

**Agenda Item No:** 7                   **Report No:** 174/17

**Report Title:** Travel Policy

**Report To:** Employment Committee   **Date:** 18 December 2017

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

**Report By:** Helen Knight, Head of HR

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**Purpose of Report:**

- 1 To seek Employment Committee (LDC) and Cabinet (EBC) approval to implement a new policy regarding travel.

**Officers Recommendation(s):**

- 2 To agree the implementation of this policy within the organisation.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3 Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils have jointly committed to bringing policies and procedures together as part of the Joint Transformation Programme (JTP) which is an important step towards aligning our people and business practices.
  - 3.1 A comprehensive review of all existing arrangements relating to travel and car allowances across Lewes and Eastbourne has been undertaken, followed by a period of formal consultation on a proposed new travel policy which reflects new ways of working.
  - 3.2 All new JTP roles are flexible with the expectation being that staff will be required to work from both Southover House, Lewes and 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne (and more widely across the district and borough for some roles). Managers will work closely with their teams to agree agile working arrangements to ensure appropriate availability at both sites which take account, wherever possible, of specific individual circumstances.

**Information**

- 4 Currently there are differing arrangements in place across LDC, EBC and those staff formerly employed by Eastbourne Homes Limited (EHL) that were TUPE transferred to EBC on 1 August 2017. For example, some staff at EBC receive

a ‘cash car alternative’ payment whilst some at LDC have a contract hire car. Also each organisation uses different mileage rates.

- 4.1 This has resulted in a position of inconsistency and inequity between staff on both a group and an individual basis. Now that all staff are employed by EBC it is an appropriate time to implement an aligned policy which will be applied consistently to all roles.
- 4.2 During the JTP consultation staff asked for clarity regarding excess travel arrangements (i.e. the expenses incurred as a result of additional ‘home to work’ travel once appointed to roles in the new JTP structure) and again this seemed an appropriate time to review existing arrangements and consider new ideas that staff suggested such as an allowance or supplement for car sharing.
- 4.3 In drafting this new policy we researched travel arrangements with a number of other authorities (including those operating shared services) and consulted formally with staff and Eastbourne and Lewes Unison branches, all of whom have provided helpful and constructive input.
- 4.4 The new proposed Travel Policy is attached to this report as a background paper. The main points are:
  - Staff to benefit from a 15% discount on local rail fares using an Easit card, the annual cost of which will be met by the councils.
  - LDC lease car scheme closed.
  - EBC Cash Alternative scheme closed.
  - Clear criteria for a new Essential Car User Allowance
  - Gradual removal of Essential Car User Allowances for roles which do not meet the criteria, with a period of 3 years reducing pay protection.
  - Car loan scheme to be open to all staff.
  - Clear arrangements and criteria for claiming ‘home to work’ excess travel expenses, which protect our staff on lower pay bands.
  - Clear arrangements for claiming ‘business’ travel expenses, to be paid at the HMRC rate. (currently 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles per annum, then reducing to 25p per mile).
  - Introduction of a car sharing/passenger supplement.
  - Arrangements for car parking.

## **Financial Appraisal**

- 5 The implementation of this policy will result in savings to the councils over the coming years:

- When all of the LDC contract hire cars have completed their leases and been returned this will present an annual saving of £44,000 plus the expense of insuring these vehicles.
  - The reduction in the number of posts entitled to the essential user allowance will present a further saving of £55,000 per annum.
  - The removal of the EBC ‘cash car alternative’ will present an annual saving of £29,702 per year.
- 5.1 As stated in the policy these allowances will be withdrawn gradually over the next 3 years to mitigate the impact on staff. The full savings will therefore be realised in the financial year 2020/21.

### **Legal Implications**

6 The Legal Services Department were consulted regarding the policy and specifically the proposed changes to terms and conditions and notice required.

### **Sustainability implications**

7 I have not completed the Sustainability Implications Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report/budget monitoring report/development control report

### **Equality Screening**

8 An Equality and Fairness Analysis has been completed and is attached as a Background Paper to this report.

### **Background Papers**

9 None

### **Appendices**

10 Appendix 1 - Eastbourne Borough and Lewes District Travel Policy  
Appendix 2 - Equality and Fairness Analysis on Travel Policy