# Volunteer and Staff Expenses Policy

It is accepted as a principle that cost should not be a deterrent to the effective execution of a volunteer appointment and that nobody should be detracted from accepting an appointment due to financial constraint.

Substantiated claims will be reimbursed subject to the maximum entitlements outlined below. All requests for reimbursement must state the meeting, event or other information that substantiates the validity of the claim.

It is the responsibility of staff and volunteers to ensure that they use the most cost effective method of delivering their responsibilities.

In view of the current economic climate it has been necessary to re-evaluate the policies, procedures and criteria for the payment of expenses related to Scouting. The Trustees believe strongly that members should not be out of pocket when engaged in activities on behalf of Norfolk Scouts. However in an age where donations and legacies are harder to obtain the Trustees feel they need to be prudent with the funds they administer.

We have therefore reviewed our recent conventions and developed a number of guidelines, which when followed will enable us to control our budget effectively.

## A: TRAVEL

1. Use of Private Vehicles

a) Before undertaking journeys by car, other means of transport should be considered.

b) The time available for the journey; the carriage of materials/equipment; the number of members undertaking the journey; the practicality of other means of transport and the relative costs are all factors to be borne in mind.

c) Private car use will be reimbursed at the authorised rate. (See appendix A)

d) Mileage claims should state the event, starting and finishing points, distance travelled and the date of the journey.

e)VAT fuel receipts should accompany the claim, so that VAT may be reclaimed. If no VAT receipt, the lower claim will be paid

f) Essential car parking charges will be refunded and a ticket or a receipt should be produced.

2. Rail

a) When booking/purchasing tickets the most cost effective options should be considered. This includes web bookings/purchases, booking as early in advance as possible and travelling off-peak as these will usually result in price savings.

b) It is preferable to ask a Norfolk Scouts credit card holder to book your rail tickets on your behalf. (See Appendix B)

c) If a rail journey is cancelled or delayed by enough time to allow a ‘delay repay’ cash payment from the rail operator, this should be considered and an expense claim submitted for the balance of an out of pocket claim.

## B: SUBSISTENCE & HOSPITALITY

1. Meals

Reimbursement will be made for out of pocket costs for breakfast, lunch or dinner in up to three star hotels/restaurants. In hotels the guide price should be that of the table d’hôte menu. The inclusion of a single glass of wine or beer is acceptable with an evening meal. VAT receipts are required.

See Appendix A for the maximum price per person for each meal, including one glass of wine or beer where appropriate.

Whilst occasionally circumstances may dictate that these prices are exceeded, substantially higher costs will be challenged.

2. Overnight Accommodation including Hotels

a) Accommodation with ‘en-suite’ facilities in up to three star hotels is appropriate. A VAT receipt is required.

b) The County Secretary will normally make bookings accommodation.

## C: OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

1. Bulk Photocopying and Printing: All County photocopying and printing needs are required to be expedited via the County Secretary at the County Office. There will be no recharge to local budgets for this activity, but it will require the approval of the County Commissioner, a Deputy County Commissioner or the County Training Manager.

Where it is more economical and time efficient printing may be posted rather than collected from the County Office.

2. Postage: This will be refunded at cost on the production of a receipt.

3. Consumables: The County, if sanctioned by the CC, a DCC or elected officer, will consider an annual one off payment towards the cost of general office stationery, telephone calls, computer and printer consumables. (See Appendix A)

4.Telecommunications: It is recognised that within the duties of a County Role there may be some telephone calls. However, the mass communication tool of Scouting is now e-mail and most telephone contracts now include an element of free call allowance. Therefore, telephone costs will not normally be reimbursed. Exclusions to this policy will be when:

a. A call must be made to a premium rate number for the matter of dealing with a Scouting situation

b. When a telephone is designated for Scouting use only. In this case, the County Office will provide a handset.

## D: COMPUTERS AND EMAIL

1. The County recognises the need for The County Commissioner, Chairperson and Treasurer and other senior volunteers to have access to a computer and email.

The County recognises that most, if not all, households now have access to the internet and thus there should be no reason for members to claim expenses for an internet connection. The principal is that the County only pays additional expenses incurred.

Therefore:

[i] If a senior volunteer has no personal computer then Norfolk Scouts may provide a grant of up to half the cost (maximum £250) to assist with the purchase of computer hardware (computer and/or printer);

[ii] We are now in an age where it is unusual for people not to own their own PC, laptop, tablet or mobile telephone. It is therefore the trustees’ intentions not to fund the purchase of these unless circumstances are such that they are both

1) Necessary and 2) used exclusively for Scouting. In the rare circumstances where Norfolk Scouts might provide equipment such as mentioned above it must be remembered that it remains the property of Norfolk Scouts and must be returned when requested and certainly where a member changes role within the movement

The above arrangements are based on the broad principle that the County - which is funded primarily by its Members - will reimburse substantiated claims for out of pocket costs that a reasonable person would incur, having due regard for their role.

## E: CASH ADVANCES

Advances or floats are available to facilitate the running of events and for similar circumstances. Requests for floats must be approved by the County Treasurer before they are submitted to the County Secretary for payment.

Advances and floats must be cleared within one week of return or date of the event.

**F: CREDIT CARDS**

In the past some key post holders have been issued with a Norfolk Scouts credit card. The Trustees are now reviewing this policy as we still receive an annual charge for each card. Once again most people carry their own cards nowadays and all give at least 28 days grace before payment is due. The county office can turn around expense payments within a week, if all the correct paperwork is received, so negating the need for everybody to carry their own Norfolk Scouts card. It is not our intention that any member should be at a cash flow disadvantage as a result of their Scouting roles.

**G: WHERE YOU CANNOT CLAIM**

There are very few circumstances where the County would not accept a valid claim for expenses when carrying out work on its behalf. However, it is not possible to claim for the charged fee at an event as a participant or staff member e.g. attendance at Reunion, Norjam, County events etc.

An expense claim cannot be made for travel to and from our Annual Conference, when one is held.

Claims not made within three months of expenditure will not be settled.

## Appendix A

Travel -currently 35p per mile with a VAT receipt or 30p without – March 2014

Meals - Breakfast £15, Lunch £17.50, Dinner £35.

Consumables – Annual allowance £20.

## Appendix B

Credit Card holders

County Commissioner

Deputy County Commissioners

County Secretary

County Treasurer

County Business Manager

Effective from 4 November 2016

Approved by Trustees 30 January 2017

Reviewed 8 May 2017

Next review May 2018