

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

POLICY

The Council has policies on a range of travel and subsistence provisions; some reflect the terms of the National Agreement whilst others have been agreed locally.

LEGISLATION

Employment Rights Act 1996: Offers protection to employees and the right to be informed about the conditions of their employment.

Equalities Legislation: Addresses the right of individuals to be treated fairly and equitably and not to be discriminated against for reasons of race, gender or disability.

AIM

To regulate the application of the Council's travel and subsistence provisions

ELIGIBILITY

To receive car users allowance, reimbursement of travel expenses, parking costs or congestion charge, the recipient must be a direct employee of the Council. Agency staff or self employed contract staff or consultants are specifically excluded from this policy as per guidance from the Inland Revenue.

REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

Employees, necessarily incurring additional expense in the course of their work in respect of travel, meals or overnight accommodation will be reimbursed approved expenses subject to the following:

Employees who are not in receipt of an essential car users allowance will be reimbursed for using public transport expenses incurred during the course of their duties provided that evidence in the form of bus, tube or train tickets or travel cards are submitted.

- Subsistence payments for meals will only be reimbursed for employees working outside their normal working arrangements, normally outside the

Borough, and with prior agreement of the Service Manager upon submission of receipts, up to a maximum of £5.00 per meal, £7.64 for evening meals. This is not paid when suitable alternative meals are provided.

- Train travel will only be reimbursed at the cheapest rate available on the day of travel on production of the ticket and evidence of the fare paid (subject to the maximum reimbursement being the full standard class fare). Where air travel is the cheaper option this will also be reimbursed on production of ticket/receipt.
- Employees who are required to make overnight stays in the performance of their duties should make appropriate arrangements in advance and ensure that the Council is invoiced for the cost of the accommodation, breakfast and evening meal. Arrangements should be approved by the Executive Director or nominated Deputy. In those exceptional circumstances where prior arrangements cannot be made, then the Council will reimburse for dinner, bed and breakfast up to a maximum of £50.00 upon provision of a valid receipt.
- Employee's necessary including parking charges in the course of their duties will be reimbursed on production of a receipt or other evidence of payment.
- Employees necessarily paying the Central London Congestion Charge in the course of their duties will be reimbursed on production of a receipt (where the ticket has not already been purchased by the Authority).

CAR ALLOWANCES

Employees required to use their motor vehicles for the efficient performance of their duties will receive allowances for the use of their motor vehicles on business only after being authorised by their Executive Director or the Officer with appropriate delegated authority, as either a casual or an essential user.

Car user status and car allowances do not form part of the contract of employment. They may be varied or withdrawn by the Council subject to the provision the National Conditions of Service and one month's notice of the change.

The allocation of casual and essential car user status must be reviewed on an annual basis by the Service Manager and where changes to the status are made the employee must be notified, as above, and the appropriate adjustments made. Employee's drivers licences, MOT and Motor insurance document should be checked as part of their annual review for all those in receipt of car allowances.

When proposing to change the car user status of a group of employees the service manager should notify the recognised Trade Unions and the individuals concerned giving one months notice and consider any representations made.

Employees deemed to be essential car users and using a private car in carrying out their official duties, shall be entitled to receive a lump sum allowance and mileage rates as set out by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services in the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (Green Book) for vehicles of 451 to 999cc.

The criteria for deciding whether a post carries an essential car user allowance are as follows, base on any combination of the criteria below:

- that the duties of the post are such that it is essential for the post holder to have a car available whenever required, or
- that it is essential for the post holder to use his or her car a significant amount and exceed a mileage of approximately 175 miles per month or 2100 miles per year, or
- that the post holder is subject to immediate call out to deal with emergency situations, or
- that the post holder is required to regularly transport heavy equipment.

Where a car is not in use as a result of either a mechanical defect or the absence of the employee through illness:

- i. The lump sum payments should be paid for the remainder of the month in which the car first went out of use, and for a further three months thereafter. For the following three months, payment should be made at the rate of 50% of the lump sum payment.
- ii. During the period when the car is off the road for repairs, reimbursement in respect of travel by other forms of transport will be made in accordance with the Council's travel arrangements as detailed above.

Casual car users are those for whom it is desirable that a car should be available when required. The mileage rates are set out by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services in the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (Green Book) for vehicles 451 to 999cc.

An authorised essential car user may apply for a Council car loan in accordance with the Council's car loan procedures.

Congestion Charges

Reimbursement of the Congestion Charge will only be made to essential casual car users where the service being provided is a statutory service required by an Act of Parliament or an emergency service providing life and limb cover or where prior approval has been obtained from the Executive Director or other manager with delegated authority.

All employees travelling into the CCZ as part of their duties must therefore obtain prior approval by completing the **Pro Forma for Congestion Charge** prior to travelling.

Business Unit Manager must ensure that Employees who claim reimbursement have a clear business justification to use their car to travel into the Congestion Charge Zone on Council business. Employees will be reimbursed the cost of that travel in the normal way on the production of the ticket or appropriate receipts.

For reimbursement of Congestion Charges the only valid form of acceptable receipt will be:

1. Written receipt of purchase
2. Email receipt
3. SMS receipt number (an 8 digit number generated by Transport For London)

In all circumstances managers should encourage their staff to travel by public transport except where this would be inappropriate e.g. Carrying heavy equipment, transporting clients or in cases of emergency involving life and limb. Where using their car to attend meetings etc car sharing with others should be considered.

The Council has a stated policy of reducing reliance on private vehicles to conduct its business. Managers and staff must ensure that all alternative options have been considered. Reimbursement must not be used as an employee benefit and Assistant Directors are charged with evaluating each application to ensure the stated aim of reducing congestion and encouraging alternatives to private car use are met.

Fraud and abuse of the reimbursement scheme is a disciplinary offence.

MOTORBIKE ALLOWANCES

Employees who are authorised by their Executive Director or the Officer with appropriate delegated authority to use a motorcycle in the performance of their duties are entitled to receive the lowest car user mileage allowance i.e. the mileage rates applicable to essential users for 451cc - 999cc engines. Arrangements for the annual review of Motorbike allowances will apply in the same way as Car allowances.

BICYCLE ALLOWANCE

The Council also operates a Bicycle Allowance scheme. The details of the scheme are as follows:

Eligibility

- Employees who agree to use a bicycle as their primary means of travelling to and from work

Benefits

- A low cost loan of up to £500 towards the cost of a bicycle and appropriate safety equipment (e.g. helmet, reflective and weatherproof clothing, padlock/chain).
- Use of showering facilities at any Council building, where such facilities exist.
- Use of a secure parking/storage area at any Council building, where such facilities exist.

Cycle User Allowance

In addition to the above, a Cycle User Allowance may be granted to employees who, as well as using their bicycle as their primary means of travelling to and from work, also undertake to use their bicycle for official travel in the course of their normal duties. The allowance is currently a flat rate of £25.00 per month. Employees who qualify for a Cycle User Allowance cannot receive an essential car user allowance.

A Cycle User Allowance should only be granted where it is likely that the employee will use their bicycle on average at least once a day during working hours, and where the monthly fares would average more than the cycle allowance.

An employee in receipt of a Cycle User Allowance is not able to claim public transport fares unless there are special reasons (i.e. inclement weather, or a long journey which prevents them from using their bicycle).

Authorisation

Authorisation for a Bicycle Loan and for a Bicycle Allowance rests with Executive Directors.

Additional Conditions of the Scheme

- The Council will not accept any liability in respect of any loss or damage to the bicycle other than when it has been legitimately stored at a Council Work place or other designated Council building.
- An employee in receipt of a Cycle User Allowance will be required to demonstrate that they have, at their own cost, appropriate insurance covering personal and Third Party risks (including 'business use'). They will also be expected to take appropriate safety precautions such as the wearing of protective clothing whenever they use their bicycle for business travel.
- Journeys carried out on behalf of the Council should be recorded in the same way as Casual Car Users (without the need to record mileage) and submitted to the employee's line manager on a monthly basis.
- Employees in receipt of Cycle User Allowance are not precluded from claiming casual car user mileage where it has been agreed with their line manager in advance that the use of their bicycle is impractical. However this should be by exception. Where the incidence of this becomes more frequent, the manager should review the appropriateness of the Cycle User Allowance.
- An employee currently in receipt of a season ticket loan cannot apply for a loan under the Bicycle Allowance Scheme.
- Employees taking out a loan under this scheme have to sign a loan agreement which requires them: (i) to pay back the loan within a period of 12 months, payments to be deducted at source by Payroll; (ii) to pay back any outstanding loan in full if they leave the Council's service for any reason whatsoever.
- The rate of interest on the loan, and any premiums in respect of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance, will be determined by the Council.

Agreed by the L.B. Lambeth, Council and Trade Unions as adopted policy on Travel and Subsistence. As of 17th Feb 2003

PRO FORMA

FOR CONGESTION CHARGE REIMBURSEMENT

Congestion Charges

Reimbursement of the Congestion Charge will only be made to essential casual car users where the service being provided is a statutory service required by an Act of Parliament or an emergency service providing life and limb cover or where prior approval has been obtained from the Executive Director.

Business Unit Managers must ensure that Employees who claim reimbursement have a clear business justification to use their car to travel into the Congestion Charge Zone on Council business

In all circumstances managers should encourage their staff to travel by public transport except in very exceptional circumstances i.e. Carrying heavy equipment, transporting clients or in cases of emergency involving life and limb. Where using their car to attend meetings etc car sharing with others should be considered.

The Council has a stated policy of reducing reliance on private vehicles to conduct its business. Managers and staff must ensure that all alternative options (such as Public Transport or car sharing) have been considered. Reimbursement must not be used as an employee benefit and Assistant Directors are charged with evaluating each application to ensure the stated aim of reducing congestion and encouraging alternatives to private car use are met.

N.B. If employees who are not in receipt of casual or essential car user allowance are asked to use their vehicle for occasional work use then it is the individual's and their managers responsibility to check the required documentation and ensure the vehicle is adequately insured.

Employees will be reimbursed the cost of the congestion charge through their business unit on the production of the ticket or appropriate receipts.

For reimbursement of Congestion Charges the only valid form of acceptable receipt will be:

Attached

1. Written receipt of purchase
2. Email receipt
3. SMS receipt number
(An 8 digit number generated by Transport for London)

SMS receipt number

Claim for Reimbursement of Congestion Charge

To be filled in by the employee

Please ensure the standard expense claim form is attached: (*available from your Business Unit Administrator*).

Name	
Post Title	
Business Unit	

Details of Journey

Date	
From	
To	

Reasons for Journey

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Function under which the service being delivered is defined as statutory (give details)

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What alternatives (e.g. Public Transport) have been considered and why have they been rejected?

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To be completed by Line/Business Unit Manager

APPROVED

YES / NO

Name	Signature	Date
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Comments/Reasons

To be completed by Assistant Director

APPROVED

YES / NO

Name	Signature	Date
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Comments/Reasons