

Policy – Travel and Subsistence

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Policy – Travel and Subsistence

Version control

This document is subject to regular review due to legislative and policy changes. The latest versions of all our publications can be found on our website. Before contacting us about the content of this document, we recommend that you refer to the most recent version on the website and any relevant guidance.

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Notes / changes
v1.0	27/7/2016	Full council	New Policy
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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

COUNCIL

- Reduce the risk of potential harm to employees and other road users.

DIRECTORS / HEADS OF SERVICE

- Responsible for and promoting the most efficient use of resources and cost effective method of travel.
- Committed to reducing the financial and environmental impact from its business travel, by selecting the most efficient and cost effective means of transport.

HEAD OF HR

- Responsible for monitoring, use, application and reviewing the policy.

MANAGERS

- In consultation with staff undertake the necessity of travel assessment.
- Identify the most efficient, economical and safe means of travel with support from Fleet.
- Ensure policy and procedure is followed and implemented.
- Approve all travel and authorise all claims to ensure they are accurate and correct.
- Forward all claims to creditors for timely payment.

EMPLOYEES

- Provide copy of driving licence to line manager annually.
- Must complete a DVLA796 Driving Entitlement Consent Form if using council

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owned vehicle or their own vehicle for any type of travel/journey.

- Ensure own vehicle complies with the law, is safe, roadworthy and fit for purpose.
- Drive within the requirements of the law and adheres to speed limits.
- Car insurance meets the requirements of the council, covers business use and the carrying of business passengers
- Advise manager of any overpayments.

FLEET

- Arrange car hire.
- Arrange train journeys.
- Provide managers and employees with advice on efficient and safe travel.

HR DIRECT

- Provide managers and employees with advice on efficient, economical and safe travel.

PAYROLL

- Ensure all travel claims are accurately paid in accordance with pay deadlines.

Introduction

The council is responsible for meeting the cost of any additional travel incurred by its employees and elected members on official business. Official travelling means necessary travel for the purpose of official business, including:

- attendance at meetings in pursuit of official council business
- attendance at training courses

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- attendance at site meetings

In order for the council to ensure the most efficient use of its resources it requires that any spending on travel has to be pre-authorised. This means reviewing the cost of travel and promoting the most cost effective method of transport to employees and Members prior to undertaking the journey.

The council is committed to reducing the impact on the environment from its business travel. The target set by Government in the Climate Change Act 2007 is to reduce the Carbon footprint of the council by 33% by 2020. In order to achieve this target and continue to make reductions in the council's impact on the environment there is a need to reduce miles travelled and also identifying methods of transport with lower carbon emissions per mile.

As part of our overall health and safety policy, the council is also committed to ensuring that employees and elected members are safe in the workplace which extends to the vehicles being used for council business. Managing the risks that our employees face and create when driving or riding for work is essential.

Any vehicles which are used for travelling on council business which are not owned by the council are described as the Grey Fleet. The council's responsibilities extend to the Grey Fleet which may be hired, owned or leased by employees and Members and any travelling financially compensated.

Necessity of travel

Employees will only be reimbursed for expenses, which they actually and necessarily incur in the course of official travel. Before contemplating any journey, the following assessments need to be undertaken regarding the necessity of the journey:

- can the business need be undertaken equally as well using video or telephone conferencing facilities, telephone, e-mail, or through correspondence?
- can the meeting or need for the journey be postponed until a later date, or

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brought forward and then be combined with an additional requirement to travel, to reduce overall travel costs?

- is a colleague already travelling to the same meeting or location by car, with spare capacity?
- if the journey is necessary, has it been approved by your line manager after all of the above considerations have been taken into account?

A travel decision process can be found Travel Decision Process, which outlines the process to follow before undertaking a business journey.

Means of Travel

It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that their employees use the most efficient and economical means of travel, taking into account the cost of travel, the cost of subsistence and savings in official time. More expensive means of travel may only be authorised when justified by a management benefit, or to meet the needs of employees with disabilities.

At all times the following order of priority should be adhered to when travelling on official business:

- public transport/walking/cycling: wherever possible public transport should be used in order to reduce congestion and pollution on the roads and the appropriate rates will be reimbursed.
- fleet vehicle (including pool car): effective use of pool vehicles will reduce cost, environmental impact, and health and safety implications.
- hire car: it is particularly required for car journeys in excess of 100 miles return that a hire car is used. The normal expectation would be that the hire car would be in Group A or B category. Please refer to the council's hire car policy for further information.
- car sharing with another employee going to the same location.
- own vehicle: in certain circumstances, an employee may be authorised to use their own vehicle for journeys more than 100 miles return.

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There is a requirement that, where a car is the right travel option and there is no pool vehicle available, then for all return journeys expected to exceed 100 miles, employees should hire a car through our corporate contract where it is economically beneficial to do so.

In exceptional cases (e.g. where there is a medical condition or disability) a journey in an employee-owned vehicle may exceed 100miles. In these cases, specific authorisation willbe required in advance of the journey from the line manager. This approval should be attached to the travelling form when making a claim.

Travelling Expenses – when travelling is essential for the job

If it is an integral part of the job description to be able to travel in order to undertake and fulfil the requirements of the post then the council will reimburse employees for business miles travelled in their own vehicles. It is expected that employees use their own private vehicle to carry out official duties, however, the council commits to working with any employee who wishes to explore alternative travel arrangements and to agreeing suitable alternative arrangements with them, including access to pool vehicles.

If it is a condition of employment that employees are able to drive and if, for any reason they become unable to drive, then their employment will be reviewed taking into account all relevant circumstances - but the council would not be able to guarantee their position with regard to continued employment should this situation arise. The council however, will take all reasonable steps to seeksuitable alternative employment consistent with employment legislation requirements, should this need arise.

Employees are required to complete a DVLA796 Driving Entitlement Consent Form and provide the original copies of their driving licence in order that a copy can be taken for retention on personnel files and recorded on iTrent. Employees will be required to

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provide this information to their Line Manager on an annual basis. See the Drivers Licencing Guidance available on the Health and Safety pages of the intranet.

When public transport is used in the exercise of duties the appropriate rates will be reimbursed.

Using a Private Vehicle

Payments may be made to allow employees to use their own vehicles for journeys less than 100 miles, provided there is a benefit to the council and the mileage rate represents the most cost effective means of transport for the journey.

Employees driving for work in their own vehicle must ensure that it always complies with the law, is in safe and roadworthy condition and is suitable for its purpose.

When claiming motor mileage in a private vehicle, the employee will be required to sign the declaration on the Travel and Subsistence claim form to recognise their obligations as follows:

- to ensure that the vehicle meets the minimum safety features; seatbelts and head restraints fitted to all seats
- to ensure the vehicle is taxed and, where appropriate, has a valid MOT certificate
- to ensure their motor insurance policy includes business use cover for the amount and type of mileage they undertake, and covers 'business' passengers.
- to ensure they possess a valid licence to drive the vehicle being used
- to ensure the driver is medically fit to drive and is not suffering from driver fatigue
- to ensure the vehicle is serviced according to the manufacturer's specifications
- to ensure the vehicle is not used inappropriately, (e.g. unsecured load carrying, or hazardous off-road access).

Employees will also be required to complete a DVLA 796 Driving Entitlement Consent Form.

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Whilst driving on council business it is the individual's responsibility to drive within the requirements of the law including adhering to the speed limits.

Insurance of private vehicles

Motor Mileage Allowance will only be paid where the employee holds an insurance policy that covers bodily injury to, or death of, third parties, bodily injury to, or death of, any passenger; and damage to the property of third parties, and permits the use of the car in connection with the mileage allowance claimants' business.

When first using their car on official business, employees must declare in writing that they know and understand the ownership and insurance requirements of the council and whether they meet those requirements. An on-going declaration will be confirmed by the employee on submission of expense claims.

It is the employee's responsibility to ensure they are covered for business use and carrying of business passengers, if in doubt the insurer should be contacted for clarification. Any

material changes to the employee's insurance provision shall be notified to the line manager.

Claiming Business Mileage and Time

Mileage will be payable for all authorised journeys over 1 mile, undertaken for official business.

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Mileage claims for return journeys over 100 miles in private vehicles shall be paid only where the employee has received prior authorisation for that journey from the line manager.

Please refer to Calculating Business Mileage - Guidance Notes to calculate business mileage for the following:

- Permanent workplace to temporary workplace
- Start or end a business journey at home address
- Designated fixed home worker
- If you have a lease car

All mileage claims should be submitted using the Travel Expense Claim form available on intranet. Mileage and subsistence rates are detailed on the Intranet under Pay and Rewards.

Claiming time for travel

Employees must deduct their usual home to work 'time' from any time claimed.

Disturbance mileage

Where it is necessary for the council to move an employee from their contractual place of work on a permanent basis any additional mileage incurred will be reimbursed.

This will be paid for a 4 year period on a reducing scale of:

- Year 1 = 100% of mileage incurred paid
- Year 2 = 75% of mileage incurred paid
- Year 3 = 50% of mileage incurred paid
- Year 4 = 25% of mileage incurred paid

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This allowance is calculated as the distance of return travel from an employee's home to their new place of work less the distance of return travel from home to their former place of work.

If during the payment period the employee moves house to a location closer to their new base, the mileage incurred will be reduced accordingly. If during the payment period the employee moves house to a location further from their new base, the expenses will not be increased to reflect the extra distance.

If during the payment period there is a further change of base, the 'additional mileage', will be recalculated. Recompense will reduce or increase as appropriate. The duration of payment will not be extended. If during the payment period, the employee successfully applies for a new position within the authority (regardless of whether it is on a different grade or at a different location), the entitlement to disturbance mileage will cease from the effective date of the new appointment.

Subsistence

Reasonable subsistence is only paid when travelling outside of Denbighshire.

Where expenditure is incurred outside the Denbighshire County Council area, the amount payable will be the cost over spent on a meal, up to the maximum level which is detailed on the Intranet under Pay and Rewards.

These rates will be reviewed on annual basis.

Overpayments

If an employee is overpaid for mileage and subsistence, they must inform their line manager immediately so that this can be rectified. In accordance with Part II of the

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Employment Rights Act (1996) any salary/wage or monies paid in error will normally be recoverable by the council.

Any overpayment will be recovered following consultation with the employee, taking all relevant circumstances into account.

Hire vehicles and train journeys

The council has a vehicles hire desk providing access to a range of vehicles at very competitive prices. The cost of vehicle hire plus fuel can prove better value for money for many journeys than officers travelling in their own cars.

Further information relating to this service can be obtained by contacting Fleet Hire Desk on 01745839243 or 01745839230, email catrin.w.jones@denbighshire.gov.uk or chris.brown@denbighshire.gov.uk

All train journeys should be booked via Fleet Service Centre using the Rail Travel Booking form or with written approval of line manager you can purchase train tickets online and pay using the Services credit card.

Driving council owned vehicles

Employees required to drive council owned vehicle will be expected to undertake a formal driving awareness and sign a Driver's Declaration Form or Driver's Declaration Form Non Tracker Fob.

Employees will also be required to complete a DVLA 796 Driving Entitlement Consent Form.

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All council vehicles will be fitted with a tracking system. The system will improve management information, driver safety and protect the council's assets and improve driver behaviour. It will also have a positive environment impact by reducing travel, fuel usage and exhaust emissions.

Please refer to the A Protocol for the use of Vehicle Tracking for further information.

Managing occupational road risk

When opting to drive on council business it is important to remember and apply the following health and safety best practice:

- you should ensure that you familiarise yourself with the controls of any hire or pool car before setting off
- you must never use a mobile telephone whilst driving, and should instead switch it off to avoid the possibility of distraction
- at all times you must obey speed limits, and never drive faster than road or driving conditions safely allow. Avoid incentives to speed and allow time at the start of any journey for delays en-route: congestion, hold-ups and bad weather
- make sure that you are fit to drive: do not undertake a long journey (longer than an hour) if you feel tired
- plan your journey to take sufficient break: a minimum break of at least 15 minutes after every two hours of driving is recommended
- you must be able to read a new style number plate from a distance of 20 metres (66 feet). If you need to wear glasses, or contact lenses you must wear them at all times whilst driving.

Please refer to the HSE Guidance Driving at Work – Managing work related road safety for further information. This document can be found on the Intranet site under Health and Safety.