

Councillors Briefing Note

No. 289

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This is to further advise councillors of the legislation change with regards to Members' expenses and provides additional details of 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 and which received Royal Assent on 18 November 2015.

2.70 Taxation of councillors' travel expenses – *As announced at Autumn Statement 2014, the government will exempt from income tax travel expenses paid to councillors by their local authority. The exemption will be limited to the Approved Mileage Allowance Payment (AMAP) rates where it applies to mileage payments. This change will take effect from 6 April 2016. (Summer Finance Bill 2015).*

Details shown within the Finance Bill can be found [here](#). In essence, this means that any claims submitted for the *home to permanent workplace journey* of a councillor will now be covered by the HMRC approved mileage rates, which currently stands at 45p per mile, provided that the councillor's home is not more than *20 miles* from the boundary of the local authority area. The exemption for the home to work journey will also apply to any passenger payments that are made if the passenger is also a member of the local authority.

A reminder that claims will now need to be submitted via the SAP portal. Should any claims cover more than a three month period, they will need to be approved by the Monitoring Officer or a Corporate Director before any payment is processed. We will continue to work with members to ensure they are comfortable with using the SAP Portal system and offer every assistance possible. If you do require training, please contact corporatebusinesssupport@wiltshire.gov.uk.