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Policy Name	Committee Expenses
Policy Author	Assistant Director (Corporate Services)
Approved by Sub Committee	N/A
Approved by Management Committee	January 2021
Latest date of Next Review	November 2023

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative will provide this policy on request at no cost, in larger print, in Braille, in audio or other non-written format, and in a variety of languages. Please contact the office.

Registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator No. 203
Registered Charity No. SCO38737, VAT Registration No. 180223636
Registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014



1. Introduction

- 1.1 Committee members (including voluntary officers) and co-opted members may incur expenses while carrying out duties on behalf of the Co-operative.
- 1.2 The Co-operative will reimburse those expenses within the terms of this policy.
- 1.3 This policy covers describes the conditions on which the Co-operative will make these payments.
- 1.4 The payment of expenses to employees is covered within the Terms and Conditions of Employment.

2. Regulatory Standards

- 2.1 The Regulatory Standards that apply to this policy are:

Standard 3 – “The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.”

Standard 5 – “The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.”

3. Equality

- 3.1 This policy will be administered in accordance with the our policy on Equality and Diversity. It is recognised that the financial situation of individual voluntary committee members may differ and this policy aims to make sure that no management committee member is restricted from carrying out their role due to travel, training or networking costs.

4. Conditions for Paying Expenses

- 4.1 Expenses will only be paid in the following circumstances:
 - Travel to any ordinary meeting of the Management Committee, a sub committee, working group, or meeting with staff members.
 - Travel to any extraordinary or special meeting of the Management Committee (or sub committee or working group meeting).
 - Subsistence for business which requires attendance for more than five consecutive hours, subject to section 5.6.
 - Travel, and subsistence if needed, to attend a meeting outside Whitlawburn on the Co-operative’s behalf. This could include, for example, meetings at other RSLs or at EVH’s office in Glasgow.
 - Travel, accommodation and subsistence, including overnight subsistence, when undertaking overnight business on behalf of the Co-operative, e.g. at residential conferences.

5. Eligible Expenses

5.1 The Co-operative will try to avoid Committee members being out-of-pocket and having to claim expenses for meals, accommodation, transport, etc after the event. We will normally pay in advance for travel, subsistence and accommodation for governing body members when they are on approved Co-operative business. Travel and accommodation will normally be booked and paid for by the Co-operative, included in any attendance fee or provided free of charge. When this is not possible, and for smaller expenses, e.g. when travelling to attend local meetings and events; being out-of-pocket will be unavoidable. In these circumstances, the following arrangements will apply.

5.2 **Travel**

Committee Members are expected to use the most cost effective form of transport unless there are specific reasons why an alternative had to be used, such as for issues of safety or accessibility.

5.3 Committee members may use their own car where it is more cost effective to do so, for example a number of Committee Members and/or staff members could share a journey, or where public transport is impractical.

5.4 Eligible expenses that will be met by the Co-operative include:

- a) Taxi Fares. Taxis should be booked via the Co-operative's contract. If this is not possible receipts must be obtained and submitted with an expenses claim.
- b) Public transport fares (rail, bus, air or ferry) will be reimbursed at standard class rate. Receipts must be submitted with an expenses claim.
- c) Car mileage is payable at the rates which apply for employees within their Terms and Conditions of Employment – please refer to current Conditions for current rates.
 - i) Car mileage will only be paid to those members who have supplied The Co-operative with a current certificate of motor insurance confirming that the member can use their private vehicles for such business.
 - ii) Insurance of the vehicle is the member's own responsibility and the Co-operative will not be held liable for any costs incurred in the replacement or repair of the vehicle, including the cost of insurance excess.
- d) Bridge tolls and car park fees - every effort should be made to avoid or restrict such fees.
- e) Fines for breaching parking regulations are not included.

5.5 **Subsistence (Meals)**

If meals are not provided during attendance at approved events, the Co-operative will pay subsistence in line with current EVH rates. Expenses are paid up to a maximum value based on hours “on duty”. Expenses are paid on production of a receipt.

5.6 **Care of Dependents**

5.7 The costs incurred for having a dependant looked after while carrying out duties as a Committee Member may be met by the Co-operative. Dependants are deemed to be children under the age of sixteen and adults in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or equivalent support.

5.8 The person minding the dependent must not be a member of the Committee member’s household.

5.9 Childminding expenses will be paid for any child or stepchild of a Committee member, or any child for whom the Committee member is the legal guardian, if the child normally lives with the Committee member.

5.10 The Co-operative may ask for documentary evidence of the relationship of the dependant to the Committee member and any legal duty of care, for example payment of a relevant Welfare Benefit, payment from Social Work, etc., before paying expenses.

5.11 For both childminding expenses and care of dependants, the maximum number of hours to be claimed for meetings will normally be three hours (plus travelling time for approved Co-operative business outside Whitlawburn). If child minding or care is required for a Committee member to attend a residential event, a maximum of 8 hours will be paid per 24 hour period.

5.12 Expenses for the care of dependents will be paid at an hourly rate not exceeding the UK Living Wage. Expenses for the care of dependents will not be paid in advance. A receipt must be provided with an expenses claim.

5.13 **Accommodation**

If accommodation costs are not covered in any other way e.g. within a delegate fee, committee members will have their actual accommodation expenses paid.

5.14 This will require the prior agreement of the Management Committee. If this is not practical, the Director (or in their absence the Assistant Director (Corporate Services)) may make a decision.

5.15 All such instances will be reported to the full Management Committee as soon as is practical.

6. Communications Allowances

- 6.1 Office Bearers are entitled to claim the cost of telephone calls incurred in the course of their duties. Committee should, whenever possible, use Co-operative telephones for Co-operative business.
- 6.2 Payment in lieu of telephone calls will be at the appropriate British Telecom or Vonage rate.
- 6.3 Any Committee member who does not have an existing broadband service will be provided with a mobile broadband connection, paid for by the Co-operative.
 - a) Mobile broadband connections provided by the Co-operative must be used in line with the Co-operative's policy on acceptable use of technology and the committee members' Code of Conduct.
 - b) Any device supplied will remain the property of WWHC.
 - c) Any device supplied must be returned if the member leaves Committee for any reason, or takes a leave of absence exceeding 3 months.
- 6.4 Any Committee member who has an existing broadband connection will be entitled to claim the cost of line rental, up to the equivalent mobile broadband cost in 6.3.
- 6.5 Any Committee member who does not have communications equipment, e.g. a tablet or laptop, which would allow them to participate in Management Committee business will be loaned equipment from the Co-operative.
 - a) Use of any device provided by the Co-operative will be in line with the Co-operative's policy on acceptable use of technology and the committee members' Code of Conduct.
 - b) Any device supplied will remain the property of WWHC.
 - c) Any device supplied must be returned if the member leaves Committee for any reason, or takes a leave of absence exceeding 3 months.
 - d) Any device supplied will be returned to WWHC for routine maintenance when requested.
- 6.6 Committee members must provide a copy of their broadband bill twice a year in order to claim broadband expenses.

7. Overnight Allowances

- 7.1 The Co-operative will pay an allowance to those committee members who are required to be away from home for more than two hours between 11.00pm and 6.00am.

- 7.2 This payment is in addition to those made for expenses otherwise covered in this policy.
- 7.3 The allowance will be £25.00 per night where an overnight stay has been authorised in advance by the Management Committee.

8. Loss of Earnings

- 8.1 The Co-operative will reimburse a Committee Member for any loss of earnings or annual leave entitlement in the following circumstances:
- the payment is not being made in respect of a routine meeting
 - the meeting or event could not have reasonably been held at an alternative time
 - the attendance of the committee member was required and authorised by the Management Committee
 - another committee member who would not lose earnings could either not attend in their place, or it would not have been appropriate for them to attend in their place e.g. where the Chairperson should attend.
 - the claimant must submit an official letter from the employer confirming that earnings have been lost or annual leave entitlement used, in which case the date and the amount or value involved should be confirmed.
- 8.2 Committee members who are self-employed are not allowed to be reimbursed for loss of earnings. It is anticipated that reimbursement for loss of earnings will be made by exception rather than on a routine basis. If this is required regularly or frequently, the Committee should consider what other options may be available to the Co-operative.

9. Unforeseen Costs

- 9.1 Where a committee member incurs unforeseen costs which are a direct result of his or her attendance at events on behalf of The Co-operative, such costs may be reimbursed on the approval of The Co-operative Chairperson and Director. Costs resulting from wilful negligence or behaviour which is likely to bring The Co-operative into disrepute shall not be eligible for reimbursement.

10. Representation on other Organisations

- 10.1 Where the committee member is representing another organisation e.g. EVH, all expenses paid to committee members must be reimbursed by that organisation. Committee Members must seek agreement that the other organisation will pay these expenses before they participate in any event/meeting etc. for which payment of expenses will be payable.

11. Claiming Expenses

- 11.1 Claims should be made only for expenses that are allowed for within this policy.
- 11.2 All claims must be made on the expenses claim form in Appendix 1. This must be completed in full and signed and dated by the claimant. Invoices or receipts must be provided where applicable. Any discount obtained in the course of incurring an expense must be included in any subsequent claim. The claim must then be authorised by the Assistant Director (Corporate Services).
- 11.3 Where essential, Committee Members may be paid certain expenses in advance at the discretion of the Assistant Director (Corporate Services) (e.g. train fares). All receipts must be returned to the Assistant Director (Corporate Services) on the immediate return from the event attended.
- 11.4 Claims should be made in advance where the amount required is known in advance, such as overnight subsistence and public transport travel costs for attendance at a residential conference. Any part-day balance can be reclaimed once the Committee member has returned.
- 11.5 If a Committee member does not attend an event for which expenses/subsistence have been provided in advance, the sum in full must be returned to the Association's office within three working days of the missed event. The Committee member will be given a receipt by the staff member receiving the repayment.
- 11.6 Care of dependants' costs, loss of earnings or mileage/taxi costs will not normally be paid in advance, except in exceptional circumstances. These will be considered on an individual basis, and the reason for any advance payment noted on the form and countersigned by the senior manager making the decision.
- 11.7 Expenses provided in advance will normally be in cash. The Co-operative will pay expenses claims by credit transfer where possible, but our Financial Procedures recognise that cash payments may be preferred.
- 11.8 In exceptional circumstances allowances may be agreed beforehand at the discretion of the Assistant Director (Corporate Services). In such circumstances, if the additional allowances prove not to be required, these should be returned to The Co-operative as soon as possible after the trip.

12. Policy Review

- 12.1 The subsistence amounts payable in this policy will be updated (or not) at the time of, and according to, any changes agreed by EVH.
- 12.2 The policy itself will be reviewed every three years unless this is required earlier due to changes in the law, regulation or best practice requirements.

Policy Implementation Checklist

Equality and Diversity Compliant	Yes
Equality Impact Assessment required	Yes
Data Protection (GDPR) compliant	Yes
Health & Safety compliant	Yes
Training requirements	None
Regulatory Framework Assurance Information Bank Updated	Standard 3 – “The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.” Standard 5 – “The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.”
Policy Implementation	Circulate to Finance staff.
Reporting arrangements Management Committee	Quarterly expenses report.
Policy register updated	
Published on Website	
Publicity material issued	N/A
Related Policies	Computer Use Policy Committee Codes of Conduct Volunteer Policy Terms and Conditions of Employment Governance Policies Treasury Management Equality and Diversity