

Eligibility of rental discounts to third sector, voluntary and community groups – Assessment Tool

This Assessment Tool for determining the eligibility of rent subsidies of properties let by Cheltenham Borough Council to the third sector, voluntary and community groups, should be read in conjunction with the 'Policy for Property Lettings and disposals to the third sector, voluntary and community groups,' found at Appendix H of the July 2010 Cabinet Paper.

The Policy for Property Lettings and disposals to the third sector, voluntary and community groups states:

'As a general rule, when leases are due to be renewed, and at the Cabinet's discretion, buildings that are operating primarily as social or sports clubs *with a paying membership* [our emphasis] should be given the standard 20% discount against the full market rent that applies to all charities hiring Council property.

Buildings being leased to organisations that are open *to the community at large* and *are working to further the aims of the council's community plan* [our emphasis] can be given up to 100% discount, subject to a business plan outlining their activities, how they align with the corporate or community plan and how they intend to make their activities sustainable.'

Cheltenham Borough Council's Corporate Strategy 2010-2015 identifies 3 key community objectives, which are as follows:

- Enhancing and protecting our environment
- Strengthening our economy; and
- Strengthening our communities

These are supported by an additional 'cross-cutting' objective of

- Enhancing the provision of arts and culture

Rental subsidies will be determined by the degree to which organisations support these objectives in their business plans.

Alongside the Corporate Strategy is Cheltenham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2011. This Strategy identifies nine priorities for Cheltenham:

- Promoting Community Safety
- Promoting Sustainable Living
- Promoting a strong and sustainable economy
- Building healthy communities and supporting housing choice
- Investing in environmental quality
- Investing in travel and transport
- Investing in arts and culture
- A focus on children and young people

Nearly all of these priorities 'fit' in some way to the 4 objectives in the Council's Corporate Strategy. The focus on children and young people is however more cross-cutting. In view of this, and the recognition that the Community Strategy has given the need for a clear focus on children and young people, any organisation whose work has such a focus, which improves those outcomes for children and young people, as identified within Every Child Matters, will also be given recognition for this when calculating rent subsidies.

Calculating the Rent Subsidies

Where an organisation is able to demonstrate clearly and to the satisfaction of the Assessment Panel that it is making a significant contribution to one or more of the objectives identified within the Corporate Strategy and/or the outcomes for children and young people, as identified within Every Child Matters, it will be entitled to a 20% discount on the rental costs for significantly contributing to each objective/priority.

The Cabinet reserves the right to award an additional discount in exceptional cases, where the organisation concerned has demonstrated, by clearly evidenced business plans, that they are providing a comprehensive community benefit which is not satisfactorily reflected through the application of the rental discount criteria specified within this document.

Organisations will have the power to sub-let only with the agreement of the Council which will not be unreasonably withheld so long as the income is used to further the aims and activities of the organisation.

This discount will be staggered incrementally, as follows:

One objective	– 20% discount
Two objectives	– 40% discount
Three objectives	– 60% discount
Four or more objectives	– 80% discount

As agreed by the Cabinet in July 2010, a further 20% discount is available to all charities renting Council property.

As a general rule, when leases are due to be renewed and at the Cabinet's discretion, buildings that are operating primarily as social or sports clubs with a paying membership should be given the standard 20% discount against the full market rent, that applies to all charities hiring Council property.

The following Assessment Matrix identifies the objectives identified within the Corporate Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy, and provides a framework for calculating the rental subsidies.

It is the responsibility of the Cabinet, acting on the advice from the Cabinet Member responsible for Community Development, following consultation with

relevant officers and Cabinet portfolio holders, to decide whether or not the organisation contributes sufficiently enough to the Council's Corporate Plan or the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Plan, to merit a discount on the rent and what the level of discount should be.

Assessment Matrix

Name of Organisation:	Registered Charity?	Does the organisation having a paying membership?
Based on their Business Plan, what contribution does this organisation make to the Council's Corporate Strategy and/or Cheltenham's Sustainable Community Strategy?	Yes	Yes/No
Objective 1: Enhancing & protecting our environment (includes investing in environmental quality, investing in travel and transport and promoting sustainable living)	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>The provision of a cycle rack obviously promotes sustainable living to a degree, and the sensible agreement re sharing car parking space with others to reduce traffic congestion in the area in my view demonstrates an investment by the organisation towards improving environmental quality in the area.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>There are no ongoing cost implications for this.</p>
Objective 2: Strengthening our economy	<p>X</p> <p>There is no evidence to support how this organisation is able to strengthening the local economy, and</p>	

	St Margaret's have not made any claims that they can	
Objective 3: Strengthening our communities (includes promoting community safety, promoting housing choice, building healthier communities and supporting older people)	<p>✓</p> <p>There is clear evidence of the role St Margaret's plays in strengthening it's communities (including diverse groups within those communities), through the hiring out of its facilities to local residents for parties, meetings, etc, and in particular for being a base for the tenants and residents neighbourhood meetings.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Ongoing hiring out of space for these facilities will continue to provide revenue for the organisation.</p>
Objective 4: Enhancing the provision of arts and culture	<p>✓</p> <p>There are a number of classes, including dance, language, concerts and fashion shows hosted by St Margaret's, enabling the promotion of arts and culture within the local community.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Ongoing hiring out of space for these facilities will continue to provide revenue for the organisation.</p>
Objective 5: A focus on children and young people i.e. where One or all of the following outcomes for children and young people are met: Be healthy Stay safe Enjoy & Achieve Making a positive contribution Achieving economic well-being	<p>✓</p> <p>Facility space made available by St Margaret's ensures that activities such as acrobatics for children, mother and toddlers groups, Martial Arts and various dance classes aimed at children, are available for children</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Ongoing hiring out of space for these facilities will continue to provide revenue for the organisation.</p>

	within this local community – all of which contribute towards the Every Child Matters outcomes	
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Date of Assessment:

Assessed by:

Name and Job Title(s)

Signature(s)

**Martin Stacy, Housing & Communities Manager
Tom Mimmagh, Building Services Manager**