

MOBILE EXHIBITION UNIT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report reviews the usage of the mobile exhibition unit over a period and, in the light of that information, seeks the Committee's views as to whether the policy of restricting the outside hire of the unit to partner organisations that meet the Council's corporate objectives, at an initial rate of £150 per day plus any other staffing costs that accrue, should be changed.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In June 2001, the Corporate Resources Sub-Committee considered a report which sought Members' views as to whether the mobile exhibition unit should be made available for use by other agencies and, if so, whether any conditions should be placed upon that use. At the time, Members agreed to restrict any hire to partner organisations that met the Council's corporate objectives, at an initial rate of £150 per day, plus staffing costs. Members also asked that the situation be reviewed after 6 months with a report back into Committee for further consideration of the matter (Min. 416/01). A copy of the original report is attached as Appendix 1.

3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Since the last report was produced, the mobile unit has been used in connection with a variety of public consultation exercises on behalf of the District Council – for example, the town centre enhancement schemes, the kerbside recycling scheme and various community safety initiatives.
- 3.2 Over the next six months further consultation exercises are planned in connection with various recycling/composting initiatives, the Local Plan, community safety, and playscheme/leisure initiatives.
- 3.3 Other options are also being examined to use the Unit in the community in connection with other initiatives and projects, e.g. Golden Jubilee events.
- 3.4 Whilst there have been some approaches by partner agencies to use the unit around initiatives in line with the Council's Corporate Objectives, none have so far made a firm booking. There have also been no approaches from partner agencies to use the mobile unit simply for their own purposes.

3.5 In the circumstances therefore, it is considered that the current policy of hire and charging rate should remain in situ for a further twelve months, and reviewed again in March 2003.

4 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To continue with the current policy of hiring and charging for a further twelve months, with a review in March 2003.

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APPENDIX 1**MOBILE EXHIBITION UNIT****1 SUMMARY**

1. This report seeks Members' views as to whether the new mobile exhibition unit should be made available for use by other agencies, and if so, whether any conditions should be placed upon that use.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Council' new mobile exhibition unit has already been used for Council business on a number of occasions this year, including consultation exercises in connection with Domestic Violence, New Political Structures and Rochford Town Centre. Other key exercises planned for this year revolve around the roll out of the kerbside recycling scheme and further publicity and consultation in relation to community safety. However, there has now been a request to hire out the unit for independent use by an outside organisation.
- 2.2 Surrounding Councils which own a unit have been contacted to see whether they have any policy and/or procedures in connection with this. The feedback received is that they do not hire out their own units to other organisations unless it is in connection with a partnership venture.

3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 In the light of the approach received, Members' views are sought as to whether the mobile exhibition unit should be available for hire to outside organisations for independent use purposes, and if so, what conditions should be imposed and what cost should be charged.
- 3.2 If Members did decide that outside usage was acceptable, then clearly one condition should be that the Council usage should take priority. In addition, Members might like to consider restricting usage to partner organisations such as Parish Councils, local housing associations, health and the local voluntary sector, in association with initiatives/consultation exercises/promotions taking place within the

District. Priority could also be given to those requests which contribute to the aims and objectives of the Council rather than more general usage.

- 3.3 If Members do decide to allow some form of outside hire, then clearly Members will also need to consider issues such as wear and tear, insurance (as the current insurance does not cover the use of the unit by third parties), staffing and administrative costs. This is considered in more detail below under Resource Implications.

4 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Parish Councils would benefit from the availability of the manned unit to publicise District Council initiatives throughout the District and at specific Parish events. A request has been received from one Parish Council to hire the unit for independent use.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of hiring a commercial unit of similar specification to the Council is as follows :-

Unit	£185 per day
Towing and Management	£230 per day plus fuel
Generator	£55 per day plus fuel

Plus full insurance to be covered by the hiring party.

- 5.2 From experience to date the current labour costs associated with providing the Council's Mobile Exhibition Unit (unmanned) at a location in the District for one day, including administration, set up and dismantling, is approximately £100.
- 5.3 Also, at weekends and out of office hours, overtime would apply at the appropriate rate.
- 5.4 In setting the fees and charges for 2001/2002, a provisional charge of £50 per day was indicated for the Mobile Exhibition Unit. However, this was very much dependent upon whether Members wished to allow the unit to be hired out as such.

- 5.5 In the light of the information outlined above, if Members do wish to agree to the hiring out of the unit, a sum of £150 per day plus separate insurance cover is suggested, with the proviso that weekend and out of hours usage will also need to include appropriate overtime rates.

6 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RECOMMENDS**

- 6.1 Whether to hire out the unit to outside organisations for use and if so, what conditions should be imposed, together with an appropriate hire fee.

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