

For publication

Approval of amended corporate concessions policy (JO30)

Meeting: Deputy Leader

Date: 21 June, 2017

Cabinet portfolio: Deputy Leader

Report by: Policy and Communications Manager

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To approve a minor amendment to the council's concessions policy.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the revised corporate concessions policy is approved and implemented.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 At the 12th January 2016 Cabinet meeting, Councillor J Barr, Scrutiny Project Group Leader presented a report and recommendations of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on how Chesterfield Borough Council offered concessions on fees and charges made on chargeable services. The review had examined the consistency, fairness and objectives in the provision and application of concessions across council services. The full report is available [here](#).

- 3.2 Cabinet approved in principle all of the recommendations of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum report on Concessions on Fees and Charges, but that before the implementation of any resolution that could have a financial implication to the Council, further investigation on the impact is carried out by officers and brought to Cabinet for consideration.
- 3.3 A member and officer working group was established to investigate this issue further and to develop a corporate policy on concessions.
- 3.4 The new concessions policy was agreed by Cabinet on the 1st November 2016 for implementation from 1st April 2017. The Deputy Leader was also given delegated authority to approve minor policy amendments in between the formal review periods (every two years).

4.0 Proposed change to the concessions policy

- 4.1 Generally the new concessions policy has been working well across all relevant service areas. However a best practice equality and diversity consideration has emerged regarding concessions for performances and events.
- 4.2 Following discussions with customers of Chesterfield theatres and consideration of best practice from other service providers we are recommending the introduction of a new concessions category for essential companions.
- 4.3 The essential companion concession aims to enable all patrons to equally participate with dignity and respect at our events and performances. It also enhances the safety and enjoyment of customers who require a companion to assist them in accessing events and facilities.
- 4.4 The concession is not open to, or intended for, those who simply require a companion to assist with transportation to and from the venue, or to keep them company. The scheme is not offered to anyone who can cope independently in a public venue.

4.5 The Essential Companion's primary role is to assist the customer with mobility or guidance, to enable them to use and enjoy the services at the venues. The essential companion is expected to attend to the needs of the customer at all times whilst on the premises.

4.6 The revised concessions policy is attached at appendix A.

5.0 Financial considerations

5.1 This small change to the policy only applies to a very small number of customers and will not impact significantly on income or costs.

6.0 Risk management

6.1 The main risks associated with the proposed change are shown in the table below:

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Loss of custom from customers requiring essential companions.	Low	High	Proposed change to the policy would mitigate this risk.	Low	Low
Increased numbers of people claiming concessions impacting on income generation.	Low	Low	The proposed change applies to a very small number of customers so will have very limited impact on impact generation. This is be monitored by the service manager. The policy change could increase the number of people accessing events which could have a	Low	Low

			positive impact on income generation.		
Reputation damage and potential legal challenge. Concerns have been raised by some of our customers regarding accessibility if essential companion concessions are not considered.	Medium	Medium	The proposed changes to the policy will give venues staff the flexibility to provide concessions for essential companions.	Low	Low

7.0 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was produced for the original concessions policy. This has been updated to reflect the proposed policy change and is available at appendix B.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 That the revised corporate concessions policy is approved and implemented.

9.0 Reasons for recommendations

- 9.1 To ensure a consistent approach to concessions within discretionary services while retaining the flexibility needed to achieve the Council's social and legal obligations, as well as its commercial needs.
- 9.2 To improve accessibility to our events and performances.

Decision information

Key decision number	Non-key decision
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Wards affected	ALL
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Document information

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Appendices to the report	
Appendix A	Revised Concessions Policy
Appendix B	Equality impact assessment