Benwick Parish Council
Expenses Policy

Version Control

Adopted at council meeting on 07/07/2025 (minute ref: 066/25-26 c)

Reviewed: 06/07/2026 (minute ref: 057/26-27 c)

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the rules by which the Clerk and Parish Councillors may claim reimbursement for expenses incurred in the course of carrying out their official duties on behalf of Benwick Parish Council.

The Council is committed to ensuring that no individual is financially disadvantaged when carrying out council business, while also ensuring proper use of public funds.

2. Clerk's Expenses

The Clerk may claim reimbursement for the following approved expenses:

2.1 Travel and Parking

- Travel undertaken on Council business will be reimbursed at the current HMRC approved mileage rate (currently 55p per mile for cars).
- Parking costs and public transport fares will be reimbursed where supported by receipts.

2.2 Subsistence and Overnight Stays

- Reasonable costs for meals, accommodation, or other subsistence expenses incurred while away from home on Council business may be claimed if pre-approved by the Council and supported by receipts.

2.3 Home Working Allowance

- A contribution of £26 per month, may be claimed to cover the additional cost of using home facilities (e.g., heating, lighting, electricity) for Council work.
- This allowance is subject to periodic review in line with HMRC guidance.

2.4 Office Equipment and Consumables

- Costs for stationery, postage, printer ink, and other office consumables may be claimed, supported by receipts.
- Contribution toward office equipment (e.g., laptop, printer) must be pre-approved by the Council and supported by receipts.

2.5 Communication Costs

- The Clerk may claim 15% of the annual broadband and phone contract cost to cover Council-related usage.

- Additional call charges (to premium or business numbers) may be claimed with receipts.

3. Councillors' Expenses

Benwick Parish Councillors, including the Chairman, do not receive an annual allowance. However, they may claim for approved out-of-pocket expenses incurred on Council business.

3.1 Travel and Parking

- Mileage for allowable journeys authorised by Council (via resolution or Clerk's written approval) will be reimbursed at the current HMRC rate.
- Public transport and parking costs will be reimbursed, supported by receipts.

3.2 Subsistence

- Reasonable subsistence expenses for authorised events may be reimbursed if pre-approved and supported by receipts.

3.3 Reimbursement for Council Purchases

- Councillors may be reimbursed for items purchased on behalf of the Council only where prior approval has been granted.
- All claims must be supported by receipts.

3.4 Time Limit for Claims

- All claims must be submitted to the Clerk within 2 months of the date of expenditure.
- Late claims may only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and with Council approval.

4. Submission and Evidence

- Claims must be submitted using the standard Parish Council Expenses Claim Form, available from the Clerk or Council website.
- Digital or paper receipts must accompany all relevant claims.
- Claims may be submitted by email or in hard copy.

5. Record Keeping and Audit

- All claims will be retained securely in line with the Council's Financial Regulations and Data Retention Policy.
- All claims are subject to internal and external audit.

6. Accessibility and Equality

- Reasonable adjustments will be made for claimants with accessibility needs or those who require assistance completing forms.

7. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if prompted by changes to HMRC guidance, audit recommendations, or Council requirements.