



Corporate Business Travel Policy

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1. *Executive Summary*

This Travel Guide provides you with all the information you need to make efficient and cost effective Business Travel arrangements.

Currently there is no specific policy to co-ordinate, monitor and regulate business travel activities and obtain best value in an agreed consistent manner, across Glasgow City Council, for the expenditure.

This policy will be structured to take advantage of the many business benefits to be found in this ever changing market. This includes:-

- **Making the best use of “no frills airlines”**
- **Negotiated route deals owned by Glasgow City Council**
- **Mixed class tickets (i.e. flexible one way, economy the other)**
- **On-line Booking Tool**
- **In-house ticket printer (rail)**
- **E-ticketing**
- **Use of corporate credit cards**
- **Robust and accurate management information reporting tools**
- **Council-wide “purchasing power” opportunities**

2. *Objectives*

The objective of this Policy is to provide all Glasgow City Council’s staff with a consistent, structured, clearly understandable and effective approach to Business Travel. The best use of this Policy will ensure financial and non-financial benefits, value add activity and cost savings for reinvestment within Glasgow City Council.

Supply market analysis for travel services highlights that the market for Business Travel is subject to considerable change and increased competition. For example, airline carriers have drastically reduced the commissions payable to travel agents and internet booking travel services are providing better access and convenience to the customer. Competition in the airline industry and for hotel accommodation, is also high and short term pricing promotions often characterise the travel markets offers.

Corporate organisations are a key market segment for travel services as there is a need to provide assured access to the most competitive offers, provide efficient access and manage and control travel costs on behalf of the customer. Glasgow City Council is therefore looking to develop a corporate solution that addresses these needs as well as those specific to each service area.

This policy has been constructed to provide a clear framework for all staff to work within, while at the same time recognising both the flexibility required for Glasgow City Council and implementing leading private sector initiatives into Public Sector business, to ultimately achieve best value for money without affecting the overall role of Glasgow City Council.

This policy is endorsed and supported at management level and through its use will provide Glasgow City Council’s departments with a more effective business travel procedure and enable administrative duties to be focussed elsewhere.



This policy will be subject to review. Mary Aitken (Head of Executive Compliance) within Glasgow City Council Financial Services will ensure the Policy stays current to the business requirements and the Travel Industry market.

3. *Priorities*

The priorities governing the implementation of this policy are:-

- Defined user requirements and expectations
- Customer travel satisfaction
- Travel Safety
- Achieving “best value for money”
- Cost savings and non-financial benefits
- Management information and reporting capabilities
- Effective Supplier Management/Relationships

4. *Scope*

The scope of this policy will cover the following areas:-

- Making Travel Arrangements
- Group and Conference Travel and Accommodation
- Guidelines for Approval
- Travel Agency
- Air travel
- Rail
- Ferry
- Hotel Accommodation
- Car Hire
- Management Reporting
- Exceptions to the Policy

5. *Corporate Travel Arrangements*

As of December 2018, the Council formally appointed Corporate Travel Management (North) as their new travel provider.

All Glasgow City Council business travel will be arranged by the Executive Compliance Unit (ECU) via Corporate Travel Management (North) in order to ensure that the Council maximise best value and that all travel is channelled through the awarded contractor. Glasgow City Council’s Business Travel Insurance Policy will only extend to cover travel arranged via the awarded contractor.

The Council will continue to arrange travel through the on-line booking toolset or by liaison with Corporate Travel Management (North) direct depending on the complexity of travel required.

The Council’s objective is to work with Corporate Travel Management (North) to maximise the adoption rates of their on-line booking toolset initially for relatively simple single/dual



sector air travel, hotel accommodation booking and rail travel. On-line booking will deliver several benefits to the Council including lower transaction costs, empowerment of travellers (within travel policy guidelines), access to key travel providers from one system ('one stop shop'), policy exception management and demonstration of best value.

Where travel requirements are more complex or for larger groups, the ECU will liaise with Corporate Travel Management (North) either through fax, email or by telephone and they will assist with the booking process.

6. *Making Travel Arrangements*

- 1. All travel and accommodation must be booked according to the guidelines contained within the Corporate Travel Policy and the [Guidance on Personal expenses whilst travelling on Council Business](#).**
- 2. Where flexibility is required regarding meeting times, travel arrangements and fares will be assessed by the ECU in order to ensure that obtaining the most advantageous travel fare is not outweighed by delay and/or the cost of additional and unnecessary accommodation and travel costs.**
- 3. All travel and accommodation should be booked at least 2 weeks in advance or earlier where there is a known requirement in order to achieve best value for money. Any exceptions to this must be authorised by the Head of Executive Compliance.**
- 4. All relevant information must be provided to Corporate Travel Management (North) or alternatively detailed appropriately within the on-line booking toolset at time of booking. i.e. accurate times (where possible), preferred accommodation etc.**
- 5. Any special needs during travel, such as dietary requirements or access arrangements should be made known to Corporate Travel Management (North) at time of booking.**
- 6. Corporate Travel Management (North) will confirm all booking arrangements with the ECU**
- 7. All travel documentation (e-ticket confirmation, insurance details etc) will be issued directly to the traveller from the ECU. Contact names and numbers for use in the event of difficulties will be provided along with all travel documentation.**
- 8. All business travel must be booked through Corporate Travel Management (North) either directly or through the on-line booking toolset as they are the sole approved supplier for business travel within Glasgow City Council.**



7. *Travel Approval*

All travel by Glasgow City Council's staff must be approved by the appropriate Executive Director or nominated officer in advance of any travel arrangements being made and any bookings confirmed.

Any travel that deviates from the Travel Policy guidelines must be authorised by the Head of Executive Compliance. The justification and the additional costs incurred for any deviations from policy must be provided by the traveller at the time of booking. All deviations from the Travel Policy will be recorded and reported on a regular basis to senior management with a view to minimising any unnecessary additional expenditure from policy deviations on future travel.

8. *Travel Expenses*

- Travellers and the ECU are expected to ensure that all travel expenditure falls within reasonable limits and that the Council will not routinely reimburse any costs incurred over and above the minimum consistent with the application of this Travel Policy.
- The ECU are responsible for confirming that the rates charged match the rates shown on the travel itinerary. Any discrepancies must be reported immediately to the travel agency.
- Where it is necessary for travellers to pay for additional expenses e.g. meals which are not included with overnight stay, then these should be claimed back via the My Portal system in line with the [Guidance on Personal expenses whilst travelling on Council Business](#). Detailed receipts will be required on all occasions.

9. *Air Travel*

1. Corporate Travel Management (North) will advise the lowest available fares and carriers within a four (4) hour window before and a four (4) hour after the requested departure/arrival time.
2. The lowest economical/logical fare must be purchased in all instances. Glasgow City Council is currently saving vast amounts by adopting these guidelines.
3. The use of 'non-refundable' tickets is recommended where there is reasonable certainty over required arrival/departure times as these are generally less expensive than refundable 'unrestricted' fares.
4. If some degree of flexibility is required a restricted ticket should be purchased for the outward sector and the lowest flexible ticket should be reserved for the return portion of the journey as it is usually the return portion that requires changing.
5. All flights within the UK, across Europe, Asia, Africa & the Americas must be economy class.
6. Flights to Oceania may be upgraded to business class with the appropriate authorisation by Head of Executive Compliance.
7. The preferred method of booking flights would be to book using the on-line booking tool. Where the travel required includes 4 or more sectors, then the booking should be made direct with Corporate Travel Management (North) either by telephone, fax or email.
8. The current procedure regarding the use of "Air Miles" accrued by travellers whilst on Council business shall continue ie all miles return to the Council for future



business use. Travellers should continue to accrue “Air Miles” in the normal manner but must submit copies of statements to Mary Aitken on a quarterly basis for recording purposes. As “Air Miles” can only be redeemed by the traveller, Mary Aitken will advise each individual as and when it is most beneficial to the Council for redemption.

10. *Ferry Travel*

1. To book ferry travel, the ECU will call or email Corporate Travel Management (North) with the request. They will confirm the details back to the ECU
2. The lowest economical/logical fare must be purchased in all instances.
3. All ferry travel booked and made must be 2nd class. Any deviations must be authorised by the Head of Executive Compliance.

11. *Hotel Accommodation*

1. All required hotel accommodation must be made via the online booking toolset or through Corporate Travel Management (North) direct.
2. Accommodation must be booked as soon as there is a definite requirement to ensure best rates and availability.
3. Where more than one individual is seeking accommodation for the same destination, every effort should be made to have all parties booked at the same time.
4. Bookings will be confirmed with the traveller once finalised.
5. The lowest available rates should normally be booked by the ECU whilst ensuring that the rates do not exceed the rates defined in the [Guidance on Personal expenses whilst travelling on Council Business](#).
6. It is recognisable however that the cost allowances within these guidelines may not be obtainable at peak times and in certain destinations, therefore the best available rate will be obtained but the deviation must be authorised by the appropriate Head of Executive Compliance and justification provided.
7. It is recognised that in some instances there may be requirements to arrange superior standard hotels, such as attendance at international events where the conference facility has been pre-booked by outside agencies. In such circumstances, this must be approved in advance by the Head of Executive Compliance and justification provided.

12. *Car Rental*

1. All car rental requirements must be made direct through Corporate Travel Management (North) by telephone, fax or email.
2. Car rental must be booked as soon as there is a known requirement in order to obtain best possible prices and ensure availability.



3. Glasgow City Council has an insurance package which covers employees who hire vehicles on business. Therefore, travellers should decline any optional insurance coverage. In the event of an accident whilst travelling, travellers must notify Human Resources within their own department.
4. The ECU must book either a small (category A) or medium (category B) sized car in order to ensure best value for the Council. Any deviations from this must be authorised by the Head of Executive Compliance.
5. Wherever possible travellers must refill the car with fuel prior to returning the rental car for drop off. Rental firms charge on average 50% more for fuel than independent filling stations so this will ensure that unnecessary Council expenditure is minimised.

13. *Rail Travel*

1. The preferred method of booking rail journeys would be to book using the on-line booking tool. Where the travel required involves rail journeys out with the UK, then the booking should be made direct with Corporate Travel Management (North) either by telephone, fax or email.
2. The ECU must ensure that the lowest fare possible is obtained.
3. All tickets should be purchased in standard class.
4. Where a department has a number of employees conducting regular travel on a particular route e.g. Glasgow – Edinburgh, then the department should investigate and purchase if available, a book of flexi passes (or equivalent). This often represents better value than purchasing individual tickets and the department can then issue these out as and when required.

14. *Management Information*

1. The approved Travel Management Company will email on a monthly basis to the Corporate Procurement Unit and Executive Compliance Unit a detailed monthly and accumulative analysis of their spend. The Executive Compliance Unit will ensure each service receives regular Management Information reports.
2. The reports will be detailed to meet individual specific customer needs.
3. These reports will enable the Procurement Department or Executive Compliance Unit to :-
 - Record cost savings
 - Capture missed savings/opportunities
 - Ensure compliance with Travel Policy
 - Provide statistical data in all aspects of business travel in order to facilitate decision making for the management and control of the Travel Policy
 - To enable efficient and effective Supplier Management.

15. *Supplier Management*

1. The Corporate Procurement Unit will manage all Supplier Relationships in conjunction with Conditions of Contract and specified Service Level Agreements.
2. Supplier meetings will be held on a regular basis to monitor supplier performance and continuous improvement targets.



3. **The Corporate Procurement Unit will continuously liaise with Corporate Travel Management (North) and the ECU in all aspects of business travel i.e. training, streamlining procedures/processes etc.**
4. **Any complaints with the Business Travel service provided must be channelled through Mary Aitken within Glasgow City Council Financial Services in order for the complaints to be recorded and solved if necessary.**
5. **All complaints will be dealt with in relation to the agreed Service Level Agreement with Corporate Travel Management (North).**

16. Exceptions to the Travel and Accommodation Policy

It is recognised that there may be very occasional exceptional circumstances, which may give rise to urgent travel and accommodation requirements falling out with these policy guidelines.

Following all such instances, recommendations should be forwarded to Mary Aitken within Glasgow City Council Financial Services to identify ways in which the Travel Policy may be improved to accommodate future requirements.

All regular travel and accommodation requirements should however follow the guidelines set out in this policy document.