

POLICY

Committee Members Expenses

Wellhouse - The Place To Be

Date of Introduction	March 2016 (updated April 2019 to reflect adjustment in line with the inflation rate applicable in February each year. Approved April 2019
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Date of Next Review	April 2020
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document outlines the Association's policy on the reimbursement or provision of expenses to Management Committee members when these have been or will be incurred while carrying out duties on behalf of the Association. This also includes the payment of subsistence allowances.
- 1.2 Wellhouse Housing Association supports the ethos of the voluntary housing movement, i.e. that a Management Committee member (whether elected, co-opted, nominated or appointed) should not receive financial payment in return for serving on the Association's Management Committee or any of its sub Committees. In common with the majority of Committee members throughout Scotland, all of Wellhouse's Committee members serve on a completely voluntary basis. It is recognised, however, that in their capacity as Committee members representing the Association, they may occasionally incur out of pocket expenses and these should be reimbursed.
- 1.3 This Policy covers the conditions in which the Association can make payments related to loss of earnings, and the circumstances in which allowances are payable. It also sets out the circumstances and process for Committee Members to claim expenses for care of children and adult dependants.

2. APPROVED ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

- 2.1 Approved Association business is where the Committee Member is attending a meeting or event on the authority of the Management Committee. Expenses may therefore be claimed, including;
 - Travel to any ordinary meeting of the Management Committee or sub Committee or 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 3.8.
 - Travel, and subsistence if required, to attend a meeting outside Wellhouse on the Association's behalf. This could include, for example, meetings at other RSLs' or GCC's offices, EVH's office in Glasgow, or the Regulator's office
 - Travel, accommodation and subsistence, including overnight subsistence, when undertaking overnight business on behalf of the Association, e.g. at residential conferences.

3. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- 3.1 The Association will try to avoid Committee members being out-of-pocket and subsequently having to claim expenses for meals, accommodation, transport, etc. We will normally pay in advance for travel, subsistence and accommodation for governing body members when they are on approved Association business. Usually, travel and accommodation will be booked and paid for by the Association, included in any attendance fee or provided free of charge. However, 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.

3.2 Travel

This applies to the cost of travel to and from regular Committee and sub Committee meetings as well as to other approved business. Committee Members are expected to use the most cost effective form of transport. Other forms of transport are eligible if there are specific reasons why an alternative has to be used, such as for issues of safety, journey time, accessibility where a Committee Member or staff member is frail or disabled, or where the times of departure or arrival of public transport are unsuitable.

3.3 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.

3.4 The Association will meet all eligible travel expenses including:

- Standard class fares on public transport (rail, bus, air or ferry). Where possible, tickets should be booked in advance to obtain cheaper fares. All claims should be accompanied by tickets or receipts.
- Taxi fares. The Association's Taxi Account should be used for journeys where public transport is inappropriate as in 3.2. If this is not possible, e.g. when travelling outside Glasgow, receipts should be obtained for the fares and submitted with the expenses claim.
- A combination of taxi fares and public transport; for example a taxi to a train station from where the Committee member is travelling to an event.
- Car parking fees (but fines for breaching parking regulations are not included).
- Car/motorcycle/bicycle mileage. Where it is cost effective to make a business journey using these, a mileage allowance may be claimed in accordance with HMRC limits (These examples apply to 2018/19):

Car per mile 45p

Car, in addition, per passenger, per mile 5p

Motorcycles per mile 24p

Bicycles per mile 20p

3.5 These rates will be reviewed from time to time, in line with HMRC rules. Any Committee Member claiming mileage costs will be responsible for informing HMRC for applicable tax relief or tax payments.

3.6 Expenses claims should detail the number of miles along with the departure and destination points and purpose of travel.

3.7 The Association will not accept responsibility for damage to a member's vehicle or for injury to the occupants when used to attend to Association business.

3.8 Meals (Subsistence)

Where meals are not provided during attendance at approved events, the Association shall pay subsistence in line with current EVH rates.

These rates are reviewed every year for attendance of;

- i) 5-10 hours in any one day (£10.08 in 2018/19)
- ii) More than 10 hours in any one day (£16.48 in 2018/19)

Also, for meetings and events of less than 5 hours outside Wellhouse, it is allowed that members may have a modest breakfast, lunch, coffee etc, and reclaim the actual cost up to the EVH amount in 3.8 i) with receipts. The subsistence allowance may be claimed to cover the period of the event including travel time and meals but not subsequent leisure or sleeping time, which is covered in overnight subsistence.

3.9 Overnight Subsistence

If possible, the Association shall arrange and meet the cost of meals for Committee members at approved events. For Committee members attending residential events, subsistence payments will be provided in advance at the approved rate per 24-hour period – normally referred to as “overnight subsistence”. The Association has set the overnight subsistence rate (£33.31 in 2018/19) in line with the rates paid to Committee Members of other local Housing Associations. This amount will be reviewed annually and adjusted in line with the inflation rate (RPI) applicable in February each year. Any adjusted subsistence rate will be payable from 1st April each year.

3.10 Subsistence and Overnight Subsistence cannot both be claimed for the same time period. However, Overnight Subsistence will be granted in advance for each 24 hour period of a residential event, including when meals are included in the attendance fee. This will ensure Committee members are not out-of-pocket to make arrangements for family meals while absent, when contributing to charitable causes at the event or mixing and networking with other delegates outside the formal event programme.

3.11 A single claim may involve both types of subsistence. For example if a Committee member leaves Wellhouse to attend a Conference at 10am on a Friday and returns at 4pm on Sunday, the subsistence rates are:

- 10am Friday – 10am Saturday (Overnight Subsistence)
- 10am Saturday – 10am Sunday (Overnight Subsistence)
- 10am Sunday – 4pm Sunday (Subsistence nil, or 5-10 hours if no meals provided)

3.12 Accommodation

Wherever possible, the Association will reserve overnight accommodation on behalf of Committee members to avoid the member having to pay the bill on departure. Where accommodation costs are not covered in any other way, Committee members will have their reasonable actual accommodation expenses paid for bed and breakfast.

4. CHILD CARE AND CARE OF ADULT DEPENDANTS

4.1 The costs incurred for having a child or adult dependant looked after while carrying out duties as a Committee Member will be met by the Association, providing that a receipt is provided and the person minding the child is not a member of the Committee member’s household. Dependants are deemed to be children under the age of sixteen and adults in receipt of attendance allowance (or the equivalent level of Disability Living Allowance). Child minding 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.

4.2 The Association 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 Social Security Benefit, payment from Social Work, etc., before paying

expenses. For both child minding 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 Association business outside Wellhouse). 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.

- 4.3 The approved expenses for child-care and care of dependants will be paid in accordance with the Glasgow living wage. Consideration will be given to payment of registered child-minder costs where receipts are provided. Expenses for child minding and care of dependants will not be paid in advance.

5. LOSS OF EARNINGS

- 5.1 The Association will reimburse a Committee member for any loss of earnings or annual leave entitlement in the following circumstances;

- The payment is not being made for 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, for example where the Chairperson should attend
- The Employer provides written confirmation that earnings or annual leave entitlement have been lost and the hours lost

- 5.2 The amount payable for loss of earnings (or leave entitlement) will be the lesser of;

- (i) The Committee member's daily earnings– as shown in a wage slip – or,
- (ii) The prevailing daily rate for loss of earnings as a result of Jury Duty.

- 5.3 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 Association.

6. RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL

- 6.1 There may be a requirement from time to time for expenses to be approved retrospectively. Expenses will normally only be paid for actual expenses for an approved activity and where a receipt is provided.

- 6.2 Occasionally, other reasonable expenses incurred by Committee members that are not described in this policy may be refunded by the Association. Each case will be considered by the Committee on its own merits without setting a precedent for the future.

7. CLAIMS PROCEDURE

- 7.1 All claims made by members of the Management Committee must be made to the Director on the form in **Appendix 1** and signed 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.

- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 Expenses provided in advance will normally be in cash. The Association will pay expenses claims by credit transfer where possible, but our Financial Procedures recognise that cash payments may be preferred.

8. POLICY REVIEW

The subsistence amounts payable in this policy will be updated (or not) at the time of, and according to, any changes agreed by EVH. The amount of Overnight Subsistence will be reviewed annually as in section 3.9. 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.