

Report to: Personnel Committee



Date of Meeting 14 January 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Driving at Work Policy

Report summary:

As part of the Council's responsibilities as an employer, it has a duty to ensure arrangements are in place to meet the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. To assist in achieving this it has adopted a number of policies and procedures that set out standards and approach to various work activities. There is an ongoing programme of review of these documents to ensure that they are up to date and effective. This report outlines proposed changes to the Driving at Work Policy.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Personnel Committee approve the updated Driving at Work Policy

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Driving at Work Policy is up to date and effective.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☒ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Economy
- ☐ Finance and Assets
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Whilst the use of vehicles has a relatively high impact this report only deals with the health and safety aspects.

Risk: Medium Risk; Driving at work is a significant risk which this policy hopes to help control. If the required amendments are not made/approved there is a risk that the Council will not be compliant with this aspect of health and safety management.

Links to background information [Driving and riding safely for work - Overview - HSE](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
 - ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
 - ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services
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Introduction

The Driving at Work Policy was first adopted in September 2017 and requires review to ensure that it is current and effective. The policy and handbook have been updated to meet legal requirements and current operational procedures.

The policy applies to both private vehicles used for work purposes (grey fleet) and the white fleet of Council owned vehicles and aims to:

- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to employees relating to driving at work tasks.
- Increase awareness of work-related road risks and road safety.
- Make sure that work-related road risks are assessed.
- Reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Encourage full reporting of all work-related incidents and near misses relating to driving at work.
- Manage and prevent work activities undertaken by staff which may place employees in situations where there is an elevated risk.
- Reduced stress and improve employee's morale.
- Promote operational improvements and reduce operational costs associated with road traffic incidents.

Key revisions:

1. Revised organisation and arrangements taking in to account the structure of the organisation and new posts, including the Fleet and Equipment Manager.
2. Outline responsibilities for line managers to check driving licences, undertake risk assessments, identify training needs and staff fitness to drive.
3. Outline responsibilities for employees, and others, in respect to maintaining vehicle and driving licence standards. Note: To drive on council business as a disqualified driver will be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in your dismissal.
4. New section on **fleet vehicles**, including vehicle checks and maintenance, monitoring arrangements to ensure vehicles are safe and roadworthy.
5. New section on **driver conduct**, including professional conduct, and compliance with the Highway Code. Note: A formal Disciplinary Investigation may be instigated where employees frequently or excessively incur penalties for breaches of road traffic legislation whilst driving on Council business.
6. New section on **fitness to drive** to reflect DVLA standards for relevant health conditions and eyesight.

7. New section on **alcohol and drugs** reminding staff not to drive if they are not fit to do so or if their ability is impaired by alcohol or drugs. Note: To drive on council business whilst under the influence of alcohol, recreational drugs or prescribed medication known to cause driver impairment will be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in dismissal.

The Council reserve the right to conduct drug testing for any member of staff, including contractors when there is reason to believe the individual in question is under the influence of drugs, alcohol or prohibitive substances.

8. New section on **smoking and vaping**. To smoke or vape in a council vehicle will result in disciplinary action.
9. New section on using **mobile phones and electronic devices**, outlining the legal position, whilst driving.

Drivers shall not use a device in their hand for any reason, whether online or offline.

Drivers must not text, make calls, take photos or videos, or browse the web.

Exceptions: a device may be used and held if the driver / vehicle is:

- Calling 999 or 112 in an emergency and it's unsafe or impractical to stop.
- Safely parked.
- Making a contactless payment in a vehicle that is not moving, for example at a drive-through restaurant.
- Using the device to park your vehicle remotely.
- Using devices hands-free.
- Use devices with hands-free access, as long as you do not hold them at any time during usage. Hands-free access means using, for example:
 - a Bluetooth headset.
 - voice command.
 - a dashboard holder or mat.
 - a windscreen mount.
 - a built-in sat nav.

10. New section on what to do in the event of a **road traffic accident**, in particular notifying the line manager, the Council's Insurance officer, and completing an accident report form.

Note: Drivers should be aware that disciplinary action may be taken against them if their actions are deemed to have been negligent.

11. Revised section on **journey planning** outlining driver's responsibilities.
12. Revised section on **risk assessment** for managers to follow the risk assessment process looking at the driver, vehicle and journey.
13. The driver's handbook has been revised to reflect operational procedures.

Outcomes

The Council will comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act by providing safe places of work and safe systems of work for its' employees and it will meet its duty of care for those driving on council business.

The potential dangers to employees and members and the public from road traffic accidents will be minimised. The aim is to reduce the number of damage only accidents thereby reducing insurance costs.

Financial implications:

Covered by the report.

Legal implications:

The legal issues are dealt with in the body of the report