

TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE POLICY

Responsible Officer

Director of Finance (Company Secretary)/Governance Manager

Aim of the Policy

Phoenix Community Housing (Phoenix) values our residents and elected members, as part of our commitment to community engagement, and our corporate priority of resident leadership and membership. This policy aims to ensure that the basis that Phoenix uses to assist residents and elected members to get to Phoenix business meetings or carry out a role at official functions for Phoenix is fair and transparent.

Policy Scope

The policy applies to all residents and elected members in Phoenix.

Definition

Resident: Includes tenants and leaseholders but does not include freeholders.

Phoenix: Phoenix Community Housing Association (Bellingham & Downham) Limited.

Official Function: Means an event decided from time to time by Phoenix.

Elected Member: Means any person who is part of the Phoenix Governance structure.

Transport: Means assistance given by Phoenix to help residents and elected members to get from their home to the place of a business meeting or an official function. This may be by booking a taxi, arranging transport by a member of Phoenix staff or paying money towards the cost of using public transport. Staff should not provide lifts to residents in their own vehicles due to insurance issues.

Applicant: Means the resident or elected member applying for transport assistance.

The Policy

1. Any resident or elected member shall be able to apply for transport assistance. Applications should normally be made in advance of a meeting or function. Any transport assistance request will be treated as being made in good faith.
2. The Phoenix Governance Team staff will decide on the type of transport assistance to be given to applicants. Transport will be decided on the needs of the applicant and the cost.
3. Applicants may be asked to share transport in order to reduce costs.
4. Applicants will be allowed to arrange transport themselves, subject to the provision in this policy. When claiming reimbursement of fares, they will need to supply receipts for each journey claimed and details of the meeting attended.

5. Applicants will be asked to use public transport whenever possible except when the applicant is disabled. No application for reimbursed costs will be approved if the candidate is eligible for a Freedom Pass whether they have chosen to apply for one or not.
6. Applicants will be told to avoid travel by taxi whenever possible due to their relatively high cost. Taxis will be considered if one or more of the following apply:
 - Those residents who feel at risk in the hours of darkness should be entitled to transport for their own safety.
 - The applicant may have personal health and safety issues which affect the method of transport that is the cheapest.
 - The frequency of public transport will not be suitable for the meeting.
 - Equal Opportunity policies.
 - Safeguarding policy.
 - The applicant may have a temporary illness or condition that makes it difficult to travel on public transport.
7. Any applicant that requires the use of taxis on a regular basis may be given dispensation as an exception to this policy by the Director responsible for this policy.
8. Phoenix will allow applicants to use whichever method of transport they choose but we will only pay the applicant the cheapest method available. Mileage will be allowed at the rate being used by Phoenix at the time of the meeting provided that it has been agreed by Phoenix that this will be the cheapest method of transport. Mileage claims will be paid on a monthly basis. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the vehicle they are travelling in, is suitably insured for the journey. Phoenix will not be held liable for any losses incurred as a result of using a private car on Phoenix business. Neither will Phoenix pay any fines or penalty notices that may be issued.
9. Phoenix officers will tell any applicant whether a meeting or function is to be regarded as one within the scope of this policy.
10. No application for assistance under this policy will be accepted from a Phoenix member of staff.
11. Where an applicant disagrees with the decision of a Phoenix member of staff, they may refer their claim to the Company Secretary or Governance Manager for a decision.
12. Any abuse of this policy by a resident or elected member could lead to action under the Involved Resident's (resident) or Board Member's (Board Member) code of conduct and/or withdrawal of transport assistance. This includes applicants altering the times and passengers of a Phoenix taxi booking.

Monitoring and review

This Policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required by good practice or other learning.

Legislation

- Equality Act 2010

Reference to other documents and associated policies and procedures

- Resident Involvement Code of Conduct and Breach of Code of Conduct Procedures
- Board Member Code of Conduct
- Equality and Diversity Charter
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Statement of Intent
- Community Empowerment Strategy

Definitions

Term/acronym	Description
Resident	Includes tenants and leaseholders but does not include freeholders.
Phoenix	Phoenix Community Housing Association (Bellingham & Downham) Limited.
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Elected Member	Means any person who is part of the Phoenix Governance structure.
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