



Report of: Executive Member for Community Development

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	30 September 2019		All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: Islington Council Venues Free Community Use Scheme Round 1: Winter 2020

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 Each year, Islington Council is pleased to offer eight community groups, schools and colleges, arts and cultural organisations based in Islington the chance to have free use of Islington Assembly Hall and selected Town Hall meeting rooms for five hours.

In June 2018, the Assembly Hall Free hires scheme amended its criteria and application process, reducing the number of free hires of the Assembly Hall but at the same time opened up the opportunity for organisations to apply to use the Town Hall's larger committee rooms for smaller events more suited to these rooms.

The new scheme allows for free hire of civic space to community groups with no hidden costs/or minimal additional costs.

In the previous year under the new scheme, all free hires were allocated and none were carried forward. Therefore, four slots are available in this round (two for free hires of the Islington Assembly Hall and two for the use of Town Hall rooms).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To allocate one free hire of the Islington Assembly Hall for June and mid-September 2019 to each of the following:
- Creative Society
 - Voluntary Action Islington - Volunteer Centre Islington
- 2.2 To allocate one free hire of Islington Town Hall rooms for June and December 2019 to each of the following:
- Centre 404
 - Galbur Foundation

2.3 To hold the following applicant in reserve, in case of inability of the above applicants to negotiate appropriate dates and timings:

- Middle Eastern Women & Society Organisation

3. Background

3.1 There are two different packages available to organizations depending on the nature of the event and/or number of guests and audiences. The Council reserves the right to decide on the option more suitable for events:

- The Assembly Hall - for fairs, conferences and networking events with an audience of over 100 people, musical performances with a small number of performers, and other simple performances. The free hire scheme is offered on selected **Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in January – February 2019 (1st round), and between June to mid- September 2019 (2nd round).**

- The Town Hall rooms - for smaller conferences, workshops and collaborative networking events with an audience between 25 to 80 people - depending on layout of the room, and whether attendees are seated or standing up. The Town Hall free hire is offered on working days **Monday – Friday, between 9am and 5pm from 2 January – 31 May 2019 (1st round); and 1 June to 21 December 2019 (2nd round)** subject to availability.

3.2 The first round of the 2019-20 scheme was launched in July 2019 and was promoted through LBI Communications on the council external website, Schools Bulletin, as well as through Voluntary Action Islington news group, directly to Housing Estates and Community Centres, to the wider sector via LBI departments (Youth Services, Housing, VCS Team, BME Forum, School Improvement Service, Libraries), and direct mailings to previous applicants and arts sector organisations.

The scheme received 6 applications from organisations supporting a wide range of events (see Appendix 1).

3.3 Applications have been assessed against the published criteria (see Appendix 2) which requires applicants to demonstrate a commitment to provide events and activities that:

a) Have a strategic value and, in particular, a focus on at least one of the following four areas:

- community cohesion
- children and young people
- diversity
- creative ways of engaging local residents and, in particular, those who might otherwise miss out on cultural opportunities.

b) Have a borough-wide impact

c) Demonstrate a commitment to good practice (events that are viable, of high quality, well managed and evaluated)

d) Promote Islington Assembly Hall as a focus for high quality events, or demonstrating good use of the civic space at the Town Hall, making best use of the high quality facilities available in both venues

The scheme does **not** support:

- Groups that are not based in the borough of Islington
- Events or activities from commercial organisations
- More than one usage per applicant per year
- Applications from organisations who have previously cancelled a slot once accepted
- Applications from departments of Islington Council

3.4 Wherever possible, unsuccessful applicants will be supported, to secure alternative premises for their work.

4. Free Hire

4.1 The following organisations and events most closely meet the criteria and are recommended for free use of the Assembly Hall.

Creative Society	Creative Job Studio Drop in – a series of free workshops to support young people from low-income households, in low-paid work or freelancing, access to the creative sector.
Voluntary Action Islington (Volunteer Centre Islington)	Winter Volunteer Recruitment Fair – Open event to recruit volunteers, with a number of stalls with a variety of volunteering to choose from on the day.

4.2 The following organisations and events most closely meet the criteria and are recommended for free use of the Town Hall rooms.

Centre 404	Family Carers Reference Group and Islington Parents Forum – Forum meetings for parents with children with SEND and family carers for adults with learning disabilities.
Galbur Foundation	‘Beat Up Stigma’ Annual Youth Mental Health Conference for BAMER communities – Conference for Youth BAMER communities

The following organisations and events met the criteria and are recommended to be held in reserve, in case of inability of organisations recommended for free hires listed in 4.1 to negotiate dates and timings with Assembly Hall management.

Middle Eastern Women & Society Organisation	MEWSO'S 10th Anniversary Celebration – Anniversary event of this organisations supporting Middle Eastern, North African and Asian women in London.
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4.3 Officers will prepare a press release announcing the free hires. Organisations will have to submit information about their events to the Council’s events diary.

5. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications other than the loss of income as a result of waiving the fees for the four hires of the Assembly Hall which has been built into the business plan for the venue.

6. Legal Implications

The Council can support voluntary and community sector organisations under the wellbeing power in Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. This gives the Council the power to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole or part of its area or all or any of the persons resident or present in that area.

7. Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications.

8. Resident Impact Assessment:

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The proposed events serve a wide range of communities and support the Council and Arts Services priorities, targeting children and young people with activities that support young people from low-income households access jobs in the creative sector. Galbur Foundation is an organisation which addresses BAMER themes. Centre 404 supports children with SEND and their families and family carers for adults with learning disabilities.

9. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

The scheme provides an opportunity for the council to support local organisations through free use of the Assembly Hall and civic space. Applications have been assessed through a clear and transparent process.

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



Date: 10.9.2019

Executive Member for Community Development

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APPENDIX 1
Islington Council Venues Free Community Use Scheme
All Applicants VCS Committee 30 September 2019

Organisation	Event Title	Event Description	Expected Audience	Recommended
Creative Society	Creative Job Studio Drop in	A series of free workshops to support young people from low-income households, in low-paid work or freelancing, access to the creative sector.	150	YES (ASSEMBLY HALL)
Voluntary Action Islington (Volunteer Centre Islington)	Winter Volunteer Recruitment Fair	Open event to recruit volunteers, with a number of stalls with a variety of volunteering to choose from on the day.	150	YES (ASSEMBLY HALL)
Middle Eastern Women & Society Organisation	MEWSO'S 10th Anniversary Celebration	Anniversary event of this organisations supporting Middle Eastern, North African and Asian women in London.	80-100	RESERVE (ASSEMBLY HALL)
Centre 404	Family Carers Reference Group and Islington Parents Forum	Forum meetings for parents with children with SEND and family carers for adults with learning disabilities.	10 to 25	YES (TOWN HALL ROOMS)
Galbur Foundation	'Beat Up Stigma' Annual Youth Mental Health Conference for BAMER communities	Conference bringing together young people, voluntary and statutory services and the community, faith groups and schools to discuss and share ideas on how best support young peoples' mental health needs.	60-80	YES (TOWN HALL ROOMS)
Camden & Islington NHS Foundation Trust	Service User Conference	Conference and celebration event for practioners and service users of the Camden & Islington NHS.	100	NO



APPENDIX 2

Islington Council Venues Free Community Use Scheme Eligibility Criteria and Guidance Notes - Round 2

Each year, Islington Council is pleased to offer eight community groups, schools and colleges, arts and cultural organisations based in Islington the chance to have free use of Islington Assembly Hall and selected Town Hall meeting rooms for five hours.

There are two different packages available to organizations depending on the nature of the event and/or number of guests and audiences. The Council reserves the right to decide on the option more suitable for your event. Therefore, it is important that the information you provide is detailed and accurate. Please read carefully the information below before completing an application form

Option 1 - Islington Assembly Hall

The Assembly Hall is suitable for fairs, conferences and networking events with an audience of over 100 people, musical performances with a small number of performers, and other simple performances. Please note that Islington Assembly Hall is not a theatre and if you're looking to put on a stage performance with multiple acts, props, sets or other complex lighting or audio-visual effects within a limited budget, then this scheme might not be suitable for your event and other venues might provide a better and cost-effective alternative.

Please email assemblyhall@islington.gov.uk if you would like to check if this is the right venue for you. The free hire scheme will be offered on selected **Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays** between **June to mid-September 2019 (2nd Round)**. Two free hires of Islington Assembly Hall will be offered in this round. Successful applicants will get free hire of the main hall **for a maximum of five consecutive hours**.

The five-hour hire of the Assembly Hall Free Hire will include:

- access to Islington Assembly Hall for you and/or your suppliers for your event
- Islington Assembly Hall set up to meet your requirements as agreed in pre-event discussions
- a named events coordinator leading up to the event
- at least one duty manager throughout your event
- a small PA system that can be used without additional support from an engineer
- a sound engineer (if required) for a period of five hours
- one member of Assembly Hall security team as a standard
- use of the kitchen for caterers

All other items and services – such as hire of the hall for additional hours, use of the venue's balcony, refreshments, extra security, equipment, table linen and specialized technical support – will incur additional costs, which your organisation will need to meet. Additional costs for the use of the Assembly Hall may include, but are not limited, to (costs below are inclusive of VAT):

- Hire of the hall for more than five consecutive hours: from £120 per hour
- Use of the balcony: £300 for a five-hour hire
- Tablecloths: £84 in total
- Additional security staff: from £93.90
- Refreshments: costs available on request

Option 2 - Islington Town Hall rooms

The Town Hall rooms are suitable for events with an audience between 25 to 80 people depending on layout of the room, and whether attendees are seated or standing up.

The Town Hall can be booked for **workshops, collaborative working sessions, networking, and small get-togethers for residents and community groups.**

The Town Hall free hire will be offered on working days **Monday – Friday, between 9am and 5pm** from **1 June to 21 December 2019 (2nd Round)** subject to availability*. Two free hires of Islington Town Hall rooms will be offered in this round.

Successful applicants will get free hire of the room **for a maximum of five consecutive hours.**

The five-hour Town Hall Free Hire will include:

- access to Islington civic spaces for you and/or your guests
- setting up the room to a layout of your preference
- at least one duty facility officer throughout your event
- use of in-house furniture, tables and chairs
- jars of drinking water
- use of large plasma LED monitor
- free Wi-Fi

Additional costs may include, but are not limited, to:

- hire of additional stationary such as flipcharts, flipchart paper, and pens
- hire of additional technical equipment such projectors, etc.
- any additional services which fall outside the normal working hours will have to be charged
- refreshments: costs available on request

*Please note that the Council has a right to cancel or postpone your event at any time due to exceptional circumstances without incurring liabilities for any losses or damages incurred by the hirer as a result of cancellation. Should the Council cancel your booking for reasons other than force majeure within two weeks of the date of the event, the council will at its sole discretion endeavour to assist the hirer in finding alternative accommodation for the event.

Criteria

Organisations must demonstrate a commitment to provide events and activities that have a strategic value, and in particular a focus on at least one of the following four areas:

- community cohesion
- children and young people
- diversity
- creative ways of engaging local residents and, in particular, those who might otherwise miss out on cultural opportunities.

Applications should be able to demonstrate your event achieve the following:

- have a borough-wide impact
- demonstrate a commitment to good practice (events that are viable, of high quality, well managed and evaluated)
- promote Islington Assembly Hall as a focus for high quality events, or demonstrating good use of the civic space at the Town Hall, making best use of the high quality facilities available in both venues

In addition, to be shortlisted for the scheme, you must be able to demonstrate how your organisation will cover any associated costs (if any), as the free hire scheme gives you use of the venue for free for up to five hours, but other additional costs must be covered by your organisation as indicated above.

The scheme will not support:

- groups that are not based in the borough of Islington
- events or activities from commercial organisations
- more than one usage per applicant per year
- applications from organisations who have previously cancelled a slot once accepted
- applications from departments of Islington Council

How to apply and additional support:

Please email your completed application to culture@islington.gov.uk by 12 noon on **Friday 22 February 2019**. The Council will contact all applicants from week commencing 1 April 2019 to offer available dates and issue terms and conditions of the booking, which must be completed to guarantee the free use of the venue.

Before you submit an application, we would like to invite you to meet us so that you can ask any questions and learn more about the scheme. We warmly invite you to attend a viewing of the Assembly Hall where staff will be available to welcome you and talk in more detail about the available space; potential additional costs; and technical requirements.

If you would like to attend the viewing, please email culture@islington.gov.uk.

(Please note - attending the viewing is **optional** and does not form part of the shortlisting process)

If you cannot attend the viewing but would like more information about the scheme or if you need help completing an application, please call 020 7527 5243 or email culture@islington.gov.uk