

## **WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE**

**5 September 2012**

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### **Travel and Mileage Allowances Policy**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To present an amended and updated policy to clarify what travel expenses can be claimed and the process involved.
2. This policy applies to all Wiltshire Council employees (with the exception of teaching staff in locally managed schools).

#### **Background**

3. Following the move to a unitary authority, it became clear that there was the need to clarify a single approach to travel expense claims. Research revealed that there were inconsistencies in the way that staff have been claiming for their travel expenses and therefore a review of the travel expenses policy and procedure was required.
4. The current travel expenses policy does not outline where business mileage can be claimed from. This has meant that some staff have been claiming business mileage from their home to their business destination, some have been claiming from home but deducting the miles which are part of their normal commute, and others are claiming solely from their work base. Therefore, there are currently differences between claims from one team to another.
5. Following review, CLT have determined a single approach, that in line with the transformation agenda (promotion of flexible working and the introduction of LYNC), the policy should be updated and amended to enable employees to claim business mileage from home, where the journey does not form part of their normal commute or go directly past their work base.
6. Clear guidelines are given on :
  - when travel expenses can be claimed ( i.e. 'on the job' as opposed to 'to the job')
  - expense rates for cars, motorbikes, bikes and green car scheme
  - examples of journeys and what can be claimed
  - how claims are made, to include deadlines and links to forms
7. The public transport rate has now been removed.

8. A number of FAQ's have been included to give answers to a variety of different scenarios to ensure clear interpretation of the policy.
9. Additional guidance is being developed to help manager apply the policy consistently and managers are being consulted on scenarios to include in this guidance.
10. The policy complies with HMRC guidance on business mileage. Employees will not be able to claim travel expenses for their normal commute to and from work but would be able to claim business mileage from home if they travel directly to a business meeting not at their normal place of work.
11. However whilst the HMRC regulations do not prevent employees claiming business mileage from home for any business journeys which go directly past their work base, or where they call into their work base only for an incidental purpose (e.g. to pick up papers), the Wiltshire Council policy requires employees to deduct their normal commute in these cases.
12. This approach has been taken to prevent employee's who live a considerable distance from their work base (including out of county), from being able to effectively have a "free commute" when travelling from home to a business meeting within the county.
13. This approach has been taken to ensure fairness and equity. It tends to be lower earners who are required to attend at their work base each day and are less likely to claim business mileage so it would be unreasonable for those staff to pay for their commute each day when higher earners are able to claim business mileage from home because they attend meetings away from their work base.

### **Consultation**

14. The unions have agreed the updated policy through JCC.

### **Environmental Impact of the Proposal**

15. None

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

16. No negative impacts have been identified.

### **Financial Implications**

17. There is the potential for an increase in expenses paid for travel claims, however it is envisaged that with manager support, increased home working and use of LYNC there is a potential to reduce the amount of business

mileage across the council. Costs will be reviewed 6 months after implementation of the policy.

**Recommendation**

18. That Staffing Policy Committee approve this updated policy and procedure.

**Barry Pirie  
Service Director  
HR & OD**

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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:** None