Insert name of forum financial control policy consists of:

* Management of financial records
* Banking arrangements including signatories
* Receipts
* Cheque payments
* Petty cash payments
* Expenses, payments and honoraria
* Payment documentation
* Staff
* Other rules

# **Management of financial records**

1) The financial control policy is designed to ensure that all expenditure is on the Forum’s business; that it is properly authorised; and that this can be demonstrated.

2) Financial records (a book of accounts) must be kept so that the forum:

* has proper financial control of the organisation
* meets its legal and other statutory obligations (if relevant), such as Charities Act, Inland Revenue, Customs & Excise, Companies House returns and common law
* meets the contractual obligations and requirements of funders

3) The book of accounts must include:

* a cashbook analysing all the transactions appearing on the bank accounts
* a petty cash book if cash payments are being made
* Inland Revenue deduction cards P11 (if registered for PAYE)

4) Accounts must be drawn up at the end of each financial year within three months and presented at the next steering group.

5) Prior to the start of each financial year, the forum will approve a budgeted income and expenditure account for the following year. This will be agreed by the forum steering group.

6) A report comparing actual income and expenditure within the budget should be presented to the steering group members on a termly basis.

# **Banking arrangements**

1) Insert name of forum will bank with ***XXX*** at its xxxx branch and accounts will be held in the name of Insert name of forum.

2) A bank mandate (the list of people who can sign cheques on the forum’s behalf) will be approved and minuted by the steering group, as will any changes to it (see Appendix A).

3) Insert name of forum will require the bank to provide statements every month. These will be reconciled by the budget manager with the cash book at least every three months. The steering group will check that this reconciliation has been done on a termly basis.

4) Insert name of forum will not use any other bank or financial institution, or use overdraft facilities or loan, without the previous agreement of the steering group.

5) Insert name of forum will if possible, aim to maintain a reserve in its account equal to three months of running costs.

# **Receipts**

1) All monies received by the forum will be recorded promptly in the cashbook and banked without delay. The budget manager/treasurer will maintain files of documentation evidence.

# **Cheque payments**

1) The approved budget provides the cheque signatories with authority to spend up to the budgeted expenditure and not beyond it.

2) The steering group will be responsible for holding the cheque book (unused and partly used cheque books) which should be kept locked in a secure place when not in use.

3) Each cheque will be signed by at least two people.

4) A cheque must **NOT** be signed by the person to whom it is payable.

5) Blank cheques will **NEVER** be signed.

6) The relevant payee's name will always be inserted on the cheque **BEFORE** signature, and the cheque stub will always be properly completed.

7) No cheques should be signed without original documentation (see Appendix A).

# **Expenses, payments and honoraria**

1) Insert name of forum will reimburse **pre agreed** expenditure paid for personally by volunteers or staff, providing prior approval has been given by the steering group, which includes the following:

* Insert name of forum will cover travel to and from the meeting venue and any prior agreed travel undertaken during the course of volunteering (see Appendix B for details).
* Refreshments will normally be provided free of charge to representatives where appropriate. However, there will be occasions outside of this and Insert name of forum will reimburse the pre-agreed cost (see Appendix B for details).
* Insert name of forum will make a contribution towards agreed childcare expenses incurred while representing the forum (see Appendix B).
* Insert name of forum will reimburse other minor expenses supported by receipts if agreed in advance with the steering group.

2) Every payment out of the forum’s bank account must be evidenced by an original invoice and never against a supplier's statement or final demand. The original invoice will be retained by the forum and filed.

3) The only exceptions to cheques not being supported by an original invoice are items such as advanced booking fees for a course, deposit for a venue, VAT, etc. Here a photocopy of the cheque will be kept.

4) A cheque must NOT be signed by the person to whom it is payable. Bacs payments will NOT be paid by an individual to themselves a relative or spouse’s/partner’s account.

**False Claims**

Any false claims made will be taken very seriously and when identified the claimant will immediately be asked to stand down from their role within Insert name of forum until the claim has been thoroughly investigated.

The claimant will be invited to a meeting to discuss the claim and will have 21 days to provide evidence that the claim is valid and to explain the claim, including provision of any additional evidence or documentation.

The meeting and investigation may result in the claimant being asked to reimburse the amount claimed (if it has been paid already); they may be asked to leave Insert name of forum and criminal proceedings may be instigated.

Each case will be looked at individually by the steering group in the first instance. An independent investigator may be asked to review the queried claim.

# **Staff**

1) There must be a clear trail to show the authority and reason for EVERY payment to staff; e.g. a cheque requisition form asking for payment to an employee. All employees will be paid within the PAYE and National Insurance regulations.

2) All staff appointments or departures will be authorised by the steering group who will minute the dates and salary level. Similarly, all changes in hours and variable payments (e.g. overtime) will be authorised by the steering group.

# **Other rules**

1) The forum does not accept liability for any financial commitment unless properly authorised.

2) The forum will adhere to good practice in relation to its finances at all times. This should include a fixed asset register stating the date of purchase, cost, serial numbers and normal location of assets. Any assets should be returned to the forum upon request or if individual members stand down.

3) Purchases of goods or services over £500 will be agreed by the steering group. Insert name of forum will obtain at least two quotes and the subsequent decision will be on value for money and minuted by the steering group.

4) Any Insert name of forum steering group member who has a personal interest in, or connection to, an organisation or individual who is already being paid by the forum (or intends to quote for work being commissioned by the forum) must declare this interest and have it minuted by the steering group.

5) In an emergency situation, the purchase of goods or services over £500 will be agreed by at least 2 steering group members and the whole steering group will be advised as soon as reasonably practical.

6) Any steering committee member or employee who has a personal interest in, or connection to, an organisation or individual who is already being paid by the forum (or intends to quote for work being commissioned by the forum) must declare this interest and have it minuted by the steering committee.

# **Appendix A – Banking arrangements**

Insert name of forum will bank with xxx at its xxx Branch and accounts will be held in the name of Insert name of forum. The account will hold the grant funding and will require dual signatories for transactions. The account will have a minimum of 3 signatories, who are not related on the account at all times.

Named signatories agree to only use funds from the account in accordance with the forum's policies and as approved by the steering group. The signatories will provide receipts within 7 days for any purchases.

## **Signatories**

I hereby agree to only use funds from accounts belonging to Insert name of forum in accordance with the forum's policies and as approved by the steering group. I will provide receipts within 7 days for any purchases. Any money deemed to be outside of this agreement by the steering group will be returned within 7 days.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Signatory** | **Address** | **Signed** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

# **Appendix B – Reward and Recognition of Volunteers processes**

## **Introduction**

We aspire to reward and recognise the value of parent carers who contribute their time, skills and expertise to support the aims of Insert name of forum.

## **How claims will be made**

* For first time claims, all parent carers are required to complete the Insert name of forum ***Expenses declaration sheet***. This will need to be signed before any expense claims can be processed.
* Claim forms are available via the forum main email address or will be posted upon request.
* Claims should be submitted monthly. **Claims for expenses over 3 months old will not be accepted.**
* The Accounting period runs from 1st April to 31st March every year. To enable us to comply with our grant monitoring, claims must be received **by the second week in** **April** for any claims up to and including the 31st March every year.
* These occasional representations on behalf of Insert name of forum do not constitute a contract of employment, but any honorarium payment may be classed as earnings by HMRC. It is the sole responsibility of individuals to notify HMRC of their earnings/expenses. If you are claiming benefits it is your responsibility to declare your earnings/expenses where appropriate to any other relevant agencies.

## **Expenses**

## **Travel Expenses**

* Insert name of forum will covertravel to and from the meeting venue and any prior agreed travel undertaken during the course of volunteering.
* Insert name of forum will pay an agreed vehicle rate per mile (see Appendix C). We offer a passenger rate to encourage car sharing of a return trip from pick up and drop off point of a passenger in a private (see Appendix C).
* Public transport reimbursement will be made against a receipt.
* If for any reason a taxi is required, please make all reasonable efforts to clear this in advance with the budget manager. A receipt must be obtained.

## **Refreshments Expenses Criteria**

Refreshments will normally be provided free of charge to representatives where appropriate. This includes lunch where activities take place over lunchtime. However, there will be occasions outside of this and Insert name of forum will reimburse the cost of reasonable meals or refreshments in accordance with the following criteria:

* Necessarily absent from home and are more than 3 miles from their home.
* Away from their home for more than five hours and the period of absence covers the whole of the normal lunchtime period of 12 noon to 2.00pm or 5:30pm to 7:30pm.
* Non-alcoholic drinks may be reimbursed where the number of hours of voluntary time and participation time has exceeded 3 hours or more.
* See Appendix C for current rates. Receipts must be provided.

## **Childcare Expenses Criteria**

* Insert name of forum will make a contribution towards childcare expenses when representing Insert name of forum.
* Childcare should only be claimed where additional childcare costs are incurred, i.e., not when immediate family members are caring for the child/young person in their own home.
* See Appendix C for current rates. Receipts must be provided.

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# **Appendix C – Reward and Recognition of Volunteers amount**

A reward may be offered as a token of appreciation for parent carers’ knowledge and expertise. The rate of this will be agreed in advance.

## **Refreshment expenses**

Maximum of £x for lunch and £x for dinner.

## **Childcare expenses**

Up to a maximum of £x per hour per child, supported by receipts. A payment of up to £x per hour per child will be paid where a child requires 2 to 1 care, supported by receipts.

## **Travel Expenses**

Travel expenses will be paid at the rate of 45p per mile.

An additional 5p per mile may be claimed if car sharing per additional person.

Monitoring and review of this policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if necessary due to budgetary constraints.

**Date Approved:** x 2025

**Date of next revision:** x 2026

**Responsibility of:** The Steering Group