

PART A

Report to: Licensing Committee
Date of meeting: 14 July 2014
Report of: Head of Community and Customer Services
Title: Charity collections in the town centre

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its last meeting on 18 March 2014 the Committee agreed to changes to its policy on charity collections in the town centre. This report is to briefly update Members on progress since then and to clarify a few minor outstanding points.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the charitable collections policy adopted on 18 March 2014 be amended to allow:

(1) no more than one charitable stall in The Parade between Rickmansworth Road and Bentine Lane, unless recommended by exception by the Events Planning Group. This group will approve only additional stalls that are part of an organised event recognised by the Council and supporting local charities.

(2) with the exception of zone 1 of the policy, only one charity may be allowed to collect in the town centre at a time subject to the limits on the days and numbers of collectors set out in the policy.

(3) that vehicles used as part of non-commercial promotions and activities be authorised by officers to be sited in the town centre subject to consultation with the Highways Authority and the Parking Service;

Contact Officer:

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Report approved by: Alan Gough, Head of Community and Customer Services

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

3.1 At its' last meeting on 18 March 2014 the Committee agreed changes to its policy on charitable street collections in the town centre, which followed a public consultation exercise. A few minor operational changes require consideration as a result.

3.2 Charitable direct debit collections

Amongst the changes was a decision to enter into a site management agreement with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA), a voluntary umbrella body for organisations involved in face-to-face direct debit fundraising in the streets. The effect of the agreement is to limit the number of face-to-face fundraisers in the town centre at any one time.

3.3 The draft agreement suggested there would be a maximum of six fundraisers in the town centre at any one time, and Members expressed the view that this should be limited to no more than four. The agreement also specified that they should only be allowed to collect on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays.

3.4 The PFRA have agreed to this change and officers are now able to sign the agreement.

3.5 Charitable cash collections

The policy divides the town centre into zones, with a limit on the times and numbers of collectors allowed in each zone at a time. For the sake of clarity, the Committee is asked to confirm that only one charity at a time should be allowed to collect in the town centre, subject to the limits on the numbers of collectors in each zone.

3.6 Non-commercial promotional stalls

The policy also set out three locations where non-commercial, charitable promotional stalls could be set up in:

(1) The Parade between Bentine Lane and Clarendon Road, subject to agreement with the charter market operator;

(2) St Mary's Square; and

(3) Queens Road between the High Street and Beechen Grove.

3.7 The policy sets out that no non-commercial stalls would be allowed in The Parade between Rickmansworth Road and Bentine Lane. As this area is specifically designed for events and entertainments such as Watford Live, it is suggested that this approach is too restrictive. Instead, the policy should allow one charitable stall to be positioned in this area, or more than one where part of a larger event recognised by the Council.

3.8 Vehicles

There are occasions when the sites above are not necessarily suitable for the proposed promotion. These are typically activities involving vehicles – officers have recently processed an application for Macmillan Cancer Care and for diabetes awareness day to park promotional buses in the High Street. In these cases approval is not given without prior consultation with Highways and with the Parking Service.

Officers propose a clarification to the policy so that alternative locations can be approved where the use of vehicles is involved, in consultation with Highways and the Parking Service.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications arising from this report.

4.4 **Potential Risks**

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
Not implementing the policy	1	1	2

Appendices

None

Background Papers

PFRA draft Site Management Agreement with Watford Borough Council and related correspondence

File Reference

None