

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	City Growth and Resources
DATE	26 September 2019
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Corporate Booking Policy
REPORT NUMBER	RES/19/369
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Jones
TERMS OF REFERENCE	Remit 2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of the draft Corporate Booking Policy, as attached at Appendix 1 of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 approves the adoption of the Corporate Booking Policy, as attached at Appendix 1 of this report, and:
- 2.2 notes the draft Terms and Conditions document, as attached at Appendix 2 of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Officers are currently working to implement a new online booking system for the administration of space hire in schools and community learning centres. The new online system will bring about improvements to the way in which internal and external hires are managed, whilst also significantly improving the customer experience of submitting a booking for a hire in one of these buildings.

- 3.2 To coincide with the planned launch of the new booking system, a new policy document was drafted, in order to set out the revised principles and procedures for managing and operating hires in schools and community learning centres, which would be supported by the new booking system.
- 3.3 During the course of developing the draft policy document, officers established that there was a need for an overarching policy, which would cover the booking of spaces in a wider range of Council buildings, and not only schools and community learning centres.
- 3.4 It is therefore proposed that a Corporate Booking Policy should be implemented, to ensure a consistent booking experience across all venues / spaces, and that the policy should be aligned to support future digitisation of the booking processes for those spaces.
- 3.5 The draft Corporate Booking Policy is attached at Appendix 1 of this report, and it is recommended that the Committee approves the adoption of this policy.
- 3.6 If approved, the Corporate Booking Policy would be supported by a separate Terms and Conditions document, which will set out the operational arrangements for managing bookings, including for example the cancellations process, application of discounts, space availability and the process for making a booking. This would be reviewed by officers on an annual basis to reflect any changes to charges and processes, and venue availability.
- 3.7 A copy of the draft Terms and Conditions is attached at Appendix 2 of this report, for noting by the Committee.
- 3.8 The proposed corporate policy applies to all hires which take place in any Aberdeen City Council venue. It does not apply to long term leases of buildings, where separate lease agreements are in place, and it does not apply to events which are directly supported by the Council's City Events Team.
- 3.9 Details of the buildings currently available for external let which would be covered by this policy, is provided at Appendix 3.
- 3.10 An online consultation with school and community learning centre lets customers (internal and external) was carried out between 26 February and 31 March 2019, to gather feedback on the principles which underpin the proposed new Policy. The consultation generated 145 responses. The questions focused on whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the following key principles being introduced for the hire of spaces:

Principle	No. of respondents who agreed	No. of respondents who disagreed
Introduction of an online bookings system	114 (79%)	14 (10%)

Introduction of advance (online) payment for all bookings	91 (63%)	36 (25%)
Introduction of a simplified hire pricing structure	126 (87%)	1 (<1%)
Revised availability of venues for hire to better reflect level of demand	94 (65%)	31 (21%)
Arrangements for Priority Booking for repeat customers and those who provide significant community benefit	117 (81%)	9 (6%)

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	The policy ensures that a consistent approach is taken to managing payments and cancellations ensuring no financial loss to the council.	H	The terms and conditions for each venue will support the policy on payments and cancellations.
	Changes to payment procedures introduced with this policy may not be the preference for some customers, potentially resulting in fewer bookings and	M	Online consultation carried out with customers ahead of the introduction of the policy. Feedback used to influence and develop the overall policy approach. The venues terms and conditions will ensure

	reduced income from space hire.		consistency across all bookings.
Employee	Introduction of the new policy and online booking system will require staff administering the system to adopt new procedures, which may cause some concern amongst staff	M	Appropriate training and support will be provided to staff prior to the introduction of the new system
Customer	<p>There is a small risk that the introduction of a booking policy may be unpopular with some customers</p> <p>The way in which venues currently administer bookings varies and is inconsistent for the customer.</p>	<p>M</p> <p>M</p>	<p>Online consultation carried out with customers ahead of the introduction of the policy. Feedback used to influence and develop the overall policy approach. Online booking system is expected to streamline the booking process and remove current delays and frustrations experienced by customers. Guidance for customers and digital support will be available for those less experienced with online systems.</p> <p>The proposed policy will ensure our staff provide a consistent approach to bookings across our venues.</p>
Technology	Technical failure of the online booking system could prevent customers from making bookings and impede staff in supporting and administering bookings	L	Failure is most likely to be caused by faults with live changes or the application itself from scheduled upgrades. Robust change-management protocols will mitigate both of those.

Reputational	There is a small risk that changes to booking policy may be unpopular with customers, leading to a negative impact on the Council's reputation if resulting in negative feedback.	M	Online consultation carried out with customers ahead of the introduction of the policy. Feedback used to influence and develop the overall policy approach. Online booking system is expected to streamline the booking process and remove current delays and frustrations experienced by customers. Guidance for customers and digital support will be available for those less experienced with online systems.

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous People	The proposals within this report help support the delivery of Stretch Outcomes 3 to 8 and Stretch Outcome 11 in the LOIP. The proposed new booking policy will streamline the process for booking space hire in Council buildings, which in turn should encourage groups and individuals to continue to book spaces in order to run activities for people within their local community, leading to positive outcomes for those taking part in those activities.

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	The proposed booking policy fully supports the Customer Service Design Principles, in particular Being Digital, using digital technologies to promote and encourage self-service, and Customer Centric, through providing a more streamlined and personalised booking experience.

Process Design	The proposed booking policy also supports the Process Design Principles, with the introduction of a simple and intuitive booking system, which will provide data to help us better understand customers' needs.
Technology	The proposed new booking policy has been designed to support the Technology Principles, with the new online booking system providing the data needed for us to take an intelligence led approach to the future management of bookings.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Full EHRIA completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required for this report – a DPIA has been completed for the planned new online booking system
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Not applicable

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers associated with this report.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 : Draft Corporate Bookings Policy

Appendix 2 : Draft Terms and Conditions for Hiring a Space

Appendix 3 : Buildings available for external hire

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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