

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee – 22 June 2023

Subject: Staff Business Travel and Active Travel Policy

Report of: Director of Human Resources, Organisational Development and Transformation (HROD&T)

Summary

This report provides information on the progress being made towards embedding a culture of sustainable staff travel within the council as part of the Staff Travel policy.

Recommendations

To consider and comment on the information in the report and endorse the approach we are taking.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The report outlines work being undertaken to embed the Staff Travel policy which aims to radically reduce the carbon footprint and adverse environmental impact of staff travel whilst in work by encouraging and advocating for sustainable travel.
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
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This report considers that the staff travel policy is inclusive and accessible by taking into account wider considerations about why people make certain decisions about travel

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The measures set out in this report will contribute to the development of a green economy in terms of developing more sustainable transport
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The measures set out in this report will encourage recruitment and retention of the Council's workforce
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The measures set out in this report will contribute to developing community engagement and initiatives for sustainable travel.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	This report is activity directly related to the successful delivery of a liveable and low carbon city through ensuring the City Council workforces are actively engaged with and are embedding sustainable staff travel into service policy and delivery.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The measures set out in this report contribute to improvements in transportation for Council staff and how they move around the city

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025

Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2025

Manchester City Council - Climate Change Action Plan - Work Plan 2022-23

Manchester City Council Staff Travel Policy, December 2021

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The 'Manchester City Council - Climate Change Action Plan - Work Plan 2023-24' sets out activity to be progressed to support the delivery of the 'Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2020-25'.

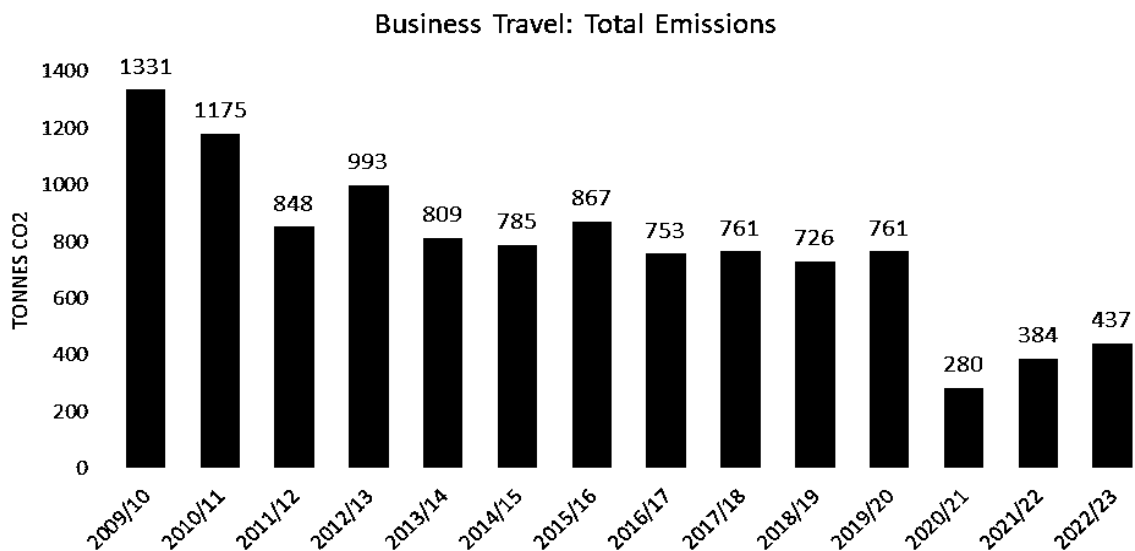
1.2 Implementing and embedding the staff travel policy across the Council forms part of **Workstream 2: Travel and Transport** of which the following activity relates directly to the purpose of this report.

- Delivering Staff Sustainable Travel engagement workshops and toolkits
- Producing resources and support guides to embed behaviour change
- Implementing a monitoring and reporting system to track policy impact

1.3 The report focuses primarily on staff business travel as per the current workstream remit. It should be noted that travel to work emissions are not currently in this scope of work however light touch updates are provided.

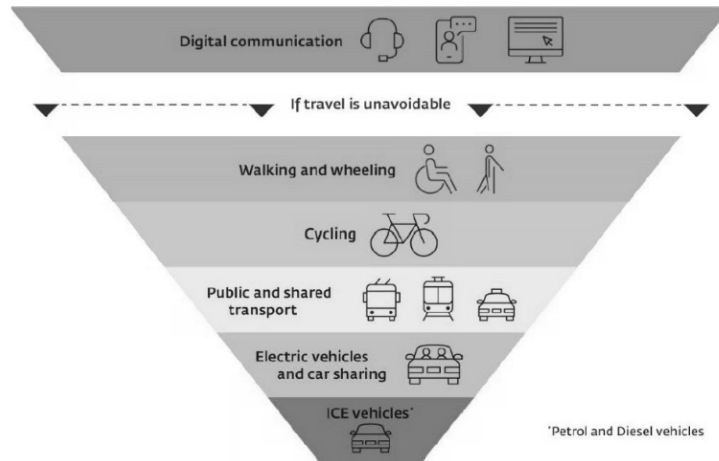
2.0 Background

2.1 The Staff Travel Policy was presented to the Personnel Committee in December 2021 with a subsequent launch of the policy in 2022. This was following a recommendation in the Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan for the Council to reduce its emissions through staff travel by 100 tonnes of CO₂ each year. The below graph provides insight into our annual CO₂ reductions with the figure above each line indicating the total number of emissions for that year.



2.2 The policy highlights the need for the Council to reduce its carbon emissions through staff travel and recognises the impact of our indirect emissions through wider staff behaviours. It recognises that the decisions people make about travel need to take into account wider considerations in order for this policy to be inclusive and accessible. It introduces a travel hierarchy (pictured

below) that staff should use when making decisions about travel, at the top of which, are considerations as to whether the travel is needed and prioritising active and sustainable modes. Revised guidance and updated content on the intranet will be published to complement the policy.



3.0 Our Manchester, Our Corporate Plan and Service Plans – the way we do things, not a thing that we do

3.1 In 2020, the Our Manchester Strategy was reset placing a more explicit focus on Zero Carbon at the heart of the strategy, which subsequently became a priority within the City Council’s Corporate Plan.

3.2 As a direct result of this, every year, services within the council are expected to set out how they will embed Zero Carbon into service delivery as part of their Service Plans. The Staff Travel Policy now features as a point of consideration within the Zero Carbon commitments.

3.3 This approach provides a thread from the strategy to each member of the workforce in relation to how everyone will contribute to achieving zero carbon status.

3.4 Given that this is a new policy, significant engagement is taking place to ensure that knowledge of the policy meets the needs of staff, and services so that an Our Manchester approach “to the way we do things and not a thing that we do”, is fully embedded.

4.0 Progress Update - An update on key progress is aligned to the actions set out in points 1 and 2 above.

4.1 ACTION: Workforce Development

4.1.1 Service Plans for 2023/24 for Zero Carbon commitments were refreshed to include key headings and priority areas for consideration. Commitments for service managers to review, embed

and support sustainable staff business travel was included in this refresh. Service managers can access support from the Sustainable Travel Project Officer in HROD&T to discuss and set ambitious, yet realistic, targets for their service. The project officer will review the commitments made in the service plans and will use them as a point of consideration in future engagement workshops and action planning.

- 4.1.2 The Good Managers Guide was launched in May 2023 which aims to help managers be the best that they can be. The guide helps managers to make decisions safely and empowers them to do so by providing support to deliver the seven basic principles of being a line manager. In principle “6. Manage resources in the best interests of our people, places and climate”, managers are encouraged to work through a checklist of key priorities to support this principle.
- 4.1.3 The priorities include, “ensuring that you are actively contributing to the delivery of our zero-carbon targets and supporting your teams to do so – as documented in the Service Plan for your area.” and “review opportunities for your service to reduce carbon emissions.” Whilst every member of the workforce needs to play their part to reach our Zero Carbon targets it is important that managers understand and are supported in their role in enabling their teams to travel sustainably.

4.2 ACTION: Staff Travel Engagement

- 4.2.1 Directorates/services across the organisation are invited to schedule team engagement workshops to scope and develop how they can implement the staff travel policy within their ways of operating. This area of work is being led by the Sustainable Travel Project Officer.
- 4.2.2 An example of the work being done with services is with Coroners and Registrars. Following engagement with the Coroners and Registrars service a public transport pilot scheme was launched in mid-February 2023. Bus and Metrolink passes were purchased for the whole team to share to reduce their reliance on taxis to deliver their service. Initial motoring has shown that taxi journeys are down by 52% against the same quarter in the previous financial year with miles travelled and cost being down 64% and 74% respectively. This will continue to be monitored as the scheme is embedded and the team grow in confidence using public transport.
- 4.2.3 A dedicated staff travel engagement tracker has been created to monitor the services who have been engaged with on the Staff Travel Policy to record actions, progress and measure impact.
- 4.2.4 Service leads are being approached by the Sustainable Travel Policy Officer with the offer of developing a tailored engagement workshop to

map and scope alternative methods of travelling whilst in work that adopts the policies guidance and recommendations.

- 4.2.5 A Staff Travel Toolkit is in development for Service Managers as a means to provide a “self-service” approach for managers who are unable to uptake a workshop offer. The Toolkit will enable service managers to embed similar information, resources, support and guidance into their teams that a workshop would have provided. The provision of a Staff Travel Toolkit that service managers can adopt will allow the Sustainable Travel Project Officer to prioritise engagement workshops with services that are more complex and reactive in the way they operate.
- 4.2.6 A tailored action plan is available for services directly following the engagement workshop. The action plan aims to set out clear, achievable and service appropriate options for staff to embed when traveling whilst in work. The action plan will assign key KPI’s so that the impact of staff travel policy engagement can be measured and reported.
- 4.2.7 The Staff Travel Policy recognises that the decisions people make about travel may include wider considerations for accessibility and inclusivity, this is therefore acknowledged and reflected in the engagement workshops and furthermore will be clear in wider comms.
- 4.2.8 During the engagement process, success story case studies will be collected to share with harder to reach services to show “what good looks like” with the intention of encouraging behaviour change. An example of this is presented in the attached appendix.
- 4.2.9 As per the Climate Change Action Plan requirements, a sustainable travel guide is in development for elected members.

4.3 ACTION: Staff Business Travel

- 4.3.1 The table below provides an insight into staff business travel over the last 5 years up until 2022. Data for 2022/23 is not yet available. Key points to consider are:
- 2020/21 shows a dramatic reduction in all forms of travel as a direct result of COVID restrictions.
 - During 2021/22 (post COVID) there was an increase across all modes of travel however, the level of travel did not revert back to pre-COVID rates instead remained significantly lower
 - Bicycle User Allowance claims has seen a steady decline since 2017/18 until 2020/21, we would like to see the increase in claims continue from 2021/22 onwards. So, the engagement work will promote the scheme to encourage uptake
 - Enterprise Car Club mileage has declined sharply post-COVID, this again can be attributed to the overall decrease in staff travel due to lockdown

restrictions and new ways of working. The Car Club is being promoted as an option in all engagement sessions with the carbon benefits over grey fleet being emphasised (on avg. 43% less CO2 than the average UK car).

- The SAP team are building expenses claim line for Beryl Bike hire within the system so that staff can reclaim the hire costs when Beryl Bikes are used for business travel. SAP is the current HR and Finance administration system for the Council.
- There is currently no data for bus/Metrolink travel as we don't currently have the resource to extract this information from the SAP system. Additionally, employees with season cards purchased for commuting cannot be reimbursed if they choose to use the pass for in-work travel
- There is currently no reporting system in place that captures staff that walk during business hours as the data is expenses led. Alternative methods of capturing this mode of active travel are under consideration.

Financial Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Grey Fleet (Miles)	1,901,747	1,834,686	2,001,496	985,695	1,274,488
Car Club (miles)	20,607	25,927	28,673	10,106	10,851
Taxi (miles)	154,483	163,856	169,716	56,005	112,943
Air (miles)	354,127	285,889	205,520	14,082	50,793
Train (miles)	373,036	519,292	668,349	49,089	160,589
Bicycle allowance (no. of claims)	1094	879	748	397	477

4.4 ACTION: Cycle to Work Scheme

4.4.1 The below table outlines the number of members of staff who have accessed the Cycle to Work scheme over the last 5 years. Key points to consider are:

- With the exception of 2020 where cycle transactions increased where Covid may have been a contributing factor, the number of staff accessing the scheme has decreased year on year.
- The average value of vouchers claimed from 2018 to 2022 has doubled, with the lifting of the cap and the rise in popularity of e-bikes being a contributing factor
- It is unknown whether the officers accessing the Cycle to Work scheme utilise the bikes to travel whilst in work. Methods of how to capture this data are under consideration.
- Reflecting on the below data, it is acknowledged that a refresh of Cycle to Work promotion and engagement should be delivered

Year	Cycle transactions	Average value	Workforce count	Percentage of workforce
2018	134	£836	7463	1.81%
2019	124	£861	7462	1.67%
2020	154	£991	7600	2.08%
2021	122	£1,230	7381	1.64%
2022	119	£1,614	7418	1.60%

4.5 ACTION: Bicycle User Allowance Scheme update

4.5.1 A review of the Bicycle User Allowance scheme was conducted using direct feedback from members of staff who had previous experience of completing expenses claims using the existing process. It was concluded that the Bicycle User Allowance scheme was difficult to access as information on the intranet was limited. The following actions were taken to make the scheme more accessible:

- Consultation with current users highlighted the process of claiming on SAP was confusing, furthermore managers were unaware of the process of registration and claims due to the unclear information
- Consultation with Employee Life Cycle (ELC) revealed users could not be registered as a car user and bicycle user concurrently. In agreement with ELC the scheme was altered to allow employees in roles designated as Casual/Essential Car Users to register as Bicycle Users too. A separate non-SAP claims method was designed to make the claims process easier
- The staff Intranet content has been overhauled to explain the scheme clearly, highlighting these changes
- The Bicycle User Allowance scheme was re-launched on 'The Forum' staff email bulletin and directorate level communications in February 2023
- There will be monitoring of Bicycle User Allowance claims to gauge the impact of the changes and to direct future communications. It will also form a part of all engagement workshops

4.6 ACTION: Staff Travel Policy Communications

4.6.1 A 12 month targeted internal communications plan for staff travel is being developed. This will ensure maximum engagement using a variety of inclusive and accessible methods. The use of regular newsletter segments and staff forum takeovers are examples of what will be included in the plan.

4.6.2 Health and Wellbeing Plan for the Council is being refreshed. This provides an opportunity to align messages and promote the potential

benefits of active travel relating to fitness, socialisation, etc, will be considered as part of the communications plan.

- 4.6.3 A Digital Staff Travel Guide is in development to act as a digital resource pack that breaks down the staff policy into tangible resources, support ideas and guidance for embedding policy recommendations into services ways of working across the organisation. The Digital Staff Travel Guide will be shared with teams in engagement workshops, will be accessible via the intranet and will have complimentary launch campaign once published.
- 4.6.4 Staff Travel Guide z-cards as a complimentary addition to the digital guides will also be produced as a hard copy alternative for accessibility purposes and for teams/services who do not have digital access.
- 4.6.5 Staff Travel Policy Engagement success story campaigns will be captured by the Staff Travel Policy officer following workshop sessions. Compiling success story case studies to share with harder to reach services will show “what good looks like” with the intention of encouraging behaviour change.
- 4.6.6 A refresh of Cycle to Work promotions and advertisements will form part of the overall comms plan which will include a Cycle to Work campaign week. It is the ambition that video case studies of real people/real stories will enthuse staff to consider using the scheme.
- 4.6.7 ULEV (Ultra Low Emission Vehicle) case studies will be gathered via a post vehicle order feedback form which will gather an understanding of the user experience, satisfaction of the service and to gain insight in to whether the vehicles will be used for commuting and/or business travel. Participants will be asked whether they would like to contribute to a case study interview which will be shared via internal comms. A video version of these case studies is the ambition to bring the user experience to life.
- 4.6.8 Regular review and updates of the intranet pages will be actioned to ensure all information relating to the staff travel policy is up to date so that staff are equipped with correct knowledge, guidance and available resources.

4.7 ACTION: Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV) Consultation & Launch

- 4.7.1 It is acknowledged that the use of an Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle is not at the top of the sustainable travel hierarchy when compared to active travel and public transport options which would be more environmentally friendly. However, it is important for the workforce to be presented with a variety of sustainable options and opportunities.
- 4.7.2 As part of working towards the City Councils reduced carbon emissions target, work has been undertaken to launch a car leasing scheme for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles. These are defined as having less than 75 grams of CO2

per kilometre (g/km) from the tail pipe, the vehicles available to staff through the scheme meet this criteria, these include both Hybrid and Fully Electric vehicles. The scheme operates on the basis of a salary sacrifice with the employee benefiting from savings on tax, pension and national insurance and the Council benefiting from increased take up of electric vehicles, reduced car mileage costs and some small savings on reduced employer costs.

4.7.3 The Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEV) scheme through NHS Fleet, was launched in March 2023 through an organisation wide internal communications promotion.

4.7.4 As a result, the intranet information page has had 1820 views with 910 unique visitors and 557 visitors being redirected to the NHS Fleet page/brochure. The below table shows a breakdown of staff orders over the last 10 weeks.

Row Labels	Count of Record ID
Contract sent to coordinator	2
Contract sent to employee	1
Vehicle delivered	20
Vehicle on order	23
Grand Total	46

4.7.5 As the launch of the scheme is still in its infancy, a representative insight into staff uptake cannot yet be provided. However, a detailed analysis will be delivered at the next Staff Business Travel update.

4.7.6 A forward plan has been produced to continue the promotion of the ULEV scheme and gauge an understanding of the appetite, uptake and staff satisfaction of the scheme. The following actions will take place over the next twelve months:

- Develop a monitoring process to record the number of vehicles ordered on a directorate/service level
- Develop an internal comms action plan for the next 12 months sharing case studies gathered from staff who have accessed the service
- Utilise the complimentary learning lunches/learning workshops that NHS Fleet provide for staff engagement and support and disseminate the promotional/information materials provided across the organisation
- Gather feedback from staff users via questionnaire to gain an understanding of the user experience, satisfaction of the service and to gain insight in to whether the vehicles will be used for commuting and/or business travel.

4.7.7 ULEV case studies will be gathered via a post vehicle order feedback form which will gather an understanding of the user experience, satisfaction of the service and to gain insight in to whether the vehicles will be used for commuting and/or business travel. Participants will be

asked whether they would like to contribute to a case study interview which will be shared via internal comms. A video version of these case studies is the ambition to bring the user experience to life.

4.8 ACTION: Monitoring and Reporting

- 4.8.1 Monitoring of emissions by mode will be captured quarterly which will enable a regular review of the impact of the policy. Emissions from business travel will continue to be reported within the CCAP Quarterly Reports.
- 4.8.2 Work is underway to capture directorate/service level data on ULEV orders.
- 4.8.3 An evaluation framework will be developed to highlight actions and impact from the staff travel policy engagement workshops.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on this report.