

Transport Assistance Policy

Responsible Officer

Director of Finance and Resources (Company Secretary) / Head of Governance

Aim of the Policy

Phoenix Community Housing (Phoenix) values our resident Board Members and other involved residents including residents involved in our governance, as part of our commitment to resident involvement and our strategic objective of resident leadership and effective governance. This policy aims to ensure that the basis that Phoenix uses to assist resident Board Members and other residents involved in our governance to attend Phoenix business meetings or carry out a role at official functions is fair and transparent.

Policy Scope

The policy applies to all resident Board Members and other involved residents including residents involved in our governance.

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. This may include external conferences, awards ceremonies and visits to other housing associations.

Phoenix Business: Includes Group Board, Subsidiary Boards, Board Sub-Committees, Phoenix Gateway, Phoenix Youth Council, Scrutiny Panel, Resident Communications Group, and other business meetings such as Customer Journey Mapping, focus groups etc.

Transport: Means assistance given by Phoenix to help resident Board Members and other residents involved in our governance to get from their home to the place of a business meeting or an official function. This may be by booking a taxi, or 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 Board Member or resident involved in our governance applying for transport assistance.

The Policy

1. Any resident Board Member or involved resident including resident involved in our governance 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 or Phoenix or Phoenix 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 or function attended.
5. 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:
 - Residents feel at risk in the hours of darkness.
 - The applicant has personal health and safety issues.
 - The frequency of public transport is not suitable for the meeting or function.
 - Equal Opportunity policies.
 - Safeguarding policy.
 - The applicant has a temporary illness or condition that makes it difficult to travel on public transport.
6. 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.
7. Phoenix will allow applicants to use whichever method of transport they choose. 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.
8. Phoenix staff will tell any applicant whether a meeting or function is to be regarded as one within the scope of this policy.
9. Where an applicant disagrees with the decision of a Phoenix member of staff, they may refer their claim to the Company Secretary or Head of Governance for a decision.
10. 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
- Resident Involvement and Community Engagement Strategy

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