



Dorset County Council

“Driving at Work” Policy

Adopted by the School on.....

Signed

By the Headteacher

Foreword

Why do we need a 'Driving at Work' policy?

For many occupations driving is the most hazardous task performed. It is estimated that over one third of all fatal driving collisions involve someone who was at work at the time – over 1,000 deaths per annum. Many more are seriously injured, often resulting in long-term disability. The human costs associated with these events are impossible to calculate. Financial costs are more tangible with an estimated £2.7 billion lost per annum to UK employers from fatal road traffic collisions (Gallagher Bassett, 2006).

A significant amount of this cost is deemed to be uninsured. For instance, there is no insurance protection in respect of staff absence, investigation time and paperwork, replacement vehicles, medical costs etc.

In recent years the enforcement authorities have shown an increasing interest in occupational road risk and this is being reflected in the courts with a number of successful prosecutions under health and safety law. Employers have been fined and even received a custodial sentence following fatal collisions for which their drivers have been responsible. Corporate Manslaughter legislation (wef April 2008) brings this in to even sterner focus, with the new offence of corporate manslaughter applying to local authorities and other public sector bodies. Unlimited fines can be levied on companies "if the way in which any of its activities are managed or organised by its senior managers causes a person's death and amounts to a gross breach of relevant duty of care owed by the organisation to the deceased"

In September 2003 HSE published guidance on the management of occupational road risk, making it clear that employers have a responsibility to manage the hazards of driving for work in much the same way as they have for all other occupational hazards, including the need for formal risk assessments (Gallagher Bassett, 2006).

Research by the Dept for Transport revealed that 476,500 people in the UK have driven while disqualified and 1,000,000 drivers have 9 points on their licence (Drivetech, 2006).

These issues clearly emphasise the significance of ensuring that the risks involved with driving at work are actively managed. Case studies and research shows that having an effective Driving Policy can result in the following benefits:-

- Fewer staff injured at work whilst driving;
- Fewer days lost due to injury;
- Reduce the risk of work related ill-health;
- Reduce stress and improve morale;
- Less need for investigation and paperwork;
- Less lost time due to work rescheduling;
- Fewer vehicles off the road for repairs;
- Reduced running costs through better driving standards;
- Less chances of key employees being banned from driving, e.g. as a result of points on their licences.

The formation of this policy was approved by Dorset County Council County Management Team on 30th November 2007, in response to active work by the Council's Risk Management Group and Vehicle Transport Users Group to improve the Council's management of its occupational road risks.

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Introduction

The Health and Safety Executive (H&SE) in collaboration with the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) have published guidance for employers on “Driving at Work – managing work-related road safety”.

This guidance clearly states their view that the requirements of Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 apply to all work related activities, including “work-related driving”.

The guidance also states that it is essential to have an effective policy which covers the issue of work-related driving, clearly defining responsibilities for both the employer and employee and the arrangements for implementation.

1. What is the scope of this policy?

1.1 This policy is intended to cover any persons who may drive or ride a motor vehicle on the business of **Dorset County Council**. This would include both

- (i) those who are required to drive vehicles that are owned/leased or hired by the **County Council** as an integral part of their employment or duties; and
- (ii) those who use their own vehicles in order to undertake their role within the **County Council**.

1.2 For avoidance of doubt, a driver may be an employee of the **County Council**, an **elected member**, a non-employed (agency) worker or a volunteer..

1.3 The aim of the policy is to clarify the responsibilities and obligations of the **County Council** (as the “Employer”), the **Manager** and Drivers. A number of assessment tools to assist implementation of the policy requirements are available.

1.4 The policy makes the assumption that having regard to the environmental impact of motor vehicles and having assessed the practicality of alternative means of achieving the required objectives, including the use of public transport, electronic communication including video conferencing etc., that for many employees the decision to undertake work-related driving is considered to be a ‘last resort’. This policy is not intended to cover those forms of non-motorised transport (such as bicycle) or motorised mobility aids such as powered wheelchairs and scooters.

1.5 **Managers** and Drivers should be aware of the content of the following associated Council policies and guidance:

- [Statement of General Policy for Health, Safety and Welfare at Work](#);
- [Lone Working Policy](#);
- [Accident Reporting](#);
- [Working Time Regulations](#);
- [Risk Assessment Policy](#);
- Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy;
- [Mobile phones and Driving](#);
- [Smoke Free](#)

2. Roles and Responsibilities of Dorset County Council (the Employer)

- 2.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 (as amended) and Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998 impose a duty on all employers to ensure that anyone required to use any equipment for work are fully trained and competent in its use. It is easy to overlook the fact that a motor vehicle (even one that is personally owned but used on work business) falls into this category. As such, employers must ensure that any equipment used is safe and fit for purpose, and that all staff required to drive as part of their duties are trained and competent to do so. The holding of a current driving licence does not necessarily demonstrate the competence of a driver to drive a particular vehicle.
- 2.2 The **Council** recognises that the occupational risks associated with driving are related to a wide range of factors including :
- Driver competence;
 - Vehicle maintenance;
 - Vehicle fitness for purpose;
 - Journey planning (including shift working and total hours worked);
 - Unaccompanied working;
 - The nature of the goods being transported;
 - Passenger behaviour;
 - Eligibility to drive (in terms of authority and legal ability to drive);
 - Medical fitness to drive;
- 2.3 The **County Council** will ensure that it operates systems to ensure the safety and roadworthiness of its motor fleet. It will ensure that any vehicles it supplies to its drivers are maintained by competent personnel and that drivers have access to technical and personal support in the case of breakdown or accident.
- 2.4 Employers who do not regularly check employee driving licences risk facing prosecution for “causing or permitting” an offence under Section 87(2) of The Road Traffic Act 1988 if an employee drives while disqualified and/or drives a class of vehicle for which they do not have entitlement to drive. Similarly, the law requires that all persons who drive on the public highway to be adequately and appropriately insured. This means that any person driving on **Council** business must be covered for “business use”. The **Council** will therefore ensure that an appropriate system of inspection is in operation to check that any persons required to drive hold current and valid driver documentation.
- 2.5 The **Council** will maintain a record of its motor vehicle accident history, which will be analysed to assist the identification of trends and to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of **Managers**

- 3.1 Driving on **Council** business (whether as part of regular duties or on an ad hoc basis), should be treated in the same way as any other job performance issues. **Managers** therefore have a duty to satisfy themselves that any drivers under their supervision can legally and safely drive the vehicle before giving authority to drive.
- 3.2 Driving is a foreseeable and significant risk and, to comply with current Health and Safety legislation, must be risk assessed. **Managers** must carry out a risk assessment for each driver they manage, whether they use a vehicle supplied by the **Council** or their own personal vehicle. This assessment should be reviewed each year, and amended accordingly. This may need to be reassessed throughout the year if any driving activity constitutes a greater hazard (i.e. longer journeys, weather conditions). Assessments should consider such issues as risk of fatigue, stress, working alone and suitability of the

vehicle for its intended purpose. The Council's [Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures are accessible from Staffnet](#).

3.3 Where risk assessment identifies a training need, **Managers** must ensure that appropriate action is taken for this need to be addressed. In particular, driver training, or attendance at a driving refresher course, is mandatory if the Driver has:

- Had two or more blameworthy collisions whilst driving for work (or whilst using their Leased Vehicle at any time) within the last three years; and / or
- Accumulated six or more current points on their driving licence; and / or
- Returned to driving duties following a period of disqualification.

The Dorset County Council Road Safety Team can be consulted in this respect.

3.4 **Managers** must ensure that all drivers under their supervision hold and maintain current and valid driver documentation. **Managers** must therefore satisfy themselves, on appointment of any new drivers, and at least annually thereafter, that:

- Anyone required to drive vehicles owned/leased/hired by the **County Council** (i) maintains a current, valid and appropriate driving licence for the type of vehicle concerned; and (ii) is medically fit to carry out the driving duties;
- Anyone who uses their own vehicles in order to undertake their role within the **County Council** (i) holds a current valid driving licence for the type of vehicle concerned; (ii) holds a current valid MOT certificate (where required); (iii) maintains an appropriate policy of insurance cover for business use; and (iv) that they are medically fit to carry out the driving duties.

3.5 In terms of fleet and hired vehicles, **Managers** must ensure that there is a system in place to ensure that vehicles are regularly checked for safety and are roadworthy, and that their drivers are aware of their obligations to carry out and record these daily inspections. **Managers** must also ensure that a record is maintained of who is driving the vehicle at any time. This will help to identify drivers in terms of responsibility for any collisions, fines or complaints.

3.6 **Managers** will ensure that any persons that use their own personal vehicle on official business are aware of their obligations to carry out regular safety checks of these vehicles.

3.7 Where a **Manager** believes that any injury, illness or impairment declared by a driver may impact on that person's ability to safely driver the vehicle, they must consult with the Council's Occupational Health team.

3.8 **Managers** must ensure that all drivers under their supervision are aware of the availability of the County Council's Corporate Drivers Handbook.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of all Drivers

4.1 All persons who drive on behalf of the **County Council** are personally responsible for ensuring that they are qualified to drive the relevant type of vehicle within the UK. They have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to take reasonable care of their own safety, and that of others that may be affected by their acts or omissions. Drivers are legally responsible for ensuring that any vehicle they intend to drive is in a safe and roadworthy condition. They must ensure that any concerns about the vehicle (any damage or faults, or lack of road fund licence or MOT etc) are reported to their Manager.

- 4.2 Drivers must be able to demonstrate to their **Manager** that they hold a valid driving licence that is appropriate for the use of the vehicle. Any person using their own personal vehicle on **County Council** business must be able to demonstrate that their motor vehicle insurance policy provides cover for use of that vehicle on the business of **Dorset County Council**, and that a current MOT is held where appropriate.
- 4.3 Drivers must comply with the Highway Code, safe driving practices and any other statutory provisions, for example:
- Wearing of seat belts and car restraints;
 - Not operating a mobile phone whilst driving;
 - Not driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any medication that may adversely impact on the ability to drive.
- 4.4 Where Drivers are responsible for transporting passengers (whether in a **County Council** supplied or personal vehicle) they must report any crash or collision, driving offences and possible proceedings or convictions to their **Manager** as soon as possible (regardless of whether such offences, proceedings or convictions occurred during their working day). All other persons who may drive on **Council** business must notify their **Manager** promptly in the event of any possible crash or collision, driving offences, proceedings or convictions that may impact on their legal entitlement to drive.
- 4.5 Any injury, illness, impairment or other circumstance (such as a course of certain medication) that may affect their ability to drive must be reported. It is the driver's responsibility to seek advice from their doctor and inform their **Manager** immediately. Any medical condition or impairment that has worsened, or new condition that may affect the ability to drive is experienced, must be reported by the driver to their **Manager**. The Driver Medical Unit, DVLA Swansea, SA99 1TU must also be notified. Failure to do so is a criminal offence punishable by a significant fine.
- 4.6 Any employed drivers who undertake additional employment outside of their employment with the **County Council** must seek permission from their **Head of Service / Director**, as noted within the **Council's** [Code of Conduct for Staff](#). Where this additional work involves driving, the number of hours would be cumulative with any hours spent driving on **Council** business in respect of the statutory limits contained within Drivers Hours Regulations. In such instances, the driver shall notify their **Manager** accordingly.
- 4.7 Smoking is not permitted in vehicles belonging to or hired by the **County Council**. It is also not permitted for drivers to smoke in their private vehicles (including lease cars) if used to carry members of staff or members of the public whilst carrying out their duties. The Dorset County Council [Smoke Free](#) guidance is accessible from Staffnet.
- 4.8 All disqualified drivers must obtain the authority of their **Manager** and be referred to the Dorset County Council Road Safety Team for a driving assessment before returning to driving duties.
- 4.9 Drivers must co-operate with the **Council** insofar as is necessary to enable it to comply with any duty or requirement placed upon it in respect of this policy.
- 5. Complaints, Disciplinary and Convictions**
- 5.1 Where a complaint is made relating to the use of a vehicle on **Council** business (whether in respect of the vehicle itself, or how it is being driven), the **Council's** [Complaints Procedures must be adhered to. These are accessible from Staffnet.](#)

- 5.2 A breach of this policy may give rise to a disciplinary action. This would be conducted in accordance with the [Council's Disciplinary Procedures which are accessible from Staffnet](#).
- 5.3 Drivers that have been disqualified from driving will be relieved of all driving duties with immediate effect. Advice will be sought from Human Resources to identify, in consultation with the individual and their **line-manager**, the most appropriate course of action. In some instances, this may result in termination of employment. Each case will be dealt with on its merits.
- 5.4 Any fines or convictions that result from a person's use of a motor vehicle are the sole responsibility of that person, other than where the **Council** itself is deemed responsible for such fine or conviction.

6. Policy Review

- 6.1 The **County Council** will review this policy at least every three years, to ensure that the systems in operation to support this policy remain robust and fit for purpose. In determining the successful application of this policy, the **County Council** will regularly review claim and collision statistics relating to occupational road risks. **Feedback will be co-ordinated via the Council's Vehicle Transport Users Group, who have reporting responsibilities to the Corporate Risk Management Group.**

Responsibility for update: Marc Eyre, Corporate Risk Officer

To be Reviewed Annually

Reviewed December 2011

Next Review Autumn 2012