

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL

Street Collections Policy

Introduction

The licensing authority is empowered under Section 5 of the Police, Factories, Etc (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 to licence collections made in “any street or public place” for “charitable or other purposes”

‘Street’ is defined as including any highway and any public bridge, road, lane, footway, square, court, alley or passage whether a thoroughfare or not.

The definition of a ‘public place’ will include shopping centres and the entranceways to shops. The foyer of a supermarket could be considered to be behind closed doors therefore would only require the consent of the manager, however if the collection also took place outside or in the car park, a licence would be required.

Aims

The aims of the licensing authority are to:

- Safeguard the interests of both public donors and beneficiaries;
- Facilitate well organised collections by bona fide charitable institutions and to ensure that good standards are met, and;
- Prevent unlicensed collections from taking place.

Objectives

In order to achieve its aims, the licensing authority has identified the major issues and sought to tackle them through this policy with the intention of:

- Ensuring impartiality and fairness in determining applications;
- Accommodating all eligible requests, subject to capacity, and bearing in mind that certain days and locations are especially sought after;
- Providing equality of opportunity for would-be collectors;
- Avoiding causing undue nuisance to the public;
- Setting fair maximum limits for one applicant;
- Achieving a fair balance between local and national causes;

The licensing authority recommends that all organisations adhere to the Institute of Fundraising’s Code of Fundraising Practice. A copy of this code of practice can be found at www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk

Collection Areas

Applications for street collections may be made for the following areas:

Promenade
Town Centre
Hounds Hill Shopping Centre
Stanley Park
The whole of Blackpool

Only one street collection will be permitted in the Town Centre and Promenade area per day. An exception may be made where the collection in Blackpool is part of a larger national/Countywide event and the collectors are merely passing through the area, or for small scale collections in a limited area.

Organisation

Charities must be registered with the Charity Commission, or be a charitable organisation based in/around Blackpool.

Whilst the Council does not place a specific limit on the number of collections a particular charity may apply for in a calendar year, applications will be monitored. If Officers form the opinion that an excessive number of collection permits are being applied for by one charity, this charity's applications may be referred to the Public Protection Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee may place a restriction on the number of permits that may be granted to this charity.

Where a statement of return has been nil or there has been a failure to return the statement of return, this will usually result in subsequent applications for a five year period being refused.

Where a permit for a collection has been issued and the collection is not to take place, the permit must be returned to the licensing service at least 7 days before the collection was due to take place, failure to do so will usually result in subsequent applications for a five year period being refused.

Applications

The initial allocation of street collection permits will take place annually in March each year and will cover collections for the subsequent financial year.

All organisations appearing on the approved list maintained by the Council will automatically be sent an invitation to apply for a permit.

Subsequent applications will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

There must be a minimum of 28 days notice given between the application and the proposed date of collection. This requirement may be waived in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Licensing Officer.

Where the collection is to take place in the Hounds Hill Shopping Centre, written permission from the Centre Manager must be sent with the application.

Where the collection is to take place on the Promenade you will, in the first instance, need to contact Visit Blackpool on 01253 478231 to check the dates requested are available. Public Liability insurance cover will be required. There may be need to apply for a tramway activity permit.

If the collection is to be held within the Town Centre, the Licensing Service will consult with the Town Centre Admin Manager before considering the application.

Allocation of permits

When deciding whether to grant a permit, consideration will be given to the following factors:

- Is the collection linked to specific events within the Town
- Is the collection linked to a nationwide campaign for example, Children in Need, Comic Relief, Remembrance Day
- Will the collection benefit local good causes, local hospices, community fund raising
- If the collection is on behalf of a national charity, is there likely to be some benefit for the residents of Blackpool
- What proportion of the funds collected will be applied to the charity
- Has a permit been previously refused

Permits for collections relating to emergency disasters will be considered on a case by case basis, even if they do not fall within any of the considerations listed above.

Monitoring

An annual report will be prepared for the Public Protection Sub-Committee providing information on applications for permits in the previous year and financial returns received.