

Appendix 1

Corporate Booking Policy

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1. Purpose Statement

- 1.1 This Policy is intended to set out the agreed principles through which all Aberdeen City Council bookings will be managed.
- 1.2 The Policy will provide clarity to customers and staff on how decisions relating to bookings are made, and will ensure that all bookings are administered fairly and consistently

2. Application and Scope Statement

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all bookings which take place in any Aberdeen City venue.
- 2.2 The Policy 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. Responsibilities

- 3.1 Overall responsibility for managing this policy is held by the Chief Officer (Corporate Landlord).
- 3.2 Any instances of non-compliance with the policy should be reported to Chief Officer (Corporate Landlord).
- 3.3 Feedback on the policy should be communicated to the Chief Officer (Corporate Landlord).

4. Supporting Procedures & Documentation

- 4.1 This Policy is supported by:

- **Charges**

The scale of charges sets out the hire cost for each room type, and for each category of activity. The scale of charges may be changed following approval by Council.

- **Terms and Conditions**

Terms and conditions will detail:

1. Cancellations process
2. Free hire/reduction of fees/discounts
3. Availability

4. Process for bookings

5. Policy Statement/s

5.1 Protection of Finance

- 5.1.1 Where a charge is to be made for a venue booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking. Payments will be processed in accordance with the terms and conditions.
- 5.1.2 Charges for bookings will be based on the agreed scale of charges. For special bookings or major events, a special charging rate may be applied to the booking. Any special rates to be used for specific bookings must be approved by ACC's Chief Officer (Finance), prior to the booking being confirmed.
- 5.1.3 For bookings which require documents or eligibility to be checked, customers will be asked to upload relevant documents onto the online booking system and the booking will be held as provisional, pending verification of documentation. Following successful verification and payment received (if applicable), confirmation of the booking will be sent to the customer.
- 5.1.4 Cancellations will be processed in accordance with the terms and conditions.

5.2 Compliance with the Law

For the following types of booking, customers will be required to upload evidence of relevant licenses and documentation, prior to the booking being confirmed:

5.2.1 Provision of coaching, teaching or instruction services

For external bookings, all group leaders must hold appropriate teaching or coaching qualifications, along with personal indemnity and public liability insurance covering the type of activity being offered.

5.2.2 Activities involving the provision or sale of food

Anyone involved in the preparation or provision of food for the consumption of others must be suitably trained in food hygiene controls appropriate to the activity. Where food is sold commercially, the business conducting the sales must be registered with their own local authority Environmental Health department and must have achieved a Pass standard in terms of the Food Hygiene Information Scheme.

5.2.3 Bookings involving the consumption of alcohol

Bookings involving the consumption of alcohol may be permitted where the refreshment is provided free of charge by the organisers, or where group participants supply their own alcoholic refreshments, and where children under the

age of 18 are not permitted to partake. Customers will be required to provide detailed information on how the activity will be suitably managed, when submitting their booking. This information will be verified before the booking is approved.

5.2.4 Bookings involving the sale of alcohol

Booking involving the sale of alcohol, or where alcohol is to be provided for in the cost of the ticket for the activity, require an Occasional License, issued by the Licensing Board. A copy of a valid Licence or other suitable evidence that a valid Licence is held must be provided by the customer, and this will be reviewed by ACC staff, prior to the booking being confirmed.

The sale of alcohol in educational establishments is permitted only where no person under the age of 18 years is entitled to be present at the function. The number of occasions involving the granting of Occasional Licences is restricted to four per year (plus weddings) per establishment.

5.2.5 Use of Council Property for political purposes

Aberdeen City Council may allow political parties or candidates to use a council property for a public meeting. The booking will be free of charge, but the Council is entitled to be reimbursed for heating, lighting and other utilities, as well for any damage caused to the room during the hire. Candidates or their agents are required to give reasonable notice in booking a room and any booking should not interfere with existing arrangements such as prior bookings or school opening hours. Aberdeen City Council must also prepare and keep for each constituency which is wholly or partly in its area, a list of rooms available, such as in school premises, council offices and other council owned buildings.

5.3 Protection of People

- 5.3.1 Where activities are attended by children under the age of 18 who are not also accompanied for the full duration of the activity by their parent or other responsible adult, and where the group leaders are not known to all of the children's parents through a family or personal relationship, then group leaders are considered to be undertaking regulated work, as defined by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (the PVG Act).
- 5.3.2 In accordance with the PVG Act, group leaders undertaking regulated work on behalf of an employer, or for an established voluntary organisation, should hold PVG Scheme membership. Customers applying to hire a space in which to undertake regulated work will be required to provide evidence of valid PVG Scheme membership from their employer or voluntary organisation, which confirms that the appropriate PVG membership is held by the named individuals who will be acting as group leaders at one or more of the sessions being applied for.
- 5.3.3 All group leaders undertaking regulated work who are self-employed, or who are running the activity as a private individual and not on behalf of a company or

established voluntary organisation, will be required to obtain a Basic Disclosure Certificate, at their expense, from Disclosure Scotland, and to provide evidence of their valid certificate, or other suitable evidence to show that a valid certificate is held, prior to their hire booking being approved.

- 5.3.4 Group Leaders will be responsible for the activities undertaken with respect to health and safety upon the premises. This includes the provision of adequate supervision and the relaying and implementation of those emergency procedures to and by their group whilst on the premises. It is the responsibility of group leaders to ensure that the ratio of participants to group leaders in an activity meets any current guidelines covering that activity.
- 5.3.5 Group participants must be met at the establishment entrance by the group leader and accompanied to the relevant leased area. The group leader is responsible for ensuring that group participants access only those areas included within the hire.
- 5.3.6 Detailed information and guidance on local health and safety arrangements will be available from the member of staff on site, and via relevant notices and signage posted within the premises.
- 5.3.7 ACC operates a smoke free grounds policy. No smoking (including the use of e-cigarettes) is permitted anywhere within the building or grounds of any ACC property.
- 5.3.8 Bookings involving the use of bouncy castles or other inflatable equipment will only be permitted where all inflatable equipment is Pertexa Inflatable Play Accreditation (PIPA) registered, and operated by a competent person. Evidence of this must be provided prior to the let application being accepted. Further advice and guidance for organisers of events involving the use of bouncy castles or other inflatables can be found here: <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/eventguide>

6. Definitions

- ACC :** Aberdeen City Council
- External Customer :** Any member of the public who submits a booking for a let which is to be used for any activity not connected to the direct delivery of ACC services
- Group Leader :** The person who is leading, coordinating or is in charge of any activity for which a venue has been booked, and who is present whilst the event is running
- Group Participant :** Any person attending and/or taking part in an activity for which a venue has been booked

Internal Customer :

Any member of ACC staff who submits a booking for a let on behalf of an ACC establishment, team or service, and where the let is to be used for the direct delivery of ACC services

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7. Risk

7.1 This implementation of this policy and supporting procedures specified in Section 4 is expected to mitigate the following identified risks:

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic	Existing procedures for administering bookings across the council could place excess demand on available staff resources	H	This policy will underpin the digitisation of bookings. The online booking systems to support this policy will incorporate logic to ensure that bookings can only be made where resource is available. It will help minimise the staff resource required to administer the service.
Compliance	There is no corporate bookings policy currently in place or an existing system for recording and storing data relating to booking applications.	H	The new policy clearly outlines the agreed principles through which all Aberdeen City Council bookings will be managed. The online booking system to support the policy will be used to collect and store data relating to booking applications in compliance with GDPR legislation.
Operational	The way in which venues currently administer bookings varies and is inconsistent for the customer	M	This policy will ensure our staff provide a consistent approach to bookings across our venues.
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.
Reputational	Inconsistent decision making on individual applications due to the lack of a clear policy could lead to reputational damage to the Council	H	Clearly setting out the policy principles and terms and conditions for bookings will help to eradicate this risk.

7.2 Implementing the policy may result in the following unintended consequences and risks:

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	Changes to payment procedures introduced with this policy may not be the preference for some customers, resulting in fewer bookings and reduced income from space hire.	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 consistency across all bookings.
Operational	There is a small risk that the introduction of a booking policy may be unpopular with some customers	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.
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.

- 7.3 The UK Government's PREVENT Strategy requires local authorities to ensure that publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views. Activities taking place during bookings are therefore monitored by staff who are required to report any concerns / suspicious activity. The online booking system will include a facility for staff to log an instant report onto the system using a PC or mobile device. Reports will be reviewed by the Chief Officer Governance and responsible Service Manager and appropriate action will be taken to address any concerns. Activities attended by unaccompanied children also require group leaders to submit valid PVG / Disclosure certificates which are checked prior to let applications being accepted.
- 7.4 The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010. Aberdeen City Council has the right to refuse or cancel a booking where this duty could be compromised.

8. Policy Performance

- 8.1 Booking performance can be measured by the total number of bookings per venue and total revenue. Booking performance can be reported to the City Growth and Resources Committee at each committee cycle. The Policy can be reviewed every twelve months from September 2020.

9. Design and Delivery

- 9.1 The policy is aligned to supporting the delivery of the Target Operating Model :

Customer Service: The Policy will help ensure a customer centric approach, making use of a digital online booking system to provide self-service opportunities for customers, whilst also ensuring that alternative support is available for customers who require it.

Organisational Design: Corporate bookings will be managed in house, with streamlined processes and digitised bookings to allow a reduction in current administration.

Governance: A corporate policy on all bookings will ensure a consistent approach and ensuring terms and conditions for each venue are visible to our customers

Processes : The Policy is designed to better reflect the needs of customers and allows for a streamlined, simplified digital process for administering bookings.

Technology : The Policy allows for better use of technology, through utilising a new online booking system, which will streamline the booking process and provide data to help us better understand and respond to customers' needs in future.

10. Housekeeping and Maintenance

- 10.1 This Policy replaces all other policies relating to corporate bookings. The separate terms and conditions document will support this policy and should be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect any changes to charges and processes, and venue availability.

11. Communication and Distribution

- 11.1 The policy will be available on request. The terms and conditions document will be available for customers prior to any booking and a copy provided to them upon any bookings. The policy will also be issued to all members of Council staff involved in administering and supporting bookings.

12. Information Management

- 12.1 Data relating to bookings will be collected via the online booking system, and is processed, stored and managed in accordance with the Council's Corporate Information Policy. A separate Data Protection Impact Assessment is available.