

Councillors Briefing Note No. 286

Service : Corporate Office

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Members Expenses

This is to advise Councillors of changes being made to the way Members claim expenses, that takes into account the amendments that come into effect from April 2016 under the new Finance Act.

The Chancellor's Budget Statement in 2015 included the amendment of payment of tax on Councillors' home to work travel expenses and the Finance Bill in which this was included, received Royal Assent on 18 November 2015.

Group Leaders have been advised of the changes and are in agreement with the new approach.

All members will be required to submit their claim for expenses electronically via the SAP portal with effect from **1st April 2016**. The SAP portal can be accessed via any Council laptop. It is not currently possible to do this via iPads, although a solution is being examined. From April, Members will also receive their payslips electronically via SAP, which will negate the requirement for monthly printing and postage. All members have been set up with SAP log-ins to enable this transition.

Corresponding receipts are required to accompany all claims to ensure payments are not delayed. These can also be submitted electronically by scanning or photographing the receipts and sending in together with a receipts form, quoting the relevant trip number generated from SAP in the email title. The form and attachments can to be emailed to hrpayroll@wiltshire.gov.uk, quoting the Councillor name and SAP reference in the email title. Alternatively, receipts can be provided in the current way, by attaching to a receipts form, quoting the quoting the relevant trip number generated from SAP and posting to HR Payroll at County Hall.

The cut off date for the submission of expenses will be extended to the **5th** of each month, bringing it into line with the policy for staff expenses. These will then be authorised by the Head of Service for the Corporate Office. Claims should be submitted on a monthly basis but at the very most, claims must be made within 3

months of the date of travel. In line with the Audit requirements, each Councillor will have their claims examined at least once annually.

Please note that claims that are for more than three months will need approval from the Monitoring Officer or a Corporate Director before any payment is processed.

Full training will be provided to support members to make the transition from paper/electronic submission of expense to inputting expenses claims via the SAP Portal. We will continue to work with members to ensure they are comfortable with using the SAP Portal system and offer every assistance possible. Please contact corporatebusinesssupport@wiltshire.gov.uk if so required.