

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Staff Committee of
Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils**

Queen Elizabeth II Room, Shoreham Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea

Tuesday 21 March 2017

Councillor Brian Boggis (Chairman)

Adur District Council:

Councillor Peter Metcalfe

*Councillor Sammi Zeglam

Worthing Borough Council:

Councillor Keith Bickers

Councillor Vicky Vaughan

*Councillor James Doyle

*Absent

JStC/001/16-17 Substitute Members

There were no substitutions.

JStC/002/16-17 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

JStC/003/16-17 Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

JStC/004/16-17 Items Raised Under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

JStC/005/16-17 Business Travel Policy

Before the Committee was a report by the Director for Digital & Resources, copies of which had been circulated to all Members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Item 5.

The report sought approval for a Business Travel Policy to replace the existing Car Mileage Policy & Procedure. The proposals reflected the conclusions of a review of the criteria for Essential Car User Allowance (ECUA) which was conducted with the involvement and approval of UNISON and their members, and in consultation with Heads

of Service. The policy gave consideration to the mileage claim rate for business users, bringing it into line with HMRC guidance.

The Committee was informed that the Business Travel Policy would be developed further over the coming year, providing additional support and encouragement to the use of bicycles, public transport and walking, as part of the Council's strategic focus on sustaining the natural environment, and wider leadership role in our communities.

Members were informed that the current ECUA scheme was based on eligibility criteria with a business mileage threshold of 1,000 miles per year. Staff in the scheme received a lump sum payment ranging between £846 and £1,239 per year, dependent on the cc of the vehicle, and a mileage rate of 45p per mile. The current policy did not give consideration to the demands of the role, the nature of the journeys taken or whether it might be feasible to use a pool car or other, alternative modes of transport. A review of the scheme by the Director for Digital and Resources, identified that a number of staff in receipt of the allowance, did not meet the current criteria of 1,000 business miles per year.

The proposed Business Travel Policy would remove the mileage threshold and introduce criteria more accurately focused on the demands of the job role. It would replace the Car Mileage Policy and Procedure, providing a clearer and more appropriate scheme, including the establishment of a single, clear mileage rate for those wishing to use their own vehicles.

The proposed policy also contained the details of the criteria that would be used to assess whether a post qualified for Essential Car User status. It was noted that applying the proposed criteria would be a major exercise over the next two months involving Officer Panels assessing business cases put forward by Heads of Service and individual members of staff.

A Member sought clarification regarding the numbers of staff involved. Officers advised that 130 members of staff had received the existing allowance and that 50 of those had received notice as they did not fulfil the 1,000 mile criteria. There were 49 different job roles which required panel consideration against the new criteria.

The Committee noted that the Councils wanted to encourage the use of pool cars whilst the continuation of a business mileage scheme (incorporating the existing casual mileage scheme) would enable flexibility. The changes proposed were estimated to deliver savings in the region of £75,000.

A Member commented that they would like to see someone in a comparable position sitting on the Panels. Officers advised that both Heads of Service and individuals were able to put forward business cases for consideration by the Panel. A Union representative would sit on each panel alongside the Monitoring Officer and the Sustainability Manager. Members of staff would also be invited to attend and make representation.

The Committee questioned why there were no Elected Members sitting on the Panel. The Director for Digital & Resources advised that it was appropriate for Officers to undertake

this role and that a summary of the decisions of the Panel would be shared with Members at the end of the process.

Decision,

That the Joint Staff Committee approved the Business Travel Policy set out in Appendix 1.

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 7:10pm, having commenced at 6.30pm.

Chairman