Appleton Parish Council

Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road, Appleton, WA4 5EQ

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Income and Debtors Policy

Adopted by the Parish Council on 18th June 2024

Introduction

The policy outlines the Parish Council's procedures for dealing with income and debt collection.

Credit Control

Invoices for Birthday party booking or ah-hoc events for Hall Hire

Once the booking has been made an email with a tenancy agreement and invoice is sent to the Hall Hirer. Payment is due before the date of the Hall hire date. If payment is not paid and the tenancy agreement is not completed a key for the Parish Hall will not be issued.

Invoices for Parish Hall hire for regular hall users for Hall Hire

Invoices are issued monthly at the beginning of each month for the Hall hire charge for the month of hire. Payment is due before the end of the month.

In the event of non-payment, reminders will be issued by email with a telephone call to the lead person of the group. The maximum number of reminders will be three over a period of three weeks. If payment is still not made, access to the Hall and all bookings will be cancelled until payment is received. In the event of regular non-payment Hall Hire fees will be due in advance of the booking.

Payment of Hall Hire charges

Payments are accepted by bank transfer only and is non-refundable.

Payment of storage fees is payable in advance as one lump sum in April for the next financial year. Any storage fee charge is added to the April's Hall hire fee. If storage is no longer required or the users cease to use the Parish Hall part way through the financial year, then storage charge for the full financial year remains payable and it is non-refundable.

Cancellation of bookings

Any booking will have to be cancelled in accordance with the cancellation policy, which is as follows;

If the booking is cancelled with less than three months' notice the full hire hall hire charge is due and payable and cannot be refunded under any circumstances.

Complaints

Any complaints regarding the terms and condition of hire of the Parish Hall will be dealt with by the Finance and General Purposes committee on a case-by-case basis.

Discretion of the clerk/assistant clerk

In exceptional circumstances only, the clerk/assistant clerk have the discretion to reduce or waive the hall hire fee. For example, if the class was disrupted and could not continue. This is on a case-by-case basis and any complaint/appeal subsequently will be dealt with by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The reason and authorisation for any reduction or waive of the Hall hire fee will be recorded on the invoice.

Non-payment of Parish Hall hire charges

In the event of nonpayment of Parish Hall charges this is reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee under an agenda item. The Finance and General Purposes Committee will then consider the size of the debt and whether to commence proceedings with the small claims court. If it is not possible to recover via the small claims court, then the debt will be referred to the Parish Council to consider.

Write-off and action in the case of bad debts

The Parish Council will consider any action in the case of bad debts.

The Parish Council will seek to minimise the cost of write-offs by taking all necessary action to recover what is due. Debts will be subject to the full recovery, collection, and all reasonable legal procedures.

Write-off debt is a non-routine function which the Parish Council will decide upon only if all practical means have been exhausted. Before the Parish Council makes this decision, due diligence consideration should include the following;

- The cost of recovery against the amount owed.
- The likelihood of success of recovery.

Procedure for write off consideration

Any debts recommended by the clerk for write off will be initially considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, who will then decide any action to be taken or refer the bad debt to the Parish Council for write-off. If a debt is considered for write off a report on the debt will contain the following;

- Copy of invoice
- Amount of debt
- Recovery history
- Reason for write-off
- Date of write off and details of the agenda item and minutes of the Parish Council meeting which gave authorisation to write off the debt.

- If the debt is subsequently repaid, the debt will be written on again to account for the sum paid.
- The reason and authorisation for the write off debts will be recorded on the invoice.

All bad debts will be accounted for at year end.