

Committee(s): Civic Affairs Sub-Committee	Date: 31 March 2023
Subject: Member Transport Protocol	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1-12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Deputy Town Clerk	For Decision
Report author: Greg Moore, Town Clerk's	

Summary

The "Protocol for the Provision of Transport for Elected Members" is the policy document which sets out the procedures for the provision of transport support (in the form of cars) for Members when engaged on City of London business.

The main purpose of the protocol is to provide clear guidance for Members and officers as regards the provision of transport support, as it is recognised that the roles and responsibilities of certain Senior Members (particularly the Chief Commoner and the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committees) can place significant burdens on the individuals concerned and the provision of transport is both reasonable and in the City Corporation's best interests, in supporting the Members to undertake their duties on behalf of the organisation.

The policy has not been updated for some considerable time (well over a decade) and, notwithstanding the fact that it has worked well to-date with no material concerns escalated, it is prudent to review and update the document to ensure any deficiencies or outdated references are addressed. It is also a useful opportunity to ensure greater awareness, amongst both Members and Officers, of the Protocol's provisions.

This report highlights those areas where updates might be helpful and invites Members to comment. Subject to any additional comments, Appendix 2 also sets out an updated version of the policy for Members' consideration.

Recommendation(s)

That Members:-

1. Note the existing Protocol, set out at Appendix 1.
2. Consider and approve the adoption of the updated Protocol, set out at Appendix 2.

Main Report

Background

1. The usage by Members of City Corporation cars is set out in a document entitled the “Protocol for the Provision of Transport for Elected Members”. (NB – this excludes the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, for whom separate arrangements are in place).
2. That document, attached at Appendix 1, recognises there is often a need to provide transportation to Members, particularly senior Members, in support of them undertaking the responsibilities and duties associated with their roles.
3. The support outlined in this policy is in the form of City Corporation cars, i.e., transport provided directly by the Corporation. Train fares and so on are reimbursed under the separate policies covering Member Expenses and Business Travel.
4. The policy has been in place for some considerable period without alteration. The reference within to the City Lands & Bridge House Estates Committee, which last met in 2011, indicates the time period in which the policy has not been revisited; however, the fact that there have been minimal if any complaints or concerns expressed, despite a decrease in the number of cars and drivers (from three to two) made available to Members, suggests that the policy remains largely fit-for-purpose and does not require significant amendment.
5. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to review the document in order to consider whether there are any helpful updates or corrections which could be made, or gaps which could be addressed, and to confirm the policy remains fit-for-purpose.

Current Position

6. The current policy is set out at Appendix 1. Members will observe immediately that there are a number of references which require updating; for instance, the aforementioned reference to the City Lands & Bridge House Committee (abolished 2011), together with the intimation that there are three drivers/cars (there have been two since 2010).
7. It must be said that the current Protocol appears to work well (outdated references notwithstanding); issues or complaints associated with the provision of cars have been exceedingly rare in the decade plus in which it has been operating and have, almost exclusively, related to circumstances outside of the Protocol itself (for instance, non-arrival of hire cars when the two in-house drivers are otherwise engaged). Consistently high levels of positive feedback are received in relation to the in-house service and it is clear that the provision is valued extremely highly by successive Chairs and Chief Commoners.
8. However, there have from time-to-time been elements of confusion (amongst both officers and Members) as to the requirements of the Protocol and entitlement to transport, as well as the appropriate mechanisms or conventions by which bookings should be made and entitlement associated therewith (particularly where such bookings are attempted at very late notice). Given the

significant organisational turnover in recent years, this is perhaps unsurprising; a refreshed Protocol might take the opportunity to clarify these points more explicitly and allow for a greater shared understanding and awareness. Proposed wording within Appendix 2 has been set out to address these points.

Options and Proposal

9. One option available to your Sub-Committee is to simply agree to note the existing protocol and update it to reflect the changed factual circumstances since the last review.
10. However, appendix 2, whilst doing this, also takes the opportunity to provide the additional points of clarification referred to at paragraph 8 above, which is recommended.
11. It is also open to Members to make additional suggestions or amendments where they feel these would be beneficial.
12. It should be stressed that these proposals do not seek to extend the existing provision; any proposals to do so would carry prospective cost implications and would require further approvals through the appropriate channels.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

- Financial implications – the current provision is met from within existing budgets and a simple updating of the protocol carries no financial implications. Any request to extend provision would be subject to further costings and associated approvals.
- Resource implications – as above.
- Legal implications – none.
- Risk implications – none.
- Equalities implications – The Protocol has been tweaked to make specific reference to the need to make provision where reasonable adjustments are required for accessibility purposes, in keeping with the City Corporation's general obligations in this area.
- Climate implications – vehicles procured to support the Protocol are subject to the City Corporation's standing Climate Action Strategy requirements and the procurement of any replacement vehicles will be managed by the City's Procurement Team accordingly.
- Security implications – none.

Conclusion

14. There is a need to provide transportation to Members, particularly senior Members, in support of them undertaking the responsibilities and duties associated with their roles. The current Protocol, setting out the arrangements associated with this, has worked well for some years but would benefit from a refresh, wording for which is proposed at Appendix 2.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Current Protocol
- Appendix 2: Proposed Revised Protocol (changes marked in track)