

Tenant Involvement Payment of Expenses Guidance



Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure that you do not suffer any financial loss in respect of your out of pocket expenses, as you are making a gift of your time to help improve housing services for all.

We want to ensure a fair, transparent and consistent approach to the payment of expenses, which is cost efficient. Money to pay expenses comes from public funds; therefore, as the biggest cost associated with expenses is transport to and from meetings, we will only cover the cost of the cheapest method of transport.

If you choose not to use the cheapest form of transport, we will only pay the value of the cheapest reasonable method available for the journey. This means, if you qualify for a free bus pass and choose not to use this, you will not be able to claim travel expenses.

We also understand that the cheapest method is not always suitable for everyone. If the cheapest method is not suitable for you, please contact the Tenant Participation Team, who will then meet with you to discuss your needs. If we agree that the cheapest method (which will usually be public transport) is not suitable, we will then agree a personal travel plan, to meet your specific needs.

Our promises to you

Who can claim out of pocket expenses?

- ◆ If you are a council tenant (or live in a council house) and you come to an activity organised by the Tenant Participation Team, you can claim out of pocket expenses in line with the following guidance.
- ◆ If you are a resident on a council estate (see attached Map for areas) we will pay expenses for you to attend activities where the Tenant Participation Team have deemed it relevant for residents to also have an influence (example a focus group looking at anti-social behaviour).
- ◆ If you are not a Council tenant or resident of a council estate from time to time we may ask you your views on topics which affect you, if we invite you to a meeting for this purpose we will also pay your expenses. (for example if we were reviewing the HomeSearch policy, we would also pay expenses for people who are registered on the HomeSearch list)
- ◆ When people join activities we will make it clear who can and cannot claim expenses for that activity.

NOTE: If you are invited to attend an activity and are not able to attend for the duration, please contact the Tenant Participation Team to discuss

alternative options which may be more appropriate (i.e. one to one briefing). Failure to do so may mean that your expenses will not be paid.

What we will pay for travel

For most people the cheapest form of transport will be public transport.

- ◆ We will pay bus users the cost of travel. Examples:
 - If you can have a free bus pass you will be expected to use it.
 - If you purchase a single ticket, you will be paid amount on the ticket.
 - If you purchase a return ticket or day ticket, you will be paid amount on the ticket.
 - Day rider – you will be paid equivalent to day return.
 - Weekly ticket – you will be paid equivalent to a day's journey (divided by 7).
 - Monthly pass – you will be paid according to the days of the month.

A Tenant Participation Officer must sign your expenses form to say they have seen your bus ticket.

- ◆ We will pay push bike users 20p per mile. (*this option is always a choice even if it is the cheapest method of transport we would not make people choose this method)

If it has been agreed in your personal travel plan that other methods are more cost effective or suitable for your needs:

- ◆ We will pay car users car mileage at 45p per mile, motorcycle users at 24p per mile and will also cover parking costs, but we must see a car parking receipt.

If you claim parking costs we expect you to use a Hull City Council car park, unless agreed beforehand with the Tenant Participation Team.

- ◆ If you come in a car and bring other people to meetings who do not live within your own household, we will pay an extra 5p per passenger per mile.
- ◆ If it is agreed in a personal travel plan that you cannot use any other form of transport to get to and from meetings, then we will pay for a taxi for you to get to and from meetings.

If you make use of the taxi service, we expect you to:

- ◆ Attend the agreed pick up points at the arranged time
- ◆ Give a minimum of 30 minutes notice if a taxi is to be cancelled or changed.
- ◆ Travel to arranged destination only with no unauthorised diversions.

Failure to meet these expectations will mean the service will be withdrawn.

Out of town visits

Occasionally you may be asked to attend out of town meetings, if we ask you to do this your Tenant Participation Officer will always contact you to discuss the method of transport to be used and we will arrange to order and pay for the method of transport agreed.

What we will pay for food and drink:

- ◆ We will provide you with one drink of tea, coffee or water at most meetings that are between 1 - 3 hours long, (If refreshments are not available, we will clearly tell you beforehand).
- ◆ If a meeting is longer than 3 hours, we will provide two drinks per person (tea, coffee or water).
- ◆ A light buffet lunch will be served for meetings over 4 hours long.

We expect you to tell us if you have any specific dietary requirements that we need to consider.

- ◆ We will provide a light buffet lunch if there are two meetings one after the other on the same day. If we are unable to provide a lunch, payment will be made for the cost of a lunch up to the amount of £7. This must be agreed beforehand with the Tenant Participation Team.
- ◆ We will pay for the cost of a breakfast and/or lunch and/or tea/evening meal for meetings/events that are held outside of the city of Hull as follows: -
 - The cost of a breakfast can be claimed up to the amount of £11.27 if travel commences before 7.30am.
 - The cost of lunch can be claimed up to the amount of £15.50 if travel commences before 11.30am.
 - The cost of tea up to the amount of £6.11 can be claimed if travel continues after 6.30pm.
 - The cost of an evening meal up to the amount of £19.28 if travel continues after 8.30pm.

This payment will only be made when no catering is provided and when agreed beforehand with the Tenant Participation Team.

If you do claim for breakfast/lunch/tea/evening meal, receipts must be provided and must not include alcoholic drinks or tips.

What we will pay for caring or childcare costs:

- ◆ We will pay reasonable costs for childcare or other caring responsibilities to registered carers (personal assistants for example) if arrangement is made with the Tenant Participation Team beforehand. A receipt or letter detailing the rate of care will be needed before any payment is made.

What we will pay for patch walkers

- ◆ We will pay patch walkers who walk a patch in their area or outside of their area, out of pocket expenses in line with this policy.

What we will pay for mystery shopping

- ◆ We will pay mystery shoppers out of pocket expenses in line with this policy which could include telephone calls and travel expenses.

How to claim:

You need to fill in a claim form which you can get from the Tenant Participation Team, you will also need to provide receipts or show the Tenant Participation Officer your bus ticket, and they will then sign your form to say they have seen it.

You can give your claim forms to any member of the Tenant Participation Team or post it to the freepost address provided on the claim form. If you have any difficulty completing or returning your claim form, you can contact a member of the Tenant Participation Team on 612010 or ask for help at the meeting.

You need to give us your claim form no later than one month after the day of the activity.

How we will pay you:

We pay expenses directly into your bank account, as this is quicker and also costs less money. Payment can also be made by a cheque posted to your home address which may take longer to process (your first claim will also take longer as we will need to set up your details as a new volunteer).

It is important to remember that any money claimed may affect benefits and/or tax position; it is up to you to notify the relevant organisations.

Note:

The above expenses are to be used for 2024 - 25. They will be reviewed at the **Tenants' Forum Committee meeting in April 2025** and every year after that.

Personal Travel Plan – Form

If the cheapest method of transport does not meet your needs a tenant participation officer will meet with you to discuss your travel needs, we will use the following form to help understand your needs, if we agree with your reasons we will draw up a personal travel plan for you.

Name	
Address	
Why does the cheapest form of transport not meet your needs?	
What form of transport do you normally use to travel to and from the city centre between 9.30am and 4.30pm?	
What is your bus route? What times do the buses run? How close are the bus stops to your home and the meeting venue?	
What is your preferred method of transport?	
Are there any other factors which may impact on the preferred choice of transport? (i.e. time of day)	
<p><i>By signing this form, you are consenting to the Tenant Participation Team keeping your details until such a time where you cease to be a volunteer for the Neighbourhoods and Housing Service. Information submitted will enable us to reimburse you for any out of pocket expenses incurred as a Housing Volunteer, and information submitted will not be shared with any other organisation. The Hull City Council Privacy Policy can be found online at https://hull.gov.uk/privacy</i></p>	
Signed	Date

Personal travel plan agreed:

Signed Officer:

Date:

Date of Review:

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Signed Tenant: