

Brighton & Hove City Council

Tourism, Equalities, Communities and Culture Committee

Agenda Item 56

Subject: BHCC - Venue Hire Policy

Date of meeting: 12th January 2023

Report of: Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Culture

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 Brighton & Hove City Council owns and manages a large portfolio of indoor and outdoor venues across the city, which facilitate a significant number of events each year.
- 1.2 The BHCC Venue Hire Policy (Appendix 1) seeks to provide clear guidance on authorised hire and use of venues and outdoor spaces owned and operated by the council.
- 1.3 This policy sets out principles for how the council will authorise and manage the booking of events, applying consistent practice in doing so. These principles are based on a range of requirements which arise from legislation, guidance, and other council policies.
- 1.4 With many differing and opposing viewpoints in society, it is important for the council to have a robust Venue Hire Policy which demonstrates how it manages the right to freedom of speech with its duty to protect people from discrimination, victimisation and harm, within the framework of the law.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee approves the BHCC -Venue Hire Policy at Appendix 1.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 Brighton & Hove City Council owns and manages a large portfolio of indoor and outdoor venues across the city, which host a significant number of events each year, as a city we are committed to supporting a diverse mix of events, including those that contribute to our vibrant culture, community prosperity, the environment, and the economy.

- 3.2 The BHCC Venue Hire Policy attached at Appendix 1 covers the obligations, responsibilities, and limitations in relation to hosting an event in Brighton & Hove City Council venues or outdoor spaces. It is the intention of the policy to balance the interests of residents, communities, event organisers and other stakeholders in the city.
- 3.3 The policy seeks to enable a diverse mix of well-designed, accessible, and well managed events across the city, which deliver community, environmental and economic benefits, bring communities together and contribute to the promotion of a vibrant multi-cultural community.
- 3.4 While many venues across the council will operate their own booking hire agreement or contract, the BHCC - Venue Hire Policy seeks to provide clear guidance on authorised hire and use of venues owned by the council.
- 3.5 The BHCC - Venue Hire Policy, clearly sets out and supports an appropriate use of its venues, where spaces are utilised safely and legally. The Policy relates specifically to the hiring of venues for events, activities, and meetings attended by the public in a 'Brighton & Hove City Council Venue', specifically:
- Council owned, operated, or managed indoor and outdoor spaces
- This includes but is not limited to the hiring of venues for events in the Brighton Centre, parks, and other event spaces. For example:
- Meeting, training, and conference venues
 - Parks and open spaces including Public Highways
- 3.6 The BHCC - Venue Hire Policy details the core principles, giving a clear and systematic approach to the hiring of council venues/spaces, and describes in more detail, the council's position on event bookings, and the grounds by which an event application will be successful.
- 3.7 The policy clearly describes that the council will adhere to all relevant sections of the Equality Act 2010 including Section 149 of the Act, and all other relevant legislation that events must conform to.
- 3.8 Any individual or organisation looking to make an event booking be it for personal, commercial, charitable or community use must adhere to the requirements of this Policy and the principles set out in it. Hirers must also adhere to any relevant policies, procedures, conditions, and codes of conduct specific to the booking concerned and relevant to the hire and use of the venue.
- 3.9 The council will balance its decisions for venue hire on a range of factors, which includes equalities, cohesion, human rights considerations, regulation, and legislation. It will assess applications to ensure they are in accordance with existing priorities, commitments, policy and booking conditions.
- 3.10 Where an application for venue hire contravenes the principles of this Policy it may be escalated to Brighton & Hove's Executive Leadership Team for

advice and support. Feedback from the group will be reflected when the council's decision is conveyed to the applicant.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 Although each department may well have its own contracts and operating systems, the purpose of this policy is to draw into one place a consistent and unified booking policy for venues and outdoor events.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 Consultation has been undertaken between the Brighton Centre and the Outdoor Events department to formulate this policy alongside input from the BHCC Equalities Team. Also, the policy has taken into consideration other venue hire booking policies from other local authorities.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Events continue to form a significant part in the council's overall tourism strategy. As well as bringing substantial cultural and economic benefits to the city, people experience civic pride when major recreational, sporting and entertainment events take place in their locality and in the local events that celebrate and recognise the diverse communities of the city. This policy will seek to provide a consistent approach to the type of events considered suitable within BHCC venues and outdoor spaces.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Venues fees & charges are subject to the Council's Corporate Fees and Charges Policy. As a minimum, charges will be reviewed annually as part of the budget and service planning process. Any significant variations to budget will be reported as part of the council's monthly budget monitoring process.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack Date consulted: 19/12/2022

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 This policy will ensure a consistent approach to venue hire and ensure the Council is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

Name of lawyer consulted: Alice Rowland Date consulted: 12/12/2022

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 The policy supports an appropriate use of its venues, where spaces are utilised safely and legally. Through good management, community benefits are delivered, and equal opportunities and community cohesion are promoted. This will also enable more residents, individuals, groups, and community organisations to hold events in the city, this includes for charity

and commercial events. Through the policy it encourages events which enrich the cultural diversity, vibrancy, and economic vitality of the City and promotes equal opportunities, encourages events which are accessible and do not unlawfully discriminate against any individual or group. It may well be the case that event organisers will have to conduct their own Equalities Impact Assessment for the events that they plan to hold in the city. Consultation has been undertaken with the BHCC equalities team to assist in the formulation of the BHCC - Venue Hire Policy.

10. Sustainability implications

10.1 None

11. Other Implications

Social Value and procurement implications

11.1 Events can affect the way places are perceived and people's relationships with their place of residence, making them feel connected to it. It may encourage people to contribute more towards local projects or take more care of the local environment. Events act as vehicles to bring people together, encouraging social contact leading to enhanced individual wellbeing and more resilient communities. People benefit from participating in events, but also by volunteering and getting involved in planning and organising them helping to build capacity of communities to organise events and other projects in the future.

11.2 Involvement in events can enhance people's quality of life by providing enjoyable, sociable experiences to look forward to and reflect on as well as encouraging personal development to equip people with skills, confidence, and knowledge to help them in their lives.

11.3 Events are not universally appreciated and there may be some associated negative effects that diminish their social value including disruption to everyday routines.

Crime & disorder implications:

11.4 None

Public health implications:

11.5 Events can have a positive impact on the health and well-being of participants and spectators.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. BHCC - Venue hire policy

