



Policy on Committee Members Expenses & Scale of Allowances

1) Introduction

Section 63 of The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced the legal measures laid down to prevent the possibility of Committee Members, Officers and Staff of Registered Housing Associations from abusing their position by prohibiting an Association from making payments or granting benefits to such people or their close relatives, subject to certain exemptions. These measures are defined in Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland Act) Act 2001.

2) Out of Pocket Expenses

To prevent Committee Members being restricted to only those who can afford it, and to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to participate, it is Linstone's policy to pay "out of pocket" expenses on an agreed scale.

Volunteers can opt not to accept reimbursement. However in order that Linstone can obtain an accurate picture of their running costs members should be encouraged to submit a claim form confirming that they do not wish repaid. Committee Members are volunteers and therefore cannot be paid for any service provision, but only for expenses reasonably incurred.

3) Items Which Can Legitimately be Claimed

The Inland Revenue and Communities Scotland have guidelines on the payment of expenses. Reimbursing volunteers for only those expenses actually incurred will minimise any difficulties.

The following expenses are legitimate:-

- Travel to and from the place of volunteering (e.g. Committee Meetings, Conferences, Training Events).
- Travel undertaken in the course of volunteering.
- Meals taken during the period of voluntary activity.
- Postage and telephone costs.
- Care of dependants during the period of voluntary activity.
- The cost of protective clothing.

In addition to the above expenses will be paid for:-

- The cost of Conferences/Seminars/Training including accommodation if this is appropriate.
- Hospitality as appropriate at residential or other appropriate events.

All of the above headings will be paid in accordance with Linstone's procedures as agreed by the Management Committee.

4) General Information

1) Travel Expenses

- Public transport would be the normal mode of travel – second class rate.
- Private car use will be acceptable as an alternative in certain circumstances e.g.:

Travel to and from Committee Meetings.

Public transport not easily accessible to the destination or incurs several modes of transport which considerably

lengthens or makes awkward the journey or 2 or more members travelling together.

If medical conditions make public transport unreasonable.

To minimise any health and safety/security risks.

- Taxis can be used to link public transport with training/conference or meeting venues or where there is a security risk e.g. evening meetings or a distance from the nearest public transport access.

Committee Members are requested to share taxis where possible.

- Receipts are required for all direct expenditure e.g. parking; taxi fares; meals. The Inland Revenue requires evidence of such expenditure in relation to tax implications.

Public transport will be paid at the rate incurred. Car allowances are based on information provided by the Inland Revenue in relation to its Fixed Profit Car Scheme.

2) Subsistence Expenses

Expenses are reimbursable in relation to meals, incurred in the course of Linstone's business, the cost of which are not included in the fees for the event.

These expenses can cover Breakfast, Lunch, Evening Meal.

3) Care of Dependants

Expenses which are incurred in the course of the Committee Members duties are payable.

The Committee Member must confirm that he or she cannot attend Linstone's business unless support facilities are available.

Payment will be made for children under 16 years of age and for adult dependants in receipt of an appropriate attendance/care benefit.

A maximum of 8 hours per day will be paid. Payment will only be made to non household members. Husband/wife/or other member of the household will not be eligible for payment.

Payment will be made only when confirmation, in writing, is received from the babysitter/supporter and the Committee Member.

Linstone re-affirms its commitment to the highest level of accountability and probity regarding all expense paid to Committee Members.

4) Submission of Claims

Claims should be submitted on the standard claim form to the Chief Executive or Finance Director as soon as possible after the expenditure is incurred but definitely within one month.

These should be signed by the claimant and authorised by the Chief Executive or the Finance Director. If neither of the above is available, the claim form should be authorised by one of the other Directors to minimise delay.

The preferred method of payment would be by direct transfer to the Committee Member's Bank Account.

In the absence of a Bank Account, payment can be made by cheque which will be payable via Linstone's Bank.

Small incidental amounts can be paid from Petty Cash.

5) Scale of Allowances/Expenses

Car mileage allowance will be paid in line with the Inland Revenue Fixed Car Profit Scheme. This is non taxable. The current rate (November 2004) is 40p per mile regardless of engine size.

This will vary from time to time, as guidance is issued by the Inland Revenue.

Public Transport

Actual cost of fares will be reimbursed – tickets or receipts required.

Second class travel should be used where available.

If cost of public transport is in excess of £5 per single journey, members can request an advance to cover costs.

In certain circumstances journeys costing less than £5 may also be paid in advance.

Requests in both of the above circumstances should be made to the Chief Executive or the Finance Director.

For non local journeys train tickets can be booked in advance. This will be done by the Chief Executive's Personal Assistant (PA) who should be contacted directly by the Committee Member as required.

Taxis

Actual costs will be reimbursed. Receipts required.

Linstone has an account with a local taxi firm. Pre arranged pick ups" can be organised by the Chief Executive's PA. Members will then be asked to "sign" for their journey by the taxi driver and Linstone will be invoiced directly.

Subsistence Allowances

Breakfast: Actual costs up to a maximum of £10.00
Lunch: Actual costs up to a maximum of £15.00
Dinner: Actual costs up to a maximum of £20.00

Receipts required.

Care of Dependents

One child/adult: Actual costs up to £3.00 per hour
Two children/two adults: Actual costs up to £4.50 per hour
Three or more children/adults: Actual costs up to £5.50 per hour

Written confirmation required from babysitter/supporter on appropriate Linstone "pro-forma".

Protective Clothing

On the rare occasion when this may be necessary, the Chief Executive will discuss with the member involved and will make the necessary arrangements.

Overnight Conference/Seminar Hospitality

Where appropriate this will be paid at the rate of £25 per night per member.