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Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Bill Cullen MBA (ISM), BA(Hons) MRTPI
Chief Executive

Date: 12 January 2026

**To: Members of the Ethical Governance and
Personnel Committee**

Cllr CE Green (Chair)
Cllr A Pendlebury (Vice-Chair)
Cllr SL Bray
Cllr MB Cartwright
Cllr MA Cook

Cllr MJ Crooks
Cllr WJ Crooks
Cllr C Harris
Cllr KWP Lynch

Copy to all other Members of the Council

(other recipients for information)

Dear member,

There will be a meeting of the **ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** in the De Montfort Suite, Hinckley Hub on **TUESDAY, 20 JANUARY 2026 at 6.30 pm** and your attendance is required.

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Manager

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- *There are two escape routes from the Council Chamber – at the side and rear. Leave via the door closest to you.*
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- **Do not** use the lifts.
- **Do not** stop to collect belongings.

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Thank you

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 2)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

3. ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

To be advised of any additional items of business which the Chair decides by reason of special circumstances shall be taken as matters of urgency at this meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive verbally from members any disclosures which they are required to make in accordance with the Council's code of conduct or in pursuance of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. **This is in addition to the need for such disclosure to be also given when the relevant matter is reached on the agenda.**

5. QUESTIONS

To hear any questions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.

6. DOMESTIC ABUSE WORKPLACE POLICY (Pages 3 - 16)

To present the updated Domestic Abuse Workplace policy for approval.

7. TRAVEL POLICY (Pages 17 - 30)

To present the updated Travel and Subsistence policy for approval.

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DECIDES HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH AS MATTERS OF URGENCY

As announced under item 3.

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HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

25 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr CE Green - Chair
Cllr A Pendlebury – Vice-Chair
Cllr SL Bray, Cllr MB Cartwright, Cllr MA Cook, Cllr L Hodgkins (for Cllr WJ Crooks), Cllr KWP Lynch and Cllr P Williams (for Cllr MJ Crooks)

Also in attendance: Gordon Grimes, Independent Person

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny and Rebecca Owen

255. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Crooks and W Crooks with the following substitutions authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10:

Councillor Hodgkins for Councillor W Crooks
Councillor Williams for Councillor J Crooks.

256. Declarations of interest

In response to a request, members were advised that being in the same political group as someone did not necessarily mean that an interest should be declared, however being a close associate or friend would be a different matter.

Councillor Lynch declared a non-registrable interest in complaint 2025/12 as a close friend of one of the subject members and said he would leave the meeting during consideration of the item.

257. Minutes of previous meeting

It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Hodgkins and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November be confirmed as a correct record.

258. Housing Ombudsman compliance letter

Members were informed that a letter had been received confirming compliance with the Housing Ombudsman's publication requirements for 2024/25.

259. Matters from which the public may be excluded

On the motion of Councillor Bray seconded by Councillor Cartwright, it was

RESOLVED – in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the following

item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

260. Complaints update

In relation to the hearing held at the previous meeting following an investigation into two complaints about Councillor Batty of Groby Parish Council, it was reported that Councillor Batty had not accepted the outcome and had indicated he would submit a complaint about the matter.

Having declared an interest in the following item, Councillor Lynch left the meeting at this juncture.

261. Complaint 2025/12

Consideration was given to a complaint alleging that a borough councillor had breached the code of conduct by failing to declare an interest and bullying by intervening in plans for development.

It was noted that one of the two members mentioned in the complaint had been on Planning Committee when the application in question was discussed but had declared an interest and left the meeting. The subject member was not a member of the Planning Committee.

Councillor Bray, whilst minded to take no further action, proposed that the Monitoring Officer speak to the case officer first to consider whether the subject member had made any comments in relation to the relevant planning applications. If they had not made comment, the complaint would be closed, and if they had made comments, the complaint should be brought back to the Ethical Governance & Personnel Committee. Councillor Cartwright seconded the motion.

Members then gave further consideration to the ability for a member not on Planning Committee to influence a committee or a delegated decision and the actions available to the committee should it be discovered that comments had been made by the subject member. They felt that the influence would be very limited and a member who had been at the meeting in question stated that no attempt had been made to influence them or any other member. The Monitoring Officer also reported to members that discussion had taken place with the Head of Planning when the complaint was first received and no impropriety had been reported. After consulting with the Independent Person, Councillors Bray and Cartwright subsequently withdrew their motion.

It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Cook and

RESOLVED – no further action be taken.

(The Meeting closed at 7.05 pm)

CHAIR



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Ethical Governance and Personnel Committee

20 January 2026

Wards affected: all wards

Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2025-28

Report of Director (Community Services)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To present for approval the updated Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2025-28. (Appendix 1)

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the policy and procedure is approved.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 2.3 million people aged 16 years and over (1.6 million women and 712,000 men) experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2024.
- 3.2 Employment is vital to earn an income and financial security helps maintain social connections which help with maintaining a person's health and wellbeing. For people experiencing domestic abuse, the workplace itself can also be a place of safety and respite from the abuser, and a place where they can make the arrangements they need and contact specialist services.
- 3.3 Domestic abuse not only impacts on the well-being of victim-survivors, but it affects the financial strength and success of the organisations for which they work. The wider economic and social costs of domestic abuse are significant. Home Office research found that in the year ending 31 March 2017, domestic abuse was estimated to have cost over £66 billion in England and Wales. The biggest component is the physical and emotional harms incurred by victims (£47 billion), followed by considerable costs to the economy (£14 billion) due to lost output due to time off work and reduced productivity as a consequence

of abuse. Domestic abuse frequently extends into work itself, with different surveys showing that between 36% to 75% of employed victims are harassed by abusive partners while at work (TUC (2014) Domestic violence in the workplace).

- 3.4 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 aims to protect those persons who experience domestic abuse and to strengthen measures to deal with those who bring about domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory definition of domestic abuse is 'the behaviour of one person towards another where: both people are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive'.
- 3.5 The council has had a Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure in place since 2017.

4. Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2025-28

- 4.1 The updated Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2025-28 (Appendix 1) is based on best practise and reflective of current legislation.
- 4.2 This policy and procedure is for all staff.
- 4.3 The policy and procedure supports Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's commitment to tackling domestic abuse within the workplace and its commitment to ensure the safety of its employees.
- 4.4 The policy and procedure aims to be a practical guide to employees and managers on how to effectively respond to domestic abuse within the workplace and how to support employees affected by domestic abuse.
- 4.5 The policy and procedure, on approval, will continue to be supported by a relevant training programme for employees and managers.
- 4.6 Within the policy and procedure the importance of using specialist services to support employees is stressed.
- 4.7 Consultation on the updated policy and procedure has taken place with the council's safeguarding team, the council's domestic abuse outreach team, HR and the recognised trade unions. Any comments received have been considered and incorporated as appropriate.
- 4.8 The main changes of note to the policy include:
- there have been no legislative changes since the policy was last reviewed so no legislative updates have been incorporated
 - updated intranet links have been provided to relevant internal policies
 - updated web links have been provided where appropriate
 - where areas of practise are no longer relevant these have been removed
 - links to support options and pathways have been updated where appropriate

- 4.9 The policy and procedure will be formally reviewed again in 2028 alongside being refreshed annually to ensure accuracy.

5. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

- 5.1 The report is to be taken in open session.

6. Financial implications (CS)

- 6.1 All work on the policy has been carried out within existing resources.

7. Legal implications (ST)

- 7.1 None.

8. Corporate Plan implications

- 8.1 The objectives of this report align to the following corporate plan objective:

People – Helping people to stay safe, healthy, active and in employment.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 The policy and procedure has been subject to full consultation with the council's safeguarding team, the council's domestic abuse outreach team, HR and the recognised trade unions.

10. Risk implications

- 10.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 10.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 10.3 No risks identified.

11. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 11.1 The policy and procedure is for all staff.
- 11.2 The policy and procedure aims to support and protect all staff who are affected by domestic abuse irrespective of their age, culture, disability, gender, gender identity, language, racial origin, socio-economic status,

religious belief, marital status, care leavers status, pregnancy or maternity and/ or sexual orientation.

12. Climate implications

12.1 Delivery is continually informed by decarbonisation objectives.

13. Corporate implications

13.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers:

Appendix 1 – Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2025-28

Contact officer: Rachel Burgess Ext 5746, Jodine Legg Ext 5746
Executive member: Councillor S Bray
Councillor M Mullaney



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough
Council

December 2025
Review date: December 2028

1.0 Introduction - Domestic Abuse and the Workplace

It is important to promote the understanding that everyone has the right to a life free from abuse in any form. Domestic abuse is wholly unacceptable and inexcusable behaviour, and responsibility for domestic abuse lies with the perpetrator. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council strives to create a working environment that promotes the view that abuse against people is unacceptable.

2.0 Definition

Domestic abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, economic, or emotional) between adults who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of “domestic abuse” is as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The full definition is provided at Appendix A or can be viewed at [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/32/section/1)

3.0 Employers' and Employees' Duties

3.1 Employers' Duties

- Employers have a duty of care for the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff and are in a strong position to create a safe and supportive workplace environment.
- Domestic abuse is everyone's business. As an employer, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has a responsibility to promote awareness around domestic abuse through campaigns, training and to support the early identification of domestic abuse to prevent escalation and save lives.
- Employers also risk directly/indirectly discriminating against individuals if they do not put adequate support measures and adjustments in place.

3.2 Employees' Duties

- Employees with whom information is shared in relation to domestic abuse must keep this information strictly confidential except for safeguarding concerns. [Safeguarding Policies](#) can be found on the council's web pages.
- Employees must treat their fellow colleagues with dignity and respect and not make assumptions about what other employees are experiencing.

4.0 Policy

4.1 Providing information / creating awareness

The council intends to publish, maintain, and post in locations of high visibility, a list of resources for victims/survivors and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

4.2 Providing support to victims/survivors

The council intends to make support available to employees involved in or impacted by domestic abuse. The council will provide support through our Managers, HR, and Employee Assistance Programme and other areas of the council as appropriate. Managers will be encouraged to signpost to specialist services with consent of the victim/survivor for specialist domestic abuse support. Where safeguarding referrals are required, the council will follow their safeguarding policies which can be found on the intranet at [Safeguarding Policies and procedures](#).

4.3 Providing support to perpetrators

It is recognised that perpetrators of domestic abuse may wish to seek help voluntarily. The council intends to provide signposting to support.

4.4 Providing training to managers

The council have a programme of training for staff to raise awareness of domestic abuse and understanding of this policy and guidance.

Managers will be trained to:

- Better identify if an employee is experiencing domestic abuse
- Provide support and signposting
- Discuss ways to help the person stay safe in the workplace
- Understand that they are not counsellors. Counselling is to be left to trained professionals, and no one should attempt to act in place of a domestic abuse expert or counsellor. The best thing a manager can do is to refer the person to the appropriate domestic abuse resources.

4.5 Perpetrators

Domestic abuse perpetrated by staff will not be condoned nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. Staff should be aware that domestic abuse is a serious matter which can lead to criminal convictions. Misconduct outside of work may lead to disciplinary action being taken against a member of staff, as such conduct may undermine the confidence and trust the organisation has in them. However, the council recognises that it has a role in encouraging and supporting perpetrators to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds.

4.6 Scope of policy: Applies to all council staff.

5.0 Procedure

5.1 A Guide for Employees

a) Anti-Discrimination

The council will not discriminate against anyone who has been subjected to domestic abuse, in terms of their existing employment or career development.

The council is aware that domestic abuse victims/survivors may, because of their experience, encounter challenges in the work environment such as chronic absenteeism or lower productivity. When addressing performance and safety issues, the council will make reasonable efforts to consider all aspects of the employee's situation and / or safety problems.

b) Absence options for employees experiencing domestic abuse

The council will make every effort to assist an employee experiencing domestic abuse. If an employee needs to be absent from work due to domestic abuse, the length of the absence will be determined by the individual's situation through collaboration with the employee and their manager and a Human Resources representative.

c) Safety at work

The council works to ensure the safety of its employees. The council will actively provide support to employees to try and minimise the risk to their safety while at work, if they make it known to us that they are experiencing domestic abuse.

d) Providing support for employees

The council intends to make support available to employees affected by domestic abuse. The council will provide support through our managers, HR and Employee Assistance Programme and other areas as appropriate. Employees can also refer to the council's Safeguarding Policies and procedures

For the role of managers supporting employees disclosing domestic abuse, please refer to paragraph 5.2.b below.

5.2 A Guide for Managers

a) Anti-Discrimination

The council is aware that domestic abuse victims may, because of their abuse, encounter challenges in the work environment such as chronic absenteeism or lower productivity. When addressing performance and safety issues, the council will make reasonable efforts to consider all aspects of the employee's situation and / or safety problems.

b) Providing support for employees

Managers, and HR role is to:

- Be available and approachable for those employees experiencing domestic abuse
- Listen, reassure and support all individuals experiencing abuse, no matter their background and work with those who are having difficulty accessing support.
- Keep information confidential (subject to the requirements of child and adult protection-see council safeguarding policies)
- Respond in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner
- Discuss the specific steps that can be taken to help the employee stay safe in the workplace
- Ensure the employee is aware of the options available to them
- Encourage the employee to seek the advice of other relevant agencies

c) Training managers to identify and respond appropriately

Managers will be trained to:

- Identify if an employee is experiencing domestic abuse
- Provide initial support
- Offer referrals, such as, safeguarding, referrals to the Jenkins centre or the dedicated domestic abuse Services and other agencies listed within Appendix B
- Discuss ways to help the person stay safe in the workplace
- Understand that they are not counsellors. Counselling is to be left to trained professionals, and no one should attempt to act in place of a domestic abuse expert or counsellor.

Appendix B gives options for signposting survivors/victims and perpetrators and advice for professionals.

5.3 Perpetrators

If a member of staff discloses perpetrating domestic abuse, the police should be informed as should HR so that the disciplinary policy or other internal procedures can be considered. However, the member of staff will be provided with information about the services and support available to them (see Appendix B for support guidance for victims/survivors and perpetrators). If a member of staff discloses perpetrating domestic abuse or the organisation becomes aware of allegations of domestic abuse this procedure can be applicable in cases where a member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or threatened their partner
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against their partner
- Had an allegation of domestic abuse made against them
- Presented concerns about their behaviour within an intimate relationship

The council will ensure:

- Allegations will be dealt with fairly and in a way that provides support for the person who is the subject of the allegation or disclosure

- All staff will receive guidance and support
- Investigations will be sufficiently independent
- The accused member of staff will be:
 - Treated fairly and honestly
 - Helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved
 - Kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary process

5.4 Victims and perpetrators working for the council

In cases where both the victim/survivor and perpetrator of domestic abuse work for the council; appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risk of harm to the victim/survivor. In addition to following the council's disciplinary policy for the perpetrator, action may need to be taken to ensure that the victim and perpetrator do not come into contact in the workplace. Action may also need to be taken to minimise the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim. This may include a change of duties or withdrawing the perpetrators access to certain computer programs. For employees who are also tenants of the council, relevant action with regards to their housing tenancy will be taken in line with our housing tenancy policy. Further advice can be sought from HR and our Disciplinary Policy can be found at [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#).

Appendix A – DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC ABUSE (DA ACT 2021):

(1) This section defines “domestic abuse” for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

- (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
- (b) the behaviour is abusive.

(3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (see subsection (4));
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

(4) “Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to—

- (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
- (b) obtain goods or services.

(5) For the purposes of this Act A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

(6) References in this Act to being abusive towards another person are to be read in accordance with this section.

(7) For the meaning of “personally connected”, see section 2.

2 Definition of “personally connected”

(1) For the purposes of this Act, two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies—

- (a) they are, or have been, married to each other;
- (b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
- (c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- (d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(e)they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;

(f)they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));

(g)they are relatives.

(2)For the purposes of subsection (1)(f) a person has a parental relationship in relation to a child if—

(a)the person is a parent of the child, or

(b)the person has parental responsibility for the child.

(3)In this section—

- “child” means a person under the age of 18 years;
- “civil partnership agreement” has the meaning given by section 73 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004;
- “parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989 (see section 3 of that Act);
- “relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

3 Children as victims of domestic abuse

(1)This section applies where behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is domestic abuse.

(2)Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who

(a)sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse, and

(b)is related to A or B.

(3)A child is related to a person for the purposes of subsection (2) if—

(a)the person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child, or

(b)the child and the person are relatives.

(4)In this section—

- “child” means a person under the age of 18 years;
- “parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989 (see section 3 of that Act);
- “relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

Appendix B - Support agencies for victims/survivors and perpetrators

Victims/Survivors:

It will be an individual's choice as to whether they would like to access the council's domestic abuse outreach service or another countywide/ national service. Below are some options of services that the victim or professionals could access for support:

- Freephone National Domestic Violence Helpline, run in partnership between *Women's Aid* and *Refuge* 0808 200 0247
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's domestic abuse outreach service. call 079660202181 - for women aged 16+ suffering from intimate partner abuse. [Domestic abuse | Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council](#)
- FreeVa Helpline and Engagement Service, Freeva Sexual Violence Support Service, Living Without Abuse Locality Service and Leicestershire Safe Accommodation Support Service (provided by Women's Aid Leics Ltd) Male and female service aged 13+ for victims of domestic abuse and /or sexual violence. Victims can call 0808 802 0028 for support
- GALOP for those within the LGBTQ+ Communities experiencing Domestic Abuse 0800 999 5428
- The Traveller Movement for those within the GRT community experiencing Domestic Abuse 0754 1637 795
- Panagher for those within the BAME community experiencing Domestic Abuse 0800 055 6519
- ManKind for male victims of Domestic Abuse 01823 334244
- Men's Advice Line, helpline 0808 801 0327, calls to the helpline are free from landlines and mobile phones within the UK and do not appear on itemised bills. Email info@mensadvice.org.uk, website www.mensadvice.org.uk
- Employee Assistance Programme available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Free phone 0800 0280199, Website <https://wisdom.healthassured.org/login> and enter employer code MHA111009
- [Health assured information can be found on the intranet at HBBC - Intranet - HR - Home](#)

Perpetrators:

For more information on what help is available for perpetrators contact **Respect** on 0846 122 8609. The Respect phone line provides information and advice to perpetrators of domestic violence, to professionals wanting information and to the friends and family (including partners) of perpetrators who want more information on what help is available for perpetrators.
www.respect.uk.net

Additionally, the Jenkins Centre works with people who are abusive and violent in their relationships to help them change their behaviour. The centre works with people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and can be contacted on 0116 254 0101.

Employee Assistance Programme available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Free phone 0800 0280199, Website <https://wisdom.healthassured.org/login> and enter employer code MHA111009

[Health assured information can be found on the intranet at HBBC - Intranet - HR - Home](#)



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Ethical Governance and Personnel Committee

20 January 2026

Wards affected: All wards

Revised Travel Policy

Report of Interim Deputy Chief Executive

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To approve the updated Travel and Subsistence Policy developed by the Joint Management and Trade Union Working Group.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the committee approve the updated Travel and Subsistence Policy.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 The Climate Change Strategy identified the requirement to promote green travel across the council and one of its actions was to review the current Travel and Subsistence Policy. The current policy, in its application, indirectly incentivised staff to use their car as the main mode of travel and undertake more miles to qualify as an essential user, which opposes the aim of the strategy.
- 3.2 The Trade Unions also sought a review of the policy equally expressing a desire to move towards promotion of green travel and a single mileage rate for all users. They wanted an equitable rate that was fair for all staff given the cost of living and increased motoring costs.

Current travel policy

- 3.3 To provide context, the current travel policy categorises car users into two types of car user, Essential or Casual User.

Essential User

To qualify as an essential user the employee in their job role, is required to meet the following criteria:

- Incur business mileage greater than 900 miles per annum and satisfy at least one of the criteria set out below:
 - (i) *Undertaking regular visits to customers, premises or sites or attendance at meetings to represent the council or*
 - (ii) *Undertaking travel on demand to multiple work bases within the same working day*
 - (iii) *Call out when on standby to attend customers or council*

- 3.4 Essential users receive £850 per annum to cover capital outlay and wear and tear. In addition to the lump sum they also receive 25p per mile for mileage incurred.

Casual user

- 3.5 All other employees are classed as a casual user and receive 45p per mile for mileage incurred.

Joint review of the policy

- 3.6 A joint review of the policy took place with the Trade Unions this year. A travel survey was also carried out to ascertain the appetite of staff to consider alternative modes of travel. The feedback from the travel survey was considered along with 5 years mileage data, including a review of existing essential user mileage.
- 3.7 The mileage data showed that whilst levels dipped between 2020 – 2023 they increased again and are now at pre-pandemic levels. The main reason for this increase is due to service resumption (i.e. more visits) and that the borough is geographically vast.
- 3.8 It was also noted that only 34 essential users (from a total of 90) meet the current criteria (over 900 miles) whereas 8 casual users currently meet the essential user status.
- 3.9 Based upon the data reviewed there was consensus to eliminate the need to have essential and casual users, given the anomalies in the data and the ongoing requirement to constantly administer such a scheme. The group agreed that one mileage rate is required for all users at a higher rate of 65p given that there would be a need to compensate their members, and the savings from removing the lump sum allowance would offset the increase in mileage rate.

Outcomes from the staff travel survey

- 3.10 The outcomes of staff travel survey highlighted that many staff lived within 5 miles of the councils offices but over 85% travelled to work by car. The barriers cited to travelling in a more sustainable way were:
- Lack of available and regular public transport routes
 - Lack of safe cycle routes into work
 - Carrying workplace kit that is too heavy (hybrid workers)
 - No appetite from staff for car sharing
 - Impractical to use office-based pool cars/bikes
 - Using other forms of travel would impact upon the employee time, when capacity/workload is high
 - Need their car to carry out their job role
- 3.11 Whilst the survey focussed predominantly upon commuting habits, the last two points highlights key barriers if staff are required to regularly travel as part of their job role. Another area that has been trialled is the use of pool vehicles and bikes. Such schemes have been discounted due to the conflict with hybrid working arrangements and all staff not being on site, so they do not make full use of the pool car/bike. What was recommended however, to encourage greener forms of travel, was an increase in the cycle rate to 45p per mile. This has been incorporated into the revised policy.

New Travel and Subsistence Policy

- 3.12 The new policy is set out at **Appendix 1** and directly aligns to the Climate Change Strategy. Its purpose is to reduce the environmental and financial impacts and where possible, encouraging employees to reduce unnecessary travel. Where travel is required, the policy promotes the use of more sustainable and safest forms of transport. The main changes to the policy are:
- Introducing the travel hierarchy - encouraging staff to use the most sustainable form of travel from walking (being the most preferred choice), through to cycling, public transport, car sharing to using their own car (as the last option).
 - Promoting sustainable incentives to staff including salary sacrifice schemes such as cycle to work and electric cars (Ultra Low Emission Vehicles)
 - Removing of essential and casual user status
 - Mileage rate of 65p per mile to all car users (up to 8500 miles per annum). This covers petrol, diesel and electric cars and the increased rate negotiated by the trade union is to cover all motoring costs
 - Car users who incur 8,500 miles or more will receive a reduced rate of 16p per mile for those excess miles
 - An increased cycle rate of 45p per mile.

Formal consultation - Trade union ballot

- 3.13 As the essential user lump sum payment forms part of an employee's contract of employment, which has previously been negotiated by the trade unions on a collective basis, any contractual change to this requires a formal ballot of the union membership.
- 3.14 A proposal was issued to staff for consultation on 3 November with a deadline of 21 November for responses. 67% of Unison members voted in favour of the new policy.

Roll out of policy

- 3.15 Essential users lump sum will be compensated as part of the policy implementation. Essential users will receive a one-off payment of £212.49 which is equivalent to 3 months' notice of the monthly essential user lump sum allowance. Updated contracts will be issued to former essential users.
- 3.16 The new policy will be published to all staff, with HR expenses systems updated, following approval at committee.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

- 4.1 Open Session

5. Financial implications (DW)

- 5.1 The costs based on the mileage done for 2023-24 for the existing arrangements and what that would have cost under the proposed arrangements are set out in the table below

2023-24 Mileage Cost (0.45p Essential, 0.25p Casual, £850 Essential User Lump Sum)

Type	Mileage Cost	Essential User	Total Cost
Casual	17,349	0	17,349
Essential	32,052	72,250	104,302
Other	311	0	311
Total	49,712	72,250	121,962

Proposed Mileage Cost (0.65p Essential & Casual Rate, No Essential User Lump Sum but compensation paid as one off , rate of 16p for miles in excess of 8,500 per annum

Type	Mileage Cost	Essential User Compensation (£70.83 for 3 months)	Total Cost
Casual	25,059	0	25,059
Essential	77,920	17,849	95,769
Other	675	0	675
Total	103,654	17,849	121,503
In Year Saving			(459)
On-Going saving			(18,308)

5.2 In the full year 2023/24 the overall car allowance budget was overspent by £23,954. If the saving is approved it will help to put the budget back in line.

6. Legal implications (ST)

6.1 None.

7. Corporate Plan implications

7.1 Contributes to Places – to work towards a greener borough.

8. Consultation

8.1 Unison worked jointly with management to propose this new policy. The policy has been subject to further consultation during November.

9. Risk implications

9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

10.1 An equality impact assessment will be carried out when drafting the proposal.

11. Climate implications

11.1 Set out within the report.

12. Corporate implications

12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers: None.

Contact officer: Julie Stay

Executive member: Councillor S Bray

TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE POLICY

Introduction

The council is committed to reducing the environmental and financial impacts arising from business travel. The council also has a duty of care and health and safety to its employees when travelling for work purposes. Where possible, the aim of this policy is to encourage employees to reduce unnecessary travel and, where travel is required, promote the use of more sustainable and safest forms of transport.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to reduce CO2e emissions by decarbonising travel across the council to meet the vision of the council's Climate Change Strategy and prepare a safe system of work for managing the health and safety of employees when choosing options to travel. This policy also sets out the procedures to follow when arranging travel and reimbursement for expenses when travelling as part of their work.

Scope

This policy applies to all Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council employees.

Equalities

The council's commitment to equality of opportunity will be always observed during the operation of this policy. This will ensure that employees are treated fairly and without discrimination on the grounds age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Principles

The principles underpinning this policy are:

- To encourage the reduction of CO2e emissions to meet the aims as set out within the Climate Change Strategy
- To reduce and avoid unnecessary travel
- To support and educate staff in making efficient choices when they travel
- To provide a safe system of work for managing the health and safety of journeys carried out by drivers driving using their own vehicles.
- To have a fair and efficient procedure in place to reimburse expenses.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Council will:

- ✓ Ensure that services are delivered in the most efficient way possible
- ✓ Reduce the risk of potential harm to employees and others when travel is required
- ✓ Ensure that carbon emissions from staff travel are minimised

The Strategic Leadership Team will:

- ✓ Promote and facilitate alternatives forms of travel

- ✓ Ensure there is a safe system of work for employees if they are required to use their own car, if alternatives are not available, for council business

The HR Team will:

- ✓ Responsible for monitoring and regular review of this policy
- ✓ If car travel is essential, ensure that the relevant checks are carried out including driver and vehicle checks

Managers will:

- ✓ Ensure the policy is followed and implemented
- ✓ Carry out a risk assessment to prepare a safe system of work and consider whether the journey could be avoided and whether the task can be carried out using virtual meetings, telephone or email
- ✓ When the journey is necessary, ensure team members choose the relevant mode of transport following the travel hierarchy
- ✓ Ensure staff understand that claims will be authorised when compliant with this policy and VAT fuel receipts are provided to support any business mileage and / or other costs incurred being claimed.

Staff will:

- ✓ Only travel when necessary and in the delivery of service, and in line with the travel hierarchy
- ✓ If car travel is essential the staff member must:
 - Drive within the requirements of the law and adhere to speed limits
 - Hold a valid driver licence
 - That their vehicle has a valid MOT and serviced in line with manufacturers requirements
 - Have car insurance that covers business use and the carrying of business passengers
 - Ensure VAT receipts are provided for mileage claims or other costs incurred and claimed.

Business Travel – ‘Lesser of mileage rule’

- 1.1 Employees should always consider the most efficient mean of travel in terms of time and efficiency to meet the council's green agenda.
- 1.2 The designated council location as set out in the contract of employment contract is considered the employee's work base.
- 1.3 Under the HMRC tax rules commuting miles (travel between an employee's home and their work base, including the return journey) are not claimable.
- 1.4 Employees who attend an alternative work location or client's home for official business reasons on route to/from the normal work base may claim mileage which is over and above their normal commuting miles. This must not exceed the miles which

would have been travelled had the employee made the journey from the normal work base (lesser of mileage rule).

- 1.5 Employees can claim mileage if required to travel between multiple work bases during the working day (subject to the lesser of rule).

Travel Hierarchy – Decision Making Process



- 2.1 The council is committed to reducing the environmental and financial impacts arising from business travel. This not only covers miles travelled, but also the associated reduction of carbon emissions, reduction of cost to the 'public purse' and improved safety for its employees.
- 2.2 Employees are encouraged to use more sustainable forms of travel such as: travelling by foot, bike, bus/coach, train, motorbike or by car sharing. Employees should follow the sustainable travel hierarchy when travelling, whether it is part of the daily commute, for work related travel or for leisure.
- 2.3 Employees should make the following assessments prior to each business journey:

Can travel be replaced by virtual meetings?

Where there is an alternative to travel, this should always be used. Not only does this save the council money, but it also reduces carbon emissions as well as lost productivity through time which would otherwise have been spent travelling.

Active travel - Is the meeting close enough to attend by walking/cycling, or could employees use public transport?

For any journeys where walking, cycling or public transport are viable options, these should be selected wherever possible. Employees can claim 45p per mile when cycling for

business purposes. Public transport is often the best solution, where bus or train routes and timetables allow, and when staff are not required to carry any equipment.

The council will not reimburse mileage if the journey is less than 1 mile. Exceptions will be made for example, where employees have reduced mobility or there is no safe walking route.

Can attendance at the meeting be delegated to a colleague in a closer base location?

Due to the large geographical area covered by the council, often there will be a colleague or delegate located closer to the meeting who could attend instead. Meeting minutes and actions can then be discussed following the meeting.

Lift Sharing - Could employees car share with other colleagues?

Before traveling to a meeting, always check the meeting invitee list. If someone from an employee's base location is also attending, check how they are planning to get there and share the journey wherever possible. This will save on duplicate journeys, whilst offering good networking opportunities with colleagues.

Should employees use their own car?

There may be certain circumstances under which the use of an employee's own vehicle where other options are not available or viable. When undertaking council business in a private vehicle it is a legal requirement that employees hold a valid driving licence, business class insurance suitable for the types of journeys that are being undertaken, and a current MOT. VAT receipts for fuel must be provided to support the mileage claimed.

Business Mileage Rates

3.1 Where employees use their car for business purposes (including training) the following mileage rates (which are based on HMRC rates) will apply:

- Petrol/diesel/hybrid/electric cars and motorcycles - 65p per mile *
- 8500 miles or more paid at 16p per mile
- Cycle Rate 45p per mile
- Additional passenger 20p per mile

* any mileage payment claimed in excess of the HMRC rate of 45p per mile will be classed as a benefit and reported on a P11d and taxed.

Council Initiatives

Cycle2work

4.1 Cycle to work is a government initiative to encourage more people to commute to and from work by bike enabling people to make healthier choices and reducing the

UK's CO2e emissions. Tax free bikes are available through a government approved scheme which is fully HMRC compliant. The scheme allows you to hire a cycle and safety equipment from your employer for the purpose of commuting to and from work and for use at weekends and evenings. The cost is spread across a period of 12 months. This exchange of gross salary deductions for a benefit, known as a salary sacrifice, lets you spread the cost to make payments more convenient.

- 4.2 The council, through its benefits platform, offers the Cycle2Work scheme which is supported by a wide range of specialist bike dealers, including: Halfords, Cycle Republic, Tredz and local independent bike shops.
- 4.3 The council also provides secure facilities to store bikes and shower facilities in the Hub and Jubilee building. For staff based at other council locations please contact your line manager to make local arrangements.

Tusker Cars

- 4.4 The council operates a car benefit scheme through its benefits platform. The scheme is administered by Tusker who offer zero or ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs) to purchase through salary sacrifice. ULEVs are currently defined as having less than 75 grams of CO2 per kilometre (g/km) from the tail pipe. These are listed at <https://carfueldata.vehicle-certification-agency.gov.uk/search-by-low-emissions.aspx>. Pure electric vehicles, and other plug-in electric vehicles when driving in the electric mode, produce no tailpipe CO2 or pollution.
- 4.5 Staff can access the Tusker scheme with the following benefits:
- No initial upfront payment or credit checks
- Exclusive manufacturer discounts
 - Routine service and maintenance
 - Replacement tyres
 - Fully comprehensive motor insurance including business travel
 - Annual road tax
 - Greater benefit in kind (BIK) savings (compared to petrol and diesel vehicles)

5. Other Arrangements

Training

- 5.1 Mileage incurred when attending training courses will be paid at the applicable mileage rate. Training mileage should be recorded separately when claiming. Wherever possible, employees attending the same event as other colleagues should travel together in the interests of the environment, alleviating parking problems and minimising travel costs.

Travel time

- 5.2 The actual time spent on the training or development activity may be recorded as normal work time (at plain time) together with time incurred whilst travelling to and from the event, more than your normal commute to work time. This means that if the event is some distance away and you are 'at work' for more than your normal working hours, the extra time may now be counted. (Please note, however, that it is not intended that all hours should be claimed where an overnight stay is involved – please discuss with your manager what is appropriate.)

Public Transport

- 5.3 Tickets and VAT receipts must be authorised by your line manager and then submitted to Human Resources to process
- 5.4 Rail travel tickets (at standard class) should be obtained in advance of the journey as soon as possible to try and ensure the cheapest travel cost. It should not normally be necessary for employees to pay at the counter. Use of taxis should be agreed in advance with your manager.
- 5.5 Should you need to book train tickets, please advise Jo McLaren as early as you possibly can as they rise substantially in price as the journey date becomes closer. Also, please check that you choose the cheapest (reasonably timed) option. You will need to provide Jo with details of your destination (from where to where) and date and time of travel – and provide her with a purchase order made out to 'HSBC Credit Card creditor no. 00255101'. If the travel is in relation to training, please advise HR, who will raise the PO on your behalf.

Subsistence

- 5.6 The council does not reimburse employees for expenditure incurred in respect of meals when on training courses. Exceptionally, where attendance at a full day seminar or similar does not include the provision of meals, reimbursement of reasonable expenses may be paid subject to submission of expenses form and VAT receipt with prior approval by your line manager and submitted to Human Resources for processing. No reimbursement of expenditure is payable for employees attending post entry training courses.
- 5.7 In regard to for overnight stays, the seminar/course should provide you with a list of locally recommended hotels. An official purchase order should be made and the invoice will be processed via the purchasing system. However, should the hotel not want to comply with this and decline the payment when you leave, the council will reimburse any personal expenditure incurred once the bill has been presented for payment. There is no agreed rate for overnight accommodation due to the varying costs of accommodation in the different locations around the country. Your accommodation must be authorised by your line manager in advance and it will be charged to your service area's budget.
- 5.8 Employees should keep meal costs to a minimum. It is recommended that where overnight accommodation has been arranged that employees keep to reasonably priced or set menus. No reimbursement will be made in respect of alcohol.
- 5.9 In all instances your expenses form and vat receipt must be authorised by your line manager and then submitted to Human Resources for processing.

Car Parking

- 5.10 Payment for car parking will be made to car users on official council business if costs are incurred whilst at a location which is not an employee's normal place of work.
- 5.11 Employees are required to complete an expense form along with a VAT receipt, authorised by your line manager and then submitted to Human Resources for processing.

VAT Receipts

- 5.12 All mileage claims must be made through employee self-service and submitted by the 13th of each month. For users who do not have access to the self-service portal this can be claimed manually.
- 5.13 Users are required to provide a VAT receipt with a claim for fuel consumed in a claim and this should be marked with the claim identity number and submitted to HR when requested.

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