



Subject:	Party political use of Community Centres and Bowling Pavilions
Date:	9 th June 2026
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Margaret Higgins, Lead Officer, Neighbourhood Services Yvonne Coyle, Community Services Unit Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted? Yes No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To advise members of a change to the facility conditions of hire for Council operated community centres and seek Committee agreement on the wording that will be used in respect of this. This change relates to party political use, which would be permitted on a restricted basis.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members are asked to note the contents of the report and agree the change in facility conditions of hire wording that will enable use by political parties on a restricted basis.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Background</p> <p>Elected members recently requested that officers consider a change to the facilities conditions of hire in community centres and bowling pavilions to enable party political use. City & Neighbourhood Services Officers have engaged with Legal Services to develop a form of words that would permit party political use on a restricted basis and provide clarity for staff when taking bookings.</p>
3.2	Party Political activity is currently restricted within Council operated community centres through the following Condition of Hire. <i>‘that the facility will only be used for the purpose stated in the application and shall not be used for party political purposes’.</i>
3.3	<p>The clause below would enable restricted use by political parties;</p> <p><i>That if the Facilities forms part of the Council’s Community Centres, the Hirer agrees that the Facilities will only be used for the purpose stated in the Application and shall not be used for any Party Political Activities as defined in clause 1.11 however, Community Centres can be used by political parties for public good i.e. for constituency/advisory clinics, or community engagement purposes, where the activity does not involve campaigning, fundraising, or promotion of a political party or its policies, and is intended to provide a service or information to members of the public. Political Parties will not be able to book a venue during Purdah Period.</i></p> <p><i>For the purposes of these terms and conditions, reference to Purdah Period includes reference to Periods of Heightened Political Sensitivity which is observed by the Council in relation to local elections.</i></p>
3.4	Members should note that Party Political Activities are currently permitted in other Council facilities such as Leisure Centres and Bowling pavilions without any restrictions.

	Members are asked to consider whether they wish to amend the existing Conditions of Hire for Bowling Pavilions to ensure that they are consistent with other spaces owned and operated by the Council.
3.5	Removal of the restriction and use of Council Community Centres will be subject to compliance with booking procedures and current conditions of hire. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All requests for use of community centres are subject to availability and compliance with conditions of hire and pricing policy. • Booking documentation will outline specific purpose of use and may require risk assessments and event management plans. • All requests for use must comply with the Council's 'Good & Harmonious' policy/procedures.
3.6	C&NS has responsibility for 27 directly managed community centres, a full list of community centres can be found here; Community centres . Any change to the Conditions of Hire agreed by committee will come into effect for bookings from 01 September 2026 onwards.
4.0	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
4.1	All activity outlined in the report can be delivered within existing resources. City & Neighbourhood Services will draft detailed guidance for staff following committee's decision.
5.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment</u>
5.1	A screening of this proposed amendment has been commenced. If the decision is screened in, a further report will be brought to Committee to reconsider this decision in advance of the proposed commencement date of 01 September. A full review of the terms and conditions is underway and they will be screened for any equality or good relations impacts.
6.0	Appendices - Documents Attached or None
6.1	N/A