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Travel (Assistance & Arrangements)

Introduction

The following topic deals with:-

- Car leasing
- Car related benefits for people with disabilities
- Congestion charges
- Essential user car parking permit
- Season ticket loans
- Advice to management on actions to be taken when there is disruption to public transport.

Advice on car allowances and the reimbursement of expenses (etc) is contained in the topic [Remuneration](#).

What will be done for you

The Council manages a contract car hire scheme for eligible postholders. This is administered by Fleet Services.

What you must do

Participation in the car hire scheme can only be offered to staff whose posts fall under defined criteria, or the individual is classified as having a disability.

Business units and staff must use the Council's preferred supplier for leased cars and pursue leasing agreement only in liaison with Fleet services.

What you must not do

The entitlement to car leasing derives from the post occupied (excluding special arrangements for people with disabilities). Business units cannot, therefore continue the lease where the employee moves to a post which is not eligible for a lease without special advice from Fleet services or relevant HR staff.

Key Information

The Council's Fleet Hire Services manage the car leasing scheme.

Reference Section

Other relevant topics: [Remuneration](#)

Section 1: Contract Car Hire Scheme

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Contract Car Hire Scheme gives eligible employees the opportunity to contractually hire any appropriate vehicle over a three year period. Only environmentally friendly cars with a CO2 emission level of 130g per km or less are available for leasing.
- 1.2 The Council will contribute a set level towards the monthly hire costs (according to the band by which the employee qualifies for the scheme). The employee meets any outstanding hire charge that is dependent upon the make/model chosen.
- 1.3 The hire charge includes full servicing and maintenance cover, Road Fund Licence, AA or RAC cover, replacement batteries, exhausts etc.
- 1.4 The Council also meets the insurance costs of vehicles within the scheme unless the driver has a particularly bad record.
- 1.5 To be eligible people must be employed –
 - In an essential car user post (category D) or;
 - Have been employed continuously since before 1st April 2007 in one of the posts described in categories A-C.

The following staff are eligible to join the Contract Hire Car Scheme:

Band	Designation
A (i-iii)	Chief Executive, Chief Officer
B	Strategic Managers
C	JNC Business Managers (before 1 st April 2007)
D	Essential Users (including any disabled employee as described in Section 3 below)**

** 'Essential User' status under existing car allowance scheme criteria will be reviewed before eligibility for the Contract Hire Car Scheme is confirmed.

All outstanding car or season ticket loans with the Council must be repaid before an employee is entitled to enter into a Contract Hire Car agreement.

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2. The Council's Contribution

- 2.1 The Council will contribute a maximum amount towards the contract hire costs for each eligible category. The Council's contribution to each category of user is fixed for the period of contract hire (usually 3 years). On April 1st each year, these figures will be adjusted in line with the Retail Prices Index and applied to new contract hire agreements taken out.
- 2.2 The Council will also meet the insurance costs of most users.

3. The Employee's Contribution & Obligations

- 3.1 The employee will pay for any contract hire costs that are in excess of their relevant maximum subsidy available from the Council. There are also tax implications as leased cars are classed as "taxable benefits". The amount of tax paid depends on a number of factors; e.g. exhaust emissions.
- 3.2 The cost of contract hire (and therefore the employee's contribution level) is dependent upon two main factors - the type of vehicle, which is hired, and the mileage level that the vehicle travels over the three years' hire period.
- 3.3 When entering the scheme employees will be asked to provide an estimate of the vehicle's total mileage over the three-year period. This mileage total will define the actual hire cost of the vehicle. A charge may be levied if the driver exceeds their contract mileage figure. It is the employee's responsibility to contact the Contract Hire Administrator if it becomes clear to them that they will not be able to contain the vehicle's mileage within the estimated total.
- 3.4 The basic charge on each vehicle will not normally be varied during the contract hire period. However, the Council reserves the right to pass on to the user any increase of Road Fund Licence or Motor Club Membership. If relevant taxation or charges should change these shall also be passed on to the employee, and reflected in the monthly rental cost.
- 3.5 Staff who receive an essential car user allowance, or a leased car, need to provide proof that their car has passed emission checks;
 - for cars less than 3 years old, an annual check is required which should be produced to the HR Resource Centre.
 - for cars over three years old, twice yearly checks are required, one of these must be provided with the MOT certificate and the other six months after the date of the MOT.

For those with a leased car the emissions check will be completed at the annual service.

- 3.6 At the same time, or on expiry, the employee will be required to present to the HR Resource Centre their driving licence, insurance details and MOT Certificate (if appropriate).
- 3.7 Photo card licences have a validity date for photos (normally 10 years) and employees are responsible for presenting a photo card licence with a valid photo.

Item 4b on the licence shows either the date the photo expires (driving entitlement is valid until 70th Birthday) or the date entitlement expires (medically restricted and over 70 licences). Details of renewal are available via the DVLA site:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/DriverLicensing/NeedANewOrUpdatedLicence/DG_078070 .

- 3.8 Those presenting a Northern Ireland (NI) or European Community/European Economic Area (EC/EEA) licence will be required to apply for a UK counterpart licence from the DVLA using form D9 with any costs reimbursed by the business unit.

Applications for a UK counterpart licence must be made within three months of receiving a car user allowance or lease car.

Those presenting Non EU licences must exchange their licence for a GB licence within one year of taking residency.

Failure to provide an appropriate licence will prevent the staff member from driving and any related allowances will cease.

4. Car Allowances

- 4.1 The receipt of car allowances will be suspended throughout the contracted hire period. Lump sum allowances will cease from the date of delivery of contract hire vehicle and outstanding allowances will be apportioned accordingly.

5 Business Mileage

- 5.1 Business mileage payments will be made to Essential Users at a level of 8p per official business mile.

6 Termination of the Agreement

- 6.1 If it is necessary to return the vehicle and terminate the agreement before the contract hire period has elapsed the Council reserves the right to charge the employee any early termination costs, i.e. up to 8 months during the first year of hire.

- 6.2 The Council reserves the right to terminate the scheme in the event of any significant changes that would make its continuance detrimental to the Council's interest. The period of such notice will be a minimum of three months in writing.
- 6.3 Any agreement between the Council and the user and the user's right to the vehicle will terminate immediately:-
- on the death, retirement, or termination of service with the Council; or
 - by any serious breach of the conditions of service or of the contract hire agreement.

All sums due to the Council, including any early termination costs, will be payable immediately.

7 Ownership of the Vehicle

- 7.1 Ownership of the vehicle remains with the contract hire company at all times. On completion of the contract hire period the vehicle will be returned to the contract hire company who have complete discretion about the disposal of the vehicle. However, in many cases the Council employee will be given first choice to purchase the vehicle.

8 Insurance

- 8.1 Insurance will be arranged as a block policy and will be paid for by the Council at a standard, agreed rate. No exceptions to this block insurance will be allowed. Individuals whose insurance will exceed this rate (due to age, criminal convictions, a number of previous accidents etc.) will be responsible for the payment of the sum of the excess.

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Section 2 Car Related Benefits for People with Disabilities

1.1 Those staff who are Blue Badge holders and who qualify as a driver under the scheme are entitled to-

- Reimbursement of the registration fee, if their place on work is in the congestion charging zone, this will be subject to tax & NI deductions.
- Wherever practical, car parking is provided by the Council at the place of work.
- Where staff are blue badge holders and qualify as passengers, their circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis, e.g. drop off points made available.

1.2 Staff who have a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act

1.2.1 At least annually, the manager should discuss with the employee what reasonable work adjustments would assist in overcoming those obstacles caused by the person's disability, which prevent full participation in employment. The frequency of the discussions would be dependent on the presenting issues (e.g. how recent is the disability, sickness levels etc).

1.2.2 This discussion should extend beyond that legally required and include the award of car related benefits, i.e. how these may assist the person overcome the restrictions caused by their disability rather than how this may assist the employee generally or quality of their life. Where car leasing is awarded this will be a 3 year commitment by both parties.

1.2.3 Where it is proposed that car related benefits are awarded the manager, in consultation with the employee, should prepare a business case for agreement by senior staff. This must include the following:-

a) Confirmation that the employee is recorded on SAP as having a disability. **This is a prerequisite for the payment of any disability related benefits by the Council.**

b) Where essential, a report from the occupational health service that supports whether the allocation of car related benefits might assist the employee overcoming their disability to participate fully in work. A report will not always be necessary where the nature of the disability is well known and an obvious restriction to mobility. For others, e.g. psychological disorders, the linkage will be less obvious or may mean that the benefits are awarded for a limited period as the condition is expected to change over time.

c) Recommendations the type of benefit to be awarded, i.e.

- Car allowance / leasing, &/or

- Annual payment of congestion charging payments where the person's place of work is in the zone or travel through the zone to the place of work is essential to avoid deleterious impact on health (again a medical view could be sought if essential). Note payment must be made through payroll, will be taxable and subject to NI; &/or
- Payment of car parking charges in CPZs where an allocated space is not possible and off street parking is not available.
- Agreement by the employee to inform the Council if their circumstances change that could impact on benefits, e.g. moved house, change in level of disability etc.

d) Costs, though generally car related benefits should not be refused on the basis on cost alone.

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Section 3: Congestion Charges

- 1.1 For those staff with essential car user status, the cost of congestion charges will be met where car travel into, or through the zone, is essential for work purposes. This to be either through weekly, monthly or annual season tickets, where such journeys are identified as a regular feature of day to day activities. Note where the person's place of work is in the congestion charges zone or they travel through the zone to get to their place of work this payment will be subject to tax & NI, as per Inland Revenue ruling. Payments can only be made through the Payroll system and not through any creditors arrangements.
- 1.2 Staff with essential or casual car user status are reimbursed daily congestion charges where occasional car travel into or through the zone is determined as the most efficient use of resources, rather than public transport.
- 1.3 Staff are encouraged to share vehicles where occasional travel into the zone is required, to reduce costs and support the environmental principles that underpin congestion charging.
- 1.4 No re-imburement is given to staff who use their car to travel into or through the zone to their place of work only.
- 1.5 The Council does not reimburse penalty charges incurred by individuals through non payment of the congestion charge.

See section 3 above on additional benefits for people with disabilities.

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Section 4: Essential user car parking permit

1. Eligibility for car parking permit

- 1.1 The essential user car parking permit is known as the 'SP' permit. Staff with essential car user allowance based on the usage criteria (not grade) are entitled to use one.
- 1.2 There are 3 categories for issuing as indicated on the application form – Highways, Estates or Both.
- 1.3 The 'SP' permit is a concession and not a right.
- 1.4 An 'SP' permit may be provided for an agency worker who is classified as an essential car user based on the usage criteria. This will have to be justified by the Business Unit Manager as it should only be provided in exceptional circumstances where other parking options are not viable. An 'SP' permit can only be issued for 3 months at a time, in accordance with point 5 of the Council's Agency Worker protocol.
- 1.5 An employee who is disabled and receives car related benefits from the Council, due to restricted mobility, is entitled to an 'SP' permit. To qualify for car-related benefits the employee must be recorded on our HR record system as having a disability.

2. Application for permits

- 2.1 Business Unit Managers are responsible for the authorisation and the issuance of the 'SP' permits for their staff.
- 2.2 'SP' permits are for essential car users only and as such the Business Unit Manager is responsible for ensuring that non-essential car user applications are not authorised and a written explanation is provided.
- 2.3 First time application forms must be sent via e-mail by the Business Unit manager to Parking Services (parking@southwark.gov.uk).
- 2.4 Renewals / replacements must also be sent via e-mail by the Business Unit manager to Parking Services (parking@southwark.gov.uk)
- 2.5 It is the holder's responsibility to ensure the permit is renewed on time, giving the issuer at least 10 days notice.
- 2.6 Business Unit managers must provide the SAP Code and subjective to enable internal billing arrangements.
- 2.7 Business Unit managers are to provide payment to Parking Services for each permit ordered by their department on an annual basis, as required.

2.8 The HR Resource Centre is responsible for informing Parking Services of any changes to staff status (e.g. leavers) so that business unit refunds can be arranged.

2.9 Parking Services retains copies of all paperwork made in relation to applications for 'SP' permits. Parking Services holds a record of all 'SP' permit applications, issuance, replacements, and renewals.

3. Contacts

HR Resource Centre - HRServiceInquiry@southwark.gov.uk

Please note:

It is the responsibility of the Business Unit Manager (not Parking Services) to ensure permit holders are aware of the Council's conditions for obtaining and using an essential user car parking permit. Sections A and B of the application form should be fully completed and authorised by the Business Unit Manager before it is sent to Parking Services.

4. Conditions of use

4.1 It is the responsibility of the Business Unit Manager to ensure permit holders are aware of the conditions of use of the 'SP' permit.

4.2 The 'SP' permit displays the vehicle registration number, date of expiry and the letters 'SP'.

4.3 The permit must be displayed in the car windscreen above the tax disc at all times when parked within permit bays. Failure to do so may result in the issuance of a Penalty Charge Notice and even clamping or removal.

4.4 The Staff Permit for "**Highways**" allows staff to park:

4.4.1. In Permit and residents holders only parking bays all over the borough's controlled parking zones, all day. (There is no time limit with this permit).

4.4.2. In Shared use parking bays all day, all over the boroughs controlled parking zones. (This bay is where the time plate states 'permit holders or pay at machine'. Which means staff can either park with a valid permit or purchase a pay and display ticket from the machine nearby).

4.5 The Staff Permit for "**Highways**" does NOT allow staff to park:

4.5.1. In bus stops/stands

4.5.2. Single or double yellow lines

4.5.3. Loading bays

- 4.5.4. Pay and display only bays
- 4.5.5. Meter only bays
- 4.5.6. Free parking bays
- 4.5.7. Disabled bays
- 4.5.8. Doctors bays – or any other specifically designated bay
- 4.5.9. Single meter parking bays
- 4.5.10. Loading restrictions (where yellow blips are painted on the kerbs)
- 4.5.11. Southwark Estates

4.6 The Staff Permit for “**Estates**” allows staff to park:

- 4.6.1. In authorised bays on Southwark Estates only. They are not valid for use on highways.

4.7 The Staff Permit for “**Both” Highways and Estates** allows staff to park:

- 4.7.1. In Permit and Residents holders only parking bays all over the borough’s controlled parking zones, all day. (There is no time limit with this permit).
- 4.7.2. In Shared use parking bays all day, all over the boroughs controlled parking zones. (This bay is where the time plate states ‘permit holders or pay at machine’. Which means you can either park with a valid permit or purchase a pay and display ticket from the machine nearby).
- 4.7.3. In authorised parking bays on Southwark Estates

4.8 The Staff Permit for “**Both” Highways and Estates** does **NOT** allow staff to park:

- 4.8.1. In bus stops/stands
- 4.8.2. Single or double yellow lines
- 4.8.3. Loading bays
- 4.8.4. Pay and display only bays
- 4.8.5. Meter only bays
- 4.8.6. Free parking bays
- 4.8.7. Disabled bays
- 4.8.8. Doctors bays – or any other specifically designated bay
- 4.8.9. Single meter parking bays
- 4.8.10. Loading restrictions (where yellow blips are painted on the kerbs)

4.9 There are a few streets in Southwark where the ‘SP’ permit is not valid. These are listed below:

- 4.9.1. Alscot Road – The east side of the road outside the Vauban Estate
- 4.9.2. Ethel Street – Whole Length
- 4.9.3. Fendall Street – Whole length
- 4.9.4. Grange Walk – Whole length
- 4.9.5. Larcom Street – Whole length

- 4.9.6. Neckinger – Whole Length
- 4.9.7. Spa Road – Between Alscott road and Rouel Road
- 4.9.8. Wansey Street – Whole Length

5. Change of vehicle or replacement permit

- 5.1 If the employee purchases a new vehicle after a permit has been issued, he/she will need to follow the same application process to obtain a permit that is valid for the new vehicle.
- 5.2 In addition, for a 'change of vehicle permit' also known as a 'replacement permit' the employee will need to enter the expiry date of the current permit on the form. There will be no charge for the new vehicles permit.
- 5.3 If the employee does not obtain a replacement permit, their vehicle may be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) and they will be liable for payment of the charge.
- 5.4 On collection of a replacement permit the employee will need to return the old permit.

6. Permits for less than 1 month

- 6.1 Parking services will not issue temporary parking permits for courtesy vehicles that are being used for less than 1 month. For example:
 - 6.1.1. If the vehicle has gone into a garage for repair and the repair will take less than one month.
 - 6.1.2. If the vehicle was involved in an accident
- 6.2 If staff are likely to have a different vehicle for one month or more, they will need to return their current permit to obtain a replacement for use in the courtesy vehicle. Once the normal vehicle is returned the same process is followed in order to obtain the new permit.

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Section 5: Season Ticket Purchase Scheme

- 1.1 The Council allows eligible employees to take out a loan to purchase an annual season ticket for travel between home and their place of work.
- 1.2 Those eligible are permanent employees who are not in receipt of an essential user car or motorcycle allowance.
- 1.3 Repayment of the loan will be made by 12 monthly instalments deducted from salary.
- 1.4 The season ticket loan is interest free.
- 1.5 In the event of an employee leaving the Council's employ before the expiry of the ticket, the outstanding balance will be recovered from any monies due to the employee. (The Transport Authority concerned may not give a total refund of monies due on the unexpired portion of the ticket. In these cases the employee will still remain liable to make-up the full outstanding balance of the purchase price to this Authority).
- 1.6 Employees should bear in mind, when applying for a season ticket loan that the issue of the loan will involve administrative work by the Council. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the application form is completed, authorised, and sent to Payroll by the 1st day of the month in which the loan is to be provided.
- 1.7 Proof of purchase must be provided to line manager within 3 weeks of receipt of the loan. If no proof is provided the money may be claimed back in the next and subsequent payrolls until repaid.

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Section 6: Action in the Event of Disruption of Public Transport or Severe Weather Conditions

1. General Conditions

- 1.1 All employees are expected to make every effort to attend their normal place of work at the scheduled time to carry out their duties. The responsibility rests with the employee to get to their place of work and to advise their line manager of any difficulties that they are likely to encounter, but it is also appropriate for the employer to offer reasonable assistance when difficult conditions arise.
- 1.2 Chief Officers (or their nominees) should make arrangements to ensure the maintenance of essential services during any such disruptions, and notify staff of any "emergency plan".
- 1.3 Employees living not more than three miles from their normal place of work may be expected to walk and, where transport is provided, they may also be expected to walk up to three miles to a scheduled picking up point.

2. Hours & Place of Work

- 2.1 Working hours may be re-arranged or staggered by agreement but the normal number of hours per week will be maintained. The re-arranged hours will be treated as substituted for the normal hours.
- 2.2 In consultation with, and with the agreement of, the employee concerned re-arrangement of hours may include the substitution of Saturday or Sunday work for work on a normal weekday. Where such weekend working is at the request of the Chief Officer, the normal enhanced rates of pay in accordance with the appropriate agreement will be payable.
- 2.3 Where working hours cannot be re-arranged Chief Officers may excuse late arrival during the period of disruption. Time lost by lateness that is excused by the Chief Officer need not be made up before, for example, overtime accrues.
- 2.4 Employees unable to attend work or having to leave early due to travel difficulties may be given the option of taking annual leave, flexi-leave, unpaid leave, or making up the hours by agreement with their line manager. The line manager should consider any such requests in accordance with the requirements of the service.
- 2.5 Special paid leave may be awarded at the discretion of the relevant Chief Officer, where genuine difficulties exist beyond those of travel. This could include employees facing caring problems due to school closures, or restrictions due to disability.
- 2.6 Where an employee is unable reasonably to attend the normal place of work, they may be required to report for duty at another location. These arrangements will not be made solely to cover work normally performed by other employees and will have regard to travelling conditions and the place of residence of the employee.

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- 2.7 Where travelling problems are considered to be insuperable Chief Officers may permit individuals to work from home, where tasks may be undertaken in this way.

3 Use of Official Transport

- 3.1 Where absolutely necessary Chief Officers may use official transport for carrying employees to and from work. Departments may decide to pool their transport, or consider hiring transport.

4. Use of Cars

- 4.1 Employees who are in receipt of mileage allowance, whether as essential or casual car users, may be requested to provide lifts for other staff. Other people who use their cars for travelling between their home and place of work may also be asked to give lifts to other employees provided that their vehicle insurance is adequate to indemnify the Council.

5. Accommodation

- 5.1 Chief Officers may require employees, whose attendance at the usual place of work is essential, to use accommodation on Council premises near the place of work or consider other options, e.g. in exceptional cases hotels, within appropriate subsistence allowances. Employees who use accommodation on Council premises at their own request will not be entitled to claim subsistence allowance.

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