



REPORT TO:	COUNCIL
DATE:	22 NOVEMBER
SUBJECT:	REVISION TO TRAVEL AND EXPENSES POLICY
PURPOSE:	TO PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE POLICY
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR JIM ASTILL, PORTFOLIO HOLDER – CORPORATE AND COMMUNICATIONS
REPORT OF:	JAMES GILBERT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - CORPORATE
REPORT AUTHOR:	JAMES GILBERT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - CORPORATE
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	NONE

SUMMARY

This report brings forward a revised Travel and Expenses Policy for Officers of the Council, as attached at Appendix A.

Following the introduction of additional means of supporting colleagues to access a vehicle to carry out their work duties, the updated Policy removes the application of the Essential Car User allowance from the Policy.

Policy Development Panel considered the amended policy when it met on 11 October 2023 and the Panel's feedback is included at 1.11.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Travel and Expenses Policy at Appendix A be approved.
2. That the revised Travel and Expenses Policy be implemented in line with the phased approach set out in this report at 1.7.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable the updated Policy to be implemented for those joining the Council or moving positions within the Council.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not to implement the revised policy. This was discounted. The Council now supports colleagues who require a vehicle for their role to access a vehicle in alternative ways, including through a Salary Sacrifice Car Scheme and low interest loan.

1. REPORT

- 1.1** This report proposes a revised Travel and Expenses Policy for the Council's workforce. The revised Policy is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2** The principal amendment to the policy is the removal of the Essential Car User Allowance, which is currently paid to 107 employees of the Council.
- 1.3** In recent years, the Council has introduced several mechanisms to support officers in accessing a vehicle to undertake their duties – this includes low interest loans and a Salary Sacrifice Car Scheme.
- 1.4** As a result of 1.3 - and following the annual review of this element of the Travel and Expenses Policy – it is proposed to amend the Policy to remove the provision for the Essential Car User Allowance to be applied to all roles going forward.
- 1.5** Those receiving the allowances under this policy receive between £80 and £275 a month at a total annual cost of £91,049 a year.
- 1.6** At present some Officers have a contractual commitment from the Council to receive the allowance, some receive it due to the mileage threshold they are meeting, and some receive it as it has moved with them as they have moved roles.
- 1.7** As a fair means of implementing the Policy revision, the following approach would be taken:
- no more Essential Car User Allowances will be applied when roles are advertised.
 - those in receipt of allowances at present will continue to receive their allowances* but will not keep their allowances if they change roles.
- *unless there is a clear rationale and contractual basis to consider this sooner.*
- 1.8** Over time, the Council will reach a position where no Officers will receive an allowance. Until that point, the reduced mileage rate for Essential Car Users, set out in 1.9, would remain applicable to those officers in receipt of the allowance.

1.9 Those who are not in receipt of an Essential Car User Allowance are able to claim an enhanced mileage rate, as set out in the table below:

Type	451 – 999 cc*	Over 999 cc
Casual User (up to 8,500 miles)	46.9p	52.2p
Casual User (over 8,500)	13.7p	14.4p
Essential User Casual User (up to 8,500 miles)	36.9p	40.9p
Essential User Casual User (over 8,500 miles)	13.7p	14.4p

*also applies to electric vehicles

1.10 Whilst this report isn't driven by finance, the Council will realise a saving in Essential Car User Allowances through the revised policy approach. The saving value or timescale can't be estimated as the saving will be realised as recipients of the allowance change roles / leave the Council.

1.11 Policy Development Panel met on 11 October 2023 and considered the proposed policy amendment. The Panel made the following comments:

- Mileage rate table – that the lower engine size banding within the policy should be amended from 451cc to 999cc to 0cc to 999cc to reflect that the lower band mileage rates are those applicable to electric vehicle mileage. Having sought advice from HR, the banding is based on NJC banding so rather than amend the banding we have clarified in narrative in this report (1.9) and the policy that 451cc to 999cc also applies to electric vehicles.

1.12 SHDC's partner Councils, BBC and ELDC, don't offer Essential Car User Allowances as part of their standard Terms and Conditions of employment.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

This paper provides an aligned policy position on Essential Car User Allowances.

IMPLICATIONS

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

None

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

None

STAFFING

The staffing implications are identified in the report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

As a HR Policy, this is a matter for Council.

DATA PROTECTION

None

FINANCIAL

The financial benefits are identified in the report.

RISK MANAGEMENT

None

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

Consultation has taken place with Corporate Management Team; relevant Group Managers/Service Managers, HR colleagues and Unions.

REPUTATION

None

CONTRACTS

None

CRIME AND DISORDER

None

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

None

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ACRONYMS

- BBC – Boston Borough Council
- ELDC – East Lindsey District Council

APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A	Travel and Expenses Policy
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

Policy Development Panel 11 October 2023

REPORT APPROVAL

Report author:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Signed off by:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Approved for publication:	Councillor Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder - Corporate and Communications