

Laverstock and Ford Parish Council

Driving for Council Business Policy

Purpose	To set out a Code of Practice for the Council's approach to health and safety and managing risk for driving on Council business
Scope	Employees, Councillors
Date adopted	December 15 th 2025
Minute Ref:	PC25.151(f)
Previous	None
Next Review	December 2028
Policy Owner	F&GP Committee
Supersedes	None

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places a general duty on the Parish Council to have a "duty of care" for the safety of employees at work, there is also a duty of care to all other road users.

Management Approach

For most people, driving is the most dangerous work activity that they will undertake. Research indicates that every week, around 20 people are killed and 250 seriously injured in crashes involving someone who was driving for work purposes.

Employees are encouraged to follow the guidance given, in order to minimise risk to themselves and other road users.

Employees who are authorised to use their own vehicle you must show the Council that they have insurance for business use. A copy of the Insurance Certificate will be kept on file. Employees are responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is taxed and has a valid MOT test certificate if it is over three years old. We may check that these are in place on the DVSA website at <https://www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk>.

Employees and Parish Councillors must produce the following original documents at the request of the Council, on an annual basis, or at the specific

demand of the Clerk if applicable: Current MOT certificate, current driving licence, and current car insurance. For employees, the insurance must confirm cover for (Class 1) business use. For Parish Councillors, their insurance must show they are covered for driving on council business. In all cases, Councillors must obtain written confirmation from their insurer that they are covered for driving on council business. The Clerk must have sight of the policy document or a cover note specifying the level of cover to ensure the Council meets its health and safety obligations.

The Clerk must be informed of any imposed or pending driving penalties or convictions within 5 working days. These will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

A driving risk assessment is appended to this policy and will be reviewed annually. Updated risk assessments will replace the older version.

What do I have to do?

Vehicle maintenance and checks

Council vehicles will be maintained by approved companies and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and schedules.

If you use your own vehicle in connection with work you must ensure that it is maintained in accordance with manufacturers recommended service intervals and in a roadworthy and legal condition at all times. If your vehicle is over three years old, it requires an annual MOT test.

Regular checks should be carried out on vehicles by drivers, especially prior to undertaking a long journey. These should include:

- Oil, coolant and brake fluid levels
- Screen washer fluid level
- Wiper condition and operation
- Windscreen condition and cleanliness
- Tyre pressure, tread depth and general condition
- All lights are working
- Seatbelts are working

If any faults are found that may affect vehicle safety, the vehicle **MUST NOT** be used until they are remedied.

Vehicle breakdown

Breaking down can be a stressful and worrying experience, particularly if you are alone or in an unfamiliar place. It can also be hazardous. Following the basic safety guidelines can help you reduce the risks.



If you are on the motorway, if at all possible leave at the next exit or pull into a service station. If this is not possible then the hard shoulder should be used accordingly:

- Use the hard shoulder lane to decelerate before stopping as far to the left as possible, preferably near an emergency telephone
- Turn on your hazard warning lights, along with sidelights if it is dark or visibility is poor. DO NOT display a red triangle or other warning device
- Get out of the car by the doors on the verge side. Ensure passengers also get out of the vehicle the same way
- Take note of the marker posts and contact the emergency services, where possible, using an emergency phone instead of a mobile phone
- If walking along the hard shoulder to a telephone, keep as far away from the traffic as possible
- DO NOT attempt even minor repairs

If your vehicle breaks down on an ordinary road or carriageway, you should:

- Leave your car in as safe a place as possible, ideally away from traffic
- Switch off the engine
- Switch on the hazard warning lights, along with sidelights if it's dark or if visibility is poor
- Display a red triangle (if you have one) on the same side of the road, at least 45 metres (147ft) behind
- Find the nearest telephone or use a mobile phone to call for assistance
- Wait for assistance in a safe place, away from your vehicle, keeping clear of the road and traffic
- Do not stand between your vehicle and oncoming traffic as you may obscure lights

Tyre safety

You need good tyres to drive safely as they affect the steering, braking and acceleration of your vehicle. Faulty tyres work less efficiently and don't last as long; they could also mean a heavy fine and penalty points on your license. It is against the law to have:

- Car tyres with tread worn below 1.6mm
- A mix of radial and cross ply tyres
- Over or under inflated tyres
- Tyres with cuts, lumps, bulges or tears
- The wrong sort of tyre fitted

Tyre pressures and inflation

Refer to the manufacturer's handbook for guidance on recommended pressures for your vehicle. Care must be taken when inflating a tyre. Only inflate the tyre to the manufacturer's recommended pressure for the type of driving to be undertaken.

Don't use tyre inflation devices near to cuts/open wounds etc. Tyre pressures should be checked every two weeks and when the tyres are cold (pressures are raised when warm).

Accidents

Any accidents involving physical injury to an employee driving on Council business (excluding commuting to and from work), or any accident involving a member of the public, must be reported through the Council's accident reporting procedures.

Mobile Phones

Research has shown that the potential for being involved in an accident whilst using a mobile phone can be significantly increased, due to the individual concentrating more on the phone conversation than on their immediate surroundings.

The law has now made it illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone when driving, even when you are stopped at traffic lights or in a queue of traffic. This includes making or receiving phone calls, pictures, text messaging or accessing the internet.

You can also be prosecuted for using a hands-free mobile phone if you fail to have proper control of the vehicle. If you drive carelessly or dangerously when using any phone the penalties can include disqualification, a large fine and up to two years imprisonment.

Therefore, the Council strictly forbids employees using hand-held mobile telephones whilst driving. A mobile telephone may only be used with a hands-free device, in which case the call should be kept to the shortest possible time and only to effect essential communications. Where employees need to operate the mobile phone or need to deal with a call through a caller's hands-free device for longer than receiving or giving a short communication, before doing so the Council expect the employee to stop and park the car where it is safe and lawful to do so and with the engine switched off. Whilst driving, employees should not use the message facility on the mobile phone, or if available through such a phone, an image facility or internet access. A breach of the Council's rule on the use of a mobile phone whilst driving will render the



employee liable to action under the Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure up to and including dismissal dependent on the circumstances.

Driver fatigue

Research shows that physical fatigue and tiredness in drivers is a significant cause of accidents, particularly on motorways. Drivers should recognise the signs of fatigue, which are:

- Increased yawning
- Having trouble keeping your eyes open
- Not remembering the last few minutes
- Jerking your head or body from the brink of falling asleep
- Losing concentration
- Car veering off the road

If you feel sleepy when driving you should get off the road and into a safe parking area to take a break. To keep awake until you reach a suitable parking place, you should turn on the radio, open the window and/or increase the cold air ventilation.

To avoid fatigue, try the following tips:

- Plan your journey to include a 15 minute break every 2 hours
- Drink coffee or a high caffeine drink
- Don't start a long trip if you're already tired
- Ensure you have had sufficient sleep if starting your journey early
- Avoid driving between midnight and 6am (i.e. when you are likely to feel sleepy)

Driver eyesight

Drivers should be able to read a number plate at the legal distance of around 20 metres (65 feet), using any corrective appliances such as glasses or contact lenses. The general recommendation is to have eyesight tested every two years. Having an eyesight test will usually identify the majority of common eyesight conditions and also give clues about other less common diseases

If there is a problem with your vision, because of either injury or disease or following an eyesight test, you must notify your line manager immediately.

Adverse weather

The weather in the United Kingdom is unpredictable and adverse weather conditions can occur suddenly. If you drive regularly for work you should ensure that you are prepared for these weather conditions. When adverse weather has been forecast, relevant details should be obtained to decide whether it is appropriate to travel. Alternative methods of travel may be more suitable, depending on the weather conditions. Driving in adverse weather

should take account of visibility, ability to stop when roads are wet or icy and load being carried etc.

Poor Visibility

When visibility is seriously reduced you should drive at a safe distance with dipped headlights on. You may also use front and rear fog lights (in addition to the headlights) but you must switch them off when visibility improves.

Wet Weather

In wet weather, stopping distances will be at least double those required for stopping on dry roads. This is because your tyres have less grip on the road. In wet weather:

- you should keep well back from the vehicle in front. This will increase your ability to see and plan ahead
- if the steering becomes unresponsive, it probably means that water is preventing the tyres from gripping the road. Ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually
- the rain and spray from vehicles may make it difficult to see and be seen. Use dipped headlights

Flooded roads

Occasionally roads becoming flooded when there is a high rainfall over a short period of time.

- don't attempt to cross if water seems too deep
- drive slowly in first gear but keep the engine speed high by slipping the clutch to avoid stalling
- avoid the deepest water
- test brakes after driving through floods

Icy and Snowy Weather

Great care should be taken when driving in icy or snowy weather. Vehicle drivers are advised to carry a spade, warm clothing, a warm drink and emergency food in case your vehicle breaks down.

When driving:

- keep well back from the vehicle in front as stopping distances can be ten times greater than on dry roads
- take care when overtaking gritting vehicles
- watch out for snowploughs, which may throw out snow on either side. Do not overtake them unless the lane you intend to use has been cleared
- drive extremely carefully when the roads are icy. Avoid sudden actions as these could cause a skid

Windy Weather

High side vehicles are most affected by windy weather, but a strong gust can also blow a car off course. This can happen on stretches of road exposed to

strong cross winds, or when passing bridges or gaps in hedges. In strong winds your vehicle may be affected by turbulence created by large vehicles. Motorcyclists are particularly affected, so keep well back from them when they are over-taking high sided vehicles.

Personal Security

Below is a checklist for personal security when driving:

- keep the doors of the vehicle locked, especially when in towns to avoid 'carjacking'
keep 'valuables' including briefcases etc. out of sight when driving and on parking, lock whatever is to be left behind in the boot
when parking, if possible, drivers should use a manned car park and park near the exit. Reversing into parking spaces is also advised to allow drivers to drive off immediately
- keep the vehicle well maintained and with a surplus of fuel for the planned journey or to the next planned rest break or refuelling point
- keep a mobile phone with you to summon help or keep in contact with your manager/office
- avoid eye contact with other drivers and do not get into personal confrontation
- if you believe you are being followed, drive to a police station, if possible, or a crowded place
- always approach the vehicle with the key alarm/sender in hand, and be aware of people around you
- carry a torch (integral with the key if possible) to make locating the lock at night easier
- look in the back seat before entering and lock the car once seated

Alcohol and Drugs

Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (whether prescribed or illegal substances) is against the law. Drugs and alcohol can both seriously impair your ability to drive and the effects may last for a number of hours (or days). There is no safe limit of alcohol and drugs as their affect can be dependent on a number of factors:

- weight
- sex
- age
- metabolism
- amount of food consumed
- amount and type of alcohol consumed



Before driving, employees must ensure they are fit to drive and have a level of alcohol below the maximum limit allowed, ideally zero and not under the influence of any drugs that may affect ability to drive (check with your GP for

the effects of any prescribed or over the counter drugs). The possession, use or distribution of drugs/substances for non-medical purposes is strictly forbidden.

Refuelling of Vehicles

Due to the risks of fire and explosion, when refuelling any vehicle, the following should be adhered to:

- do not use any naked flames whilst on the filling station forecourt
- do not use mobile phones
- do not smoke

Care should also be taken when walking on the forecourt due to the possibility of spilt diesel and petrol being present.

For those using an unfamiliar vehicle, check fuel type prior to dispensing. If using diesel, then gloves should be worn when refuelling.

Safe Speed

One of the most significant risks for drivers and road users is inappropriate speed. This includes both exceeding the speed limits and driving within the limits but in unsuitable conditions.

When driving you should observe the following guidance:

- ensure you know the national speed limits for the roads and vehicle you are driving
- plan journeys allowing for poor weather, traffic delays etc
- obey posted speed limit signs at all times (even if late at night/early morning)
- reduce speeds for poor weather, busy roads, unfamiliar roads, high pedestrian activity etc

Further Advice and Information

<http://think.direct.gov.uk/>

How can I get help?

If you have any questions or if you require further information on this subject, please speak to your line manager or supervisor.

Incident Recording Form

Use the form below to record information about the accident and to take the names and addresses of witnesses and police officers

Ensure that the names and addresses of any passengers are recorded

Third parties are obliged to give you their name, the vehicle registration number and insurance details under section 170 of the Road Traffic Act 1988

If a camera is available, photograph the scene from different angles. Take pictures of the vehicles involved and of the damage to your own and third party vehicles/property

To be completed by Employee driving and handed to the Clerk.

Date:

Time:

Location:

Speed limit:

Road conditions:

Police Details Police attended: Y/ N

Officer's name/number:

Time:

Phone:

Reporting officer's station:

Passenger Details:

Other Vehicle/Property Damage (Use additional paper if required)

Vehicle type:

Make/model:

Driver name:

Registration number:

Third party insurer:

Policy number:

Description of damage to other vehicles/property:

Witness Details (Use additional paper if more witnesses)

Witness name:

Address:

Telephone/email details:

Write a brief description of what happened:

Incident Sketch

Make a sketch of the incident scene below.

Show the directions of the vehicles involved and note their approximate speeds. Indicate road markings, skid marks, hazards and the witnesses' locations.

Signature (Council Employee):

Date:

Risk Assessment: Driving for Business

Risk Assessment Form					
Dept: L&FPC Staff		Date Assessed: 19 th November 2025		Assessed by: Jon Sloan	
Task/ Activity: Driving for business		Review Date: Annually		Reference Number: v1.0	
Hazard and risk	People at risk	Our current controls	Our possible future controls	Risk level	Target date & by whom
Driver inexperience, poor driving technique, distractions (mobile phone)	Employees, passengers, other road users	Licence checks annually; driver declaration; mobile phone ban; handbook issued	Periodic driver training; refresher courses; monitoring of incidents	Medium	Clerk – Annual review
Alcohol/drugs or medication impairing ability	Employees, passengers, public	Zero tolerance policy; drivers declare medication; disciplinary procedure	Introduce random checks; provide DVLA guidance on medication	High	Clerk – Immediate and ongoing
Fatigue from long journeys or poor scheduling	Employees, other road users	Journey planning; encourage breaks; avoid night driving	Implement maximum driving hours policy; lone working check-in system	Medium	Clerk – Quarterly review
Vehicle condition – poor maintenance, lack of MOT/insurance	Employees, passengers, public	Annual MOT and insurance check; pre-use vehicle checks by driver	Spot checks (visual) by Clerk	High	Clerk – Immediate and ongoing
Unsecured loads causing injury	Employees, passengers, other road users	Drivers instructed to secure loads	Provide load securing training; audit compliance	Medium	Clerk – Ongoing

Adverse weather conditions	Employees, passengers	Discourage travel in severe weather	Formal severe weather policy; emergency contact protocol	Medium	Clerk – Annual review
Lone working risks during travel	Employees	Lone working policy; notify route and return time	Introduce GPS tracking or check-in app	Medium	Clerk – Within 6 months
Accident or emergency procedures unclear	Employees, passengers, public	Accident procedure issued; emergency numbers provided	Remind employees to carry in-vehicle emergency kits	Medium	Clerk – Annual review
Manual handling injuries when loading/unloading	Employees	Manual handling training; use of aids where possible	Review equipment needs; refresher training	Low	Clerk – Annual review
Stress and time pressure	Employees	Flexible scheduling; encourage remote meetings	Monitor workloads; provide stress management resources	Medium	Clerk – Ongoing