

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance & Resources
DATE	4 th October 2012
DIRECTOR	Stewart Carruth
TITLE OF REPORT:	Accord Card: Citizen Roll Out Update
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/12/093

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update committee on the progress made to date on allowing Accord Card holders to obtain services offered by Aberdeen City Council and its partner organisations at a preferential rate via the Residents Discount Scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that elected members:

- i) Note the content of the report;
- ii) Approve the next steps outlined in section 5.7.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Legal

There are no legal issues.

Resource

There are no resource implications.

5.0 MAIN UPDATE

- 5.1 The Residents Discount Scheme was launched on 2nd April 2012 allowing Aberdeen City residents to receive discounts on a wide range of local services and activities. These exclusive offers are available free to all residents of Aberdeen City, all they need to do is present and swipe their Accord Card at participating sites.
- 5.2 The Residents Discount Scheme is carried electronically on the Accord Card and participating services have Accord Card readers to verify the cardholder's entitlement to the scheme.
- 5.3 Recognising that many people live out with city boundaries but frequently travel into Aberdeen, a Visitor Card has been launched alongside the scheme which allows non residents to take advantage of many of the discounts available (excluding those funded via the Common Good Fund).
- 5.4 The scheme was launched with the following services, outlets and venues participating:
- **The Beach Ballroom:** discounts on selected events
 - **1906 Restaurant and Café:** 10% discount on food and non-alcoholic drinks
 - **Music Hall:** 10% discount on food and non-alcoholic drinks
 - **Belmont Picturehouse:** £5 discount on annual membership
 - **Aberdeen International Youth Festival:** discount on selected performances
 - **Sport Aberdeen:** 10% discount on Adult prices at fitness studios and for swimming sessions
 - **Adventure Aberdeen:** Preferential rates on 50+ programme and adult courses
 - **CityMoves:** discount on selected classes
 - **Tramsheds Coffee House and Satrosphere Science Shop:** 10% discount
 - **Libraries:** borrow 5 and get 6th free on all DVD, Blu-Ray and CD loans
 - **Arts Development:** discount on adult classes
 - **Northern Arts Club:** 10% discount on first years membership for new members

In addition to the original twelve participating organisations, a new local business joined in July 2012, ***Shirt By Hand***, who now have an offer for the Residents Discount Scheme.

- 5.5 A crucial element to the success of the Residents Discount Scheme was establishing channels through which interested residents can apply for an Accord Card without impacting on resources while providing an efficient and effective service to customers. This has been

achieved by developing an online application process. This online application enables residents to either apply online at any computer or mobile phone or at one of eight Community Libraries.

Furthermore, officers within Corporate Governance have collaborated to develop a paperless application process via the corporate CRM system, Lagan. This development allows staff at Customer Access Points and the Customer Service Centre to capture all information required to produce an Accord Card, including their photograph, on Lagan.

The benefits of these developments is that no paper application form is required, nor do the customers details need to be manually typed into the Accord Card Management System as they have been captured and managed electronically. The resulting efficiencies in back office processes have significantly reduced the time it takes to produce an Accord Card for these customers.

- 5.6 Since the Resident Discount Scheme launched in April there have been over 4,000 uses of the Accord Card to access the discounts and offers available. The scheme has been promoted through a variety of media including radio, local press and on both the Aberdeen City Council and Accord websites.

Also, work has been undertaken with Spree Publications Ltd in Aberdeen to place an insert into every Spree Book 2012/13 sold in Aberdeen to promote the discounts and offers available through the Residents Discount Scheme.

5.7 Next Steps

- 5.7.1 The Accord Card team will continue to identify, investigate and develop new opportunities to enhance the scheme and broaden its appeal. This will be progressed through both the Chamber of Commerce and the Aberdeen Business Improvement District (BID) for their buy-in and assistance to raise awareness and promote the scheme within the local business community with the aim of expanding the ranger of available offers.
- 5.7.2 Aberdeen Snowsports Centre have confirmed their desire to join the scheme and work will be underway shortly to put appropriate promotional material in place for this new offer.
- 5.7.3 In addition to the Residents Discount Scheme, over the past few months the Accord Card team and a local company called TBEx (The Business Exchange) have been working on developing a customer loyalty point's reward scheme to be implemented in local businesses that will allow citizens to use their Accord Card to gather loyalty points.

The working title of the scheme is *Accord Rewards* and it is envisaged that businesses that are members of The Business Exchange can offer loyalty points to their customers in turn for purchasing their goods and services. Effectively customers collect loyalty points for each pound spent and in turn can redeem this loyalty point as part payment at any participating business.

A bulletin report was presented to the Enterprise Planning & Infrastructure Committee on 11th September 2012 and this is attached as Appendix 1 for additional information.

6. IMPACT

The introduction of a residents discount promotes the vision in the Community Plan that we value our people by giving them access to Council facilities at a preferential rate via a Residents pass.

The aim of the residents discount policy is to increase revenue for the Council and help ensure a sustainable economic future for the City.

This report may be of interest to the public as it deals with the pricing policy for the provision of Council services.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report CG/10/205 approved by Finance & Resources Committee on 1st February 2011
- Report CG/11/109 approved by Finance & Resources Committee on 29th September 2011
- Bulletin Report to Enterprise Planning & Infrastructure Committee on 11th September 2012

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Bruce Reid
Accord Card Manager
bruce@accordaberdeen.co.uk
(01224) 346838