

Be at the **heart** of
your community



SECTION 7

COMMUNITY COUNCIL TEMPLATES / TIPS & HINTS 2013-2017

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MODEL CONSTITUTION



[Once any amendments have been made and approved by Community Council Members remove Word 'Model' prior to sending to the Democratic Services Manager]

1. Name

The name of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be
.....(referred to as "the COMMUNITY COUNCIL" in this document).

2. Area of the Community Council

The area of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be as shown on the map associated with, and described in, the Local Authority's **Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils**.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be:

- a) to ascertain, co-ordinate and reflect the views of the community which it represents, to liaise with other community groups within the area, and to fairly express the diversity of opinions and outlooks of the people;
- b) to express the views of the community to the Local Authority for the area to public authorities and other organisations;
- c) (to take such action in the interests of the community as appears to it to be desirable and practicable;
- d) to promote the well-being of the community and to foster community spirit;
- e) to be a means whereby the people of the area shall be able to voice their opinions on any matter affecting their lives, their welfare, their environment, its development and amenity.

4. Role and Responsibilities

In the discharge of their functions and the conduct of their business, the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and its membership shall have regard to their role and responsibilities as set out in Section 4 the 'Scheme for Established Community Councils', approved by the Local Authority and in the COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS' Code of Conduct (Appendix 4 of the Scheme).

5. Membership

The COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S membership is as governed by Section 6 of the 'Scheme for Established Community Councils' and as determined from time to time by the Local Authority.

6. Method of Election

Election procedures shall be governed by the method of election laid down in Section 7 of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.

7. Casual Vacancies on the Community Council

Where a vacancy arises which does not result in the number of COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS falling below the minimum number as specified in the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils (Appendix 1) and at least 6 months has passed since the last election, the COMMUNITY COUNCIL may, if it considers it to be desirable, agree to:-

- a) the filling of a vacancy by co-option with voting rights to a maximum of one quarter of the total membership of the community council as governed by Section 0 of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.
- b) the vacancy to be left unfilled until local public interest is expressed or until the next set of regular elections.

Where a vacancy arises which does result in the number of COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS falling below the minimum number as specified in Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils (Appendix 1), the Local Authority shall be informed.

8. Voting Rights of Members of the Community Council

The right to vote at any meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL or any committee thereof, shall be held by all COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS and Youth Members whether elected or co-opted, but not by Associate Members appointed for specific issues on a temporary basis, or *ex-officio* Members.

With the exception of circumstances which may arise under the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils: Section 8.2 - Community Council Elections [Co-option]; and Standing Orders: Clause 16 – Alterations to the Constitution and its Clause 17 – Dissolution, all decisions of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL will be decided by a simple majority of those eligible to vote and present and voting.

In the event of a vote of the Community Council Members that results in a majority not being achieved, the chairperson shall have a casting vote.

9. Election of Office-Bearers

- a) At the first meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL after elections in the year the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall appoint a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and other such office-bearers as it shall from time to time decide.
- b) All office-bearers shall be elected for four years.
- c) Without the express approval of the Local Authority, no one member shall hold more than one of the following offices at any one time: Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer.

10. Committees of the Community Council

The COMMUNITY COUNCIL may appoint representatives to committees of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and shall determine their composition, terms of reference, duration, duties and powers.

11. Meetings of the Community Council

- a) The quorum for COMMUNITY COUNCIL meetings shall be at least one third of the current eligible voting membership, or 3 eligible voting Members, whichever is the greater.
- b) Once in each year the COMMUNITY COUNCIL may convene an *Annual General Meeting* for the purpose of receiving and considering the Chairperson's annual report on the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, the submission and approval of the independently examined annual statement of accounts and the appointment of Office Bearers.
- c) *Excluding the Annual General Meeting, if held*, the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall meet not less than 6 times throughout the year.

- d) Dates, times and venues of regular meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be fixed at the first meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL following ordinary elections and thereafter *at its Annual General Meeting or once a year*. Special meetings shall require at least 10 days public notice, either called by the Chairperson, or on the request of not less than one-half of the total number of COMMUNITY COUNCIL Members. An officer of the Local Authority has the discretion to call a meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.
- e) Copies of all minutes of meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and of committees thereof shall be approved at the next prescribed meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, but the draft minute shall be circulated within 30 days from the date of that meeting, to COMMUNITY COUNCIL Members, other appropriate parties and the Local Authority's Liaison Officer for COMMUNITY COUNCILS.
- f) The COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall abide by its Standing Orders for the proper conduct of its meetings.
- g) The COMMUNITY COUNCIL has a duty to be responsive to the community it represents. Should the COMMUNITY COUNCIL receive a written request (petition), signed by at least 20 persons resident within the COMMUNITY COUNCIL area to convene a special meeting for a particular matter or matters to be debated, it shall call such a meeting within 14 days of receipt of such a request and advertise it in the manner prescribed locally for special meetings called by the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.
- h) The COMMUNITY COUNCIL can meet to discuss items of business in private but only where it considers it appropriate to do so. The decision to meet in private will be agreed in advance and decided by a majority vote. Notice of such a meeting will be given to the public in the usual way. However, the Notice will record that the meeting, or a part thereof, shall be held in private.

12. Public Participation in the Work of the Community Council

- a) All meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and its committees (subject to 11(h), above) shall be open to members of the public. Proper provision is to be made for the accommodation of members of the public and the opportunity should be afforded at each meeting to permit members of the public to address the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, under the guidance of the Chairperson.
- b) Notices calling meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and its committees shall be posted prominently within the COMMUNITY COUNCIL area for a minimum period of 10 days before the date of any such meeting, and, where possible, be advertised by other suitable means.

13. Information to the Local Authority

The Local Authority's Liaison Officer shall be sent an annual calendar of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S prescribed meeting dates, times and venues, which should be agreed at a COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S *Annual General Meeting/ordinary meeting*, minutes of all meetings, the annual report, the annual financial statement and any other such suitable information, as may from time to time be agreed between the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and the Local Authority.

When special meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL are to be held, the Local Authority's Liaison Officer should be advised of the date, time venue and subject(s) of debate of such meetings, at least 10 days in advance of the meeting date.

14. Control of Finance

- a) All monies raised by or on behalf of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL or provided by the Local Authority and other sources shall be applied to further the objectives of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and for no other purpose. The monies provided by the Local Authority in the annual Administrative Grant for administrative and other approved purposes shall be used only as prescribed. Monies raised from other sources may be used in accordance with the terms of this provision (so long as they are consistent with the objectives of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL), or in the absence of such terms, for the furtherance of the objectives of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.
- b) The treasurer shall undertake to keep proper accounts of the finances of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.
- c) Any two of three authorised signatories, who would normally be office-bearers of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, may sign cheques on behalf of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL. Authorised signatories may not be co-habitees.
- d) A statement of accounts for the last financial year, independently examined by a least one examiner appointed by the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, whom are not members of this COMMUNITY COUNCIL, shall be submitted *to an Annual General Meeting (if held)/Ordinary meeting* of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and shall be available for inspection at a convenient location.
- e) The financial year of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be from October to September the succeeding year. Examined accounts as received and approved by the COMMUNITY COUNCIL at an ordinary meeting *or at the Annual General Meeting (if held)* shall be submitted to the Local Authority following approval at a meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

15. Title to Property

Property and other assets belonging to the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be vested in the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and their successors in these respective offices.

16. Alterations to the Constitution

Any proposal by the COMMUNITY COUNCIL to alter this Constitution must be first considered by a meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and the terms of the proposal to alter the Constitution shall be stated on the notice calling the meeting, which shall be issued not less than ten days prior to the meeting. Any proposed alterations may not prejudice the terms and objectives contained within the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.

If the proposal is supported by two-thirds of the total voting membership of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and is approved in writing by the Local Authority, the alteration shall be deemed to have been duly authorised and can then come into effect.

17. Dissolution

If the COMMUNITY COUNCIL by a two-thirds majority of the total voting membership decides at any time that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve, it shall agree a date for a public meeting to be held to discuss the proposed resolution to dissolve.

It is a requirement that not less than ten days prior to the date of such meeting a public notice be given by means of notification in the local newspaper.

If the resolution is supported by a majority of those persons present and qualified to vote and is approved by the Local Authority, the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be deemed to be dissolved and all assets remaining, subject to the approval of the Local Authority, after the satisfaction of any proper debts or liabilities shall transfer to the Local Authority who shall hold the same in trust for a future COMMUNITY COUNCIL representing that area.

In the event that the COMMUNITY COUNCIL is dissolved under the above procedure, and twenty or more electors subsequently wish the re-establishment of a COMMUNITY COUNCIL for the area, these electors shall submit a petition to the Local Authority in accordance with Section 52(7) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, on receipt of which the Returning Officer may arrange for elections to be held in accordance with the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.

Where for any reason, the number of COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS falls below the minimum specified in the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils the Local Authority may, by suspending the Constitution of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, cause the COMMUNITY COUNCIL to be dissolved and in this event, the procedures for the establishment of a new COMMUNITY COUNCIL being those identified in the immediately preceding paragraph hereof, shall be initiated.

18. Approval and Adoption of the Constitution

This Constitution was adopted
by

COMMUNITY COUNCIL, on _____ (DATE)

Signed _____ Chairman

PRINT _____

Date _____

Signed _____ Member

PRINT _____

Date _____

Signed _____ Member

PRINT _____

Date _____

And was approved on behalf of The Moray Council on _____
date

Signed _____

PRINT _____

Position _____

Date _____

Summary of Accounts Template

[name of] COMMUNITY COUNCIL

FROM _____ TO _____

OPENING BALANCE: £ _____



EXPENDITURE				INCOME		
Date	Description	Amount (£)		Date	Description	Amount (£)

CLOSING BALANCE £ _____

PREPARED BY	_____ (Treasurer)
DATE	_____
EXAMINED BY	_____
DATE	_____

OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIVED BY CCLO	_____
DATE	_____

Community Councillor's Expense Claim Form



[name of] COMMUNITY COUNCIL

1. PERIOD OF CLAIM		From	To		
2. Name		3. Home Address			
4. Vehicle Registration					
Date	Details of Journey (Locations From / To and reason for journey)	Miles	Hours of Absence From / To	Vat Amount (Receipted)	Other Expenses
TOTALS					

CLAIMANT STATEMENT – “I certify that :

- (1) The number of miles claimed shown above has been necessarily and actually incurred
- (2) A valid driving licence and MOT certificate and appropriate motor vehicle insurance is held by me

Claimant Signature	Date	Authorised Signature	Date
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Community Council Meeting – Attendance Sheet

[name of] COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting

Venue of Meeting



Name of Member	Office Bearer Title	Attended Please sign	Apologies Received Please tick if received

Name of Attendee	Representing [Please list]	Contact Details [if applicable / if wish to receive a copy of the Minutes]	Attended Please sign


Note:

The first sign in section can be completed in advance prior to a meeting taking place with the names of the current Community Councillors.

The second sign in section can be completed by attendees who are not members of your Community Council.

Agenda Template

A standard format for your Community Council agenda may be:

[Name of] Community Council Agenda		
Date / Time / venue		
Chair:	[name of]	
Agenda		
1.	Police Update <i>It is good practice to allow the Police to speak at the outset of the meeting.</i>	
2.	Guest Presentation	
3.	Minutes of Last Meeting <i>Attach to agenda.</i>	
4.	Matters Arising	
5.	Correspondence	
6.	Treasurers Report	
7.	Community Feedback <i>This is where Community Councillors and Elected Members share matters received either informally or formally by residents or to give any visiting public the floor.</i>	
8.	Reports	
	a) Local Councillor(s)	
	b) Community Council Sub Group(s)	
	c) A N Other(s)	
9.	Planning Issues	
10.	The Joint Community Council of Moray <i>Use this opportunity to hear updates from your JCC representative and agree any matters to be fed to the next JCC.</i>	
11.	AOCB	
12.	Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting	

Minutes Template

Remember that minutes should capture the 3 points below – nothing more, nothing less:

- What was decided at the meeting;
- What was accomplished;
- What was agreed and actions for the attendees.


Try and get notes typed up as soon as possible. If you get the minutes circulated quickly you will give those with actions an early reminder to complete their work, which saves time chasing them when the next meeting rolls around.

A standard format for your Community Council minutes may be:

[Name of] Community Council Minutes		Be at the heart of YOUR community	
Date / Time / Venue			
Chair:		[insert name of]	
Attendees			
• [list attendees]			
Apologies			
• [list apologies received]			
Topic	Discussion	Action	Person Responsible / Timescale
1.	Police Update		
2.	Minutes of Last Meeting		
3.	Matters Arising		
4.	Correspondence		
5.	Treasurers Report		
6.	Community Feedback		
7.	Reports		
	a) Local Councillor(s)		
	b) Community Council Sub Group		
	c) A N Other(s)		
8.	Planning Issues		
9.	The Joint Community Council of Moray		
10.	AOCB		
11.	Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting		


Summary of Minutes Template

This template allows you to capture the **main** points from your Community Council meeting. This can be distributed within your area, to community groups / organisations and if appropriate displayed on local notice boards. This is a good way of ensuring your community are aware and up to date with what the Community Council are doing and also provides ongoing promotional opportunities for the Community Council.

[Name of] Community Council Minutes Date / Time / Venue	
A formal minute of the above meeting is available via [insert website/secretary details]	
Local Community	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [bullet point from Community Feedback and Reports]. 	
Local Planning Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [bullet point from Community Feedback and Reports]. 	
Main Actions from Meeting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [bullet point]. 	
Date and Time of Next Meeting	
[insert details here inc Venue information]	
<i>[name of Community Council] welcomes residents and community groups at their meetings and to attend / participate and, most importantly, be part of their Community Council.</i>	

Report to Community Council Template

The template below may be useful for Community Council Members to use when reporting back on sub group activities.

REPORT TO [insert name of] COMMUNITY COUNCIL	
From the [insert name] sub group	
1. Purpose of Report	
<i>Why the report has been prepared.</i>	
2. Background	
<i>Past history of the subject matter, previous decisions taken by Community Council if applicable.</i>	
3. Proposals	
<i>What you are proposing or recommending.</i>	
4. Discussion	
<i>Discuss the issues surrounding the report, how and why you have come to the conclusions reached and what has led you to a particular conclusion or recommendation.</i>	
5. Consultations	
<i>Which organisation, agencies, groups or individuals you have spoken to about your proposals and whether or not they are supportive or offered any advice.</i>	
6. Financial Implications	
<i>Describe any financial implications of the report.</i>	
7. Conclusion & Recommendations	
<i>List each of your recommendations in turn, highlighting specific matters requiring decision by the Community Council.</i>	
Produced By	
<i>[insert name] Community Councillor</i>	
Date	
<i>[insert date]</i>	

There are different ways for updates to be fed back at meetings. It is important that each Community Council find a way that works best for them in terms of reporting back e.g. verbal accounts.

Press Release Template

Community Council Headed Paper



To all News Editors
For Immediate Release/Embargo – Day of Week, Date, Time.

Short Heading Like This

Make these first few words count. Write short sentences.
Keep the second paragraph short and succinct, but directly describing the subject.
Then communicate the broader story of why the subject matters, and where the future of it lies or perhaps the reasoning behind it.

Where possible include a quote from the relevant person. Use full name and job title: Jimmy Brown, Community Council Secretary or Mary Brown, chairperson of [insert name] Community Council. This is preferable to the anonymous spokesperson.

It is difficult to stipulate an exact length of press release – but try to keep it to one page. Some topics will demand more space than others. But as a rule keep the press release short and concise. If you need to include background information do this on a separate sheet- perhaps a series of bullet points headed

Notes for News Editors.

Further information from:
Your first name and surname
Your Community Council title
Your Tel No

Photo Opportunity Information.

The Joint Community Councils of Moray Representatives Template

The Joint Community Councils of Moray



[name of] Community Council

It was agreed at the meeting on [date] that

[Insert name] Representative - 1

[Insert name] Representative - 2

[Insert name] Substitute - 1

[Insert name] Substitute - 2

will represent [name of] Community Council at The Joint Community Councils of Moray.

COMMUNITY COUNCILLORS CONTACTS SHARING AUTHORISATION TEMPLATE

[insert name of] Community Council



I, [insert name] hereby give my permission for the previously submitted contact details to be shared with my fellow [insert name] Community Councillors.

Signature: _____

Date of Signature: _____

HINTS AND TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Community Councillors Should

- Attend meetings regularly; arrive on time and stay to the end. (Send apologies to the Secretary if you are unable to attend);
- Arrive at the meeting with all the relevant papers, having read them beforehand. As a Community Councillor receiving your minutes should not be a routine act of looking over them and forgetting about them. Read them over, are they an accurate record? - Has anything been left out, are there matters arising that you want to discuss further at the next meeting, are there points for you to action before the next meeting? Make notes then store your minutes in a file and bring them to meetings;
- Be able to take an active part in the discussions in an informed and positive way;
- Make enquiries beforehand if necessary to ensure that you are well informed and briefed about items for discussion;
- Be prepared to start discussions;
- Be prepared to give an opinion without dominating meetings;
- Keep to the agenda and be mindful of the aims and objects of your Community Council;
- Be supportive of other members of your Community Council;
- Listen to the views of others in attendance.

Dates for Meetings

- Set these well in advance;
- Set a system in place for sending out reminders of the dates and times and venue of meetings;
- Establish a pattern e.g. the first Wednesday of the month.

Before The Meeting

- Publicise all meetings well in advance and as broadly as possible – remember to include local partner agencies, your local Elected Members and most importantly your community;
- The Chair should plan an agenda in consultation with the other Officer Bearers;
- Issue an agenda for every meeting to all members and previous minutes (in good time to allow members the opportunity to read through these before the next meeting);
- Invite any outside bodies you wish to attend, include a brief of what you expect from them if you are inviting them for a specific reason e.g. Police, community group representatives;
- Check your venue booking.

During The Meeting

- Knowing who everyone is helps so make sure people introduce themselves;
- Make sure the meeting is quorate (check your Constitution);
- Record the names of everyone who attends (including who they are representing if appropriate) and record any apologies received;
- Keep focused on the business and the decisions to be made;
- Remind everyone to avoid jargon, acronyms or abbreviations that some people may not understand. This can make people feel left out and may prevent them from contributing to the meeting;
- Encourage everyone to participate. Everyone's point of view is accepted and their input is valued;
- Make sure decisions are recorded in the minute with the name of the person responsible for any action;
- Finish on time.

After the meeting

- Type up the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting;
- Act on the decisions that you made.

Remember

Your meetings are part of your Community Council being open and accountable to the local community therefore how you conduct your meetings is very important.

Effective Meeting Checklist

The following table is a quick checklist for your Community Council to collectively consider at regular points during your term of office. If you find that you are answering no to any of these points it is suggested that a review of your meeting delivery is required. Support and guidance is available for this, contact your CCLO to discuss further.

Are meetings well attended by your Members?	
Are your meetings attended by partner agencies?	
Are your meetings open to members to the public so they can attend?	
Are meetings properly structured with good clear agendas that enable all present to contribute effectively to the meeting?	
Are meetings welcoming?	
Are agenda items properly introduced so that people have enough information to make decisions?	
Does the Chair keep discussion focused on the agenda item?	
Are everyone's contributions valued?	
Are minutes circulated before the meeting?	
Do the minutes reflect the decisions taken?	
Do meetings have discussions that reflect the values of the Community Council and further its objects?	
Do people know how to include items on the agenda?	
Do you think new members/ members of the public may feel intimidated attending meetings?	
Is the time and length of the meeting appropriate?	
Does the room layout help the meeting run smoothly?	
Is the meeting venue appropriate? (Consider here disable friendly access)	
Does the structure of meeting work well?	
Is it appropriate to serve refreshments?	
Do you feel able to ask questions?	
Is the language used at meetings clear and understandable?	
Are actions and those responsible for actions, clearly identified?	
Do Members know where to go for further information?	
Are members of the public encouraged to come again?	
Do you have measures in place to help identify if people need special help to attend – disabled access / transport?	

HINTS AND TIPS FOR FINANCES

As a Community Council insist on clear financial reporting systems, ask questions and do not approve financial decisions unless / (and) until you are clear about their implications.

Ensure that money is only used for the purposes that it was intended for and set against the Community Council's objects.

Consider the following when dealing with finances;

- What procedure is in place to discuss and decide on financial matters relating to the Community Council?
- Who is allowed to approve spending, handle cash?
- Who signs/ countersigns and for what amounts?
- Who can order supplies and services and authorise payment at various levels?

HINTS AND TIPS FOR OFFICE BEARERS

The Office Bearer's collective task is to:

- Ensure that the Community Council stays true to its values and mission;
- Ensure that the Community Council has the right operating structure in place;
- Make sure all Community Councillors understand the roles of the Office Bearers;
- Ensure that the Community Council has a plan for achieving its goals, is effective, accountable and lawful and has everything in place for the Community Council to work effectively.

It may be that a brief role description is written up for each of the Office Bearer positions to ensure that everyone understands the expectations of that role. Support and guidance is available to develop this, contact your CCLO to discuss this further.

Whilst it is recognised that the Office Bearer roles bring additional responsibility to being a Community Councillor all members have a core responsibility of advocating and representing the Community Council externally and to be aware of current issues that may affect the Community Council.

HINTS AND TIPS FOR INDUCTION

Having an induction process for new Community Councillors is a great idea to ensure that they are clear and confident about their new role.

It is important that members understand and can articulate the purpose of the Community Council and the role that they play within the development and running of the Community Council during their term in office.

The table below is a quick checklist with induction ideas for consideration by your Community Council.

Induction Checklist

Do you offer a tour of the meeting venue(s)?	
Do you introduce Community Councillors to one another?	
Do you introduce Community Councillors to partners and support staff e.g. CCLO, local policing team?	
Do you ensure that Community Councillors are properly supported to carry out their role e.g. are you aware of training opportunities in your area and how these can be accessed by members?	
Are Members provided with key information about the Community Council – Constitution / Members handbook / latest annual accounts / minutes of recent meetings and do they understand these documents?	
Are Members provided with a list of dates of forthcoming meetings?	
Are Members provided with contact details for each other?	
Are Members provided with samples of previous publicity materials to show the type of work / activities the Community Council has been involved with?	
Do Members know how to get things on the agenda?	
Do Members know how to claim for out of pocket expenses?	

