

# Staff Travel – Benefits & Incentives Review

## Introduction

This review summarises the current staff and member travel benefits and, incentives at East Staffordshire Borough Council (ESBC).

It is based on internal ESBC documents, a recent Executive Decision Record, and relevant findings from the 2023 Staff Travel Survey. The review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of existing travel schemes and their awareness levels among staff to inform the development of a Sustainable Staff Travel Plan.

## Review Findings

### Car Necessity scheme

- 65 employees currently use this scheme
- Business mileage rate set at [HMRC rate, currently 45p per mile](#) for all fuel types, including electric vehicles
- Council reimburses annual car insurance and breakdown cover up to £900 per annum

In addition, the Council operates an ‘Essential Car User Allowance’ which includes a lump sum each month, the amount depends on the size of the car engine.

(Source: [Car Necessity Scheme | Intranet](#))

### Cycle to Work Scheme:

- Run by [Cycle Solutions](#)
- Offers 25-39% savings on new bikes and accessories through salary sacrifice
- 38 employees have used the scheme, with 6 having had two bikes
- Business mileage rate for cycling is 20p per mile
- 76% of the 2023 travel survey respondents were aware of its existence, and 7.6% have used it.

### Share-A-Lift Scheme:

- Previously operated by Staffordshire County Council
- Put on hold during Covid-19 and has not been renewed
- Low levels of awareness and interest among staff

### Public Transport Passes:

- A salary sacrifice scheme for bus passes was previously considered but not implemented (referenced in the 'ESBC 2010 travel plan'. This is also referred to in the '[Code-of-Conduct-for-Officers.pdf](#)', Page 15, Section 14.)
- Reason for non-implementation is unclear
- Low levels of awareness and interest among staff

### Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme:

- Recently approved pilot scheme for Chief Officers (EDR 170.24 Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme.pdf) is being rolled out
- Administered by [Knowles Fleet](#)
- Aims to improve access to fully electric and hybrid vehicles
- The intention is for the wider roll-out of the scheme if the pilot is successful

### Elected Members' Travel:

- Claim mileage electronically (not through HR21)
- Paid at HMRC rate of 45p per mile
- Classified distinctly as "Members" for travel purposes

### Awareness of Travel Schemes:

- 58% of the 2023 travel survey respondents were unaware of where to find information about these schemes
- Cycle to Work Scheme has the highest awareness (76%) and usage (7.6%)
- Other schemes show lower levels of awareness and usage
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## Analysis and Interpretation

1. **The Car Necessity Scheme** appears to be the most established and utilised benefit, supporting those who require a car for work purposes. However, it doesn't differentiate between traditional and low-emission vehicles in terms of mileage rates.
2. **The Cycle to Work Scheme** shows the highest awareness and usage among staff, indicating a positive foundation for promoting cycling as a sustainable commuting option.
3. The new **Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme** demonstrates ESBC's commitment to promoting low-emission vehicles. Although its current limitation to Chief Officers may restrict its impact, the wider roll-out of the scheme will be more beneficial.
4. The consistent mileage rate between staff and members suggests a uniform approach to travel reimbursement across the organisation.
5. There's a significant **communication challenge** regarding travel schemes, with over half of staff unaware of where to find information about these benefits.

## Recommendations

- **Build on the success of the Cycle to Work Scheme** by further promoting and potentially expanding its offerings.
- **Gauge staff appetite to reintroduce a car-sharing scheme** and scope out possible car share schemes available (For example the 'lift-share' app), addressing reasons for its previous suspension and low awareness.
- **Scope out current discount schemes available for public transport passes** with local operators including buses and trains.
- **Explore opportunities to work with other councils to offer reduced/free parking at or close to their train stations** (e.g. Derby, Stafford etc.), with us providing the same to their staff, so that Council staff can park for free at neighbouring councils car parks to reduce the overall cost of rail travel.
- If successful, develop a plan to **roll out the Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme** to a wider group of employees.
- **Review the Car Necessity Scheme** to potentially differentiate mileage rates for low-emission vehicles, encouraging more sustainable choices.
- **Develop a comprehensive communication strategy** to improve awareness of all available travel benefits and incentives among staff and members.
- **Regularly review and update** travel benefits to ensure they align with the council's sustainability goals and staff needs.

These recommendations aim to enhance awareness and utilisation of existing travel benefits while suggesting potential new initiatives to promote more sustainable travel choices among ESBC staff and members.