

Shropshire Council – Passenger Transport Commissioning Group

Transport Policy

Introduction

Shropshire Council herewith sets out its policy for the provision and operation of vehicles in support of its provided Council services. The principles below also apply to schools and community groups, and to the Council's 'grey fleet' employees/drivers. The Council treats road safety as a matter of paramount importance. Aligned with this policy document are those for 'Driver Policy', 'Fuel Card Procedure' and 'Vehicle Operating Guidance' and these are applicable as well.

1 Overview

- i. Shropshire Council (the Council) provides vehicles to support the delivery of its services through its Transport Operations Group (TOG) which forms part of the Passenger Transport Commissioning Group (PTCG). Approximately two hundred vehicles are deployed in service areas, each provided to meet the needs of the service provider. In addition there are a number of vehicles operated by groups associated to the Council, for example schools.
- ii. Service areas include school transport, school meals, Highways, Libraries, Star Housing and Shire Services. All of the vehicles are maintained, insured and licensed by TOG. Vehicle maintenance is normally undertaken through a contract with a maintenance contractor provider or main dealers.
- iii. The Council deploys a 'grey fleet' of employee cars/vehicles to support provided services, for which it pays a mileage expense. Details of driver requirements are set out in the separate and aligned 'Driver Policy' document, but the relevant guidance and its principles below should also be adhered to.
- iv. The Council also supports schools and community groups in terms of vehicle supply and maintenance, where this is requested and appropriate, and the relevant guidance and its principles below apply to these arrangements as well.
- v. The Council owes a duty of care to people and property from risks under its control. The operation of vehicles is extensively legislated. The Department for Transport enforces compliance of this legislation through Licensing of Operators.
- vi. This document describes how the Council plans to manage risk by the responsible and sustainable management of its vehicles. The Council is directly responsible for large numbers of vehicles on a variety of sites. Adopting a formal vehicle management policy is a requisite in putting into place a legally

defensible vehicle management system and ensuring that the Council is compliant with its legal obligations.

vii. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this document is to set out clearly the Council Policy in relation to the vehicles it hires, leases, owns or operates in the course of its business or that of its associated groups.

The Council has a commitment to ensure that all vehicles are procured, operated and disposed of with due consideration to service need, cost, health & safety, sustainability and legislative issues in all areas of its business. In addition there is a responsibility to ensure all Council Contract rules and financial regulations are complied with.

The Council operates a TOG (transport Operations Group) who have vested within them responsibility for key matters contained within this vehicle policy.

Any part of the Council intent on procuring a vehicle must advise TOG. These policies, guidelines and conditions will then be applied throughout the procurement process, the hire/lease/ownership, operation and subsequent disposal of the vehicle. The legal position with regard to the local management of schools means that it is not possible to require them to follow this policy, but schools are recommended to do so.

It will be a requirement that vehicles wishing to be covered under the Council Motor Vehicle Insurance Policy must be acquired or operated in accordance with this policy.

vi. Safety and Sustainability

The Council recognises its duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and otherwise in criminal and civil law to protect employees and members of the public, so far as is reasonably practicable, from danger arising from vehicles it owns and operates on its premises and highways.

Vehicles are complicated mechanical objects and form an important resource for the operation of council services. Usage of such a resource means that properly managed maintenance and replacement processes have to be maintained to ensure that vehicles are in a safe working condition.

It is clear that the processes of vehicle age, wear and tear, are not acceptable without the need for vehicle management, scheduled vehicle inspections and maintenance. This should be linked to a vehicle replacement programme that is robust, practical and appropriate to the type of vehicle.

Vehicle Management, inspection and maintenance works, need to be carried out by competent persons to agreed standards.

The Council also recognises that its environmental and social responsibility for the management of vehicles is important.

Appropriate proactive management should reduce the risk of damage to persons or property and the environment.

vii. Objectives of the Policy

To clearly lay out the policy and responsibilities of vehicle operators within the Council and associated vehicle users.

To facilitate the responsible and sustainable management of the Council vehicle fleet.

2. Responsibilities

i. Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the following measures are in place.

ii. Directors

Directors are responsible for ensuring that this policy is appropriately implemented and communicated in their Directorates and that adequate planning, resources and access to training are provided to facilitate its implementation and that health and safety obligations are therefore met.

iii. Transport Commissioning Manager (TCM)

The TMC has responsibility for providing best value, compliant and sustainable transport services and for reducing road, budget and service risk to a minimum, as part of vehicle provision for client users in service areas.

iii. Vehicle Clients

Clients have responsibilities to:

- Adhere to this policy and governing legislation.
- Ensure drivers are appropriately qualified, licensed and trained to drive the vehicle type
- Ensure that driver licences are inspected regularly, at least annually, for endorsements and licence category compliance relative to the vehicle in use.
- Establish the necessity for their vehicle adequately considering sustainable alternatives.
- Identify any special enhancements required to deliver the service needs.
- Consider sustainability issues and attempt to reduce environmental impact.
- Provide full details of vehicle needs in instructions to TOG, to enable them to evaluate options, engineering requirements, offer recommendations and calculate costings.
- Take into consideration advice and recommendations from TOG.

- Establish that a funding is identified and available to meet the capital and/or the ongoing revenue costs of procuring and utilising the vehicle.
- Provide TOG with all appropriate information to enable recharges to be raised by TOG.
- Adhere to the terms and conditions of the financial and operational contract or agreement under which the vehicle is operated or any subsequent amendments as requested by TOG.
- To replace vehicles in line with agreed fleet life as advised by TOG
- Clients must ensure that only TOG authorised and approved persons or contractors undertake maintenance works on Council vehicles.
- Maintain appropriate systems to ensure that employees whose duties include driving Council operated vehicles adhere to the responsibilities detailed within the Council's policy
- Meet any non-contractual costs incurred due to repairs being undertaken to rectify faults caused through neglect, negligent or inappropriate use of the vehicle.
- Ensure TOG is informed of any vehicle operational base changes promptly.

v) Drivers

Drivers have a responsibility to adhere to the Council's policy for drivers, including:

- Ensure they are appropriately qualified and licensed to drive the vehicle.
- Operate the vehicle safely within its capabilities.
- Carry out a daily vehicle 'Nil Defects' inspection and complete the relevant book
- Adhere to guidelines and procedures detailed in the Council's Vehicle Handbook, placed in the vehicle glove box
- Operate the vehicle legally.
- Only use the vehicle for the purpose for which it is authorised.
- Report accidents in adherence to the Council's policy.
- Follow the procedures for the use of fuel cards (NB Fuel cards should not be used to purchase fuel for private use]

3 Reducing Risk

- i. The Council has a paramount duty of care to protect the safety of its employees, passengers and the general public. It therefore treats this area with the highest of priorities. Risk is mitigated by good practise and the Council also makes provision for the appropriate insurance of its liabilities, including third party risk.
- ii. Risk assessments and control measures are in place to promote good health and safety practices. Vehicles will be sourced to the latest industry standards.

- iii. All identified risks should be noted onto the risk register appropriate to the service area and those requiring actions should be detailed on the corresponding framework and time scales given for the action to be completed. All risks should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- iv. TOG to ensure that all vehicles procured on behalf of clients meet the requirements of the Council, Contract Rules and EU procurement Directive.
- v. TOG is the focus for all vehicle information necessary for the adequate consideration of risk. The standards and arrangements required for this information will be set by TOG and will include, for example:
 - Vehicle Registration and fleet number
 - Vehicle Manufacturer
 - Vehicle Converter/Coach Builder
 - Vehicle description (type, model, colour, etc.).
 - Vehicle technical details (chassis and Engine numbers, date of registration, cubic capacity, Engine type, dimensions, number of axles and weight, passenger capacity, Gross Vehicle Weight [GVW], fuel type, tyre size, special equipment, NCAP rating, Emissions Standard, etc.)
 - Vehicle maintenance and service schedules
 - Maintenance of vehicle records and service history.
 - Passenger / goods lift records & bi-annual testing certificates as required by the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 [LOLER].
 - MOT, LGV or PCV test dates & Records
 - Motor Taxation details & renewal dates.
 - Insurance details and records of claims.
 - Appropriate Operator licensing documents.
 - Legal Compliance.
 - Nil Defect reporting.
 - Location of vehicles operational base.
 - Details of driver/user.
 - For the passenger operated in-house fleet element, managed by TOG, risk assessments, route management and driver/Passenger Assistant training. NB drivers to “MIDAS” a nationally recognised standard
- vi TOG should ensure that all vehicles meet specified and appropriate standards, in respect of client, service delivery and legislative compliance.
- vii TOG should ensure that all vehicles and ancillary equipment owned or operated by the Council are subject to an appropriate Service/Maintenance Schedule and records should be retained for the required period.
- viii Where TOG does not manage a vehicle directly it will remain the operator’s responsibility to ensure that the risk, insurance and Health and Safety requirements of the Council are met.

- ix Clients are to ensure that all vehicle drivers are qualified and appropriately trained, reviewed regularly and records maintained.
- x As an umbrella process, all drivers driving Council insured vehicles will be required to undertake an authorised Driver Assessment Scheme (DAS) assessment three yearly
- xi TOG to ensure that drivers in its passenger in-house fleet are appropriately vetted, including a DBS check. Non-TOG drivers will be vetted as part of their recruitment process and the Driver Assessment Scheme undertaken. Driver licences should be inspected regularly, at least annually, for endorsements and licence category compliance relative to the vehicles being driven.
- xii Where groups operate under the Section 19 permit scheme the permit for the group should always be displayed in the vehicle in use.
- xiii All Council vehicle users must comply with the terms of the Vehicle Handbook, sign that they accept and abide its terms and follow guidance and compliance instructions therein.
- xiv Vehicle Log Books must be completed for each journey by all drivers of Council operated vehicles. Logbooks are the responsibility of the Client.
- xv Nil Defect reporting must be completed by the drivers and procedures followed to report any defects found.
- xvi All vehicle related documents must be accurately recorded and stored for the appropriate period.
- xvii TOG should incorporate vehicles into the Councils risk strategy

4 Sustainability

- i Sustainability will be a key consideration when assessing vehicle procurement options. Alternatively fuelled vehicles will continually be evaluated and if they offer better value to the Council, they will be considered. Seeking to achieve lower vehicle age profiles, as newer vehicles offer lower emissions and are more environmentally friendly will also support this.
- ii TOG has responsibility for ensuring that vehicles are procured in line with the Council's Sustainability Policy
- iii Taking positive actions to promote continual improvement in sustainability, performance and to consider environmental impacts.
- iv Developing the capacity of staff to promote the understanding of the principles and practice of sustainability within all areas of transport operations.
- v Maintaining a responsible vehicle fleet age profile.

- vi Keeping abreast of technical developments in vehicle sustainability.
- vii Introducing modern Information Communications Technology (ICT) systems to reduce to the minimum mileage undertaken to deliver services and to provide improved management information to enhance sustainable performance. (Improved ICT systems allow monitoring of vehicles and assist the clients to maximise fuel and routing efficiencies, in addition it could help to match the location of the vehicle, relative to service delivery requirements).

5 Vehicle Procurement, Management and Disposal

- i TOG's aim is to continue improving its ability to meet the needs of its clients by ensuring the best match of vehicle with the service need taking due consideration of cost, risks, sustainability and wider community benefits. In addition, maintenance programmes will be regularly reviewed to seek to reduce vehicle down time, improve reliability and image.
- ii TOG has responsibility for managing the procurement of all vehicles utilised by the Council. These vehicles may be:
 - On an Operating lease
 - On contract Hire
 - On Spot Hire
 - A dwindling few legacy vehicles may be owned outright
- iii Within the established Vehicle Procurement and Authorisation process, TOG will undertake on behalf of its clients the following:

TOG	CLIENT
Receive a request for a vehicle to be provided from service client and initiate VPAF process	Identify a vehicle need and seek authorisation within service; contact TOG to initiate VPAF process
Advise on Indicative cost including anticipated disposal income / penalties relative to the vehicle being replaced.	Identify funding requirements/source and procurement option (lease, contract hire, outright purchase)
Undertake 'gatekeeper' role and identify vehicle options available	Identify Specific Requirements
Produce vehicle Specification	Agree Specification & authorize TOG to proceed
Draw up a Tender/Quote Spec	
Identify procurement options [Lease, Contract hire]	Agree procurement option
Under take compliant procurement in accordance with the Council's policy, to ensure best value	

Receive submissions via Framework or tender	
Evaluate Tender/Quote Returns	Evaluate Tender/Quote Returns
Recommendation best option	Evaluate TOG recommendations
Place order with contracted vehicle supplier from Framework process (and for Operating Leases, seek quotes from Finance Team and take their advice about awarding the lease)	Authorise TOG to proceed
Undertake receipt of vehicle process	
Produce Documentation & set up record/file, populate IT system/vehicle 'master' list	
Handover vehicle to client, familiarization/training & provision of manuals; arrange signing of Vehicle Handbook	Receive vehicle/familiarization and training if needed; sign for Vehicle and its Handbook
Arrange for relevant vehicle maintenance program with either TSC (e.g. 'One Link') or Main Dealer; arrange for appropriate insurance, licence and tax arrangements	Arrange for vehicle to be delivered for maintenance as per maintenance program; report any accidents/collisions/damage/road incidents to TOG; ensure safe operation of vehicle, that drivers are appropriately licensed and trained and that the vehicle is only used for authorised Council purposes
Undertake monthly re-charges to clients to recover all vehicle costs incurred	Pay monthly re-charges to fund all incurred vehicle costs
Dispose of vehicles at end of contract term (or end of fleet life), advise clients of any contract penalties (or Income from sale)	Return vehicle for disposal on agreed date

- iv TOG will endeavour to procure vehicles to the latest emissions and safety standards providing these take into account the requirements of needs of the clients and end users and balanced against financial and environmental cost.
- v On behalf of clients TOG will procure vehicles from a Framework of approved contractors (e.g. Crown Commercial Service, ESPO, etc.).
- vi TOG will maintain a database of all vehicles operated by the Council
- vii Lease and Contract Hire extensions beyond the original term are not allowed unless in exception and authorised instances.
- viii TOG will be responsible for authorising the inclusion of all Council operated vehicles onto the motor policy database, such authorisation to be completed in writing to Risk Management and Insurance team.
- ix Insurance claim forms relating to motor accidents will be processed through TOG, in accordance with Council procedures.

- x Fuel management will be carried out by TOG through a Framework agreement using fuel cards
- xv. Corporate image is important and the Council has identified vehicle livery plays an important part of this. TOG will liaise and advise clients with regard to the current Council requirements. TOG will ensure that all Council vehicles are identifiable and represent the Council correctly.
- xvi. All vehicles operated by the Council must carry a relevant Vehicle Handbook, Operating Manual, Log Book and Nil Defect Reporting Book.
- xvii. All Council vehicles should be kept in a clean and tidy condition externally and internally.
- xviii. In accordance with current legislation, no smoking is allowed on any Council vehicle
- xix. TOG will manage the disposal of vehicles which encompasses the following procedures:

- De-commission the Vehicle in readiness for return to owner
- Cancel Fuel Card
- Obtain any relevant Road Fund Licence refund
- For any legacy vehicles owned outright, establish a value and remove vehicle to Auction for sale.
- Liaise with Insurance regarding cancelling insurance cover.
- Where a vehicle is Leased or Contract Hired, TOG will attend a final inspection and negotiate any penalty charges levied against the Council
- Recharge any penalties/costs applied to clients

xx) All Council vehicles must clearly display the following information:

Externally:

- Fleet number (Usually located on both front wings].
- The approved "Shropshire Council" branding logo, usually one on each side of the vehicle.
- Correct tyre pressures located on the vehicle directly above each wheel position.
- Fuel type located as close as possible to filling point/s on vehicle.
- Any legal lettering where applicable e.g. Gross Vehicle Weight, Operators address, Max speed, Long Vehicle, Plating Certificates.

Internally:

- Service schedule reminder sticker.
- Insurance Policy Details.
- Operators Disc and Small bus permit Disc if applicable.
- Any legal lettering where applicable e.g. Passenger carrying capacities, Emergency Exits, Fire Extinguisher & First Aid

locations, Height and speed restrictions, Glass hammers, No Smoking, Seat Belts must be worn at all times and any safety or special operation instructions.

6 Legislation

Legislation is continually changing in respect of vehicle specifications, usage and operations and TOG will continue to monitor, react and advise in this area. The following is a list of legislation and good practice guidelines connected to the wide sphere of activities that apply to the design, procurement, management and operation of vehicles and drivers and will be updated from time to time.

- Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) regulations 1986 as amended.
- The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989.
- Disability Discriminations Act 2005 as amended.
- Health and Safety Executive Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. (LOLER).
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Health and Safety Executive: The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Goods Vehicle (Licensing of Operators) Act 1985 as amended.
- Vehicle Excise Registration Act 1994.
- Transport Act 1985.
- Transport Act 2000.
- Drivers Hours & Tachograph Rules for Road passenger Vehicles in the UK and Europe PSV 375 (Rev 7/2005) GV262. (Appendix K)
- Data Protection Act
- Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness (VOSA [Vehicle & Operator Services Agency]).
- Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended.
- Highway Code.
- THE COUNCIL, Contract Rules.
- The EU Procurement Directive
- THE COUNCIL, Terms and Conditions of Employment as defined in the Staff Handbook.
- Freedom of Information Act.
- Performing Rights Licensing – Copyrights, Designs 7 Patents Act 1988.
- Public Service Vehicle Operator Licensing 2005 PSV 437 (Appendix L)