

Report to:	AUDIT COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	John-Paul Lovie – Head of Waste Policy and Partnerships
Meeting	29 February 2024

INTERNAL AUDIT FOLLOW UP - DRIVING AT WORK

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider a progress report on the recommendations made in the internal audit report Driving at Work issued on the 31 January 2023.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the actions being implemented to address the audit recommendations relating to the Driving at Work audit.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To enable Audit Committee to consider an update and progress report on the audit recommendations.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 N/a

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 This audit impacts on the Council's organisational resilience priority.

6.0 Background information

6.1 Blackpool Council defines driving at work as being any driving activities carried out by staff or volunteers, assisting the Council in the delivery of their business and whilst in the course of their work. This includes occasional driving to meetings. Line managers and employees both have responsibilities to ensure compliance with the Council's driving at work requirements, whether using their own personal vehicle or operating Blackpool Council's fleet of vehicles or machinery.

Blackpool Council employees undertaking business mileage using their personal vehicle are referred

to as 'grey' fleet. As Blackpool Council does not have any responsibility for the maintenance of the vehicles in use, the employee is responsible for ensuring that their vehicle is roadworthy and are required to provide evidence to their line manager prior to Council related use. Driving for business use does not include commuting to and from work, however any travel to meetings or an alternative site to the usual work location is classed as business mileage. Failing to provide evidence of the required documentation, such as proof of insurance and MOT certificate whilst driving for business purposes resulting in an accident could put the authority at risk of corporate manslaughter.

The Operator License is the legal authority needed to operate goods vehicles in Great Britain. A License is needed to carry goods in a lorry, van or other vehicle with a gross weight of over 3,500kg. The Operator License holder for the Council is the Transport Manager.

The scope and assurance statement of the audit was as follows:

6.2 **Scope**

The scope of this audit was to review:

- Management of Council's 'grey fleet' and driving at work application; and
- Compliance with the Operator Licence statutory requirements.

6.3 **Assurance Statement**

We consider the management of the grey fleet and compliance with the Driving at Work application are inadequate with significant risks identified. Although a new app may address some of the weaknesses identified by this review, the current arrangements and controls to ensure employees are appropriately documented for the use of their personal vehicles for business use are weak and inconsistently applied.

Significant improvement has been evidenced regarding compliance with the Operator's Licence and we consider that adequate controls have been introduced to mitigate the risks highlighted in the 2020 audit review.

- 6.4 Since the previous Audit Committee on Thursday the 14th of September 2023, the new Driving at Work App (DaW App) was successfully launched on Monday the 11th of December 2023. The launch was supported by an ongoing comprehensive communication plan involving both digital and print media, as shown in the comments section of the agreed update plan – Appendix 3(a) attached to the end of this report. Please review these actions and associated comments in relation to a progress update.
- 6.5 Current compliance across the Council at the time of writing this report sits at 51.70% and continues to rise. This is the highest level of compliance that we have seen in relation to driving at work (shown at Appendix 3(b)), which is encouraging and a testament to the improved accessibility and ease of use of the new app.
- 6.6 The next steps will now focus on how we can capture (and upload) those staff who do not have access to Council email address such as catering assistants, illuminations and highways operatives, school crossing patrol, integrated transport, leisure, etc. Although driving staff without email access will still be able to access a hard copy of the DaW Handbook and have manual driving checks undertaken.

6.7 Appendix 3(b) shows a screen shot of the compliance dashboard which will be demonstrated to the committee.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 3(a): Internal Audit Recommendations and Agreed Actions.
Appendix 3(b): Compliance Dashboard.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 The controls being implemented will be done so within current budget constraints.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 Risks need to be effectively managed in order to comply with relevant legislation.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 To enable the Audit Committee to gain assurance that risks are being effectively managed.

11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people:

11.1 Where equality analysis is appropriate these will have been undertaken whilst making decisions relating to the subject.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 Any matters relating to sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations will be considered when making decisions relating to the subject.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 The progress report has been prepared in conjunction with the relevant Head of Service and Chief Officer.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

Appendix 3(a) - Agreed Action Plan

Recommendation		Priority	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Target Date	Revised Target Date for outstanding actions	Progress
<i>R1</i>	We recommend a process is established to ensure suitable communication of updated and approved Driving at Work Handbook is put into place to ensure managers are aware of any future updates and the current updated handbook is uploaded onto the hub.	2	<p>Agreed. A central location for the Driving at Work Handbook to be discussed with Corporate Communications. Transport Manager to establish process for ensuring updated Handbook is provided for upload.</p> <p>Once the location of the Handbook is established, this will be shared with the TV Studio and Digital Media Manager to ensure the appropriate link is used on the Driving at Work Application.</p>	Transport Manager	31/3/2023	Completed	The new Driving at Work App (Daw) and the updated Driving at Work Handbook are both available via the Hub with the DaW app being hosted on its Teams Channel across the Council. This has been supported by digital screen messages, manager and individual emails and corporate comms across the Council

	Recommendation	Priority	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Target Date	Revised Target Date for outstanding actions	Progress
R2	We recommend guidance is issued to line managers on the recommended turnaround for approving driving at work documentation checks, declined applications are followed up and ensure line managers informed of the requirements and importance of thoroughly checking documentation prior to approval.	1	Agreed. Waste Services Manager to produce corporate guidance for distributing to all managers.	Waste Services Manager	31/3/2024	In progress	This is under development and awaiting feedback from the next Driving at Work Risk Management Group Meeting on the 19 th March, after which it will be signed off in the coming weeks.

Recommendation		Priority	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Target Date	Revised Target Date for outstanding actions	Progress
R3	We recommend robust communications are cascaded to ensure line managers and employees are aware of their duties relating to driving at work.	1	<p>Agreed. Robust communications to be shared with line managers regarding required checking processes and raise at future Driving at Work Risk Management Groups.</p> <p>Head of ICT Services and TV Studio and Digital Media Manager to be invited to March 2023 Driving at Work Risk Management Group.</p>	Transport Manager	31/3/2023	Completed	The new updated Driving at Work Handbook is available on the Hub as well as well as support for the new DaW App being delivered by Comms in terms of Corporate Communications to Managers and all staff via Teams and email. Engagement with staff is also delivered via the digital screens in offices and other platforms such as YourBlackpool (internal).

	Recommendation	Priority	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Target Date	Revised Target Date for outstanding actions	Progress
R4	We recommend the new Driving at Work App is reviewed to ensure robust arrangements capture all requirements, including annual driving license checks and penalty point recording, fitness to drive requirements are clarified and ensure this is tested and rolled out as soon as possible.	1	Agreed. Director of Community and Environmental Services to follow up the progress of the amendments agreed to the Driving at Work Application with the Head of ICT Services with a view for rollout to be 1st April 2023.	Director of Community and Environmental Services	31/1/2023	Completed	The new DaW App underwent rigorous user acceptance testing prior to the launch in December 2023 to ensure it delivers it functional outcomes.
R5	We recommend review of the management and oversight of the Driving at Work App to ensure ongoing monitoring of the compliance with the driving at work requirements are addressed corporately.	2	Agreed. Transport Manager to commence producing compliance reports to Driving at Work Risk Management group following rollout of the new Driving at Work Application.	Transport Manager	31/01/2023	Completed	In addition to the agreed actions we are also in the process of seeking to identify directorate leads who will have access to their departmental compliance reporting.

	Recommendation	Priority	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Target Date	Revised Target Date for outstanding actions	Progress
R6	We recommend the final SLA in place and agreed between services is clarified and ensure the Transport Manager is aware of the agreed arrangements.	2	Completed. Transport Manager has been provided with a copy of the final SLA.	Transport Manager	N/a – completed at the time of the audit close out meeting.	Completed	Implemented.
R7	We recommend the Transport Manager commences routine quality checks to ensure there is assurance that the SLA agreement is being adhered to.	2	Agreed. Transport Manager commenced compliance checks from November 2022 and will report on non-compliance to Line Manager and Driving at Work Risk Management Group.	Transport Manager	31/3/2023	Completed	The Transport Manager regularly undertakes routine checks at different locations, recording the outcomes and reporting back.
R8	We recommend the performance reporting arrangements are established and determine any further reporting requirements.	2	Agreed - Transport Manager has been made aware of the performance dashboards that are available via the Waste Services Manager. Waste Services Manager to review the performance reporting for Blackpool Council Vehicles.	Waste Services Manager	31/3/2024	In progress	See R5 progress – this is in progress but may require a little more development work to ensure that we have the enhanced compliance monitoring functionality in place across the Council.

	Recommendation	Priority	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Target Date	Revised Target Date for outstanding actions	Progress
R9	We recommend that the Transport Manager undertakes spot checks on a regular basis to ensure safety inspections are undertaken on time.	2	Agreed. Transport Manager to include as part of routine compliance checking.	Transport Manager	31/3/2023	Completed	The Transport Manager regularly undertakes spot checks at different locations as part of the routine compliance checking.
R10	We recommend the Transport Manager is involved in the training process to ensure that drivers are undertaking a full range of courses.	2	Agreed. Transport Manager to have oversight of the training provision for HGV drivers to ensure a suitable variety courses are undertaken.	Transport Manager	31/3/2023	Completed	Transport Manager now has oversight of the training provision in relation to annual CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence) courses, ensuring a variety of course are undertaken.
R11	We recommend the Streetscene Engineering and Illuminations ensure the training matrices are up to date and ensure expired courses are scheduled.	2	Agreed. Training Matrices to be reviewed and updated.	Head of Illuminations Streetscene Engineering Manager	31/3/2023	Completed	Training matrices are regularly reviewed and will be updated as required.

	Recommendation	Priority	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Target Date	Revised Target Date for outstanding actions	Progress
R12	We recommend Streetscene Engineering and Illuminations ensure awareness of terrorism is suitably and consistently captured within service risk assessments and consider undertaking Act Aware (Counter Terrorism) training, details of which are available on the Hub.	2	Agreed. To review training requirements.	Head of Illuminations Streetscene Engineering Manager	31/3/2023	Completed	Although this is marked as completed, this is an area that is continually reviewed and updated, especially in relation to counter-terrorism. The Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) equipment currently installed on the Promenade is an example, as is the upgraded CCTV and Control Centre located at the tram depot.
R13	We recommend ongoing monitoring and update of the Transport Manager's 'Six Month Review' takes place to ensure all areas that require improvement are addressed as soon as possible.	2	Agreed – Regular monitoring and updating of the OL Six Month Review will take place.	Transport Manager	31/3/2024	Completed	This has been incorporated in the IPA process going forward.

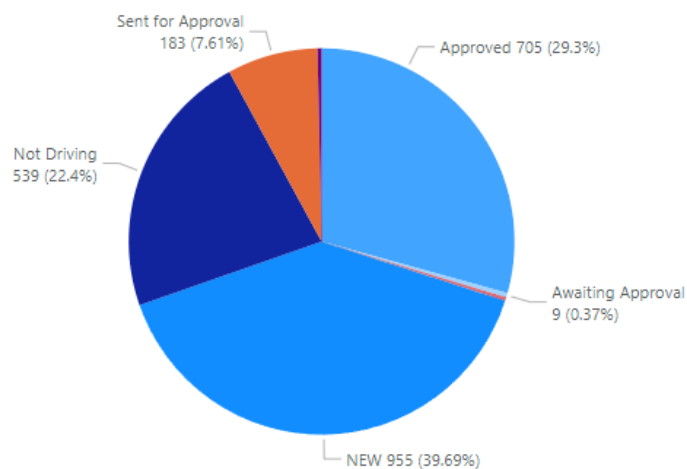
Full Council

Full Council Summary

51.70%

Total percentage of compliance across the whole council

Total percentage of compliance across the Council



Approval	Directorate
Approved	Adult Services
Approved	Chief Executives
Approved	Children Services
Approved	Communication and Regeneration
Approved	Community and Environmental Services
Approved	Governance and Partnerships
Approved	Public Health
Approved	Resources
Awaiting Approval	Adult Services
Awaiting Approval	Children Services
Declined	Adult Services
Declined	Chief Executives
Declined	Communication and Regeneration
Declined	Resources
NEW	Adult Services
NEW	Chief Executives
NEW	Children Services
NEW	Communication and Regeneration
NEW	Community and Environmental Services
NEW	Governance and Partnerships
NEW	Public Health
NEW	Resources

Adult Services	Chief Executives	Children Services	Communication and Regeneration	Community and Environmental Services	Governance and Partnerships	Public Health	Resources	Total
52.50%	52.73%	40.33%	51.12%	49.81%	62.04%	81.82%	65.70%	51.70%