

This record relates to urgent decisions taken by Chief Officers under the Scheme of Delegation to Officers Paragraph 7(2).

RECORD OF URGENT DECISION TAKEN BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

SUBJECT: Vaccination Programme, Brighton Centre

CONTACT OFFICER: Donna Chisholm, AD Culture, Tourism and Sport

REASONS FOR URGENCY AND WHY NOT PRACTICABLE TO HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING OR URGENCY SUB-COMMITTEE:

On Tuesday 24th November BHCC received a written request from the NHS for use of the main auditorium at the Brighton Centre for use as the main Vaccination Centre for the city from 1st December 2020 for a period of five months. Negotiations on the terms of the licence arrangements are due to be concluded on Thursday 26th November. This is not within the normal operation of the Brighton Centre, as a conference and live entertainment venue, so an urgent decision is required from the Executive Director Economy, Environment and Culture to enable a lease/ licence to be granted. Given the timescale, and the operational requirements involved in preparing for the mass vaccination programme it has not been possible to achieve committee approval in advance of the proposed start date of the venue hire.

DETAILS AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION WITH THE CHAIR/DEPUTY CHAIR OF RELEVANT COMMITTEE:

Consultation with Council Leader Phelim Mac Cafferty, Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee. The outcome of the consultation was agreement with the proposal to allow the NHS to occupy the Brighton Centre for the Mass Vaccination Programme.

DATE OF CONSULTATION WITH CHAIR/DEPUTY CHAIR:

Thursday 26th November 2020

THE DECISION:

To grant a permission to the NHS to allow them to use the Brighton Centre from 1 December for up to five months for a mass vaccination programme.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The city council must support the national vaccination effort. It is recognised that this massive public health programme is of critical importance to the health and well-being of Brighton and Hove residents as well as the recovery of the economy. The vaccination centre will be the largest in Sussex, used by 3000 people per day, seven days per week. Councillors and officers wish to support this decision and enable the Brighton Centre to accommodate this important work, but given the unusual nature of the request, and its duration, a decision to use urgency powers has been made.

There has not been time to arrange a special P&R Committee or an urgency sub-committee as the decision needs to be made today (Friday 27th) in order to put in place the legal agreement before the 1st December.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

The NHS had been considering a number of locations, venues and models as part of their work in preparing the vaccination programme for Sussex. They have been working under the direction of central government, and whilst the confirmation of their wish to use the Brighton Centre is quite late (from 1st December) they are working under a great deal of pressure in a very short timescale. Within this context, the timing of their request is not unreasonable. Given the size of the vaccination programme – with 3000 people each day passing through the building – there are very few buildings suitable for this type of programme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The reasons why a special committee or an urgency sub-committee cannot be arranged are set out in the body of the report. Urgency powers can be used in cases of urgency following consultation with the Chair of the relevant committee where it is not reasonably practicable to obtain prior approval of a committee or sub-committee. The action taken shall be reported to the relevant committee. In this case the action taken will be reported to the Policy & Resources Committee on 3 December.

Legal services will advise on the appropriate legal agreement to put in place (this will be a lease or a licence depending on whether the NHS will require exclusive occupation). A lease for consideration in excess of £25,000 requires a committee decision. Whilst a licence is arguably covered by the scheme of delegations to officers this is a significant change of use for the Brighton Centre and it is therefore appropriate to treat it as an urgency decision and report it to committee.

Name Alice Rowland

Date 26/11/20

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The estimated value of the licence up to 31st March 2021 is £740,000 with the potential for extending the arrangement into April/May 2021. All bookings for the venue were either cancelled or deferred for this period and therefore the licence does not impact on planned revenue streams. The income will help mitigate the ongoing operational costs of maintaining the building over the period and will reduce the council's reliance on Sales Fees

and Charges grant (government is providing grant to cover 75% of income losses over a threshold). Certain staff at the venue who are not required to support the operation over the period of the licence will continue to be furloughed subject to business need.

The estimated net impact of agreeing this licence is an improvement in the Brighton Centres' financial position in 2020/21 of around £180,000.

Name James Hengeveld

Date 26/11/20

DATE OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING TO WHICH THE DECISION WILL BE REPORTED:

Policy & Resources Committee 3rd December 2020

Signed:



Date: 27 November 2020

Nick Hibberd

Executive Director Economy, Environment and Culture

Logged by Democratic Services Officer for Annual Report:

Name:

Date:

