



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

PROCEDURE FOR HIRING TO POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out the conditions under which political organisations may hire Town Council-owned buildings, ensuring transparency, fairness, and compliance with electoral regulations, particularly during pre-election periods.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all political organisations seeking to hire Town Council-owned facilities for meetings, events, or campaigns.

3. General Principles

- Political organisations have equal access to Town Council-owned buildings, subject to availability and adherence to this procedure.
- Hire must not disrupt regular Town Council operations or other pre-booked events.

4. Booking Process

- All booking requests must be submitted in writing via the enquiries email address enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk
- Applications must include details of the event, purpose, expected attendance, and requested dates/times.
- A minimum notice period of 14 days is required for all bookings.

5. Pre-Election Period Restrictions (Purdah)

- During the pre-election period (purdah), which begins from the date an election is officially announced until polling day, Town Council-owned buildings cannot be hired by political organisations for campaigning purposes.
- Existing bookings falling within this period may be reviewed and potentially cancelled at the Town Council's discretion.
- Non-campaigning activities (e.g., administrative meetings) may still be permitted but must be explicitly stated in the booking application.

6. Conditions of Hire

- Political organisations must adhere to the Town Council's Terms and Conditions for venue hire.
- No material promoting a political party or candidate should be displayed outside the hired premises.
- The hiring party is responsible for ensuring compliance with health and safety and will provide to the Town Council a copy of the Public Liability Insurance and Risk Assessment.

7. Fees and Charges

- Standard hire fees will apply to political organisations.
- Any additional costs arising from damage or extra cleaning will be charged to the hiring party. A deposit will be taken to cover this.

8. Monitoring and Compliance

- The Town Clerk will monitor compliance with this procedure.
- Any breaches may result in termination of the booking and refusal of future hire requests.