

East Devon District Council

Driving at Work Policy

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Table of Contents

1. Version Control	3
2. Introduction	5
3. Legislation	5
4. Organisation and arrangements	6
3.1 Chief Executive and Directors	6
3.2 Corporate Lead – Human Resources	6
3.3 Assistant Directors	6
3.4 Fleet and Equipment Manager	6
3.5 Strategic Lead - Financial Services	6
3.6 Line Managers	7
3.7 Employees and others	7
5. Fleet Vehicles	8
6. Driver Conduct	9
7. Fitness to Drive	9
8. Alcohol and Drugs	9
9. Smoking and Vaping	10
10. Mobile Phones / Electronic Devices	10
11. Road Traffic Accident	11
12. Journey Planning	11
13. Risk Assessment	12
14. Outcomes	13
15. Performance Monitoring	14
16. Related Policies and Guidance	14
17. Review	14
18. Appendices	14
Appendix 1: Risk Assessment Template	15
Appendix 2: Basic Vehicle Safety Checks recommended for non-council vehicles	19
Appendix 3: Drivers Handbook	20

1. Version Control

Date	Page	Change	Origin of change (e.g. change in legislation)
11/03/24	2	New Contents page	
11/03/24	5	Removed section of previous policies and strategies	Policy has been in place since 09/2017
11/03/24	5	Removed section on why Driving at Work policy introduced and quick reference guide	
11/03/24	5	Introduction revised and updated to include scope and aims	
11/03/24	5	Legislation revised and expanded	
11/03/24	6	Revised arrangements for Chief Executive and Directors	
11/03/24	6	Revised arrangements for the Corporate Lead – Human Resources	
11/03/24	6	New role and responsibilities created for the Fleet and Equipment Manager	
11/03/24	7	New role: Strategic Lead - Financial Services	
11/03/24	7	Revised arrangements for line managers	
11/03/24	7	Revised arrangements for employees	
11/03/24	8	New section: Fleet Vehicles	
11/03/24	9	New section: Driver Conduct	
11/03/24	9	New section: Fitness to Drive	
11/03/24	10	New section: Alcohol & Drugs	
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11/03/24	10	New section: Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices	
11/03/24	11	New section: Road Traffic Accident	
11/03/24	11	New section: Journey Planning	
11/03/24	12	New section: Risk Assessment	
11/03/24		Removed section: Who is responsible for delivery	Incorporated into arrangements
11/03/24	14	Revised section: Performance Monitoring	
11/03/24		Removed section: Policy consultation	
11/03/24		Removed section: Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation	
11/03/24	14	Updated Policies and Guidance	

11/03/24	14	Review period 3 years	
11/03/24		Removed section: Equality impact considerations	
11/03/24	14	Reviewed appendices and other relevant information	
16/05/24		Removed Driver's Weekly Vehicle Checklist and Fault Report (appendix)	Checks recorded via mobile worker app
16/05/24		Removed driving practices guidance (appendix)	
04/09/24	App.3	Updated Drivers Handbook	
05/12/19	All	Minor formatting changes and numbering of sub paragraphs in section 3	
05/12/19	5	Update of link to accident reporting tool	
05/12/19	5	Inclusion of specific reference to prohibition of smoking and vaping in vehicles and Smoking and Vaping policy	
05/12/19	11	Insert in risk assessment for driver fitness	Recent experience
05/12/19	14	Updated reference to Smoking and Vaping policy	
05/12/19	16	Inclusion in driver handbook on personal fitness to drive	

2. Introduction

East Devon District Council is committed to providing and maintaining a safe working environment for all employees and to provide such information, training and supervision as may be necessary to enable them to undertake their duties safely.

The Council must manage the health and safety risks arising from those activities associated with driving a vehicle at work. Those affected include:

- Employees and Members who drive a vehicle (regardless of ownership) as part of their work activity.
- Passengers in vehicles which are being used on the council's business.
- Other road users who may be affected by Council employees at work.

Commuting to work is not generally classified as driving for work, except where a journey starts from home and travel is to a work location that is not the normal place of work. Health and safety law does not apply to commuting.

This policy applies to both private vehicles used for work purposes and the grey fleet vehicles. A grey fleet vehicle is owned and driven by a worker for business purposes. Vehicles used under cash allowance schemes are grey fleet too. This policy is not intended to cover those forms of non-motorised transport (such as bicycle) or motorised mobility aids such as powered wheelchairs and scooters.

Driving for work is one of the most dangerous things workers will do. This policy 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.

3. Legislation

This policy is designed to support the Council in complying with its duties including under The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA), Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW), Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and supports and expands the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

To manage and prevent the likelihood of incidents and accidents the Council is required to:

- Undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to health arising from work related road risks.
- Implement robust control measures and safeguards to protect employees and / or others from work related road risks.

The Police carry out initial investigations into road traffic accidents and any offences under the Road Traffic Act 1988. If an incident involves an employee driving on council business, the Police may check the mechanical condition of the vehicle (regardless of ownership), the physical condition of the driver including signs of fatigue, their driving licence, vehicle tax status, MOT, insurance, etc..

4. Organisation and Arrangements

4.1 The Chief Executive and Directors shall:

- (i) Ensure that this policy and guidance contained within it is effectively communicated and implemented by their respective Senior Managers.

4.2 The Corporate Lead – Human Resources will ensure that:

- (i) Recruitment procedures consider any requirement for driving at work.
- (ii) Licences of employees required to drive for work have been checked before they commence driving and arrangements are in place to check annually thereafter.
- (iii) Any vehicle used by an employee in the course of their duties has a current MOT certificate, is appropriately taxed and insurance which covers business use.
- (iv) Licences of elected members who claim mileage are checked, and vehicles taxed and insured, including for business use.

4.3 Assistant Directors:

- (i) Responsible for ensuring that this policy and guidance contained within, is communicated effectively, and adhered to within their service.

4.4 The Fleet and Equipment Manager is responsible for:

- (i) The purchase, lease or hiring of replacement EDDC vehicles.
- (ii) Ensuring replacement vehicles meet legislative requirements and give consideration to the safety of the drivers and users of such vehicles, the working environment, hours of use, ergonomic principles as well as purchase price and economic operation when sourcing a vehicle.
- (iii) Checking and maintaining records of driver training requirements for Streetscene.
- (iv) Monitoring and recording incidents concerning speeding, overloading and vehicle safety and any other traffic offences and accidents within the fleet.
- (v) Monitoring and ensuring compliance of regular inspections and vehicle maintenance, service and MOT.

4.5 The Finance Manager - Financial Services is responsible for:

- (i) Arranging for EDDC fleet vehicle insurance.
- (ii) Monitoring and recording insurance claims.

4.6 Line Managers will:

- (i) Check licences to ensure they are valid for the specific class of vehicle being driven and meet the requirements for any specific staff training needs.

- (ii) Ensure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed as necessary with adequate consideration given to the risk and any necessary preventative control measures from driving at work.
- (iii) Where risk assessments identify a training need for any driver, managers shall ensure that appropriate action is taken for this to be addressed such as driver training or attendance at a driving refresher course.

In particular, where the driver has:

- (a) two or more blameworthy collisions whilst driving for work (or whilst using their leased vehicle at any time) within the last three years; and / or
- (b) Accumulated six or more current points on their driving licence; and / or
- (c) Returned to driving duties following a period of disqualification.

Additional, suitable and appropriate driver training must be considered as part of the risk assessment.

- (iv) Take steps to ensure that employees under their control are not permitted to drive at work if they are unfit to do so through sickness or through drink or drugs, and report to the Corporate Lead, Human Resources any injury, illness or impairment declared by a driver that may impact on the person's ability to safely drive the vehicle.

4.7 Employees and others (including members, agency workers, volunteers) who drive on Council business shall:

- (i) Ensure that while driving any vehicle on the council's business they are in possession of a full and valid UK driving licence.
- (ii) Make sure that any vehicle (regardless of ownership) provided for use at work is properly maintained, is in a roadworthy condition, is appropriately taxed, has a valid MOT certificate and insurance covering business use.
- (iii) On request, provide all relevant documents and electronic links as appropriate to the Council's representative (Payroll/Streetscene Admin), on an annual basis and every time there is a change in circumstances, such as a change of vehicle.
- (iv) Inform their line manager of any changes or alterations to driving licences or insurance including:
 - (a) Changes in vehicle categories covered.
 - (b) Disqualification or Penalty points (including if the offence was committed in a private vehicle).
 - (c) Legal proceedings for a motoring offence.
 - (d) Withdrawal or conditions placed on motor insurance.
 - (e) Are awaiting a court appearance for a serious driving offence.
 - (f) Advised by the DVLA not to drive following reporting of a medical condition.

To drive on council business as a disqualified driver will be regarded as gross misconduct and may result in your dismissal.

- (v) Carry out basic checks on any vehicle used by them at work and take appropriate action before driving.
- (vi) Drivers of Council vehicles must complete the vehicle checks required and record these in the specified format for their service, for example the mobile worker app.
- (vii) All employees driving a council owned vehicle must comply with the Driver Handbook.
- (viii) Members and employees should note that with their agreement, the council may check with the DVLA if there is any doubt over the validity of the licence provided.

5. Fleet Vehicles

Where necessary employees shall be provided with a Council vehicle to allow them to travel to and from locations where they are required to undertake work on behalf of the organisation.

Vehicles shall be provided for use in a roadworthy condition, meet all current legislative requirements and will be supplied fit for their intended use. They shall be insured, taxed, serviced and maintained in a roadworthy condition at no expense to the individual user. Any vehicle either owned, leased or hired shall be regularly inspected and serviced in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations.

Employees provided with a Council owned vehicle shall conduct documented vehicle checks and record via the mobile worker app, and ensure the vehicle remains in a safe and roadworthy condition and serviced as recommended by the manufacturer. Defects affecting the safe operation of a vehicle should be reported immediately to the Fleet and Equipment Manager and the vehicle removed from service until repairs are conducted. All other defects should be reported to the fleet administration officer when discovered.

Managers should have a monitoring process in place to ensure the vehicle checks are being conducted by their employees and ensure that vehicles are maintained in a safe and road worthy condition. The following points should be considered:

- (i) Are adequate maintenance arrangements in place, following the manufacturers reconditions?
- (ii) How do you ensure maintenance and repairs are carried out to an acceptable standard?
- (iii) Is planned preventative maintenance conducted in accordance with manufacturers recommendations? NB an MOT certificate only checks for basic defects and does not guarantee the safety of a vehicle.
- (iv) Do your drivers know how to conduct vehicle inspection / pre user checks?
- (v) Do your drivers conduct and record vehicle inspection / pre user checks?
- (vi) How do you ensure vehicles maximum load weight is not exceeded?
- (vii) Can goods and equipment which are to be carried in a vehicle be properly secured, e.g. loose tools and sample products can distract the driver's attention if allowed to move around freely?

6. Driver Conduct

Drivers of vehicles on Council business, whether fleet or privately owned must:

- (i) conduct their duties in a professional, courteous, helpful and non-aggressive manner to other road users and pedestrians. Any problems which a driver has encountered whilst driving should be reported to their line managers.
- (ii) Comply with the requirements of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and follow the guidance detailed in the Highway Code, see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>, this policy and the arrangements contained within it. Penalties incurred for breaches of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and any other relevant legislation shall be met by the individual employee / driver.

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.

- (iii) Use safety equipment such as seatbelts, or other suitable restraint, and head restraints. Drivers are responsible for ensuring that all occupants are securely restrained in transit. Any goods or equipment carried for work purposes must be effectively secured.

7. Fitness to Drive

Employees shall immediately report to their line manager any medical condition which may affect their ability to drive and / or conduct their general duties. Employees shall also inform the DVLA, if required - see [Check if a health condition affects your driving: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-a-health-condition-affects-your-driving) Drivers can be fined up to £1,000 if they do not inform the DVLA about a medical condition that affects their driving.

Drivers shall wear glasses or contact lenses every time they drive if they need them to meet the DVLA standards of vision for driving - see [Driving eyesight rules - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/driving-eyesight-rules) All drivers should attend regular eyesight tests to confirm they meet the DVLA standards of vision for driving.

8. Alcohol and Drugs

Employees shall be aware that the use of alcohol and / or drugs can seriously impair their judgement, perception and co-ordination resulting in a serious risk to their own safety and that of other road users.

No one shall drive, under any circumstance, if they are not physically and / or mentally fit to do so or if their ability is impaired due to illness, drugs - including over the counter and / or prescribed medication, alcohol, or any other reason. If prescribed medicines effects their ability to drive safely they shall cease driving immediately and inform their line manager.

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 that might impact their performance and behaviour at work, as prescribed in the Councils' Alcohol and Drugs Policy.

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.

9. Smoking and Vaping

Do NOT Smoke or Vape in a Council vehicle.

Smoking is against the law in a council vehicle (this includes the use of electronic cigarettes), and the Council Smoking and vaping policy makes it clear that to vape in a council vehicle will incur disciplinary action.

Drivers of private vehicles should refrain from smoking when passengers are being carried.

10.Mobile Phones / Electronic Devices

Do NOT use a mobile phone when driving on Council business.

It is illegal to hold and use a phone, sat nav, tablet, or any device that can send or receive data, while driving or riding a motorcycle. 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.

The law still applies if the vehicle / driver is:

- Stopped at traffic lights.
- Queuing in traffic.
- Supervising a learner driver.
- Driving a car that turns off the engine when you stop moving.
- Holding and using a device that's offline or in-flight mode.

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.

The device must not block your view of the road and traffic ahead.

11.Road Traffic Accident

If a road traffic accident appears serious call emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance) 999. The driver shall ensure their own safety and the safety of their passengers and / or others. If passengers are mobile and uninjured they should vacate the vehicle providing it is safe to do so and go to a place of safety, behind a barrier or on a pavement.

The Road Traffic Act requires the driver to stop and exchange details of the name and address of the driver and vehicle owner to all interested parties. If this is not possible, or if any person is injured at all, the driver must report the incident to a police station or telephone 101 as soon as

possible and in any case within 24 hours. The driver should try to obtain the names and addresses of independent witnesses and obtain photograph or video footage providing it is safe to do so. No employees shall admit liability to any other person.

Drivers should aim to notify their line manager immediately following an accident who will notify the Fleet and Equipment Manager as soon as possible.

The Council's Insurance section should be informed of all road traffic accidents at work, including non-injury accidents, as soon as possible regardless of vehicle ownership using the Motor Incident Form.

Drivers must ensure all accidents, incidents and near misses whilst driving are recorded on the Councils Accident and Incident reporting system on the intranet.

[\(http://eddcintranet/forms/accident-report/\)](http://eddcintranet/forms/accident-report/)

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

12. Journey Planning

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the journey is planned to ensure the safest and most economical route is used and should consider the following points:

- Is the journey necessary, can alternatives such as video conferencing negate the need to undertake the journey?
- Is there an alternative method of travel? i.e. public transport.

If a journey must be made the driver shall ensure that for all journeys and before departure:

- Somebody knows the destination & estimated time of arrival.
- Appropriate vehicle checks have been made.
- A contact name / number at the destination is left with a colleague / designated point of contact.
- Additional safety equipment is considered for winter travel.
- Appropriate rest breaks are included in journey times and consider overnight accommodation, as part of a risk assessment, for extraordinary long distance driving that might be required
- Allow sufficient travelling time in order to arrive at appointments in good time. Drive according to the road conditions and if running late then inform the party being met safely by email, text or phone.

13. Risk Assessment

The process of risk assessment shall be used to identify the hazards associated with the driving activities undertaken and the implementation of precautions and control measures to eliminate, reduce or control the risk to as low as reasonably practicable. This process requires managers to ensure:

- A suitable and sufficient assessment of risks is conducted.
- Control measures to eliminate / reduce risks and comply with legal requirements are identified.
- Implementing preventive and protective control measures.
- Recording of the risk assessment.
- Proactive / documented communication of the risk assessment to relevant employees.

- Monitor the performance of the control measures.
- Reviewing the risk assessment (periodically or when there are any significant changes in working practices or following a relevant incident / accident / near miss, taking action on lessons learned).

A generic driver risk assessment is attached in Appendix 1 to be completed by each Line Manager who must consider if the risks are appropriate to the tasks their staff carry out. It does not consider:

- specific task adapted vehicles, mowers, tractors etc., which may have additional hazards in their use,
- the use of cycles or motorbikes which staff may use instead of cars for some journeys related to work,
- where passengers may be carried for work purposes
- if staff have to travel as passengers in other vehicles.

Carrying out the risk assessment is only part of managing the work related risk effectively. On a regular basis, consider the elements in this checklist and think about the three areas of **safe driver**, **safe vehicle** and **safe journey** to help you continue to manage work-related road safety effectively.

Safe driver

- Are drivers competent and capable of doing the work in a way that is safe for them and other people?
- Are drivers properly trained, and competent for the type of vehicle?
- Do you ensure your drivers have clear instructions and access to information about how to keep themselves safe while on the road including:
 - (i) Recommended tyre pressures
 - (ii) How to adjust headlamp beam to compensate for load weight.
 - (iii) How to adjust head restraints to compensate for the effects of whiplash.
 - (iv) The appropriate action to take if the vehicle is considered unsafe or in the event of a breakdown
- Are drivers sufficiently fit and healthy to drive safely and not put themselves or others at risk?
- Do drivers have access to information that may assist them to reduce risks e.g:

Safe vehicle

- Are vehicles fit for the purpose for which they are used?
- Are vehicles maintained in a safe and fit condition?
- Are you sure that drivers' health, and possibly safety, is not being put at risk, eg from an inappropriate seating position or driving posture?
- Where appropriate, are tachographs or load checks in place to ensure drivers are not cutting corners and putting themselves and others at risk?
- Are vehicles properly equipped to operate in poor weather conditions, e.g. are anti-lock brakes fitted?

- Are seatbelts and head restraints fitted correctly and do they function properly?
- Does the fleet vehicle have a first aid kit, if required?

Safe journey

- Do you plan routes thoroughly ensuring they are appropriate for the type of vehicle?
- Are work schedules realistic?
- Do you allow enough time to complete journeys safely?
- Do you consider poor weather conditions, such as snow or high winds, when planning journeys?
- Lone working control measures should be included in the risk assessment process.
- Journeys should be planned in such a way as to ensure that drivers of vehicles are not expected to drive continuously for more than 5.5 hours without a break of at least 30 minutes; or else 3 breaks of 15 minutes every 8.5 hours plus a break of 30 minutes after an 8.5 hour period.

14. 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.

15. Performance Monitoring

The Corporate Health and Safety team, the Fleet and Equipment Manager, and the Insurance Officer shall monitor reported incidents to identify possible related incident trends. Where necessary, additional checks on driver's documentation, competence and training shall be carried out together with checks to ensure regular vehicle inspections are undertaken.

Where a lack of compliance is found relevant information will be communicated to the relevant Director or Assistant Director as well as communicated via SLT Health and Safety reports.

16. Related Policies and Guidance

- Health and Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Smoking and Vaping Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Accident Reporting Procedure
- Department of Transport publication "*Driving at Work*", managing work-related road safety [INDG382 Driving at work \(btpolfed.org.uk\)](http://INDG382_Driving_at_work_(btpolfed.org.uk))

17. Review

The Corporate Health and Safety team will review the policy in 2027.

18. Appendices

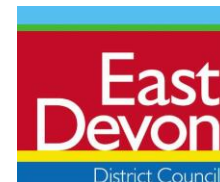
Appendix 1 Risk Assessment Template

Appendix 2 Basic vehicle checks recommended for non-council vehicles, daily and weekly

Appendix 3 Driver's Handbook

APPENDIX 1

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM



Task/Premises:

Directorate/Service:

Location:

Assessment No:

Date:

Assessed By:

Signed by Head of Service:

Review Date:

Activity/plant/materials etc.	List significant hazards	People at risk	Assessment of Risk			Existing controls i.e. Safety procedures	What further action Is required to control the risk?
			*Severity 1-4	*Likelihood 1-4	Risk Rating		
Driving for work	Accidents and incidents on the road, in car parks and on Council property	Driver, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users				Competent driver. Vehicle checks before starting. Comply with highway code. Only undertake necessary journeys. Avoid periods of peak traffic flow. Take regular breaks on long journeys.	Ensure all control measures are in place and both employee and manager is aware of their responsibilities
Driving without valid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • licence • Insurance • MOT • tax 	Driver not safe, vehicle not safe	As above				Regular document checks. Clear employee duty to have valid licence. Clear employee duty to have a road legal and properly maintained vehicle.	As above

Journey assessment	Unknown/long route. Getting lost.	As above				Vehicle checks before starting. Map/GPS Allow sufficient time. Carry mobile phone. Overnight accommodation if necessary.	As above
Lone working	As lone working risk assessment	Driver				Follow lone working procedures. Carry mobile phone.	As above
Inclement weather, ice, snow, heavy rain, high winds	Increased risk of accident, slippery road surfaces	Driver, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users				Consider cancelling travel plan. Prepare vehicle for cold weather i.e. shovel, blanket etc. Clear windows and mirrors before starting. Driver should have suitable cold/wet weather clothing. Carry mobile phone.	As above
Breakdown	Increased risk of accident. Stress	Driver				Carry mobile phone. Recommend breakdown package to drivers of own vehicles.	As above

Driver becomes unwell	Increased risk of accident. Stress	Driver, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users				Pull over to a safe stopping place and phone for help. Tell Line Manager if on medication likely to affect driving capability.	As above
Use of mobile phone whilst driving	Increased risk of accident.	Driver, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users				Mobile phone use whilst driving forbidden under Mobile Phone policy, including hands free kits.	As above
Driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication	Increased risk of accident.	Driver, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users				Driving under the influence is a criminal offense and will be regarded as gross misconduct.	As above
Driver fitness – developing loss of eyesight or medical condition that could affect driving	Increased risk of accident	Driver, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users				Staff member to report any issues. Manager to remain aware of driving history – increased number of accidents /incidents etc.	If concern is raised to discuss with Occupational Health and may require additional tests, e.g. eyesight test etc.

*Severity – Fatality/s = 4 Major Injury = 3 Lost Time Injury = 2 Minor Injury = 1

*Likelihood – Certain = 4 Likely = 3 May Happen = 2 Unlikely = 1

APPENDIX 2

Basic Vehicle Safety Checks recommended for non-council vehicles.

The following checks are recommended each day before moving off for the first time:

- visual check on tyres;
- visual check on externals (integrity of bodywork, mirrors, lights, etc.);
- check on correct adjustment of mirrors;
- adjustment of driver's seat;
- adjustment of headrest;
- correct functioning and adjustment of seat belt;
- correct functioning of panel warning lights and check for any warnings.

The following checks should be carried out on a weekly basis:

- tyre pressure including spare;
- condition of tyres, tread depth, cuts, nails, etc.;
- correct operation of all lights;
- brake fluid level;
- screen washer fluid level;
- correct functioning of windscreen wipers and condition of blades;
- other routine checks as recommended by the vehicle manufacturer (oil, clutch fluid, power steering fluid, coolant level, etc.).

Note on tread depth:

For cars and light vans the tread depth must be at least **1.6mm** across the centre three quarters of the breadth of the tread and around the entire circumference.

For motorcycles and large vehicles the tread depth must be at least **1mm** across three quarters of the breadth of the tread and in a continuous band around the circumference

3mm of tread is recommended for winter motoring, and certainly no less than 2mm.

Driver's Handbook

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Driving advice
3. Driving Licences
4. Driver's responsibilities
5. Fuelling of Council vehicles
6. Insurance cover
7. Towing trailers behind vans and 4x4s

1. Introduction

The Driver's Handbook has been issued to you to provide you with our corporate procedures, and for you to gain an understanding of the legal responsibilities that you must observe as a driver of an East Devon District Council vehicle or your own vehicle (grey fleet) if on council business.

If any item is not clear in this handbook, then the driver must speak to their Line Manager.

This handbook is a quick and easy guide to the main driving rules and requirements. Print a copy if needed; keep it convenient so that guidance is on hand whenever you need it. The contents are divided into relatively small, clearly signposted sections to make it as easy as possible for you to find the particular information you are looking for quickly.

Driving Advice

2.1 Vehicle condition and driver checks

East Devon District Council has a responsibility to provide vehicles that are fit for the purpose that you are being asked to use them for, in a reasonable condition and are legal in every aspect.

The checks that you carry out on your vehicle are essential to meet the council's statutory responsibilities. You are expected to look after the vehicle which you use, carry out the necessary checks and drive in a safe and correct manner at all times in accordance with the requirements of the [Highway Code](#).

As a driver **you are legally responsible** for the roadworthiness of the vehicle that you are driving. For example, although it is the Council's responsibility to see that brakes are properly maintained, you could be prosecuted, as well as the Council, if you drive with defective brakes.

Remember, if you are prosecuted, be it a driving offence or a vehicle defect, then it will be your licence that is endorsed, and you will be responsible for paying any fines.

You must report any defects on your vehicle as soon as possible to your line manager, or in StreetScene, the Fleet Administration Officer by email to eastdevonfleet@eastdevon.gov.uk.

There is a planned system of preventative maintenance and inspection in place to maintain the Council's fleet of vehicles; this is managed by the Fleet and Equipment Manager.

2.2 Fitness to Drive

You must be medically fit to drive at all times when on duty, employees shall immediately report to their line manager any medical condition which may affect their ability to drive or conduct their general duties.

If there are any longer-term concerns about your fitness to drive your manager will help you consult with Occupational Health and you could be asked to undertake additional tests to establish if you require any assistance, such as eyesight tests.

Alcohol must not be consumed before duty (and at any time beforehand on the same day) or during duty or breaks. This includes the consumption of alcoholic drinks without exceeding the legal limit for alcohol. Alcohol from drinking the day before can remain in your blood for up to 24 hours, any alcohol can impair judgement.

Do not drive whilst under the influence of any drugs which may affect driving ability, including those prescribed by a doctor and any non-prescribed medication.

Driving whilst under the influence of either drugs or alcohol whilst at work is considered to be an act of gross misconduct and disciplinary action.

Smoking is not permitted in any East Devon District Council vehicles; this does include the use of vapes.

2.3 Defensive driving

Defensive driving means **safe driving**, it is the art of driving to avoid preventable accidents and avoid contributing to others being involved in accidents.

A preventable accident is one that **you** as a professional driver **can prevent** by doing everything you reasonably can. This means always being alert to what other road users are doing and taking appropriate action to prevent an accident.

Observe speed limits: No-one benefits from speeding.

National Speed Limit Chart

	Motorways	Dual Carriageways	Other Roads
Car derived van	70	70	60
Car derived van when drawing a trailer	60	60	50
Rigid goods vehicle (not a car derived van) up to 7.5 tonnes MPW and not drawing a trailer (for example Transit)	70	60	50
Goods vehicle up to 7.5 tonnes (not a car derived van) drawing a trailer where their combined MPW does not exceed 7.5 tonnes (for example Transit and trailer)	60	60	50
Goods Vehicle over 7.5 tonnes	56	56	40
Maximum Permitted Weight (MPW)			
Maximum authorized Mass (MAM)			

2.4 Speed limits for vehicles.

Speed limits are set for roads and for vehicles. Where these two differ, the lower always applies for example, a transit van is limited to 50mph on a single carriageway (de-restricted) road. However, if the road has a 30mph limit, this lower limit applies.

Irrespective of the speed limit for the vehicle on the road, always match your speed to the prevailing conditions.

2.5 Take account of conditions

You must adjust your driving to the weather and visibility.

Fog, snow and heavy rain reduce your ability to control your vehicle. Bright sunlight can reduce your ability to see, and high temperatures can affect the road surface. You must adjust your driving accordingly, paying attention to the distance between yourself and the vehicle in front.

Traffic conditions can vary from hour to hour, day to day and week to week, the defensive driver must be considerate, even to inconsiderate drivers who persist in trying to force their way into the stream of traffic. This requires a calm temperament, which you, as a defensive driver, need to cultivate. You should accept the irritations and the behaviour of other drivers as part of your normal driving job.

3. Driving licences

The driver of a vehicle used on the public road must hold a valid licence for that type of vehicle they wish to drive. Using a vehicle without the appropriate licence entitlement is an offence (that is likely to result in you being prosecuted) and will invalidate the council's insurance policy; you will not be covered for insurance in the event of an accident.

3.1 Car licence holders

Holders of car (category B) licenses can drive vans, but there are differences depending on the date the test was passed i.e.:

A - Holders of a car licence who first passed their test prior to 1 January 1997

Holders will usually have the following categories issued by the DVLA in Swansea: AM, A, B1, B, C1, D1, BE, C1E, D1 and D1E, F, K, L, N, P, Q.

You can drive vans and goods vehicles Category C1 up to 7.5 tonnes MAM (for example, a 7.5 tonnes DAF 45) you can also tow a trailer as long as the MAM of the combination does not exceed 8.25 tonnes.

B - Holders of a car licence who first passed their test on or after 1 January 1997

Holders will usually have the following categories issued by the DVLA in Swansea: AM, B, B1, F, K, P, Q

You can drive a vehicle of category B, i.e. up to 3.5 tonnes MAM (for example, a Ford Transit). You can also tow a smaller trailer up to 750kg MAM behind such a vehicle.

You can only tow a bigger trailer Category BE if the total MPW of the trailer and vehicle added together do not exceed 3.5 tonnes. The MPW of the trailer must not exceed the unladen weight of the towing vehicle.

Minimum age

The minimum age limit of a category B (car) licence is 17. This covers passenger vehicles capable of carrying up to nine persons including the driver, or a small goods vehicle up to 3.5 tonnes MAM.

Car licences remain valid until your 70th birthday after which they may be renewed at intervals from one to three years depending on any medical conditions.

Details on the plastic card include a photographic image of the driver, complete with signature, licence number, address, and date of birth and categories of vehicle that the holder is entitled to drive.

The paper counterpart has been withdrawn by the DVLA in 2015; a new system has been introduced to check driving licenses, provisional categories, endorsements and disqualifications.

Whatever form of licence you have, make sure your correct address is shown. Changes of address should be notified immediately to DVLA. Failure to do so is an offence.

4. Driver's responsibilities

Production of licence

A driver, or a learner driver's supervisor, must produce their licence on demand to any police officer. A licence not produced on demand must be produced within seven days, at a police station of the holder's choice. The police can ask you to state your date of birth if you fail to produce your licence.

Notify your employer

If you are charged with any driving related offence – including fixed penalty speeding tickets – it is extremely important that you notify your Line Manager as soon as possible. If you are disqualified from driving, **you must tell your Line Manager immediately and you must not drive.**

The Council will have to notify their insurers of the conviction. Failure to do so could invalidate the Council's insurance policy.

This applies whether the offence relates to driving in the course of your employment or privately.

DVLA & Your Employer Notifiable Conditions

All drivers are required by law to disclose to the DVLA medical conditions that can affect driving, these conditions are listed on the DVLA Web site, see [Driving and medical issues - Contact DVLA - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/topics/driving-and-vehicles)

5. Fuelling of Council Vehicles

The Council has a procurement agreement set up to allow fuel to be purchased at beneficial rates.

Fuel for Council vehicles is managed by agency fuel cards, card provider is ALLSTAR Business Solutions Ltd.

All appropriate Council owned vehicles have fuel cards; these are issued and managed by the Fleet and Equipment Manager. The cards will normally be issued against the vehicle registration number.

Drivers must ensure that they select the correct grade of fuel for the vehicle they are driving, **Petrol** or **Diesel**.

The supply of fuel has been streamlined and preferred suppliers are now a part of the fuel buying process.

Our preferred supplier is Tesco's supermarkets, where possible Tesco's should be used to fuel council vehicles.

Using other suppliers will incur an additional cost; the cost is to cover the transaction of the additional invoice.

All fuel cards are chip and PIN, you will be required to input your registration number and mileage. Please retain your receipt and pass to the Fleet and Equipment Manager, or the administration staff in our StreetScene depots.

Charging of council electric vehicles can be carried out at our StreetScene depots in Sidmouth and Exmouth, also at Blackdown House in Honiton. The charge points are facilitated by Mer, and you will need to obtain a charging fob from the Fleet and Equipment Manager or the Fleet Administration officer in StreetScene.

Please ensure that the mileage is recorded for your council vehicle through the Mobile Worker app on a daily basis.

6. Insurance cover

As with any insurance policy, it is only valid if the driver is entitled to drive the vehicle and the vehicle is legal in every aspect. Therefore, conducting and recording daily vehicle checks is so important and why you are expected to carry them out and record them without exception.

The Council has full comprehensive cover for motor vehicles that are used on official Council business only. **You are not allowed** to use the vehicle for private/personal reasons, should you do so then the insurance cover is invalid.

If you have an accident the **policy is with Aviva, policy number 100772264CMI**, which must be exchanged with others involved with the accident.

Our current policy excess is £250.00, which your service has to pay each time a claim is made.

6.1 Accident reporting procedure for road registered vehicles

You should report full details of any accident or road traffic accident to your Line manager / supervisor without delay.

An accident / incident form needs to be completed within 24 hours of the accident (or by 9am Monday morning if an accident occurred during the weekend) and handed to your Line Manager. This is available from the Fleet and Equipment Manager.

If you have an accident under no circumstances admit liability or enter into any debate regarding liability, our insurers will assess the situation.

Your priorities are:

1. Your own safety;
2. The safety of anybody else involved;
3. The safety of other road users.

This may include calling the emergency services. If it is safe to do so, move your vehicle to a place of safety. If you have been trained, administer first aid, if necessary. If the accident causes an obstruction or traffic hazard, call the police. Warn other motorists (for example, use a warning triangle and/or hazard lights).

Get an independent witness if available.

If you are involved in an accident that causes:

1. Injury to another person; or
2. Injury to certain animals (including dogs, sheep, horses and cows, but not cats) not carried in your vehicle; or
3. Damage to another vehicle; or
4. Damage to fixed roadside property and furniture (such as lamp posts, trees or gateposts),

You must do the following:

1. Stop and give your name and address,
2. The Council's name and address
3. The vehicle's registration mark to any person having reasonable grounds to ask for the information.
4. You must also provide the insurance policy number if any other person is injured (on page 7).

If, having stopped, you have not followed the above procedure, you must report the accident to the police as soon as reasonably practicable and in all cases within 24 hours. If you fail to report an accident and not produce the insurance certificate, if applicable, you may be convicted. If the certificate cannot be produced, it can be submitted to a nominated police station within seven days.

This does not mean you are entitled to wait the full 24 hours before reporting an accident, as the main obligation is to report as soon as reasonably practicable, unnecessary delay could lead to prosecution, even if the accident was reported within 24 hours.

Should you have an accident in a work vehicle that results in a claim, you are required to report this to your own insurer.

Statements

No statement should be made admitting liability or fault regarding your driving, the condition of the vehicle, or security of the load. **No** offers or promises should be made to third parties without the prior consent of your insurer.

The police should otherwise be given all reasonable assistance.

You MUST obtain these details:

In both your own and the Council's interests you should try to obtain:

1. Names and addresses of drivers and owners, and registration marks of all other vehicles involved in the accident;
2. Details of insurance companies of the owners of the other vehicles;
3. Names and addresses of witnesses;
4. Shoulder number (Force Identification Number) of any police constable present;
5. Road and weather conditions, position of vehicles involved and of any other traffic, skid marks, position of traffic signs, traffic islands, turnings, etc, in the area. Try to show these details in a sketch or take a photograph (if you have a mobile phone).

Third Party damage only- This is when an employee causes damage to a third party vehicle but none to ours.

Damaged by third party-This is when a third party causes damage to EDDC vehicle but the third party vehicle is unscathed.

Own- and third-party damage- both vehicles are damaged.

6.2 Insurance claims procedure

All accidents must be recorded on the Motor Claim Form. If your Line manager does not have a form they are available from the Fleet and Equipment Manager. The form must be completed in full and sent to the Fleet and Equipment Manager immediately along with any photographs of the damage obtained to our vehicle and any third-party vehicle.

7. Towing trailers behind vans and 4x4s

This section covers items specifically for when towing a trailer. You need to have the appropriate category on your driving licence for towing trailers. The categories for towing are B, BE, C1E and CE these are listed in section 3.1 on page 5.

Check with your Line manager which trailers you are allowed to tow.

Tachograph legislation allows derogation for vehicles or combinations not over 7.5 tonnes, used within a 50 km (31 miles) radius from the vehicle's base and where driving does not constitute the driver's main activity.

The addition of a loaded trailer to a vehicle will inevitably affect the vehicle's performance. Starting, particularly on hills, can be much more laboured; stopping can take longer distances; cornering and negotiating sharp bends requires extra care.

Vehicle manufacturer's recommended towing limit, this will be found on the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) plate. If not sure speak to the Fleet and Equipment Manager.

Speed limits when towing with trailers are in Section 2.3, pages 4.

Always attach the safety breakaway cable(s) to the rear of vehicle. This cable will apply the hand brake if for any reason the trailer becomes detached whilst towing. Clip the breakaway cable onto the special rings some tow bars have or loop it around the bar, making sure it cannot foul the coupling head. Do not loop it round the tow ball neck. Check that the breakaway and lighting cables have enough slack for cornering but will not touch the ground.

Loads must be securely tied down or restrained. If not sure, speak to your Line manager.

There must be no load projections outside the trailer sides that might cause danger to other road users.

When loading a trailer ensure the weight is distributed appropriately. Nose weight is a very important factor in making your vehicle and trailer combination stable during towing. Inadequate nose weight can cause snaking problems. Too much nose weight could cause loss of control.

Refer to the recommendations of the vehicle and trailer manufacturers.

It is your responsibility as the driver to ensure all lights work and the tyres are legal.

Adjust both external mirrors so that a view down both sides of the trailer can be obtained.

If you feel you are not competent to tow a trailer, **do not**. Tell your Line manager.

It is your responsibility, as the driver, to ensure that your vehicle or trailer is not overloaded.