

Exhibition Review

Introduction

A review of the use of Exhibition space in Council buildings has been undertaken following identified weaknesses in the approval processes currently in place.

The review focuses specifically on the use of exhibition space within our Library and Hub facilities but also provides recommendations that are applicable for all public access Council spaces.

Library Provision – Legal Framework and General principles

The Public Library and Museums Act 1964 7(1) places a duty on Local Authorities to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof.

Section 7(2) of the Act sets out general tenets that Authorities are required to demonstrate compliance with – Adequate stock provision, varying formats and sufficient range of materials to meet the requirements of Adults and Children as well as ensuring that these audiences are encouraged to make full use of the library service.

Statements from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), as well as a policy document issued by the Museums, Libraries and Archives

Council 2009 highlight the Intellectual freedom that is espoused by Public Libraries within the UK.



CILIP consider that it is the role of Library and information services to allow access to all publicly available information, whether factual or fiction in which users claim legitimate interest. They believe that access should not be restricted on any grounds except that of the law. If publicly available material has not incurred legal penalties then it should not be excluded on moral, political, religious, racial or gender grounds, to satisfy the demands of sectional interest.

Libraries within the UK operate within the law to enable access to diverse information, opinion and ideas in a neutral environment. It is however true that occasionally libraries will provide access to material regarded by some as culturally or morally extreme. The MLA guidance states:-

“Each Library Authority must be able to justify such action to their communities within the democratic principles of free access that are the foundation of the public library purpose”

These are the principles applied to the Library Service in respect of **Stock Management**.

Use of Exhibition Space

Whilst the principles above are rigidly applied to our stock management processes they cannot be applied in the same terms to the use of Exhibition space. There are currently no clear professional or legal guidelines relating specifically to the provision of exhibitions within Libraries. There is no legal requirement for Councils to make such space available and by its very nature an exhibition will involve the Council in the active promotion of the subject matter included in the display.

Therefore in making decisions about the use of our publically accessible space the Council also needs to take into account its wider community cohesion and community safety responsibilities.

In The Council's Corporate Plan 2015/16 one of the four key objectives identified is to ensure **Better Skills and Education for All**. The effective use of our Exhibition space is seen as an opportunity to contribute to the delivery of this objective with space made available free of charge* to a wide range of informative, educational and public interest materials

Cardiff Council's **Everyone Matters Strategic Equality Plan 2015/16** clearly sets out the responsibility that the Council has in relation to the Equality Act in particular the requirement on public bodies to "foster good relations between people or communities who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding".

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 requires that, without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

Article 9(1) Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion of the European Convention on Human Rights

provides a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 9(2) of this act does state that this right is subject to limitations by law and necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Previous Position

Investigation of current working practices relating to exhibitions reveals Cardiff Library Service receives regular requests to host exhibitions within Libraries and Hubs across the City.

Exhibitors range from community groups, academic institutions and individuals. The service has also taken part in Arts Festivals e.g. Made in Roath and Exhibition tours such as the UK National tour of the Elephant Herd that attracted city wide participation. The space and equipment available to exhibitors is bespoke per location.

A Works of Art exhibitions guide was issued to potential exhibitors which provided exhibitors with a guide to basic planning, setting up, publicity and elements of holding an exhibition within Cardiff Libraries. It did include a statement which excluded the exhibit of political, obscene or racially offensive materials, but did not provide for sufficient governance or consultation with faith communities to enable the Authority to ensure that no adverse impact was experienced by the diverse communities within Cardiff.

Exhibit requests were made at Branch Library and Hub level and the decision to authorise was also made at the point of access with no referral to more senior management.

The subject of most of the Exhibits to date have been fairly innocuous in nature e.g. Canals in Glamorganshire, local scenery, works created within Adult Community Learner classes etc. However, there does exist a potential for requests to come forward that will impact negatively on community cohesion without proper consideration having been given to such impacts. It has become clear that there is not an effective process for consulting relevant groups such as representatives of our faith communities to ensure informed decisions are taken regarding materials that are displayed.

New Approach

In line with the Council's corporate plan objective to City of Cardiff Council would want to commit to producing a lively and varied programme of temporary exhibitions on an annual basis.

The purposes of such exhibitions would be to:

- Attract new and existing audiences
- Attract educational visits
- Raise the profile of Cardiff Libraries
- Promote Adult Community Learning
- Support the concept of community cohesion

Within this policy, the term community cohesion is used to describe

“how everyone in a geographical area lives alongside each other with mutual understanding and respect. Where every person has the equal chance to participate and has equal access to services. It is about integration, valuing difference and focusing on the shared values that join people together. It conveys a sense of acceptance and integration and of developing shared values. It is also concerned with supporting communities to be resilient when problems and tensions arise.”

Community cohesion forms the central focus for our strategy and we place significant importance on helping to raise awareness and understanding of diverse cultures. The most obvious area where we can contribute to community cohesion is through the wealth of resources that we have at our disposal – the collections, displays and exhibitions held within Cardiff and we would also like to encourage other organisations and groups to use our

public spaces to contribute to the promotion of Cardiff as a vibrant and cohesive City. By involving the whole community, the approach would aim to ensure that people can learn about different cultures and traditions as well as promoting inter-generational understanding, contributing to community confidence and harmony.

In order to ensure that the objectives of any exhibition are fully considered in line with this approach a new process is suggested:

Future Decision Making

A process mapping exercise has taken place and this will be applied as a principle to all City of Cardiff Council Public Buildings

Appendix 1 which will introduce new controls. Robust booking application paperwork has been devised

Appendix 2 which will ensure that Exhibitors provide transparent and comprehensive information.

All exhibitions must be authorised by the Lead Officer in the first instance. Any Exhibitions that the Lead Officer considers may have an impact on community cohesion will be referred to the Senior officer panel which will include but not be limited to:

Director – Housing, Communities and Customer Services
Assistant Director – Housing, Communities and Customer Services
Community Cohesion Officer for the Council
Head of Culture, Venues & Events
Cardiff Council Equality team

If appropriate the Senior Officer Panel will refer requests to the Interfaith virtual panel.

The Interfaith panel will be comprised of members of the **Inter-Faith Council for Wales**. This organization aims to help build a culture of mutual understanding and respect between the different faith communities living in Wales, and to raise public awareness of what makes each religious tradition different and of what unites them. Members of the Council include:

Muslim Council of Wales
South Wales Jewish Representative Council
Bahai Community Wales
University of South Wales Chaplaincy Services
Public Affairs and Advocacy Officer- Evangelical Alliance Wales
NHS Wales Chaplaincy
Cardiff United Synagogue
Buddhist Council of Wales
Hindu Council of Wales
Cytun

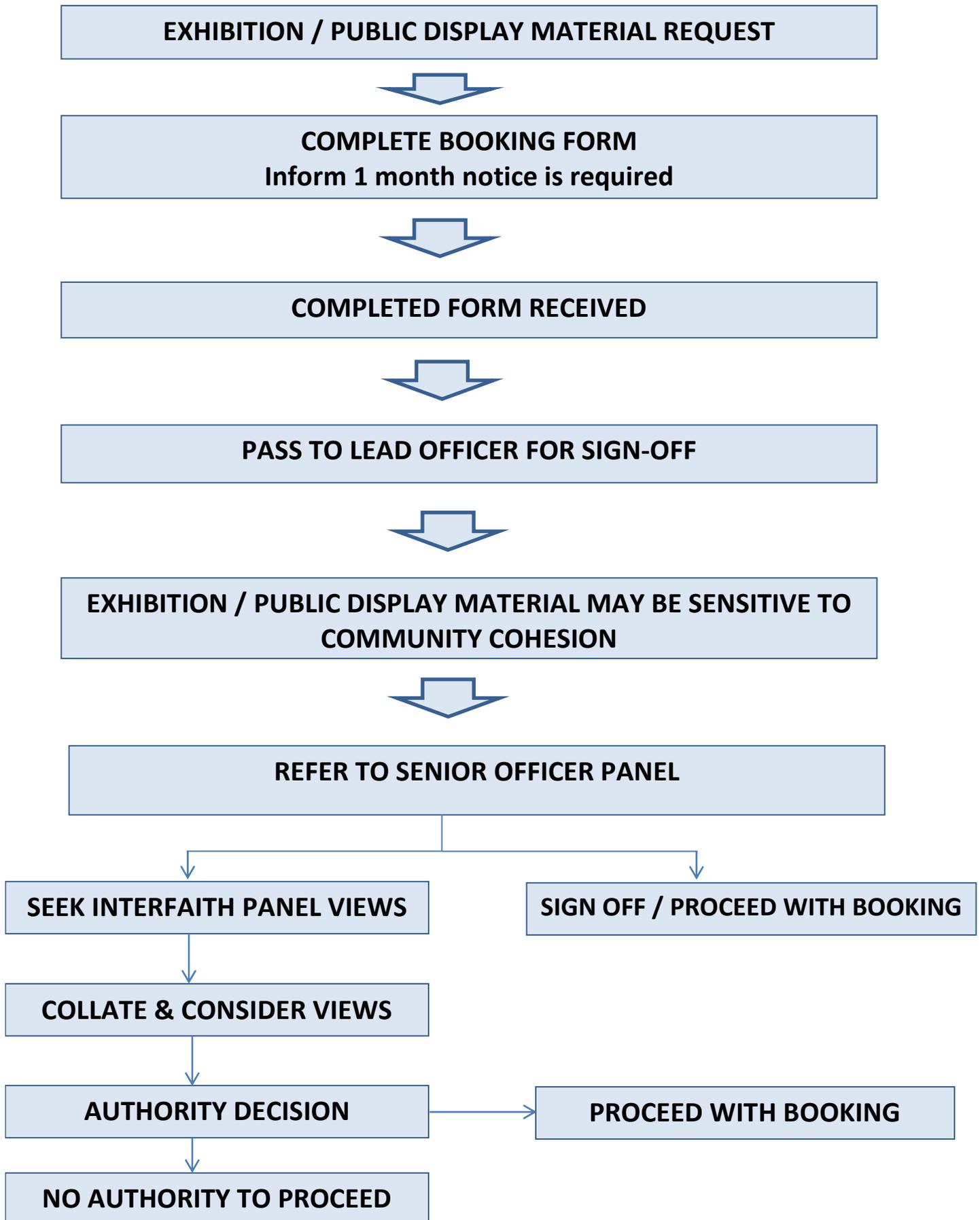
It should be stressed that this list is not exhaustive and collaboration with this group represents a real opportunity to become fully aware of the wider views. The Interfaith panel will consider faith sensitivities relating to the exhibition and provide the Authority with a collation of views. The Authority will then be fully enabled to make an informed decision that will ensure that any risks are properly assessed and managed accordingly.

Depending on the nature of the Exhibition the Authority may also consult with other appropriate bodies outside of the members of the Inter-Faith Council for Wales. There may also be circumstances where formal consultation is not appropriate, for example, where adequate consultation has already taken place at an earlier stage. These decisions will be made by the Senior Officer Panel who reserve the right to consult with other bodies of relevance on a case-by-case basis.

All information held by the Council is the subject of Freedom of Information and the Subject Access Requirements of the Data Protection Act.

The final decision to accept or refuse any request to stage an exhibition will rest with the Senior Officer Panel and therefore remains the responsibility of the Council. Should a formal challenge to any decision be made, the status of the advice provided to the panel will be considered as per the diagram on page 6.

Libraries Exhibition – Public Display Material Procedure – Process Map



City of Cardiff Council Booking Form: Exhibition (Public Display Material)

Thank you for your interest in displaying material in a City of Council Building as a potential host venue for your exhibition. Please complete all fields below and return to your point of contact, or to the address on the following page. Please note we require a minimum of **one month's notice** to review your application.

Contact Name:	
Organisation:	
Address:	
Tel / Email:	
Suggested Venue and Date of Exhibition:	Venue: From: To:
Description of Exhibition, including Title and Aims:	
Inventory: Please include number of pieces and size. This information is required as a minimum to process your application, however if a full and complete inventory is not yet available, please note this will be required at least two weeks before the start date of the exhibition.	
Logistical Information: e.g. Do the component parts need to be hung/supported? Please note display boards can be provided at some locations; however exhibits would need to be affixed by the exhibition owner.	
Continued overleaf	

<p>Sales: Are any items included in the exhibition offered for sale? Please provide details.</p>	
<p>Launch Event: Requests for launch events should be outlined in full. Comprehensive request info should be provided re times, catering, equipment required etc.</p>	
<p>Insurance: Please confirm insurance arrangements for the exhibition</p>	
<p>Any additional requirements or supplementary information:</p>	

Signed:

Date:

Thank you for supplying the above information. The information that the Council holds will be treated as confidential, but it may be shared with other Council Services in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1988. This Authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end, may use the information you have provided for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. For further information please contact the Protection Manager, County Hall, Cardiff, CF10 4UW, dataprotection@cardiff.gov.uk.

We will contact you via the details provided once your application has been reviewed.

Please note City of Cardiff Council reserves the right to not allow the display of anything deemed political or racially offensive, which breaks obscenity laws or could adversely impact on community cohesion. The Senior Officer Panel's decision on this matter is final.

Contact information:

For displays at any Council Library or Hub please contact:

Business Support Officer, Central Library Hub, The Hayes, Cardiff, CF10 1FL

Or email: centrallibrary@cardiff.gov.uk

For displays at City Hall, Cardiff Castle, Cardiff Story, Norwegian Church and Mansion House, please contact:

Kathryn Richards (Head of Culture, Venues & Events), Room CY2, County Hall, Cardiff, CF10 4UW

Or email: k.richards@cardiff.gov.uk