



UNISON

Blackpool Local Government Branch

Coastal House, 17-19 Abingdon Street, Blackpool, FY1 1DG

Call For Action

30 October 2018

ESSENTIAL CAR USER ALLOWANCE UPDATE

UNISON URGES MEMBERS NOT TO USE THEIR VEHICLES ON COUNCIL BUSINESS FROM 1ST NOVEMBER

UNISON is calling on all members who formerly received Essential Car User (ECU) allowance to stop using their car for Council business from the 1st November.

This follows Blackpool Council deciding to terminate all Essential Car User (ECU) payments from that date and everyone will then be classed as 'casual' car users. The information seems to have been sent to those who have signed up to the buy-out. (NB: The Council has informed UNISON that the buy-out will be extended to all staff who lost their entitlement to ECU following the compliance review in 2017.)

UNISON has consistently stated that the Council's decision to withdraw the allowance is a huge mistake. Not only is it unfair in expecting staff to continue to use their car without being paid an allowance for wear and tear, damage etc, but it would also be more costly to pay staff to use alternative modes of transport.

In meeting after meeting with the Council, we have repeatedly argued that the withdrawal of ECU is a false economy. The only way of demonstrating this now is for staff to exercise their contractual right to not use their vehicles for work business.

The responsibility for this state of affairs lies squarely with the Council. The onus, therefore, is on the Council to continue to provide services to the public at the same level of efficiency as when staff were paid the ECU allowance. Members, in exercising their right to not use their own car, should simply state to their manager that they will not be using their car for work business. We will not tolerate any attempts by managers to encourage, cajole or threaten staff into using their vehicles for work if they have clearly stated that they will not use it.

UNISON must stress that voluntarily withdrawing the use of your own car is not industrial action as staff are no longer contractually obliged to provide or use their car for work. You will not be refusing to travel or carry out your duties but the Council will have to put an alternative in place to facilitate any travel that you have to undertake.

While we acknowledge that there will be occasions when members will find it difficult to not use their car, the only way we can have a significant impact is to consistently refuse to use it.

Accompanying this email is an attachment which addresses the issues you may experience in refusing to use your car.

The strength of a union is its members willingness to fight back against unfair working practices. We urge you to stop using your car for **FREE** and to encourage staff who aren't UNISON members to join and to take part.

If you have any questions, please contact the branch on 01253 478492 or email branch.office@blackpoolunison.co.uk.