



Communities Directorate

13 March 2017

### **Joint Staff Committee**

**Date:** 21 March 2017

**Time:** 6:30pm

**Venue:** Queen Elizabeth II Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea

**Adur Executive:** Councillors Brian Boggis (Chair), Peter Metcalfe & Sami Zeglam

**Worthing Executive:** Councillors Keith Bickers, Vicky Vaughan, James Doyle

## **Agenda**

### **Part A**

#### **1. Substitute Members**

Any substitute members should declare their substitution.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Members and officers must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in relation to any business on the agenda. Declarations should also be made at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting.

If in doubt contact the Legal or Democratic Services representative for this meeting.

#### **3. Public Question Time**

To receive any questions from members of the public.

#### **4. Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions**

To consider any items the Chairman of the meeting considers to be urgent.

#### **5. Business Travel Policy**

To consider a report from the Director for Digital & Resources, a copy is attached as item 5.

### **Part B - Not for Publication – Exempt Information Reports**

No items.

### **Recording of this meeting**

The Council will be voice recording the meeting, including public question time. The recording will be available on the Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting. The Council will not be recording any discussions in Part B of the agenda (where the press and public have been excluded).

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For Democratic Services enquiries  
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[www.adur-worthing.gov.uk](http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk)

## **Business Travel Policy**

### **Report by the Director for Digital & Resources**

#### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a Business Travel Policy, which will replace the current Car Mileage Policy & Procedure. The proposals reflect the conclusions of a review of the criteria for Essential Car User Allowance which has been conducted with the involvement and approval of UNISON and their members, and in consultation with Heads of Service. The policy gives consideration to the mileage claim rate for business users, bringing it into line with HMRC guidance.
- 1.2 This Business Travel Policy will be developed further over the next year, providing further support and encouragement to the use of bicycles, public transport and walking, as part of our strategic focus on sustaining the natural environment, and our wider leadership role in our communities.
- 1.3 The Business Travel Policy is attached as Appendix 1.

#### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Essential Car User Allowance (ECUA) eligibility is currently based on a mileage threshold (1,000 miles). Staff in the scheme receive a lump sum payment ranging from £846.00-£1,239.00 per year, depending on the cc of the vehicle, and a mileage rate of 45p per mile. In the current policy, consideration is not given to the demands of the role, and the nature of the journeys undertaken, particularly whether it might be feasible to use a pool car or other alternative mode of transport.
- 2.2 In Autumn 2017, the Director for Digital & Resources initiated a review of the scheme in order to examine its cost effectiveness and appropriacy. Through the Joint Officer Negotiating Group, UNISON were engaged and consulted throughout the process and have recently agreed the policy as now presented to Committee.
- 2.3 As part of its work, the project team reviewed approaches in other councils, demonstrating that the Councils' current ECUA criteria was a quite arbitrary measure, and that other organisations had either moved away from the allowance altogether, or were using eligibility criteria more closely linked to the nature of the work undertaken by members of staff.

- 2.4 A site visit to Aylesbury Vale District Council provided the project team with good insight into their scheme, based on the use of pool and lease cars only. In the Aylesbury model, lease cars are provided to staff in job roles which require significant use of a car throughout the day to attend incidents or appointments, or to roles with a “rapid response” requirement, making the process of booking of a pool car impractical. This was taken as a strong steer, and the project team subsequently conducted analysis to compare the costs of a lease car with a lump sum payment given to those using their own vehicle (the Essential Car User Allowance). The analysis showed that the lower average mileage in Adur & Worthing compared to Aylesbury meant lease car costs would be higher than the lump sum amount. Feedback was also received regarding scenarios around the practical challenges of conducting visits at the beginning and end of the day in a pool car.
- 2.5 A conclusion was reached to retain the Essential Car User Allowance, but to review the criteria to ensure it is better targeted around the demands of the job role. In close consultation with UNISON and their members, a new set of criteria were designed and agreed for inclusion into the new policy. The criteria are designed to test whether a job role requires dedicated (sole) access to a car (and therefore receive the ECUA), or whether the role can be performed with access to pool cars through our existing digitally enabled service.
- 2.6 The policy also includes details of the Car Pool Scheme, which will be extended so that pool cars are available at other corporate sites according to demand which will be established in the next two months as job roles are reviewed by independent panels, through a process agreed with UNISON.
- 2.7 Those people that prefer to use their own vehicle rather than a pool car will be able to claim 45p per mile, this being the tax free threshold and the HMRC standards rate.

### **3.0 Proposals**

- 3.1 The proposed Business Travel Policy removes the “blunt instrument” mileage threshold, and introduces criteria more accurately focused on the demands of the job role. It replaces the Car Mileage Policy & Procedure, providing a clearer and more appropriate scheme, including establishing a single, clear mileage rate for those wishing to use their own vehicle.
- 3.2 The policy contains the details of the criteria that that will be used to assess whether a post qualifies for Essential Car User status. This will be a major exercise over the next two months.

### **4.0 Legal**

- 4.1 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to appoint staff on such terms and conditions as it considers appropriate.

## **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 The review of the Essential User Criteria and Policy is estimated to reduce costs by £75,000 per annum, while providing compensation for those roles where the use of a personal dedicated vehicle is required as assessed through new criteria.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

- 6.1 The Joint Staff Committee is recommended to approve the Business Travel Policy set out in Appendix 1.

## **Local Government Act 1972**

### **Background Papers:**

Adue District Council/Worthing Borough Council Car Mileage Policy and Procedure  
[Last Updated 05-01-16]

### **Contact Officer:**

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## **Schedule of Other Matters**

### **1.0 Council Priority**

- 1.1 Ensuring a cost effective and efficient process for assessing business travel options.

### **2.0 Specific Action Plans**

- 2.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **3.0 Sustainability Issues**

- 3.1 The expected greater use of pool cars is a positive benefit to the natural environment and the strategic focus established in the councils' Platforms for Our Places strategy document. This Business Travel Policy will be developed over the next 12 months to further develop sustainable travel options.

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

- 4.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

### **5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- 5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

### **6.0 Human Rights Issues**

- 6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

### **7.0 Reputation**

- 7.1 Likely to have a positive impact on the reputation of the Council as the Policy is being reviewed and updated.

### **8.0 Consultations**

- 8.1 A number of meetings with Unison and agreement achieved regarding the policy and process.

### **9.0 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

### **10.0 Health & Safety Issues**

- 10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

## **11.0 Procurement Strategy**

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

## **12.0 Partnership Working**

12.1 Matter considered and no issues identified







Adur District Council  
Worthing Borough Council  
**Business Travel Policy**

**Last updated: 9th February 2017**  
**To be reviewed: October 2017**

**Contact: Human Resources**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 At Adur & Worthing Councils, we aim to provide business travel options that provide choice and flexibility as well as promote efficiency and sustainability. We expect employees to consider the environment when they travel, planning journeys efficiently, car-sharing where possible, and choosing to walk or cycle when they can. During 2017, this business travel policy will be broadened and enhanced with further options developed through collaboration with staff groups, incorporating cycling and public transport and other initiatives. At present, the policy provides options for car travel.

## **2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees required to travel for business purposes as part of their role.

## **3.0 Essential Car Users**

- 3.1 Staff undertaking specified and approved job roles are eligible for the Essential Car User Scheme. Qualifying roles are approved by an independent panel, who assess the demands of the role against a set of criteria, outlined in section 4 below, which are centred around frequency of travel and the requirement to make unplanned visits. For the first round of assessments in early 2017, a panel of four will be established, to include a UNISON representative. Future panels will consist of two members; a HR representative and a UNISON representative. The panel of 4 will be asked to establish a benchmark and develop a scoring system and guidance for future evaluations.
- 3.2 Mileage rates for essential users are as per the current NJC rates linked to engine size up to a maximum of 45p per mile – this being the tax free threshold.
- 3.3 ECU allowance cannot be paid to two members of staff using the same vehicle.
- 3.4 In the case of passenger allowances HMRC allow up to 5p per passenger per mile without incurring any tax liability.
- 3.5 Where journeys take place by car outside of Sussex, the mileage rate for the whole journey will be 50% of the lowest casual user rate (i.e. currently 23.45p). This encourages use of public transport wherever possible.
- 3.6 Mileage claims for attendance at conferences, training events etc. should be claimed separately from mileage undertaken for the day to day business of a post, through the staff expenses process.
- 3.7 Lump sum payments that are stopped due to car documentation not being provided in a timely manner will recommence from the 1st of the month following the submission of the documentation, and will not be backdated to previous months.

- 3.8 The Councils shall not accept any responsibility for personal fines or charges for illegal parking and accordingly will not reimburse any employee for such fines or charges.
- 3.9 All mileage claims must be submitted on a monthly basis (i.e. by the end of the month following the month in which the journey was made). Payment will not be made for incomplete claims such as those that have not been signed or authorised. Any late claims will be passed to the Section 151 Officer and may be refused payment, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 3.10 A valid driving licence and up to date vehicle documentation, including insurance, that includes cover for business use, must be provided to payroll annually for inspection. See paragraph 8.0 below.

#### **4.0 Essential Car User (“ECU”) Criteria**

- 4.1 The following criteria are used to assess whether a post qualifies for Essential Car User status:
- 4.1.1 The role requires the member of staff to attend incidents on the same day the incident occurs, on a frequent and regular basis.
- 4.1.2 The nature of the role means that the postholder will be out at appointments/meetings for the majority of the day.
- 4.1.3 The requirements of the role demand that a dedicated vehicle should be available to the postholder, and these needs cannot be met by a pool car or other alternative.
- 4.1.4 There is a requirement to carry specialist equipment which means it would be impractical to use a pool car or other alternative.

#### **5.0 Reviews**

- 5.1 A review of those receiving the EU allowance will be conducted annually in October to allow a minimum of 3 months' written notice to effect any changes from the 1st April in the following year.
- 5.2 Any post that becomes vacant by a post-holder must be reviewed by the Head of Service (HoS) for that department, to check that the EU status has not changed prior to an advertisement being placed.
- 5.3 Any new posts created will require the relevant Head of Service to consider ECUA and submit a business case to the panel, which will be convened as required as part of the job evaluation panel process.

#### **6.0 Sickness**

- 6.1 Under the green book rules, where a car is not in use as a result of either a mechanical defect or the absence of the employee through illness:-

- (a) The lump sum payments should be paid for the remainder of the month in which the car first went out of use, and 100% for a further 3 months. For the following 3 months after that, payment will be made at the rate of 50% of the lump sum.
- (b) During the period when a car is off the road for repairs, reimbursement in respect of travel by other forms of transport should be made by the employing authority.

6.2 Under a local agreement made in January 2013, sickness will be aggregated together in the rolling year in which an employee's absence first commenced, therefore any periods of sickness already recorded will reduce the period the lump sum payment is payable under a).

## **7.0 Business Mileage for Non Essential Car Users**

### **Car Pool Scheme**

- 7.1 The Car Pool Scheme is a service for all business users based at Worthing Town Hall/Portland House, Commerce Way and the Shoreham Centre. The location and numbers of pool cars at each site will be kept under review. Please see the **Car Hire - Pool Cars section on the intranet** for further information.
- 7.2 If you decide that you would prefer to use your own vehicle rather than use a pool car for business travel, you will be able to claim 45p per mile, this being the tax free threshold.

For further detail please see [HMRC business travel mileage for employees own vehicles](#)

If you decide to use your own vehicle you will be required to provide your documentation detailed in section 8.0. This option provides business users with a convenient option for appointments at the beginning and end of the day, or where a business user prefers or needs to use their own car.

## **8.0 Duty of Care/Documents Required**

8.1 In order that the Council meets its duty of care to staff and the public and fulfils audit requirements eligibility for ECU or business mileage must be reviewed annually. The Council must ensure that the car used by employees is fit for purpose for which it is being used, is roadworthy, meets legal requirements and is properly insured for use for the employees and the Councils' business. Therefore, you are required to supply the Councils' payroll office annually with copies of the following:-

- 1. Your car insurance showing that you are covered for commuting to and from your permanent place of work, and for use by the policyholder in connection with his/her own business or that of his/her employer work.

2. Your car registration document (page 2 of the V5).
3. Your car MOT certificate (if applicable).
4. Your driving licence photocard.

Please note that when you renew your annual car insurance and MOT **you** are required to present this to the payroll office so that the payroll records can have a note added.

If as a driver you change car during the year, you are required to produce a copy of all the relevant documentation to payroll to ensure the payroll system is updated.

Failure to adhere to the above will result in your Head of Service being advised of the situation and will result in payment of mileage claims and essential lump sum payments being suspended or delayed.

## **9.0 Address or Name Change**

- 9.1 In addition to advising payroll, you are required to advise DVLA and your Insurance Company or any change of address or name change for any reason.

## **10.0 Indemnity Notice**

- 10.1 Whether you are claiming mileage payments or not claiming mileage payments the Councils will not be held responsible for any matter or claims for any incidents or accidents whilst an employee is on Council business.

## **11.0 Your Records**

- 11.1 For HMRC purposes under self-assessment you are required to keep a copy of any mileage claims so that these can be produced to HMRC for inspection if required.

## **12.0 Payroll Records**

- 12.1 All paperwork will be kept by payroll in a safe and secure environment.
- 12.2 Once the annual audit has been completed any paperwork that is not current will be confidentially destroyed.

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
 Alex Bailey, Chief Executive

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
 UNISON

