

Travelling Sustainably

Staff Travel Policy

AUTHOR	Human Resources and Organisational Development
SCOPE	<p>This policy applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">employees of Manchester City Council
PURPOSE	<p>The purpose of this policy is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">create a culture of environmental responsibility when it comes to in-work travel and behaviours as set out in the Employee Code of Conduct with a view to reducing carbon emissions through in-work staff travel.
APPROVAL	N/A - document in consultation only
REVIEW	<p>The policy will usually be reviewed every 3 years but may be reviewed sooner if there are changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.</p>

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1. INTRODUCTION

The [Our Manchester Strategy](#) sets out our responsibility to reduce our carbon footprint, and staff travel is one of the ways we can do this. The [Manchester City Council Climate Action Plan](#) outlines the scale of the climate challenge and sets a target of reducing emissions from staff travel in work¹ by 100 tonnes CO2 per year.

Our ability to serve the residents of Manchester depends on us being able to visit their neighbourhoods and homes. However, the way we choose to travel affects the health of our residents through pollution from our emissions.

We have written this policy during a global pandemic, which has transformed the way we work and resulted in a reduction in Carbon Emissions of 63% due to the reduction in travel. We have found new ways to work through virtual meetings and remote working on a large scale. This now gives us the opportunity to think about the reasons we travel.

This is not just about how we travel in work; it is also about the impact of our wider behaviours in work. Some of the work we are doing to raise awareness and reduce emissions includes:

Carbon Literacy Training

Book on to carbon literacy training and learn about carbon emissions. The training is mandatory for all employees and is a really important tool to ensure that our workforce is well informed about the climate emergency. It covers the impact our day to day lives have on the environment and what we can do to reduce this impact. This training is delivered virtually but in person sessions can be arranged.

Office Practices

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Printing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Avoid where possible➤ Print on both sides➤ Use recycled paper➤ Only print the pages you need➤ Do not print in colour |
| Digital | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Use electronic files rather than paper➤ Do not use coloured backgrounds if it is likely to be printed➤ Reduce the amount of emails/junk mail you receive and send- even digital communications have a carbon footprint➤ Fully shut down computers and turn off computer monitors at the end of each day |
| Reduce Waste | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Turn lights off when leaving rooms➤ Reduce the use of single use plastics (SUP)➤ Re-use containers/packaging➤ Recycle waste where possible |

¹ There is a separate action looking specifically at influencing staff travel behaviours for the commute.

- Encourage others to recycle where possible

Sustainable Commute

The Manchester City Council Climate Action Plan 2020-2025 recognizes that the Council has indirect emissions which we do not have direct control over but are a consequence of our activities.

Staff commuting falls under this category. To support staff to commute sustainably we have secured a range of corporate discounts for public transport along with providing facilities to support staff to try more active modes such as cycling and walking. Information about these discounts is available on the [intranet](#).

2. PRINCIPLES

The principles of this policy are:

1. Reduce in-work travel where possible
2. Increase the use of environmentally friendly transport such as public transport and active travel² where travel is necessary
3. Reduce the impact of road travel through:
 - a. Route planning
 - b. Using locations that reduces the distance people need to travel
 - c. Bundling up journeys
4. Reduce the use of private vehicles by using tools like car club³
5. Restrict air travel
6. Encourage and support the use of sustainable travel modes⁴ to and from the workplace

3. SCOPE

This policy should be used to inform decisions on in-work travel. The policy encourages all Council employees to use the most environmentally friendly mode of transport that is practical and accessible⁵ for their journey.

Further guidance on using each of the modes detailed can be found on the [intranet](#).

² Active travel is used to describe activities such as walking, cycling, wheeling and scooting etc.

³ Car club vehicles are generally low emission vehicles and reduce the need for individual car ownership

⁴ Walking, Cycling, Bus, Tram, Train

⁵ Accessible in this policy context means a mode of travel that is most suitable for a disabled employee's needs, even in circumstances where that is less environmentally friendly. Disabled employees with reduced mobility, limited vision or hearing, chronic health conditions or mental health conditions may need to travel by cars or taxis. Some disabled staff can or may be able to use public transport, cycle or walk, either on a permanent or temporary basis, i.e., if their condition fluctuates, but managers should always be guided by what works best for the disabled employee and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made wherever needed

4. EQUALITY

Individual circumstances and personal safety should be considered when making decisions on how to travel:

Personal Circumstances

There are many circumstances which will affect an individual's ability to use all or some of the modes laid out in this Policy. These may include, but are not limited to disability, pregnancy, childcare and caring responsibilities.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments should be made for disabled employees to enable them to use accessible travel suitable for their own needs. Carers will also need to be supported to use the mode of travel that best enables them to undertake their caring responsibilities for example a carer may need access their own vehicle through the working day.

Personal Safety

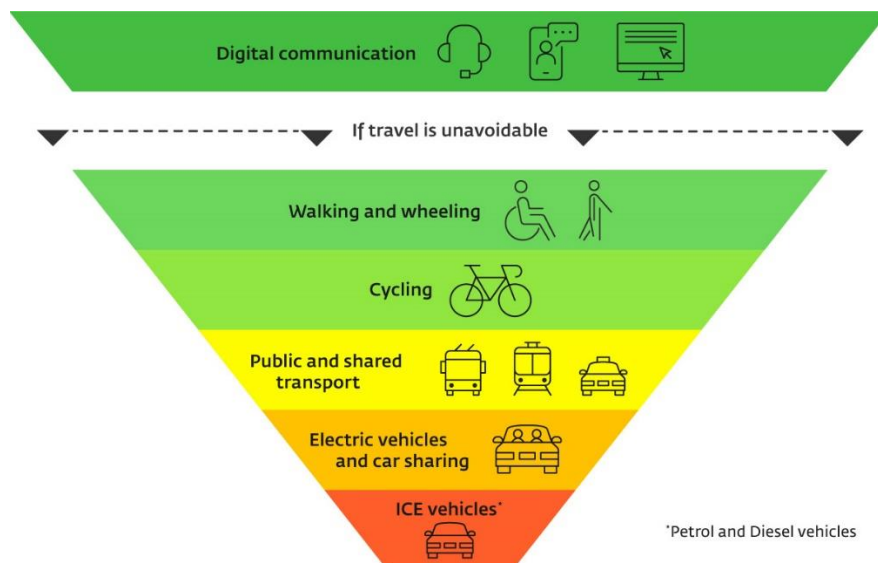
Our employees personal safety is paramount. Circumstances which may affect the perceptions of safety may include lone working, shift times and weather conditions. Reasonable adjustments should be made to enable employees to make decisions based on safety.

5. USING THE POLICY

We all need to change how we think about travel. When deciding when and how to travel, think about whether the journey is necessary and the sustainability of the mode.

If you are travelling outside of your usual routine, then you must ask your manager for approval before incurring any expenses.

We have listed the travel options in order of the environmental impact that they have, with the most environmentally friendly listed first:



Is travel necessary?

We have a range of tools that reduce the need for in-person meetings. This includes phone, 8x8, email and video conferencing⁶ via Teams (or Zoom for some services).

Always think about how accessible these tools are for those who will attend the meeting. You can find guidance on inclusive communication on the [intranet](#).

If a meeting needs to be held in-person, could it be organised for a day when everyone is likely to be in the same location anyway?

Active Travel

This is all about getting you from A to B in ways that do not use any carbon.

Walking is a great way to travel as it gives you thinking time and means you are moving which is great for both physical and mental wellbeing. We ask staff to prioritise walking/wheeling for any journey that is under one mile.

Cycling is also an energy efficient means of transport for those who feel confident on a cycle. We ask staff to consider cycling for any journey that is under three miles and where there is an accessible route, and the staff members feels comfortable to do so. Cycle users can also claim an allowance for in-work travel, rates can be found on the [intranet](#).

We are committed to creating opportunities to enable staff to try out cycling in a safe environment and will continue to promote training courses and events across the city.

In Spring 2022 Manchester City Council will be deploying 12 eCargo bikes and 3 trailers as part of our corporate fleet along with a city-wide hire scheme. If departments are interested in trialling the use of an eCargo bike for service delivery, demonstrations will be available from the host MCC departments (parks, cemeteries, leisure, south neighbourhoods and integrated services) and there will be an opportunity for short-term hire via the loan scheme.

Public Transport

Bus/Tram: Manchester has a wide and accessible bus and tram network. The use of public transport is encouraged for in-work travel where it is accessible and it is often cheaper and quicker than using a taxi. Where an employee already holds a season ticket/pass, and no further expense is incurred because of the journey, no expenses can be claimed.

Where journeys are infrequent and an additional expense is incurred, a claim can be made through the expenses form in MiSelf ensuring that the claimants' responsibilities, as laid out in the staff expenses policy, are adhered to.

Where services and teams are making regular journeys that could be made by Metrolink, annual season tickets can be purchased via the teams cost centre for use by a team. Monthly season tickets can be purchased for use on bus and Metrolink in the form of the system one travel cards. To organise this, please contact: letstalk@manchester.gov.uk

Rail: Rail travel is one of the most environmentally friendly modes of travel for long journeys.

⁶ There is still a carbon cost for virtual meetings.

Standard class rail travel is more energy efficient than first class due to the amount of space dedicated to first class seats.

First class will only be available when standard class does not meet the needs of the employee.

Rail tickets must be booked as far in advance as possible using the [agreed process](#). For urgent travel, tickets can be purchased outside of the process and a retrospective claim can be submitted.

Car Club

Car club cars, on average, emit 43% less carbon dioxide from emissions than the average UK car and reduce the need for individual car ownership. The Council is partnered with Enterprise Car club to give staff a flexible way to hire a car for a few hours for in-work travel. It can also work out cheaper than casual mileage if the average miles travelled per hour are 13 or more.

Where a service is based at one site, but employees may on occasion have to use their own car or a taxi for in-work travel then the car club is a flexible way to access a car. There is on street provision around Manchester. If a service feel that they would benefit from the car club but there are no vehicles located in the immediate vicinity then applications can be made to arrange for a car club vehicle to be situated closer by contacting: letstalk@manchester.gov.uk

Car club bookings must be made with an approved cost centre number input into the memo field. For more information visit the [dedicated intranet pages](#).

Private Car

Own Car: Where it is necessary to use your own vehicle for your role and car user status has been granted, staff are asked to:

- Manage your diary to try to group trips together, reducing the number of individual journeys to be taken in the car.
- Check if other colleagues are making a similar journey and travel together if possible and accessible.
- Travel outside of peak times where possible to reduce congestion.
- Optimise route planning and meeting locations to reduce miles travelled. When considering meeting locations, accessibility of those invited should be considered. Disabled employees will be supported to make travel and location decisions based on their accessibility needs.
- Adopt [ecodriving techniques](#) for the best fuel efficiency.

Only authorised users can claim reimbursement at [agreed rates](#).

If you incur additional charges (such as parking/toll roads) when working, these will be reimbursed when you provide a receipt or other evidence of payment. Under no circumstances will motoring offences or parking fines be reimbursed. Full guidance on how car users can make claims is available in the [Car Allowance Guidance Note](#).

You can find more information on the eligibility criteria for car users on the [intranet](#).

Reviewing Car User Status

It is a manager's responsibility to review MOT and insurance documents annually to make sure that the vehicle is roadworthy and business use is included on the insurance. In addition, managers must carry out an annual review of the payment of any car user allowance against the scheme criteria.

If the user fails to meet the [scheme criteria](#), then the allowance may be withdrawn. If the user is transferred to another post which does not require car user status, or it is deemed that they no longer require car user status to fulfil their duties then the allowance will also be withdrawn.

Taxis: Taxis should only be used for journeys where there is a specific need that needs accommodating. This could be:

- where there is no alternative mode available
- where it is more environmentally friendly due to the number of people travelling
- where it is the most accessible mode of transport for an employee and a [reasonable adjustment](#).

Flights

Air travel is restricted to business-critical⁷ cases. Given the carbon impact of air travel, this option should only be pursued for international travel, unless in exceptional circumstances. All air travel requires prior approval from the City Treasurer or Chief Executive.

All bookings will be economy class.⁸ Business class flights may be booked on disability/medical grounds.

Benefits accrued as a result of official travel (for instance 'Air Miles') must not be used for personal travel.

6. TRAVEL EXPENSES

HMRC determine the travel expenses that employees can claim for and how these are determined depends on the classification of workplace and the employee's contractual relationship with that workplace.

For contractual purposes the office remains your permanent place of work even if you spend limited time there unless you are deemed a home worker in your contract.

⁷ Business critical is defined as the organisation having a contractual obligation to attend an overseas meeting/conference where air travel is the most accessible option. Business cases can be made for other overseas travel where our attendance would have a significant positive impact on the delivery of the city's strategic objectives.

⁸ Due to the increase in efficiency of the seating layout compared to emissions from business class seats i.e., more passengers per square foot.

If you need or are required to travel from home or your usual Council site to another site further away than your normal commute⁹, then you can claim travel expenses only for the additional travel incurred. If you choose to travel to a temporary place of work e.g., for convenience, then this should be treated as a normal commute and no travel expenses can be claimed. This principle does not apply if you are choosing to travel to a temporary place of work for accessibility reasons due to a disability.

⁹ To your permanent place of work