**Workington Town Council**

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1. **Introduction**

**WORKINGTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**VEHICLES POLICY**

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An employee of a Council may have use of a vehicle during their working hours. This can be a private car, a council owned vehicle or the use of a vehicle hired by the Council.

Unless notified otherwise, Council vehicles may only be used for work purposes. Employees must provide their full driving licence for inspection prior to driving any council owned vehicle. Additional requests can also be made at any time during employment.

1. **Principles**

The Council shall be responsible for the running and standard expenses of Council owned vehicles. This shall include servicing, in accordance with the service schedule, and MOT. All documents relating to services and MOT’s shall be retained by the Council.

It is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that the correct operational levels of fuel are maintained in the vehicle at all times.

1. **Driver Responsibilities**

3.1 Employees using Council vehicles have a personal responsibility to maintain them in good and clean condition at all times.

3.2 Daily checks of oil, water, tyres and lights (including indicators, headlights and brake lights) must be carried out before use.

3.3 All defects and faults must be reported to the Chief Officer immediately. No vehicle should be used if the fault breeches Road Traffic Regulations.

3.4 Employees are expected to display courteous and legal driver behaviour; any reports to the contrary may be investigated under the Council’s Disciplinary Policy.

3.5 Any road traffic incident, in which an employee was involved in whilst driving, must be reported to the Chief Officer immediately.

3.6 Any Fixed Penalty Notice or Court endorsement to the employee’s driving licence, whether or not obtained whilst on Council business, should be reported to the Chief Officer.

3.7 Any other events that could result in the employee being ineligible to drive must be reported to the Chief Officer.

3.8 Council owned vehicles are to remain on Council owned premises overnight and not kept at an employee’s residence outside of working hours, unless with express agreement from the Chief Officer.

3.9 Non-work related passengers are not to be transported at any time unless authorised by the Chief Officer.

3.10 Towing Trailers

a) An employee must only tow a trailer on Council or privately owned vehicles if they have a licence to do so. The employee must ensure that the correct licence is available upon request and that the trailer is attached correctly to the vehicle.

b) All items must be towed securely and responsibly, with the driver adhering to the appropriate speed restrictions for towing.

1. **Breakdown and Accidents**

4.1 In the event of a breakdown the employee must notify their Line Manager as soon as practicable.

4.2 The employee must notify their Line Manager or the Chief Officer of any accident or damage (irresponsible of fault) involving a Council vehicle, and of any charges brought against them arising from driving offences. In all such cases, the individual must provide written details to the Council without delay.

4.3 Any accident whilst on Council business will be investigated. If an employee or any other person is injured whilst travelling in a Council vehicle, the details must be recorded in the accident book.

4.4 Any accident involving personal injury, to either party, must be reported to the police at the time of the accident or within 24 hours.

1. **Fines and Penalties**

5.1 The employee is responsible for the prompt payment of fines for parking, driving or other motoring offences incurred whilst they are driving a Council vehicle.

5.2 In adherence to this policy the employee consents to the disclosure by the Council to the Police in respect of motoring offences received in a Council owned vehicle, upon a written request by authorised parties to provide this information. The Council agrees to notify the employee of the disclosure of their personal details.

1. **Security**

6.1 Personal items left in the vehicle entirely at the employees’ own risk. The Council does not accept any liability for loss, theft or damage of personal items.

6.2 Vehicles should be left securely, with doors, windows and boot closed and keys removed from the vehicle.

6.3 In the event of theft or criminal damage to a Council vehicle, the Police must be advised immediately and any crime number provided to the Chief Officer.

1. **Health and Safety**
   1. The principal legislation governing road safety are the Road Traffic Acts supported by the Highway Code. There are also many other related statutes intended to safeguard road users. When employees drive Council vehicles for business use, the employer has duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

7.2 The employee has a duty to drive within the law and abide by all requirements of the Road Traffic Act and Highway Code, including, but not limited to; adherence to road traffic signs, speed limits and road traffic regulations.

7.3 The Council has a zero tolerance of driving or attempting to drive Council vehicles, or private vehicles on Council business, under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or medications that affect ability to drive. If the employee is found to be in this position, they will be subject to dismissal. If the employee is taking or will be taking any prescription medication that could affect their driving they must consult with their GP and inform their Line Manager.

7.4 Council vehicles are a place of work; as such the Council’s policy (see Health and Safety Policy) in smoking at work applies to all vehicles. This applies to all hours of the day, including work outside normal working hours.

7.5 Use of Mobile Phones Whilst Driving

1. Employees are prohibited to use hand-held mobile phones, or similar electronic devices, while driving Council owned and private vehicles on council related business.
2. If the employee is required to do so, they must first stop the vehicle and turn off the engine. Employees must ensure that they always find a safe place to stop before answering and using a mobile phone.
3. Contravention of these rules will be dealt with under the Council’s disciplinary procedure.

7.6 Eating and drinking

1. It is recommended by the government that eating and drinking whilst driving is prohibited. Drivers are found to lack control of vehicles whilst they are eating and drinking, leaving them liable to ‘driving without due care and attention’.
2. As a result, Council employees must not eat or drink when driving Council vehicles or in private vehicles on Council business.
3. **Using Private Vehicles**

8.1 Whilst driving a private vehicle on Council business employees must ensure that their insurance policy specifically covers using the vehicle for business travel. A copy of insurance must be supplied, demonstrating this, upon request.

8.2 Mileage allowance will be paid for those employees who use their private vehicle for Council use, in accordance with the Staff Expenses Policy.

8.3 Private vehicles used on Council business must be kept in good and efficient road worthy condition, with regular checks and maintenance to ensure that it complies with current road traffic legislation, including tax and MOT. If any defect is suspected, that would deem the vehicle un-roadworthy, the employee’s private vehicle must not be used on Council business. The employee must submit any documentation to support the vehicles condition upon request.

1. **Withdrawal of Use**

The Council may withdraw the use of Council vehicles if the employee loses their driving licence for any reason, charged by the Police with a serious motoring offence, or does not comply with this policy. The Council will, on an individual basis, review the employee’s appointment with the Council if the employee is no longer available to effectively carry out their duties due to the withdrawal of rights to use a Council vehicle.