



Lewes District Council



Working in partnership with **Eastbourne Homes**

TRAVEL POLICY

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Lewes District Council (LDC) and Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC) have committed to sharing services under the Joint Transformation Programme (JTP) and all of the new roles created under this programme are flexible with the expectation that staff will be required to work from both Southover House, Lewes and 1 Grove Road, Eastbourne.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all staff employed in either Council whether or not they have yet been part of the JTP process.
- 1.3 Staff should be aware that 'home to work' travel is a taxable benefit and those claims will therefore have tax deducted, this is not the case for business travel and this policy is about business travel.
- 1.4 Home to work travel is in staff's own time. Travel between sites during the course of a working day will be part of the working day.
- 1.5 The amount of time to be spent at each work base will vary depending on a number of factors including meetings and the location of team and colleagues. Managers will work closely with their teams to agree working arrangements that ensure appropriate availability at both sites which takes account, wherever possible, of specific individual circumstances.
- 1.6 Managers will also work with staff regarding work arrangements during adverse weather and factors which the Council cannot influence such as rail strikes.

2 Equality & Diversity

- 2.1 An equality and fairness analysis has been conducted and will be reviewed periodically.
- 2.2 The Councils are committed to good practice in equality and diversity, and to meeting our statutory equality responsibilities, both as an employer and in the provision of services. In respect of business travel this means ensuring that staff with a protected characteristic which is covered by the Equality Act are not discriminated against or treated either more or less favorably
- 2.3 Where a staff member requires a meeting to discuss reasonable adjustments around ways of working and travel arrangements they may be accompanied by an appropriate person to provide support, in addition to their right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union official. The manager responsible for the meeting will ensure reasonable adjustments and special arrangements are considered where possible to accommodate dependant on operational need.
- 2.4 Staff members are invited to advise their line manager and subsequent managers of their needs and requirements to ensure they are known to the councils and can be supported where possible. This may include the requirement to attend an occupational health assessment so that the council can seek professional advice on medical conditions.

3 Easit Transport Discount Card

- 3.1 LDC and EBC have are part of the Easit travel group and all staff are able to benefit from many transport discounts including 15% off all local rail fares. A membership card costs £4.00 plus VAT per person per year and can be used for work and personal train fares. The cost of the card can be reclaimed via a standard expenses claim.
- 3.2 The HMRC will include the £4.80 cost (if reclaimed from the Council) in your overall gross salary and you will be taxed on this part of your earnings.
- 3.3 Tickets can be purchased online at www.easit.org.uk and staff will need to use their work e mail address to confirm they are employed by Lewes-Eastbourne. Further information can be found on the intranet.

4 Lease Cars

- 4.1 The lease car scheme for Lewes staff has now closed. Those staff who have a contract hire car have received notice that their existing lease will not be extended. All of these cars will have been returned by December 2021.
- 4.2 Following return of the contract hire car, if the member of staff is in a role which is entitled to the essential car user allowance then they will start to receive this.
- 4.3 The lease car scheme for Eastbourne staff closed some years ago.

5 Essential Car User Allowance

5.1 Roles for which it can be evidenced they meet either or both of the following criteria are entitled to an essential user allowance:

- The role needs to be reactive to unforeseen emergency situations
- The role is reactive and customer facing where inadequate or no public transport is available so the employee regularly and frequently (more than 70% of their normal working hours) has no option but to use their car to provide the service expected

5.2 A list of the roles which currently meet these criteria are appended to this policy (Appendix 1)

5.3 If staff are in a role which is does not attract an essential car user allowance and they believe this to be incorrect they should make a written submission to their head of service which will be reviewed with all of the relevant information available in conjunction with the Head of Human Resources. There will be no further right to appeal.

5.4 Staff who were receiving essential user allowance as of August 2017 and are in a role which is not included in the list at Appendix 1 have been given notice and advised that pay protection will apply as follows:

From 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2018 they will receive 100% of the current car allowance they are receiving

From 1 November 2018 to 31 October 2019 they will receive 66% of the current car allowance they are receiving

From 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020 they will receive 33% of the current car allowance they are receiving

5.5 During this 3 year period if a staff member moves to a role which is entitled to a car user allowance then the pay protection withdrawal will cease.

5.6 This gradual withdrawal has been agreed to mitigate the financial impact for individuals who had previously been receiving this.

5.7 Staff appointed after August 2017 will only receive a car allowance if they are employed in a role which is listed at per Appendix 1.

5.8 The Corporate Management Team (CMT) and HR will be agree which roles meet the criteria for essential car user allowance and it is anticipated that these will only be roles in Service Delivery. Managers should discuss with teams ways of working across Lewes and Eastbourne include flexible and agile working.

6 EBC Cash Alternative

6.1 The EBC cash alternative car payment has now ceased and notice has been given to staff currently receiving it advising that it will be withdrawn over the next 3 years as follows:

From 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2018 staff will receive 100% of the cash alternative they are receiving.

From 1 November 2018 to 31 October 2019 staff will receive 66% of the cash alternative they are receiving.

From 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020 staff will receive 33% of the cash alternative they are currently receiving.

7 Car Loans

- 7.1 The councils have amended this policy so that all staff can apply for a car loan should they wish to (not just those who receive an essential car user allowance). In order to meet our environmental commitment we have also updated the policy so that loans are only available to vehicles whose CO2 emissions are 120 or less. Please note this CO2 emissions threshold will be reviewed annually with a view to reducing it in order to meeting our environmental commitments.

8 Excess Travel

8.1 Staff appointed to a shared service (e.g. HR and Legal Services) since 2015 have been clear from the time of recruitment that there is a requirement to work over both sites and they will not be able to claim travel. This will continue for all new appointments.

8.2 For those staff in employment prior to this who are now required to travel between the two sites and incur additional travelling costs the following arrangements are in place:

For one year (until 31 October 2018) these staff will be able to claim travel for the occasions on which they are required to work either at Eastbourne or Lewes and this incurs excess expense for them.

These claims will be the return rail fare once the appropriate Easit discount has been applied. Staff can choose whether they wish to drive or get the train but will be restricted to claiming the equivalent rail fare. This should be done using the normal EBC mileage claim form but the amount payable will be restricted to the equivalent sum of a return train journey using the Easit card after 9am. All claims should be submitted with receipts.

From 1 November 2018 only those staff who were originally employed to work at either EBC or LDC and who earn a gross annual salary of £28,500 or less will be able to claim excess travel. This has been decided, in consultation with Unison, looking at the average annual salary in the South East using the East Sussex in figures website (ESIF) and the Office of National Statistics Website (ONS). This figure will be reviewed annually in line with ESIF and ONS findings and communicated to staff.

8.3 See Appendix 2 for examples of excess travel.

8.4 The amount that can be claimed will be the post 9am return rail fare once the appropriate Easit discount has been applied. This is significantly cheaper than the fare before 9am. In exceptional circumstances, where a member of staff is required to travel before 9am and only where they are taking the train (i.e. not when driving), line management agreement may be given to claiming the higher pre-9am fare.

8.5 If a member of staff is travelling regularly between workbases, it may be more cost effective to purchase or claim for a weekly or even a monthly ticket, and these tickets can be used before or after 9am.

8.6 If staff choose to drive from Eastbourne to Lewes or vice versa they can claim the equivalent of the 2nd class rail fare with Easit applied. This should be done using the normal EBC mileage claim form but the amount payable will be restricted to the sum of £6.70 for a return journey which is the cost of a return journey using the Easit Card after 9 am.

9 Business Mileage

- 9.1 Staff can claim business mileage for journeys undertaken during the course of their work (not home to work). The mileage payable in all cases will be based on the shortest route as deemed by AA Route Finder.
- 9.2 Staff should ensure they are efficient with their journeys out of the office, if they are unable to take the shortest route they can claim additional miles (up to a maximum of 10% of their total journey). Their manager must be advised of the reasons for this and authorise the claim on this basis
- 9.3 Staff will be paid business mileage rates as defined by the HMRC.
- 9.4 Under the Corporate Manslaughter Act all employers have a duty of care to ensure that staff who are going to undertake business miles or claim the passenger supplement (see section 10) (this does not include travelling to work and back):
- Have a valid driving licence
 - Are driving a car which has a MOT if more than 3 years old
 - Are driving a car which is insured for business use
 - Are driving a car which is regularly serviced
 - Carry out basic maintenance checks on it, water, washer fluid ,tyres etc on a regular basis
- 9.5 To that end our Payroll Section require that before making any claims for business mileage staff produce:
- Their driving licence
 - Their vehicles MOT
 - Their insurance certificate confirming they have business cover (not just social, domestic and commuting). This is also required for staff who receive essential car user allowance.
- 9.6 Commercial cover is not required.

10 Car Sharing/Passenger Supplement

- 10.1 To encourage staff to car share when going to another site (not for the home to work journey) an additional 5p per mile can be claimed for passengers, whatever the number. To claim this staff will be required to detail passenger numbers and names and record this information when submitting claims. Staff also need to demonstrate that their insurance policy covers them to transport colleagues for work purposes.

11 Car Parking

- 11.1 There is no staff parking in Lewes. The Council is allocated a small number of permits each year (approximately 15) and these are distributed to heads of service for them to allocate as they deem appropriate (not for office based services or roles).
- 11.2 Lewes has a couple of long stay car parks which are £2 a day but we would encourage all staff travelling from Grove Road to Lewes to use the train particularly given the proximity of both offices to both train stations and the reduction offered by the Easit Card.
- 11.3 In Eastbourne parking permits are available for the Town Hall and College Road for flexible users and these have been issued until December 2018. There are many more permits than spaces so these are taken on a first come, first served basis but there is plenty of off road parking available within a few minutes walk of Grove Road.
- 11.4 The parking arrangements in Eastbourne will be reviewed prior to the current permits expiring in December 2018.
- 11.5 The Councils offer a 'parking loan' which is interest free and works on the same basis as the season ticket loan. So it is repaid monthly over 12 months directly from your salary, further details on both the parking loan are on Insite and Infolink.

12 Car Club

- 12.1 LDC operates in conjunction with Co-Wheels which is a car club that allows residents and businesses to hire one or two car share vehicles to get from A to B. The Council has supported this business since its inception and promoted it within the workforce including offering to pay for staff to register.
- 12.2 For staff who need occasional access to a car to travel around Lewes District (as confirmed in their job description or person specification) during the course of their work but do not qualify for essential car user allowance the councils will reimburse the one off joining fee of £25.
- Further details can be found on the website www.co-wheels.org.uk
- 12.3 Given the close proximity of both offices to train stations, the small percentage of our staff that are truly 'essential users' and the prohibitively high cost of running pool cars the Councils will not be providing these.
- 12.4 As and when East Sussex County Council installs more electric charging points across both Lewes and Eastbourne we may reconsider this if it appears there is an environmentally friendly option.

13 Cycling

- 13.1 There is an allowance in place of 20p per mile for those staff who wish to cycle to visits.
- 13.2 As with all modes of travel we will be urging staff to work smarter not harder and make the most efficient use of their time. Therefore, we will be setting a maximum of 30 minutes journey time to be undertaken on a bike, as it is unlikely that anything more would be considered the most efficient use of time. This 30 minutes reflect the maximum amount of time that it takes to travel between two sites on the train which is our preferred method of travel for staff where possible.
- 13.3 Motorcycles can be used presuming staff have the correct insurance and will be paid at the HMRC rates.

14 APPENDICIES

- List of posts within the councils who meet the criteria for essential car user allowance (Appendix 1)
- Examples of Excess Travel (Appendix 2)
- Equality and Fairness Analysis (Appendix 3)

Appendix 1.

- Senior Neighbourhood Advisors
- Neighbourhood Advisors (Zones)
- Fraud Investigators
- Specialist Advisor Trees
- Caseworkers (Neighbourhood housing)
- Senior Caseworker (neighbourhood housing)
- Neighbourhood housing team leader
- Maintenance Surveyor (property Services)
- Estate Services and Compliance Manager (Property Services)
- Clerk of Works (Property Services)

Appendix 2

Examples of excess travel:

A member of staff who currently lives in Brighton and works in Southover House will be able to claim the equivalent rail from Lewes to Eastbourne (with Easit discount) on days when they are required to work in Eastbourne.

A member of staff who currently lives in Hastings and works in 1 Grove Road will be able to claim the equivalent return rail fare from Eastbourne to Lewes (with Easit discount) on days when they are required to work in Lewes.

A member of staff who currently lives in Brighton and works in 1 Grove Road will not be eligible to claim as they will be incurring no additional travel costs.

A member of staff who currently lives in Bexhill and works in Southover House will not be able to claim travel costs on days when they are required to work in Eastbourne as there will be no additional travel costs.