YORK VENUE HIRE GUIDANCE – PREVENT DUTY

Owning and managing a venue for hire comes with considerable responsibility. This includes making sure that your venue is not used by extremists to spread their message of hatred and division or activity that raises concerns about radicalisation and/or terrorism.

The national Prevent Duty (Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015) places a mandatory requirement for councils to ensure that publicly owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views. This includes ensuring that any event spaces, publicly-owned venues, resources or IT equipment are not being used to facilitate the spread of extremist narratives which can reasonably be linked to terrorism, such as narratives used to encourage people into participating in or supporting terrorism.

Extremists seek to promote hatred and division in order to exploit vulnerable people into being involved in, or supporting, acts of terrorism. The promotion of hateful propaganda does not just happen online. Extremist groups are known to have exploited venues in order to influence and radicalise others into participating in, or supporting, terrorism.

There are many varied ideologies that motivate people and groups and the council has to take care to find a balance that takes account of the right to free speech while protecting York's status as a Human Rights City and City of Sanctuary.

This guidance aims to help you prevent this happening at your venue. It is not definitive but should be followed, along with your venue hire policy and risk assessment. It aims to help you to take a responsible and appropriate approach to event bookings.

If followed correctly, it can help you to protect your venue and vulnerable people from being exploited, while also protecting the reputation of your organisation.

The Risk Assessment template on page 7 will help you to consider the potential for any risks when taking venue bookings for events and provides a starting point to identify and address concerns where you're unsure about an organisation, group or individuals.

The decision about who at your venue should complete the Risk Assessment is your responsibility. This guidance will not apply to all events your venue hosts/ facilitates but it provides a useful framework for venue managers/ booking staff to assess the risks if you have concerns or are unsure about an individual or group's intention to use your venue.

It is your responsibility to decide when to complete this document. We advise that you complete the decision-making process in a timely manner so you can use the information you've gathered to make an informed decision about whether or not to accept the booking.

This guidance document should be used alongside your existing policies and procedures for booking events and speakers. Make sure that you record any information in line with your organisation's records management policy and data protection arrangements.

The decisions about whether to accept a booking and whether to take any further action is your responsibility. To allow for fair and transparent decision-making, you should use the Risk Assessment on page 7 to gather basic information to help make a decision about allowing a booking.

COMPLETING THE VENUE HIRE RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

ASK: What's planned and who's planning it?

- Who is the individual or organisation booking the event? Ask for their name and any associated names they operate under. Ask for their address and a phone number. Get details of the individual or organisation's website and associated website
- What is the event planned? Theme, name of the event, agenda, content, speakers, expected audience numbers and demographics, details of how the event will be promoted (ask for copies of flyers/posters etc), is the event open to the public or ticket only
- Has the organisation/individual read and agreed to your venue policy? Do they implement a policy that promotes equality and diversity and challenges all forms of discrimination?

CHECK: Undertake due diligence to confirm what you've been told and find out more

- Review the publicly available information of those individuals/organisations making the booking and the speakers by viewing their websites, articles, blogs or speeches, considering what other people are saying about them.
- Ask for a reference from a venue provider previously used by the individual/organisation.
- Make sure the booking isn't for a banned organisation by checking the **UK list of proscribed organisations**.
- If the booking is for a charity, check the charity number of the organisation with the **Charity commission**.

DECIDE: Do you let the event go ahead?

- Use the information collected in the Risk Assessment to inform your decision. If you have any concerns about the booking, speak to your organisation's Prevent lead or contact your local **Counter Terrorism security advisor** for further support and advice.

Things To Consider When Taking Bookings

- If the booking is being arranged by an event management or another company, make sure you know who their client is
- Be wary of individuals only giving mobile numbers
- If enquiries are made about internet use and bandwidth, investigate whether any speakers are participating in the event remotely
- Be wary of individuals/organisations making large cash payments
- Ensure that in the event of reputational risk to your organisation, you have the ability to withdraw from the contract

Tips For Conducting Research Online

- Complete a thorough check on the individuals and organisations involved by viewing their website(s) and looking at what other people are saying about them (articles/blogs etc). Where possible use primary evidence such as an organisation's manifesto or a person speaking on YouTube
- When you are looking at a website, check if it's being kept up to date
- If you are unsure about an organisation, check if it has a contact telephone number and business address

- Under GDPR (UK data protection), any searches you complete must be managed appropriately and sensitively ensuring data sharing agreements are adhered to

British values

When making your decision, make sure that the proposed event is in line with British values.

We advise that your venue does not permit events which:

- call for the death of British Armed Forces
- oppose fundamental British values including:
  - democracy
  - the rule of law
  - individual liberty
  - mutual respect
  - tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
  - risk drawing people into terrorism
  - are otherwise unlawful

Refusing the booking

Once you've made a decision and documented it appropriately (according to your venue's record-keeping procedure), you should communicate it clearly to the person or group who made the booking, including the reasons why. You should be transparent and be clear about your venue's right to refuse or cancel any booking. If individuals or groups have been dishonest with the information they provided when booking, you should mention this.

Accepting the booking

Once you've made and documented the decision to accept the booking, you should inform the person or group who made the booking. You should also remind them of their responsibilities, including making sure the event is compliant with British values (as described above). You should remind the person or group that breaching these conditions, or any conditions in the venue hire agreement or health and safety requirements could lead to the event being cancelled.

If you have concerns about health and safety for a potential event, you can get advice from the **Health and Safety Executive.**

Considerations for accepting a booking

When you accept a booking which you've assessed as medium risk, you may want to impose additional conditions on the person or group holding the event, to reduce risk.

You may wish to consider:

- making an event/activity open to the public giving clear guidelines on the language to be used, or topics to be discussed, for example not allowing content which promotes hatred and division
- reserving the right to attend or send in attendance an independent observer or chairperson to the event (on behalf of the venue owner), who shall have the authority to suspend or cancel the event if necessary
- restricting the sale of alcohol or other products on the premises
- requesting copies of the presenter's / speaker's material, for example presentations or speeches, before the event, to be sure they're compliant with British values
- providing information about items prohibited at the venue, including banners, flags, leaflets, or placards
- requesting that an event is recorded in case of future complaint

Suggested Wording for Venue Hire Policy

In the event where we feel there is reputational risk to our organisation, we have the ability to withdraw from the contract and cancel the booking of the event.

1. The Hirer acknowledges that the (name of organisation) has a duty under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of its functions to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (the "Prevent Duty"). The Hirer shall ensure that it uses (venue name) in such a way as to satisfy the Prevent Duty.
2. The Hirer must ensure that the venue is not used by any groups or speakers in support of any extremist ideology

Part 1: RESPONSIBLE BOOKING TEMPLATE

This information should be collected at the point of enquiry from organisations or individuals requesting to book your venue and is used for the purpose of conducting a necessary and proportionate assessment of a prospective booking. This will provide, once completed, an accurate record of how decision making was informed. Once completed, this document is to be retained by the venue owner/booking manager only. The decisions regarding whether to accept a booking and take any further action is your responsibility

Name of Event							
Date of Event		Time of Event		Is this a repeat booking	YES/NO		
Name and contact details for person requesting the booking (inc. org. / group / charity they represent):							
Event type e.g. engagement, conference, fundraiser, consultation, meeting:				Approximate Number of People Attending			
How is attendance at the event being arranged? (Tick relevant box)		Invite Only		Open invite however attendees will need to book onto the event		Open invite- to members of the public	
How is the event being advertised? (word of mouth, social media, flyers, website etc):				Will the media be present? YES/NO		Is the event going to be segregated? YES/NO	
Name and contact details of main speaker (inc organisation / group / charity they represent):							
Name and contact details of all other speakers (inc organisation / group / charity they represent):							
Please provide the contact details for a venue the booking person has held an event at previously (Advise that you may contact)		Name: Tel number/ Email:					

Part 2: ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH

For each of the questions record your findings and using the impact assessment rating below assign a number based on the level of risk and/or likelihood.

Please circle the numbers to indicate score of risk:

1: No concern/ no risk
2: Low likelihood/ impact of risk
3: medium risk/medium likelihood
4: high risk/high likelihood

1.	Ensure the event is not being organised by or on behalf of a proscribed organisation. This is a list of banned organisations under UK law UK list of proscribed organisations UK List of Proscribed Organisations	If the organisation is listed as a proscribed organisation you should not proceed with the booking. Do not agree to the event as it is likely to breach the law. Contact the City of York Council Prevent Lead immediately at: tanya.lyon@york.gov.uk	1 2 3 4
2.	If concerns are raised but the organisation is not proscribed, consider conducting an open-source internet search to research the organisation, topics or speakers to inform your decision-making process. To ensure that your search is proportionate make sure that you consider all the information and its credibility.	Record your findings of your internet search below (inc. date of search)	1 2 3 4

3.	If a charity is booking the event, you can check if it is registered on the Charity Commission website: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission	Further action / detail:	1 2 3 4
4.	Are there concerns that this event could breach UK law, the Human Rights Act 1088 or the Equality Act 2010?	YES / NO Further action / detail:	1 2 3 4
5.	In your opinion is there a chance this event could cause community tension or impact on community cohesion / relations? *e.g. may cause offence to one or more groups/individuals with protected characteristics based on, for example, faith/sexual orientation or disability*	YES / NO Further action / detail	1 2 3 4
6.	Is there a possibility that hosting this event could attract a counter protest group?	YES / NO Further action / detail	1 2 3 4
7.	Is there a risk to the premises and/or the council's and/or organisation's reputation should you host this event?	YES / NO Further action / detail	1 2 3 4
8.	Are there Health and Safety issues to be addressed or will additional security be required?	YES / NO Further action / detail	1 2 3 4
TOTAL NUMBER (add up the numbers circled for each question)			
OVERALL RAG ASSESSMENT (see table p10)			

SECURITY THREAT CHECK When completing this document there is a duty to ensure Prevent activity is guided by the following Security Threat Check. Please confirm each of the following statements has been given due regard to and any specific comments against these based on the outcome of the risk scoring.	
Any action should be mindful of the UK's current terrorism threat level	
Any action should be likely to reduce the threat of terrorism or terrorist-adjacent narratives.	
Additional comments (including, where applicable any mitigating circumstances that may impact the level of risk):	

RISK SCORE ASSESSMENT

Score: 16 or below Green – Low or no risk	Score: 16-24 Amber – Medium Risk	Score: 25 – 32 Red – High Risk
Proceed with your booking using your existing policies and procedures for booking events and speakers. If anything changes before the date of the event, you may wish to review the booking and complete a further RAG assessment	Consider making contact with City of York Council's Community Safety Team saferyork@york.gov.uk 01904 551555 or liaison with the local neighbourhood policing team or Counter Terrorism North-East for advice (see contacts below). This is advised before you confirm this event booking. If you decide to go ahead and confirm the booking for the event to be delivered from your venue, please ensure that you have the right event management arrangements in place to react, manage and log any situations that could lead to reports of breaches in the Human Rights 1998 and Equality Act 2010; including the potential for disorder.	Make contact with City of York Council's Community Safety Team safeyork@york.gov.uk 01904 551555 or with the local neighbourhood policing team and Counter Terrorism North East for advice (see contacts below). Do not confirm the event booking If anything changes before the date of the event, you may wish to review the booking and complete a further RAG assessment

USEFUL CONTACTS

City of York Community Safety Team Email: saferyork@york.gov.uk or 01904 551555

Prevent Lead Email: tanya.lyon@york.gov.uk

Counter Terrorism Police North East https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/northeast/

North Yorkshire Police Call: 101 (or in an emergency 999)