Lytchett Matravers Parish Council Expenses Policy

1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out the arrangements for the payment of expenses by Lytchett Matravers Parish Council ("the Council"). It ensures that payments are lawful, transparent, reasonable, and in accordance with relevant legislation.

The policy supports good governance and accountability in the use of public funds.

2. Legislative Framework

This policy is made with regard to:

- Local Government Act 1972 (sections 137 and 176)
- Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
- Localism Act 2011
- HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) guidance
- The Council's Financial Regulations

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All elected and co-opted Members of the Council (expenses)
- The Chairman of the Council (Chairman's Allowance)

4. General Principles

- No Member shall profit financially from their position as a Councillor
- Expenses and allowances shall only be paid where they are:
    - Incurred wholly, necessarily, and exclusively in the performance of Council duties
    - Supported by appropriate evidence
    - Approved in accordance with this policy
- All payments shall be subject to budget provision and Council approval

5. Members' Expenses

5.1 Claimable Expenses

Members may claim reimbursement for reasonable expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out approved Council duties, which may include:

- Travel expenses (mileage or public transport)
- Subsistence expenses (where appropriate)
- Training and conference fees approved by the Council
- Postage, printing, or stationery costs incurred on Council business
- Childcare or dependent care costs incurred to enable attendance at meetings or approved duties

5.2 Travel Expenses

- Mileage may be claimed for use of a private vehicle at rates set by the Council and aligned with HMRC approved mileage rates
- Public transport costs may be claimed where receipts are provided
- Taxis should only be used where necessary and justified

5.3 Non-Claimable Expenses

Expenses will not be reimbursed where they relate to:

- Routine attendance at Council meetings within the parish, unless specifically approved
- Personal or political activities
- Costs incurred without prior approval where such approval is reasonably required

6. Claiming Procedure

- All expense claims must be submitted on the Council's approved claim form
- Claims must:
    - Be submitted within three months of the expense being incurred
    - Be supported by receipts or other evidence where available
    - Clearly state the purpose of the expenditure
- Claims shall be submitted to the Parish Clerk for checking and processing

7. Approval and Payment

- Expenses claims shall be checked by the Parish Clerk and approved in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations
- The Chairman's Allowance shall be paid in instalments or as a lump sum, as determined by the Council
- No Member shall approve their own claim

9. Taxation and Reporting

- Members are responsible for their own tax affairs relating to expenses or allowances
- The Council shall publish details of Members' allowances and expenses as required by legislation

10. Record Keeping and Transparency

- All claims and payments shall be recorded and retained in accordance with the Council's document retention arrangements
- Information shall be made available for public inspection where required

11. Breaches of the Policy

- Any misuse of expenses or allowances may be treated as a serious matter
- Alleged breaches may be referred to the Monitoring Officer or other relevant authority

12. Review of the Policy

This policy shall be reviewed:

- At least every three years
- Following changes in legislation or guidance

Any amendments must be approved by the Council at a properly convened meeting.

Adopted by Lytchett Matravers Parish Council: 25th February 2026

Minute Reference: 5.3

Next review: February 2029