



FELIXSTOWE

TOWN COUNCIL

Members' Allowances & Expenses Policy 2023-24

Members Allowance

Felixstowe Town Councillors are unpaid and do not receive an annual allowance.

Mayor's Allowance

Section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that Parish and Town Councils may pay its Mayor for the purpose of enabling them to meet the expenses of their office "*such allowance as the council think reasonable*". Felixstowe Town Council provides an allowance to the Mayor of Felixstowe as a contribution towards total expenses to defray the costs associated with the office of Mayor, paid subject to tax and National Insurance PAYE via the Council's payroll system. The allowance is reviewed annually and payment is made following formal resolution by the Town Council at its Annual Meeting in May.

Provisions made for the Mayor's allowance in the Local Government Act 1972 do not extend to the Deputy Mayor, who is treated the same in law as all other Town Councillors. However, it is acknowledged that the Deputy Mayor is likely to incur costs associated with officially substituting for the Town Mayor in his/her absence. As such, the Mayor is advised to reimburse any legitimate out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the Deputy Mayor while deputising for the Mayor, out of the Mayor's Allowance, subject to such expenditure not being covered by the Expenses Policy below.

Expenses Policy

Town Council Members and staff may be reimbursed for expenses for attendance, travel and subsistence on Council business *outside the parish of Felixstowe only*, subject to approved budget provisions, for the following approved duties:

- Attending council meetings, including committees, working groups and meetings of any outside bodies to which they have been appointed by the Council
- Pre-approved site meetings, personnel arbitration and disciplinary proceedings
- Pre-approved conferences, seminars and other training
- Pre-approved meetings of other councils and their committees
- Pre-approved attendance at courts of law, commissions of enquiry and the proceedings of other relevant bodies.

Additionally, the Mayor of Felixstowe may be reimbursed for the cost of tickets, travel and subsistence to attend any events to which the Mayor has received an official invitation through the Town Council offices.

If the Mayor is unable to attend an event to which they have received an official invitation through the Town Council offices, the Deputy Mayor may be requested to attend as a substitute. In these instances, the Deputy Mayor will be reimbursed on the basis above.

All claims are to be made promptly to the Town Clerk (within 2 months of expenditure) and where relevant must be accompanied by a receipt.

Scale of expenses:

To be maintained in line with provisions made by the National Joint Council and in line with HMRC approved rates for payment without liability for tax.

Members or staff giving lifts to colleagues in their own car are entitled to claim an additional 5p per mile for each member carried. Such claims should show which Members or staff were carried.

Costs of travelling by public transport, at standard class, reimbursed on production of receipts or other evidence.

Parking Tickets

Payment can only be made for parking where a receipt/copy of the ticket is provided.

Claims are made on the basis of travelling from/to a home or work address, as appropriate.

Subsistence may be reimbursed on the following basis:

Overnight Subsistence Allowance

If Members or staff are required to be away from home overnight, they may claim the following payment for each 24HR period. This will be calculated from the time of leaving home or their place of work to their return home / work. A non-taxable payment of £25 each 24HR period can be claimed to cover all subsistence. For additional periods away after 24 hours the daily rates then apply.

Daily rates

Day rates where there is no overnight stay – or in the part-day at the end of a stay away – day rates apply. These are the maximum amounts that can be paid to Members or staff who do not provide any receipts. The amount depends on the amount of time the claimant spends on union work. The following maximum limits apply: For periods away from home/work over 5 hours =£5, or For periods away from home/work over 10 hours =£10 For periods away from home/work over 15 hours = £15. In addition to above if returning home after 8:00pm a dinner allowance of £10.

All-inclusive events

Where an all-inclusive event or meeting is held and all meals are provided members are entitled to receive a £5 out of pocket allowance for each 24 hour period in place of the allowances detailed above.

Where receipts are provided, then the amount should be of up to £45. These expenses to be separate from the cost of overnight accommodation which, if required, would be arranged directly by the Town Hall.

Stationery for use on council business

Obtainable from the Town Hall.

Eye Tests & Flu Vaccinations

The Council recognises its obligations under the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Regulations 1992 (as amended). The Council will fund the cost of one eye test every two years conducted by a suitably qualified optician for employees that use display screen equipment as part of their job specification and regular duties.

Should spectacles be required specifically for computer work, then the cost of a basic pair of glasses may be reimbursed.

The Council will offer all employees the option of having the flu vaccination each autumn and undertakes to meet the cost for this to ensure the staff are given some protection from the virus.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance

This allowance is to reimburse costs incurred for care arranged by the Councillor for a dependant (including care for the Councillor's children) to enable the Councillor to attend formal meetings of the Council or other approved official events. This allowance is set at the prevailing rate as adopted by the Living Wage Foundation as its 'Real Living Wage' for outside of London and is payable for care costs to a maximum of 15 hours per week. In exceptional circumstances a claim for reimbursement of higher costs incurred may be permitted where the care provided is particularly specialist in nature.

Other expenditure

Any other expenditure can only be incurred by specific resolution of the Council and/or in accordance with any powers delegated to the Town Clerk.

Policy Approved: Council 8 November 2023

Review Body: Finance & Governance Committee recommendation to Council

Review Period: In advance of next term of office, or earlier if required

Next Review: July 2024