

Supplementary Guidance on Concessions

Aim of the Guidance

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a consistent approach in setting, monitoring and reviewing concessions across the authority. This will ensure that greater consistency towards concessions granted to target groups for individual services is achieved and that the fees and charges levied for discretionary services are fair and equitable and support social inclusion priorities. The following principles apply:

Principles

1. Council Priorities

A directory of charges shall be maintained and published for all charges and concessions where the council has discretion over the amounts charged for services provided and for trading activities. Accurate user statistics will then enable levels of subsidy being positively provided on social inclusion grounds to be identified separately from other subsidies within net expenditure totals. All decisions on concessions for services and trading activities will be taken with reference to and in support of council priorities and recorded as delegated decisions, as appropriate.

2. Target Groups

All relevant government guidance should be considered by each service area when concessionary groups and charging levels are set. Where possible concessions should not be granted to non-Leeds residents. A business case should be approved which details the rationale for directing subsidy towards a target group. All concessions should be fully justified in terms of achieving the council's priorities.

Concessionary charges may also be provided in an area of the city when the purpose is to assist the council in achieving a policy outcome.

Concessionary charges may also be made available to organisations whose purpose is to assist the council in meeting specific objectives in its priorities and policy framework, or which contribute to the aims of key local partnerships in which the council has a leading role.

3. Level of Concessions

The level of concession should be set with regard to the service being provided and its use and appeal to the groups for whom concessions are offered.

4. Approval

The director or chief officer, in consultation with the deputy chief executive, will approve the level of concession and the groups for whom the concessions apply once all budgetary and other relevant information for the service has been considered. The level of concession and the target groups in receipt of the concession should be made explicit during the approval process and be fully justified in terms of achieving the council's priorities.

5. Monitoring

The take-up of concessions should be monitored by individual service areas to identify how well it is helping achieve policy aims.

6. Review of Concessions Guidance

This guidance shall be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.