

# SAFER DRIVING FOR WORK PROCEDURE

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## Corporate Health and Safety

### H+S P008

**Author:** Corporate Health and Safety  
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## 1. Introduction

This procedure forms part of BCP Council's Health, Safety and Welfare Policy. It follows the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. There are also obligations under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide 2007 Act.

The aim of this procedure is to clarify the responsibilities and obligations of BCP Council, its managers, drivers and others who may be affected. It also seeks to provide guidance on appropriate and safe driving for work.

We, as vehicle drivers, have duties under road traffic law, the enforcement of which is administered by the Police and Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA). A vehicle is considered to be a place of work. When someone drives as part of their work, both the employer and the individual driving share the responsibility of making sure that the risks are properly identified and managed. The management of driving activities through procedures, risk assessment and developing safe working practices for driving activities is essential to ensure safety, compliance and to reduce accidents. Work-related driving does not include travel to and from your home and your normal place of work.

## 2. Definitions

ACOP	Approved Code of Practice – HSE guidance and standards to assist with compliance of legal duties
CPC	Certificate of Professional Competence - 35 hours of periodic training undertaken every 5 years for lorry, bus and coach drivers
Driver	The person in control of the vehicle (including motorcycles) who may be a BCP Council employee, an elected member, agency worker, volunteer, contractor or someone permitted to drive under the contracted hire car agreement
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency - an executive agency of the UK Department for Transport (DfT) who maintain the registration and licensing of drivers in Great Britain. They also maintain the registration and licensing of vehicles, together with the collection and enforcement of Vehicle Excise Duty in the UK
DVSA	Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency - an executive agency of the UK Department for Transport (DfT) which carries out driving tests, approves people to be driving instructors and MOT testers, carries out tests to make sure lorries and buses are safe to drive, carries out roadside checks on drivers and vehicles and monitors vehicle recalls
Grey Fleet	A vehicle that does not form part of the corporate fleet but is used for business travel, for example, a privately owned vehicle
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
LGV	Large Goods Vehicle - a vehicle with a combination mass over 3500kg (3.5 tonnes)

LOLER	Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
Motor vehicle	An automobile, automobile truck, automobile wagon, motorcycle, or any other self-propelled vehicle designed for running on land but not on rails
'O' licence	Operator's Licence – a legal requirement to be held when operating heavy goods vehicles, for example, refuse freighters
PUWER	Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
RTA	Road Traffic Act
RTC	Road Traffic Collision - a collision involving a vehicle on a road or in a public area that has caused damage or injury to a person, animal, another vehicle or property
Tailgating	A careless driving offence whereby a driver is travelling at an unsafe distance (too close) to the vehicle in front which would make it difficult to avoid a collision should the vehicle need to brake quickly
Traffic Commissioner	Responsible for the licensing and regulation of operators of heavy goods vehicles
Uninsured losses	The costs that insurance policies do not cover, such as, staff absence, incident investigation time, retraining
VOSA	Vehicle and Operator Services Agency

### 3. Responsibilities

BCP Council will fulfil its requirements to ensure that its vehicles, drivers and operations are carried out in a safe manner by ensuring that it has appropriate local procedures in place to comply with legislation, national guidance and best practice. This includes additional responsibilities under its Operator's Licence (O-Licence).

This procedure applies to anyone who operates a motor vehicle on behalf of the council, whether this is a fleet vehicle, a hire vehicle or a personal vehicle. Non-compliance may result in additional training or disciplinary action.

BCP Council as the employer, so far as is reasonably practicable, must ensure:

- the health and safety of colleagues who are required to drive as part of their employment either on the public highway or off road
- the health and safety of non-employees who might be affected by our operations
- measures are identified and implemented as part of the risk assessment and management process
- the risks from work related journeys are reduced to as low a level as possible
- that colleagues do not drive whilst disqualified, uninsured or drive a class of vehicle for which they do not have entitlement

Managers or supervisors must ensure that all colleagues who operate a fleet, hire or their own vehicle:

- hold a current valid driving licence for the type of vehicle they are operating
- complete F008a (hire or grey fleet) or FL001 (fleet drivers) Driver Declaration and licence check authorisation documentation
- have the correct medical examinations (fleet vehicles)
- completed their CPC (fleet vehicles, if required)
- hold an insurance policy, which includes cover for the vehicle for business use
- have a valid road fund licence
- have a valid MOT certificate (for vehicles over 3 years of age)
- have read and understood your driving for work risk assessment
- are aware of the obligations of this procedure and the [Vehicle Usage Policy \[insert link\]](#)

Documents and licence checks should be carried out for new starters on commencement of employment and as a minimum annually for existing colleagues.

#### **4. Risk assessment**

Driving is one of the most dangerous activities that we undertake. Managers are responsible for ensuring that all significant risks associated with the Service Directorate or school activities have been assessed. A generic safer driving risk assessment [F008b insert link] has been created as a template to assist you carrying out a driving at work risk assessment. Specific activities or hazards identified that are not covered within the assessment should be added or assessed separately.

Common hazards associated with driving include:

- speeding
- fatigue
- fitness to drive
- driver distractions

#### **5. Driver declaration**

Prior to undertaking any driving for work the “Permit to Drive – Driver declaration and licence check authorisation” form F008a [insert link] must be completed for grey fleet or hire vehicle drivers. Form FL001 must be completed by fleet drivers.

For new starters this will be on commencement of employment and regularly thereafter on an annual basis.

It must also be repeated whenever there is a change in your information or circumstances such as:

- a change of address
- a change of insurance provider
- a licence endorsement (offence, court proceedings or conviction)
- a road traffic incident
- any injury, illness, impairment or medication that may affect your ability to drive
- additional employment, particularly if it involves driving

All drivers must be fully conversant with the [Highway Code](#) and comply with the contents at all times whilst driving for work. It is recommended that you refresh yourself of the Highway Code at least annually.

## **6. Grey fleet**

All colleagues who drive their own vehicle for council business are required to:

- hold a current valid driving licence for the type of vehicle they will be driving
- have a valid motor insurance policy which includes 'business use', not just social, domestic and pleasure including commuting
- have a valid motor insurance policy where, if the carriage of passengers is required, includes cover for the carriage of passengers as part of the 'business use'
- have a valid road fund licence (tax disc)
- have a valid MOT certificate (if the vehicle is over three years old)
- have a roadworthy vehicle
- be aware of this procedure and abide by its contents

Managers of colleagues who drive their own vehicle on behalf of the organisation should schedule in reminders to obtain this documentation. Colleagues should also do the same for every change of detail, such as those listed in [Section 5 Driver Declaration](#). As a minimum this declaration and checks should be completed annually.

## **7. Licence checks and endorsements**

BCP Council can risk prosecution if you drive on company business whilst disqualified, uninsured, or if you operate a class of vehicle which you do not have an entitlement to drive. To prevent this, regular checks must be made on your driving licence.

United Kingdom driving licence information can be accessed online. For your licence information to be shared with your manager or a hire company, you will need to obtain a '[check code](#)'. You can also use this service to see what types of vehicles you are entitled to drive and check your endorsements. Before starting you will need to know your:

- driving licence number
- National Insurance number
- postcode

Your check code should be passed to your manager within 21 days of you generating it. They will also need the last 8 characters of your driving licence number in order to access the [driving licence online](#) check.

In addition to the online check for vehicle categories, address and endorsements, managers must also check the following information on your physical licence:

- your name
- the licence is current (photo' licences are only valid for 10 years)
- you have signed it

Drivers who have accrued six or more points should have their driving licences checked on a more regular basis. Local arrangements should be made to ensure that this takes place.

## 8. Insurance

The law requires that anyone who drives on the public highway is appropriately insured.

If you are driving your own vehicle on council business, you must be covered for “business use” on your insurance policy. “Commuting” is not the same as “business use”. Commuting will only cover you to your usual, permanent one place of work and does not cover travel from site to site. Travel to attend training at a location other than your permanent one place of work will require you to have “business use” on your motor vehicle insurance policy.

When checking insurance cover for business use you will need to confirm that:

- the insurance certificate states the vehicle is owned by the policyholder
- the period of insurance is current
- you are named as either the policyholder or as a person entitled to drive
- your name is detailed within the ‘limitation to use’ section as being able to drive the vehicle for your official business

Drivers of fleet vehicles will be covered under the council’s motor vehicle insurance policy.

Minimum age requirements must be met and they must hold a valid driving licence for the vehicle being driven.

## 9. Condition of the vehicle

As a driver, you are legally responsible for ensuring that any vehicle you drive is in a safe and roadworthy condition.

All drivers should undertake basic vehicle checks prior to driving. This includes checks that:

- all lights work
- mirrors are fitted and adjusted correctly
- tyre pressures and treads are sufficient
- windscreen wipers work
- all fluid levels are correct, including fuel

Managers with responsibility for fleet vehicles must make sure that regular service and maintenance is scheduled and that daily defect sheets are completed. An obviously faulty vehicle should not be driven. [Further information can be found under the Vehicle Usage Policy \[insert link\].](#)

Fleet vehicles should remain visually clean, both inside and externally to maintain the reputation of the organisation. Both fleet and private vehicle drivers should ensure that the interior of the vehicle is kept in a condition that will not adversely affect your ability to drive safely, for example, free of items that may roll under your feet or pedals.

If you are hiring a vehicle, the hire company should show you around the vehicle, explaining its operating controls, locking system and alarm, the fuel type and agree any pre-existing damage. Further information can be found in the [Vehicle Usage Policy \[insert link\].](#)

## 10. Driver behaviour

The Council’s reputation may be damaged if you behave unsafely whilst driving for work. Unsafe and unreasonable behaviours can include tailgating, speeding, poor parking, shouting, swearing or gesticulating at other road users and pedestrians. All fleet vehicles are numbered and can be traced back to the driver at the time of an incident should a complaint be lodged.



## **11. Journey planning**

Where possible the need to travel should be eliminated. Consider whether you could communicate by telephone, email, video conferencing or MS Teams or whether an alternative, greener method of transport could be taken. If you absolutely need to use a vehicle, remember to plan the journey.

Journey planning should consider any factors that may affect the length of travel time such as, traffic 'black spots', time of day and higher risk areas, such as schools. Also consider if the weather conditions could affect your travel time. The risk of an accident or breaking the speed limit will increase if you are rushing or distracted because you are late or lost.

Allow for sufficient travel time and incorporate comfort breaks for longer journeys – do not drive for over two hours without a break or for more than eight hours in a day.

## **12. Driving conditions**

Weather conditions, the length of the day and driving in the sun, rain, snow or fog can all have a significant impact on your safety whilst driving. Check the weather in advance and on the day, particularly if driving for longer periods.

Driving in the dark increases the risk of an accident. Try to avoid driving late at night or very early in the morning between the hours of 02:00 and 06:00 when you are particularly sleepy. Driving whilst tired is a common cause of accidents. Where possible arrange for the driving time to be within your normal working hours. Consider whether an overnight stay may be a safer option.

## **13. Lone working**

Where practicable lone working should be avoided. This includes driving as part of a work-related activity.

Follow the advice on safe driving and follow your lone working team procedures using any provided devices or arrangements. As a minimum provide your route, destination and estimated time of arrival to your line manager or colleagues.

## **14. Speeding**

A speed limit is the absolute maximum and does not mean that it is safe to drive at that speed, irrespective of the conditions. Driving at a speed that is too fast for the road or traffic conditions can be dangerous.

You should always comply with the [speed limit](#) in force on the public highway. Drive at a speed that is appropriate for the type of vehicle, road, weather conditions and load which will allow you to stop safely.

Speeds should be reduced when:

- the road layout or conditions presents hazards, such as bends
- you are sharing the road with pedestrians (particularly children) and cyclists
- weather conditions make it safer
- whilst driving at night when visibility may be reduced

A speed limit of 5mph should always be observed in any public open space or footpath, unless the speed is related to the efficiency of the task concerned, for example, manufacturers' guidelines may suggest a greater speed for certain operations such as gang mowing.

You may also need to consider whether the area is cordoned off or a banks person is required, whether vehicle warning lights or messages are necessary and any other relevant safety considerations. These should all be considerations of the risk assessment of the activity.

A record should be made of who is driving a fleet vehicle at any time. This will help to identify drivers in terms of responsibility for any collisions, penalty fines or complaints.

## **15. Use of mobile telephones and other hand-held devices**

Evidence highlights that use of a mobile telephone whilst driving increases the risk of incidents fourfold. Telephone use by the driver has also been linked to reduced hazard detection ability, poor lane discipline, variable speed choices and longer reaction times, all increasing the risk of a road traffic incident.

It is illegal to use a hand-held mobile telephone whilst driving, this includes texting, accessing smart 'phone apps or even holding the 'phone whilst driving. You must not use your hand-held mobile phone, smartphone or PDA even when stopped at traffic lights or in queueing traffic. If the Police think you're distracted and not in control of your vehicle you could still get stopped and penalised. This extends to eating and drinking whilst driving.

Whilst hands-free mobile telephone use is not illegal, it is prohibited under this procedure to make or receive calls and read or send texts. You should either switch off your 'phone or enable voicemail or call diversion whilst driving. Plan your journey to allow yourself time to respond to messages, calls and emails once safely parked with the engine turned off and keys removed from the ignition.

When calling a colleague on their mobile be aware that they may be driving – check their calendar prior to calling and establish that they are safely parked prior to continuing the conversation.

Managers should lead by example and not use a telephone whilst driving, nor expect colleagues to answer calls whilst driving. Pressures of work should not be such that colleagues feel that they must use a telephone whilst driving. Remember it is your driving licence and your job that may be at risk.

The mobile 'phone may be used for genuine emergency calls only, where it is unsafe or impractical to stop.

There may be exceptional cases where the use of hand-free technology is permitted for specific purposes, where it would not be practical, for operational reasons, for the driver to park to make or receive a call. This requires a written assessment, authorised by management with control measures in place to reduce the risks as far as is reasonably practicable. Such controls could include answering the call when the vehicle has reached a safe place or requesting a passenger colleague respond.

Non-compliance may result in additional training or disciplinary action.

## **16. Driver distractions**

Drivers must exercise proper control of their vehicles at all times. It is dangerous to take your hands off the steering wheel or your eyes off the road for any reason unconnected with driving. In  
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addition to hand-held devices, other potential distractions include smoking, eating, drinking, adjusting the radio and using satellite navigation systems.

## **17. Smoking**

In 2007 legislation was passed that made it illegal to smoke in all workplaces. Smoking (including e-cigarettes) is not permitted in vehicles owned or hired by BCP Council. Appropriate signage must be displayed in these vehicles. It is also not permitted for drivers to smoke in their own vehicles if they are used to transport colleagues or members of the public whilst carrying out their duties.

## **18. Drink and drug driving**

Drink and drugs can affect your judgement and reactions. Driving whilst unfit to do so due to alcohol or drug consumption is illegal and may result in fines, disqualification or imprisonment.

Factors such as your age, weight, gender, metabolism and stomach contents all contribute to the type and quantity of drink or drug you can consume and remain under the legal limit.

The legal limits for alcohol in the UK are as follows:

<b>Level of alcohol</b>	<b>England, Wales and Northern Ireland</b>
Micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath	35
Milligrammes per 100 millilitres of blood	80
Milligrammes per 100 millilitres of urine	107

There are also 'acceptable' limits on 8 legal drugs with a 'zero tolerance' level for 8 illegal drugs where accidental exposure can be discounted. Further information can be found [here](#).

For the benefit of doubt the safest course of action is not to drink or drug drive.

If you are concerned that you may be drink or drug dependent speak to your GP, manager or Human Resources who will be able to signpost you to receive appropriate assistance.

## **19. Fitness to drive**

Driving whilst feeling unwell, being in pain or emotional distress can cause distracted driving. If you feel ill whilst operating a vehicle, you should stop as soon as it is safe to do so and inform your line manager where necessary.

If you are involved in an accident and it is found that your health condition was a contributing factor to the incident, you may be prosecuted and your insurance invalidated. Some medical conditions may affect your entitlement to hold a driving licence for certain categories of vehicle. It is your responsibility to seek advice from your GP and immediately inform your manager in such cases.

Where such a medical condition or impairment has worsened, or new condition develops that affects your ability to drive you must notify the DVLA of a '[notifiable medical condition](#)'. Failure to do so is a criminal offence punishable by up to £1,000 fine and prosecution if you are involved in an accident as a result.

Notifiable conditions are anything that could affect your ability to drive safely. These can include:

- diabetes or taking insulin
- heart conditions
- sleep apnoea
- epilepsy
- glaucoma and cataracts
- vertigo and labyrinthitis

Following completion of the relevant form associated with your condition it should be sent to:

The Driver Medical Group, DVLA Swansea, SA99 1TU.

Some prescription and over-the-counter medicines can affect driving by causing drowsiness or slowing reaction times. These can include:

- cough medicines
- hay fever remedies
- anti-nausea treatments
- anti-depressants
- pain relief

When starting to take a new medication you should check with the person dispensing it whether it is safe to drive. Always read the information leaflet and associated contraindications.

Some medication may state "Warning: This medicine may make you sleepy. If this happens, do not drive or use tools or machines". This means that the medication may cause drowsiness and affect co-ordination, slow reaction times and cause lapses in concentration which may affect your ability to drive. These effects may only occur in the first few days of treatment or may continue throughout the course of the treatment. You should talk to your line manager to discuss any implications. You are not required to disclose the reason why you are taking the medication.

Where a manager believes that any injury, illness or impairment declared by a driver may impact that person's ability to safely drive the vehicle, they should consult with Occupational Health.

The entitlement to drive lorries, minibuses or buses on a vocational driving licence, such as a PCV or LGV licence is valid until the driver's 45th birthday. After that, drivers will need to renew entitlement every five years until aged 65. After the age of 65 drivers must renew their licence annually. Further information can be found in the Vehicle Usage Policy.

## **20. Eyesight standards**

Drivers must be able to read a vehicle number plate from a distance of 20.5 metres (approx. five car lengths) in good daylight. If you need to wear glasses or contact lenses to do this, you must wear them at all times whilst driving.

If you think that you may not meet the standard, please get your eyes tested. If the optometrist advises that your vision does not meet safety standards you must inform the DVLA and your line manager, if driving forms part of your work activity. It is recommended that drivers have regular eye tests every two years.

## 21. Tiredness and fatigue

Driving whilst fatigued has been likened to a driver operating a vehicle whilst intoxicated with drink or drugs. The effects can be slower reaction times, reduced vigilance and difficulty processing information. To prevent this, try to avoid driving at times when you would usually be asleep or at peak times of sleepiness, such as during the afternoon 'dip' of 2 - 4pm. If you feel excessively tired it may help to consider lifestyle factors that may be contributing, such as family commitments, evening socialising, heavy workload, medication or stress.

Colleagues should also be aware of sleep associated disorders. These are conditions that result in changes in the way you sleep, which can affect your health, safety and overall quality of life. There are several different types of sleep disorders, common types include:

- insomnia – difficulty in falling or staying asleep
- sleep apnoea – experiencing abnormal breathing patterns whilst asleep
- restless leg syndrome – an urge to move the legs whilst trying to fall asleep
- narcolepsy – extreme sleepiness and falling asleep suddenly during the day

Some of the signs and symptoms of sleep disorders include excessive sleepiness during the daytime, increased movement or irregular breathing during sleep, difficulty falling asleep and irregular sleep and wake cycles. Speak to your GP if you feel excessively tired or have any concerns.

Tiredness does not suddenly occur but can creep up on us gradually with a number of warning signs. Sleep deprivation can affect your ability to drive safely and increase the risk of other health concerns. By being aware of these warning signs and taking notice of your body you can drive more safely.

Warning signs of driving while tired include:

- difficulty concentrating
- persistent yawning
- difficulty keeping your eyes open
- head drooping or nodding
- frequent blinking
- changes in speed
- lane drifting

Always plan your journey to incorporate a fifteen minute break for every two hours of driving. Ideally you should use this break as an opportunity to get out of your vehicle to stretch your legs and get some fresh air. Plan your journey to identify rest locations where it is safe to park. If you begin to feel sleepy while driving you must take a break, even if this is not 'due'. Pull over in a safe place as soon as possible (never on the motorway hard shoulder) and take a fifteen minute power nap. Do not rely on caffeine or rolling down the window for fresh air to stay awake.

## 22. Personal safety and security

Some risks may increase whilst traveling or lone working within a vehicle, particularly females traveling alone. A lone working risk assessment should be undertaken, giving consideration to the following aspects:

- ensure your vehicle is road worthy
- ensure you have sufficient fuel

- try to travel during daylight hours
- travel on main roads as much as possible
- ensure that someone knows your route and schedule
- listen ahead to the weather forecast, if in doubt postpone the trip
- confirm parking and meeting arrangements prior to travel
- ensure your resources are reliable with up to date sat nav or maps; if you do need to ask for directions use someone in an establishment rather than a stranger on the street
- keep your mobile telephone charged (but do not use it whilst driving)
- in the event of a breakdown try to find an appropriate place to stop that is busy and well-lit
- consider an emergency kit: enough money for a telephone call, blanket, coat, torch, sensible shoes
- stop at places that are busy and well-lit; look for locations that have other people around
- be aware of your surroundings; put your telephone away and leave headphones out
- be cautious of anyone who signals that there is something wrong with your vehicle (unless you know they are right and it is dangerous to proceed)
- do not stop to provide assistance; get to a safe place and then call for help
- do not offer lifts to strangers or people
- consider locking your doors whilst driving, do not leave valuables on view on the front seat
- if you need to talk to someone, only roll the window down a few centimetres
- in the event of a breakdown, sit in the front passenger seat (if safe to do so) to give the impression you are waiting for the driver to return
- don't drive distracted; ensure that you are physically and mentally fit and in-vehicle entertainment volume is not too loud
- avoid road rage – if you make a mistake, hold up your hand to acknowledge fault
- park in a secured car park that is well lit, with restricted entry and exit points and CCTV
- if possible, reverse into a parking space, close to the exit and away from pillars
- make a mental note of your car location and have your keys ready when returning to your vehicle

## 23. Safety features

Vehicles have many safety features that minimise the effects of injury. Vehicles that score highly on the EuroNCAP [tests](#) exceed the minimum legal safety standards that all cars must meet. It is recommended that grey fleet vehicles meet a minimum rating of 4 stars.

### Head restraints

The main purpose of a head restraint is to prevent whiplash. The top of the head restraint should be level with the top of the driver or passengers head and be positioned as close to the back of the head as possible.

### Seatbelts

Seatbelts are designed to keep people in their seat and reduce road traffic related injuries caused from impact with the vehicle's interior or from being thrown from a vehicle.

It is a legal requirement that all vehicle occupants use their seat belt for all journeys where fitted (unless [exempt or on medical grounds](#)). Only one person should sit in each seat fitted with a seat belt.

Drivers making door-to-door deliveries and collections are exempt from wearing seat belts only where the vehicle is being driven less than 50 metres between stops.

## Airbags

Vehicle airbags are designed to reduce injury in the event of a serious crash by either cushioning or completely preventing the occupants coming into contact with the interior of the vehicle. They are designed to be used in conjunction with seatbelts.

If your vehicle has a front passenger airbag, animals and infants in rear-facing seats must ride in the back seat.

## Transporting children

When carrying children, they must have the correct car seat for their weight, height and age. Drivers are legally responsible for ensuring that all passengers under the age of fourteen are wearing suitable restraints. The safest place for children in a vehicle is in the centre of the back seat with a lap and shoulder seatbelt. Further information is available [here](#).

## Wheelchairs

Ideally, wheelchair users should transfer to vehicle seats and their wheelchair be stowed securely. Where this is not possible, wheelchairs should be appropriately restrained, both for the safety of the occupant and other vehicle passengers. The wheelchair's Instructions for Use (IFU) will indicate whether the chair is suitable for occupied use in a vehicle and detail how this can be safely achieved.

A suitable risk assessment should be completed to take into account the requirements of the wheelchair user giving consideration to their upper body and head control, restraint system and head support along with any additional accessories that may be required.

## 24. Transporting and securing loads

Part of driving for work may involve transporting heavy or awkward objects and equipment. As the driver you are responsible for the load, even if it has been secured by someone else. There are several safety considerations when transporting loads, these include:

- the weight of the load
- the vehicle legal maximum carrying capacity
- how a vehicle handles whilst loaded

Loads must be secured at all times, this includes passengers and any items such as tools, materials, equipment roof racks and trailers. Items should not be loaded above the height of the rear seats or on the parcel shelf. Loose loads within the vehicle will become projectiles in the event of an emergency manoeuvre or accident.

Keep heavy loads low down and between the wheel axles if possible. The securing system must be able to secure the full weight of the load forwards and half the weight of the load to the rear. It must also be able to secure half the weight of the loads to the sides.

A loaded vehicle will handle differently to an unloaded one. Allow a greater braking distance and reduce speed when driving a loaded vehicle. A risk assessment and safe systems of work should be in place for loading, unloading, moving, securing and safe access onto and egress from a vehicle.

It is an offence to exceed the permitted weights for a vehicle. Fines may be issued to both the driver and the us. The driver's licence could also be endorsed if their vehicle is found to be overweight. VOSA have provided a [factsheet](#) for drivers to highlight the dangers of overloading vehicles.

## **25. Load shedding**

Several factors may affect the security of the load or lead to the rollover of a vehicle. All vehicles have the potential to roll, however, under certain conditions some vehicles are more susceptible.

Some of the major causes are:

- failure to understand how a loaded vehicle handles
- suspension and tyre failure
- high winds
- kerbing and soft ground
- poor load and weight distribution
- momentum and speed
- gravity

To reduce the risk of rollover and load shedding, ensure that:

- your vehicle is in good condition
- your load is secure and heavier items are as low to the chassis as possible
- you remain focussed and in control of your vehicle - avoid sharp manoeuvres and drive in accordance with the vehicle type, road, load and weather conditions

## **26. Hazardous substances**

In accordance with COSHH Regulations, a risk assessment will need to be carried out when transporting hazardous substances. These substances or products may have additional considerations when being transported in the event of their unintended release.

## **27. Minibuses**

There is specific information available for mini-bus drivers who may transport service users and [pupils](#). Ensure prior to any trip that you hold the relevant licence requirement and appropriate insurance cover. The [Driving and Operating a minibus good practice guide](#) provides more information.

ROSPA best practice guidance can be found [here](#) and further information is available from the government website.

## **28. Parking whilst on council business**

It is an offence to park where your vehicle would endanger, inconvenience or obstruct other road users or pedestrians. The [Highway Code](#) offers further guidance on waiting and parking.

Only in exceptional situations, with a risk assessment and manager's approval, such as passenger transport, may work vehicles temporarily cause an obstruction to pedestrians or other road users.

Drivers should always purchase a parking ticket or display a relevant permit, as required by parking signage, to cover the appropriate time period needed to carry out their duties. Doors and



windows should be closed, the vehicle locked and any equipment or valuables secured, stored out of sight or removed where possible.

Vehicles associated with highway works or inspection should be identified with flashing amber lights and signage compliant with Chapter 8 of the [Traffic Signs Manual](#). Vehicles should only remain at the site in order to carry out duties required by the progress of the works.

## **29. Road Traffic Collisions (RTC)**

In the unfortunate event that you are involved in a road traffic collision (RTC) try to remain calm.

Stop the vehicle as soon as safely possible to do so, turn off the engine and turn on your hazard lights. Check yourself and your passengers for any injuries. If there are casualties or the road is blocked, call the emergency services and follow any instructions given.

Exchange your details; name and address, registration number (and insurance details if known). Try to make a note of the details surrounding the incident – include the other vehicle's details (make, model, colour, registration), note the number of passengers and obtain their names. Record the time and location of the incident, include driving conditions, lighting, weather and road quality. Take photographs if appropriate and safe to do so.

Do not admit liability.

If no one is injured there is no requirement to call the Police or other emergency service. If any of the following occurs, call the Police as soon as possible:

- the other driver or drivers leave the scene without providing their details
- you think the other driver may not be insured or is under the influence of drink or drugs
- you suspect that the other driver caused the collision deliberately

Fleet drivers should follow the instructions in the vehicle packs provided and notify their line manager.

If driving your own vehicle for work purposes, you should notify your insurer and line manager as soon as possible.

## **30. Breakdowns**

All fleet vehicles have breakdown cover, details can be found in the driver pack within the vehicle.

If you are using your own vehicle for work-related driving, you will need to make your own breakdown arrangements. This is not an expense that can be claimed back as owning and running cost expenditures are covered within the business mileage rate.

In the unfortunate event of a breakdown, ensure that the following actions are taken for the safety of yourself, passengers and others.

- ensure the vehicle is in a safe place
  - move your vehicle off the road if possible
  - on a motorway pull off at the nearest exit, or onto the hard shoulder, keeping as far to the left as possible with your wheels turned to the left
- put your hazard lights on
- stay away from moving traffic

- use the doors away from the passing traffic
- on a motorway, move up the bank and behind the crash barriers, upstream of oncoming traffic
- leave any animals in the vehicle
- be seen, wear a reflective jacket or light coloured clothing if available

### **31. Being stopped by the Police or other enforcing authority**

The UK police have the power to stop you whilst driving at any time. Failure to stop is a criminal offence. When requested to stop by a traffic enforcement officer you must do so safely as soon as possible.

If you have been asked to stop and have committed a traffic offence, the police may issue you with a:

- fixed penalty notice (FPN) or a defect rectification notice
- search you and your vehicle
- arrest and detain you for further investigation, such as suspected drink or drug driving
- confiscate your vehicle, for example, if you are not insured

You may be asked to produce documents such as:

- driving licence
- insurance document
- MOT certificate

If you do not have these documents on you, you will be given the option to produce them at a police station of your choice within a specified time scale. The police have the power to issue on-the-spot fixed penalty notices, request that you provide a breath test or have your vehicle seized.

DVSA officers have the power to stop commercial vehicles to carry out spot checks, which may be carried out at the roadside or a dedicated test site. Checks can include the load type and authorised vehicle weights, road worthiness of your vehicle, your driving licence and tachograph records. Similarly, to the Police, DVSA officers can issue fixed penalties, prohibitions or impound your vehicle for serious offences. Failure to stop may result in court action, involvement of the Traffic Commissioner and suspension of the council's O-licence.

### **Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)**

An FPN is a one-off fine issued for minor traffic offences. Non-endorsable offences - those that do not lead to points on your licence usually incur smaller fines than endorsable offence. Recipients have 28 days to pay the fine or request a hearing, otherwise the fine will increase by 50%. Failure to pay an FPN for an offence detected by an automatic camera will mean that you will be reported for prosecution.

### **Vehicle defect rectification notice**

If you are found to be driving a defective vehicle you may be issued with a notice. You are required to fix the fault and provide proof that the fault has been rectified within the timescale specified on the notice. For fleet vehicles, this must be reported to the Fleet Transport department as soon as possible.

An overview of penalty points (endorsements) for motoring offence convictions can be found [here](#). In all cases it is the driver's responsibility to pay any fines. Whether you are driving your own or a fleet vehicle, you must inform your line manager as soon as possible. Grey fleet drivers must also inform their insurers. It is likely that your premium will increase, however, failure to do so and in the event of a subsequent claim your insurance may be invalidated.

## **32. Sustainability**

Due to a climate emergency being declared alternative means of transport should be considered prior to using motorised transport. Consider whether you are able to eliminate the need to travel by using email, telephone or video conferencing or by using a more sustainable means of transport such as walking, cycling or public transport.

Further information can be found in the [Interim Travel Plan](#).

## **33. Additional information**

If you have any queries about this procedure, please contact a member of [Corporate Health and Safety](#).

There are a number of supporting forms that accompany this document along with other associated Procedures. These include:

F008a Driver Declaration and licence check authorisation

F008b Work-related driving risk assessment (generic)

FL001 Fleet Driver Declaration and licence check authorisation

[P001 Risk Assessment Procedure](#)

[P002 Violence and Threatening Behaviour Procedure](#)

P010 COSHH Procedure

F010 COSHH Risk Assessment

[P012 Lone Working Procedure](#)

Vehicle Usage Policy

## **34. Revision history**

Version Number	Review Date	Amendments Made
V1.0		New BCP Council document