

Travel & Expenses Policy

Policy Title	Travel & Expenses Policy
Policy Author	HR Team - PSPS
Policy Issue date	January 2023
Policy Review date	January 2027, or earlier if required
Policy Consultation	Trade Unions recognised by the Council Council Reader Panel Senior Leadership Team
Policy Sign-off	Head of Paid Service/SHDC Council

Travel & Expenses Policy

Scope of the Policy

This policy provides guidance to employees who undertake business journeys/ travel in connection with their employment with the Council.

It is essential that both employees and people managers authorising the claims are fully conversant with this policy to ensure that they are accurate and compliant when submitted.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is a consistent and transparent approach for all business travel in connection with the delivery of the council's services and ensures that employees are recompensed for the additional costs incurred for undertaking business miles on behalf of the council.

This policy promotes more environmentally sustainable methods to either reduce business journeys and, if a journey is required, to undertake this in an environmentally efficient and cost effective way.

The policy also includes the risks associated with driving whilst at work are minimised, so far as reasonably practicable, and that adequate controls are in place to protect both the Council interests and the health & safety of its employees. This policy details arrangements which include both individual and collective responsibilities.

The policy provides a set of standards, which form a framework within which all parties may confidently operate. This policy establishes a framework for dealing with situations that may arise as a consequence of its implementation, for example identifying employees who are unfit to drive.

It does not diminish or negate in any way an individual employee's responsibility to comply with the law in all regards when driving on the public highway and it is the Council's expectation that all employees will comply with the law at all times when 'driving for work'.

Introduction

This policy sets out the guidance for claiming travel, accommodation, subsistence and any other expenses incurred by an employee whilst undertaking their role and/or in the performance of their duties

The policy applies to all employees of the Council who incur work related expenses which has been agreed to reimburse or to which an employee subsequently seeks to reclaim. This policy does not apply to Elected Members, contractors or agency staff.

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1.Responsibilities

- 1.1 Responsibility for compliance with this policy rests with the employee making the claim (“the claimant”) for the reimbursement of expenses and their approving line manager (“the authoriser”).
- 1.2 The Council assumes no obligation to reimburse expense claims that are not compliant with this policy.
- 1.3 Employees who fail to comply with this policy will be dealt with under the ‘Disciplinary Policy’, this includes employees making claims and People Managers who authorise claims.
- 1.4 Employees should discuss and/or seek pre-authorisation for planned expenditure in advance with their People Manager, where it is practicable to do so.
- 1.5 All employees who drive leased vehicles or their own vehicle as part of their employment must provide a driving licence check code to HR Department on an annual basis.
- 1.6 Employees have a responsibility to advise their Line Manager of any changes or potential changes to their licence, which may affect their ability to drive and/or undertake their role.
- 1.7 Employees are under an obligation to inform their Line Manager of any additional driving related convictions, cautions, Traffic fixed penalty notices (including penalty points) court summons, driver improvement courses or periods of disqualification immediately, if it is likely to have an impact on their ability to undertake their role.
- 1.8 The Head of HR and OD in consultation with the Chief Executive will consider if any temporary or restricted driving arrangements for an employee who commits any Road Traffic Act related matter whilst driving a lease vehicle under the company insurance policy or if any disciplinary action is necessary, if it is identified that there has been failure to comply with this policy and/or the Code of Conduct.
- 1.9 The submission of a fraudulent travel and subsistence expenses claim will be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in disciplinary proceedings.

2. Business travelling expenses

- 2.1 Journeys which employees **have to** make in the performance of their duties are classed as business travelling.
- 2.2 Journeys which employees make to or from a place they **have to** attend in the performance of their duties – but not journeys which are ordinary commuting or private travel are also business travelling expenses.
- 2.3 Tax relief is only available where travel is in the actual performance of the duties or where it is necessary, in a real sense, for the employee to attend the particular place on that occasion to perform the duties of employment. Further guidance can be found [here](#).
- 2.4 Where an individual enters in to a separate arrangement, for example a Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme, the reimbursement rates as stipulated in the scheme contract, as signed by the employee, will apply for business mileage.

3. Selecting a mode of transport

- 3.1 Where possible, all travel should be undertaken using the Council's fleet of pool cars.
- 3.2 Consideration should be given to using the most economical means possible. For instance, use of public transport or car sharing.
- 3.3 A discussion should be held with the budget holder/ line manager, to consider the practicalities. In the case of longer journeys (over 100 miles return) employees may choose to use their own vehicle but will only be reimbursed the nearest equivalent rail fare. Car hire should also be considered as a cost-effective alternative method of travel.
- 3.4 Where staff submit a journey from home to site and return home they should reduce the total miles claimed for that journey by the normal home to base mileage that would have been incurred if they had attended at base that day. This may result in no mileage being reimbursed.
- 3.5 If you are in any doubt about the correct method of claiming please discuss the matter with your people manager/budget holder or HR
- 3.6 Claims submitted for reimbursement should be done so in compliance with the online declaration(s). Claimants and line managers must be fully satisfied that claims are not in breach of the stated declaration.

4. Mileage Allowance

4.1 (ELDC & BBC Only) All mileage rates payable will be in line with the rates set by the HMRC.

Mode of transport	The approved mileage rates: First 10,000 business miles in the tax year	Each business mile over 10,000 in the tax year
Cars and vans	45p	25p
Passenger (for carrying fellow employees in a car or van on journeys which are also work journeys for them).	5p	5p
Motor cycles	24p	24p
Bicycles	20p	20p

4.2 SHDC Mileage Rates

4.2.2 Essential user

4.2.3 An essential user is an employee whose duties require them to have a car at their disposal at all times and will travel 2,000 miles or more a year on council business. They will have an automatic right to loan facilities and free parking at Priory Road Offices. Employees who travel less than 2,000 but more than 1,000 miles a year may also be given essential user status. This would be at the discretion of the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Development), based on:

- the regularity of use;
- the need to travel to different locations; and
- the nature of use, e.g. on-call.

	451-999cc	Over 999cc
Essential Lump Sum	846	963
Essential (Up to 8500)	36.9	40.9
Casual (Up to 8500)	46.9	52.2

4.2.4 Travel status is subject to annual review. This includes looking at the mileage pattern over the previous two years, where possible. If the employee has only been in post for part of the year, their first review will start at the end of the first

full travelling year. The travelling year is based on the period 1 April to 31 March. A review can also be requested at any point of time where there is a substantial change to the nature of the job which is likely to increase the annual mileage.

4.3 Where an individual enters in to a separate arrangement, for example a Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme, the reimbursement rates as stipulated in the scheme contract, as signed by the employee, will apply for business mileage'

5. Subsistence & other Expenses

5.1 Items of a personal nature for example, toiletries urgently required on work-related travel will not be reimbursed, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

5.2 Hotel accommodation should always be booked in advance and consideration to bulk bookings across the Councils if others are attending.

5.3 Meal allowances will only be paid for an evening meal and / or breakfast, where an overnight stay necessitates. No time limits will apply to when meals can be taken in these circumstances.

5.4 No other subsistence expenses will be paid such as meal allowances/ reimbursement for other purchases made including whilst on training courses.

5.5 Receipts must be provided with claims although allowance rates (set out below) will not be exceeded).

5.6 Approved meal allowance rates in line with HMRC;

Time Away from the Office Location	Maximum Subsistence Allowance
5 Hours	£5
10 Hours	£10

**15 Hours and ongoing at
8pm**

£35 (Breakfast, Lunch &
Dinner)

5.7 Payment of Subscriptions

5.7.1 **BBC** - The Council does not pay for officers' professional fees. Where an employee is required to be a member of a professional body e.g. Chartered Institute of Environmental Health or Chartered Institute of Public Finance, they will be required to pay any necessary fees personally. Where this is an essential requirement for the post, non-subscription will be considered as a serious matter and will be reviewed with the employee concerned.

5.7.2 **ELDC** - If the professional subscription is an essential requirement of the role employees will receive reimbursement.

5.7.3 Reimbursement of appropriate fees and expenses will be given in approved cases for development and training.

6. Submitting your claim

6.1 All claims for travel expenses must be submitted via [Webexpense](#) for approval via people managers.

6.2 A fuel VAT receipt must be retained to substantiate all claims for business use and uploaded when claims are made.

7. Reporting Accidents and Incidents

7.1 In the event of any accident whilst driving or travelling for work/business, an incident report form must be completed and submitted to Health & Safety. This includes commuting to and from work.