



**Muirhouse  
Housing  
Association**



**Muirhouse  
Homes Ltd**

<b>Title of Policy:</b>	Board Member Expenses
<b>Date of Adoption or Last Review:</b>	19 February 2020
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Barry Allan, Finance and Corporate Services Manager
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	February 2023

**Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management:**

**Standard 3**

The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.

***Guidance***

3.1 The RSL has effective financial and treasury management controls and procedures, to achieve the right balance between costs and outcomes, and control costs effectively. The RSL ensures security of assets, the proper use of public and private funds, and access to sufficient liquidity at all times.

# Policy: Board Member Expenses

## **1. Introduction**

This document informs Muirhouse Housing Association's ("MHA", "we", "us") policy in relation to the payment of Board Member expenses.

## **2. Purpose of the Policy**

The policy has been developed to provide a framework for payment of expenses for Board Members and to ensure this does not happen in breach with our Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy.

This policy sets out the parameters for incurring and claiming expenses and explains what costs MHA will cover. With this policy we aim to implement a process that is fair, consistent and non-discriminatory, whilst reflecting regulatory requirements and good practice.

## **3. Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to Board Members in the MHA Group. All references to Muirhouse Housing Association and MHA are including, but not limited to, Muirhouse Homes.

## **4. Definitions**

Expenses in this policy refer to out-of-pocket expenses Board Members may incur whilst performing their duties as Board Members in the MHA Group. It does not refer to payment ("remuneration") of Board Members.

## **5. The Policy**

Board Members should submit their expense claims using an Expense Claim Form from MHA with relevant documentation attached or scanned in, if submitted electronically. Expense claims should be submitted as soon as possible or at the latest within two months after they have been incurred.

### **5.1 Travel Expenses**

Travel will normally be by standard class rail, bus or private car. Taxis may be used where suitable public transport is not available or not advantageous. If a private car is used a mileage allowance will be paid in accordance with the allowance set by HM Revenue and Customs. Eligible expenses also include parking fees (fines for breaching parking regulations are not included) and bridge tolls.

Board Members must complete an Expenses Claim form in order to be reimbursed for their travel expenses. In the event of travel by public transport or

claim against a parking fee or bridge toll a receipt or ticket must be included with the claim form.

#### 5.2 Childminding and Care for Dependent Relatives

Costs of childminding will be allowed, provided the payment of costs is not to a family member in the Board Member's own household and the cost does not exceed what is regarded as a 'fair market value' for this type of service.

Costs of care for dependent relatives will be allowed, provided that the payment of the costs is not to a family member in the Board Member's own household and the cost does not exceed what is regarded as 'fair market value' for this type of service.

#### 5.3 Other Care Costs

Where either a disabled Board Member or partner of a disabled person incurs direct care costs in enabling the Board Member to represent MHA on official business, he/she will be reimbursed the actual cost of the care on supply of a receipt and the care costs do not exceed what is regarded as 'fair market value' for the services.

#### 5.4 Subsistence

Reimbursement will be made for any reasonable subsistence expenses incurred at for example attendance at training and events on behalf of MHA.

Where travelling to and from meetings involve an unavoidable overnight stay this will be paid on the basis of a reasonably incurred expense at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

#### 5.5 Use of Technology

In order for Board Members to access reports online MHA will pay to cover the cost of monthly broadband subscription for Board Members, so long as these are split to reflect the percentage of time relating to usage on behalf of MHA as required by HM Revenue and Customs and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

Receipts for Broadband should be submitted with the first claim and then once a year after.

We will consider claims for reimbursement of the cost of phone calls necessary in connection with MHA business. Payment of such claims will be at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

## 5.7 Loss of Earnings

Loss of earnings may be paid to Board Members provided that:-

- The payment is not being made in respect of a routine meeting, except where travel time is extensive and loss of earnings results as a direct consequence of this, and there is no other option to ensure the appropriate level of expertise or tenant experience on the governing body; and
- Every effort has been made to hold the relevant meeting at a time which will avoid Board Members losing salary or annual leave;
- Attendance at a meeting by a person claiming loss of earnings was important; and
- The Board Member is able to provide a letter from their employer confirming that earnings have been lost or annual leave entitlement has been used, and the amount or value involved;

MHA will not be responsible for an individual Board Member's tax return or liability relating any expenses or loss of earnings. MHA will not pay a loss of earnings claim unless accompanied by the evidence noted above.

## 5.8 Any Other Claims

Any other reasonable claims will be considered on a case-to-case basis at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

## **6. Monitoring and Reporting**

All claims for expenses will be authorised by the Chief Executive and checked by the Finance and Corporate Services Manager to ensure they are in line with policy requirements and records will be kept of all claims. Payment of expense claims will be subject to review through Internal and External Audit as necessary.

All payments of claims will be electronic payments and Board Members' will be expected to provide their personal bank account details and to adhere to our anti-fraud procedures.

In line with our obligations under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act we will publish reports on our website to provide transparency on Board Members' expense claims. Individual Board Members will be anonymised in these reports.

Complaints about the implementation of this policy should be made to the Chair who will instruct the required level of investigation.

## **7. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

All information provided to us by individuals will be treated in strict confidence and will only be discussed with other parties with the individual's (or their appointed

representative's) prior consent. We will comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 when holding personal information in our files and on our computer systems.

## **8. Equality and Diversity**

We are committed to Equality and Diversity and aim to promote equal opportunities and comply with all current legal requirements relating to equal opportunities and the Equality Act 2010.

No one will be treated differently or less favourably than others because of any of the protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;

## **9. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there are changes to applicable legislation, regulation or guidance.