



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme – Travel Provision Application

By correspondence

Reference: SPCB (2023) Paper 55

Executive summary

1. The SPCB is invited to consider a retrospective application from the Labour Parliamentary Group to have travel costs incurred from attendance at a Group Awayday in Stirling to be met from the Reimbursement of the Members' Expenses Scheme.
2. The Scheme Guidance in paragraph 1.10, provides for such costs to be met with prior approval from the SPCB in relation to Members attending a party group meeting outwith Edinburgh and in any other place in Scotland. Group meetings in Edinburgh do not need prior approval from the SPCB.

Issues and options

3. A retrospective application has been received from the Labour Party Group to the SPCB for the cost of Labour Group members travel to be met from the Travel Provision relating to the Group Awayday in Stirling on 28th and 29th August.
4. The Group propose to meet venue costs for the awayday from within their short money allocation.
5. It has been confirmed that only Labour MSPs were in attendance and the agenda was entirely focused on the work of the Scottish Parliament Labour Group. Whilst the event involved an overnight stay the application does not include the covering of any overnight costs associated with the event as we have been advised by the Group that their Members will not be claiming for these costs.

6. This is the second time this session that a retrospective application has been made to the SPCB for this purpose. The SPCB agreed the previous application in January 2023 for attendance at a meeting in October 2022. The Labour Group has apologised for this administrative error in not seeking prior approval.
7. The SPCB is invited to consider this application based on the information provided. As the scheme makes provision for such costs

Governance

8. There are no governance issues as the Scheme provides for Members travel and applying to the SPCB for the costs to be met from the Scheme.

Resource implications

9. Should the SPCB determine that the costs should be met it is confirmed that there are sufficient funds available within the overall Members budget for 2023-24.

Publication Scheme

10. This paper can be published in accordance with the SPCB's publication scheme.

Next steps

11. Advise the Group of the SPCB's decision, reminding them of the need for prior approval in future and if the SPCB agree the travel costs can be met from the Scheme then process any claims submitted through MyExpenses.

Decision

12. The SPCB is invited to consider an application on behalf of the Labour Group for the cost of travel to be met from the Members' Expenses Scheme for the attendance at the Labour Parliamentary Group Awayday in Stirling on 28th and 29th August 2023.

Allowances Office

September 2023