office and will be paid through the CHPC payroll system. The Chairman must provide receipts for expenditure of the allowance to the RFO and any residue in the Chairman's allowance budget at the end of the Chairman's term in office must be returned to CHPC.

The Chairman's allowance is treated as income arising from the councillor's office (the equivalent of a person's employment) and are therefore taxable under the PAYE system. The allowances are also liable to National Insurance Contributions (NICs). However, the NIC's earnings threshold means it is unlikely any NICs will be due.

### 2. Councillors' Allowance

Councillors are unpaid and do not receive an annual allowance.

### 3. Travel and Subsistence

Councillors, including co-opted Councillors, may claim travel and subsistence expenses when carrying out previously approved duties. (Approved duties, generally means the doing of anything approved by the Council, or anything of a class so approved for the purpose or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Council or any of its committees or working parties).

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Councillors 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.

Public Transport - the rate payable shall not exceed the amount of the ordinary standard class fare or any available cheap fare.

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. 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.

Parking and toll charges may be claimed provided these were necessarily incurred.

Travel by taxi will only be paid in urgent or exceptional circumstances.

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.

Claims shall be made on the appropriate forms available from the Clerk and in an emergency, such expenses incurred *may* be approved after the event.

Any Councillor 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 Colney Heath Parish Council business. Councillors will not receive expenses for attendance at any meeting of Colney Heath Parish Council or any work within the parish.

## 4. **Stamps and Stationery**

Councillors may obtain these from the Parish Clerk.

## 5. **Items purchased specifically at the direction of the Council**

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

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## 6. Other expenses

Councillors will be expected to provide documentary evidence for expenses incurred on parish council-related expenditure and should complete a Parish Council Expenses Claim Form, attaching all relevant supporting receipts. Specific details should be provided to support all expense claims e.g. purpose of incurring expenditure, names of people entertained.

All claims should be made as soon as possible after the expenses have been incurred and submitted to the Parish 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.

The Clerk should examine critically all expense claims submitted for payment. Expenses will be reimbursed by BACS 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.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually.