

House of Commons Banqueting Terms & Conditions

1. Eligibility

- 1.1** A Member of Parliament, an Officer of the House of Commons, or Member of the House of Lords who was formerly a Member of Parliament, must sponsor all functions, except as noted in 1.2 below.
- 1.2** Accredited, authorised all-party and House of Commons Committees are permitted to book the private dining rooms in their own right. Further details are available from the banqueting office.

2. Duties of Sponsor

- 2.1** The Sponsor must be present throughout the function, except when required to vote in the House.
- 2.2** **The Sponsor is responsible for the good conduct of the function and for ensuring that the terms and conditions of booking are complied with.**
- 2.3** It is the duty of the Sponsor to find a suitable replacement in the event that he/she is unable to attend. The banqueting office must be notified of any change of sponsorship, in addition the relevant paperwork must be completed before the event takes place.
- 2.4** The Sponsor is responsible for ensuring the *bona fides* of any organisation on whose behalf they sponsor a function.
- 2.5** The Sponsor is responsible for ensuring that the Private Dining Confirmation Form is completed and signed.
- 2.6** The Sponsor may delegate the responsibility of co-ordinating a function to an Organiser, in which case a Sponsorship Agreement Form must be completed and signed. These are available from the banqueting office.
- 2.7** **The Sponsor is liable for all costs associated with an event.**
- 2.8** It is the duty of the sponsor to inform the banqueting office when booking if the event is a family event, payable by the sponsor or if the event is to be attended solely by Members' of Parliament.

3. Duties of the Organiser

- 3.1** Organisers to whom the co-ordination of a function has been properly agreed and authorised may deal directly with the banqueting office in making all arrangements for the function.
- 3.2** Organisers are responsible for all liaisons with their Sponsor to ensure that the terms and conditions of the booking are met.
- 3.3** Organisers of sponsored events shall have the status of GUEST only.

4. Declaration of Interest

- 4.1** **The Sponsor is directly and personally responsible for the declaration of any relevant interest relating to their sponsorship of a function.**
- 4.2** The Sponsor must complete the relevant section of the Private Dining Confirmation Form to indicate whether or not there is a relevant interest.
- 4.3** In the event that there is any relevant interest, invitations must clearly state "relevant interest declared".
- 4.4** Details of a declarable interest must be forwarded to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
- 4.5** Any Sponsor in doubt about the requirements to declare any interest should consult the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

5. Use of Private Dining Rooms

- 5.1 **Subject to the exclusions in 5.2, the private dining rooms are not to be used for direct or indirect financial or material gain by a Sponsor, political party, or any other person or outside organisation.**
- 5.2 Use of the private dining rooms for direct or indirect financial or material gain by registered charities is acceptable. Please give details of your registered charity number on the 'Sponsorship agreement form'.
- 5.3 The private dining rooms may not be used as an inducement to recruit new members of outside organisations or non-parliamentary associations.
- 5.4 **No commercial promotion or demonstration is permitted by external organisations, including product/book launches; bona fide parliamentary briefings are permitted.**
- 5.5 Subject to the rules on the declaration of interest and 5.1 above, it is appropriate for the private dining rooms to be used for political functions or for "lobbying purposes".
- 5.6 All functions must be brought to a close by 10.30pm and guests should leave the Parliamentary Estate by 11.00pm. The Catering & Retail Services department reserves the right to recover additional costs incurred in the event of a late vacation of the premises.
- 5.7 With the exception of Wedding/Special Event Cakes, no food or drink, other than that supplied by the House of Commons Catering & Retail Services department, may be consumed on the premises. Corkage is not permitted without special permission from the Head of Catering & Retail Services
- 5.8 No betting or gaming may be carried out on the premises.
- 5.9 Concerts, loud music or other activities likely to cause a noise nuisance are NOT permitted. Background music may be permitted by prior agreement at times when both House is sitting and adjacent rooms are not in use for other events. The Sponsor should apply in writing to the Chairman of the Administration Committee who will advise the Speaker.

6. Publicity, Photography & Media

- 6.1 Any publicity, invitation, circular, literature or announcement in connection with the function must bear prominently the name of the sponsoring Member or Officer of the House of Commons, or Member of the House of Lords and must be submitted to the banqueting office and Sponsor for approval prior to publication.
- 6.2 Any media interest must be notified in writing to the banqueting office and copied to the Sponsor.
- 6.3 All representatives of the media must possess a formal invitation.
- 6.4 Television/photographic cameras must be hand-held and any filming or photography is restricted to the confines of the function room.
- 6.5 Photographers, television crews and radio crews authorised by the Sponsor must obtain permission from the Head of Catering & Retail Services via the banqueting office.

7. Booking

- 7.1 Provisional bookings will be held for a maximum of **ten working days**. If the banqueting office does not receive the signed confirmation of Booking within this time, the reservation will be automatically cancelled without further notice.
- 7.2 Reservations can be made for a maximum period of 18 months in advance of the function date.
- 7.3 No Sponsor may hold in the banqueting diary more than 6 bookings at any one time.

8. Cancellation by the Sponsor

- 8.1 Cancellation must be confirmed in writing to the banqueting office.
- 8.2 Cancellation of a confirmed booking will incur the following charges, unless the banqueting office is able to subsequently re-let the room:
- **60+ days notice** – no charge.
 - **31-60 days notice** – 50% loss of the deposit.
 - **10-30 days notice** – 100% loss of deposit.
 - **3-9 working days (Monday-Friday 9am -5pm)** – 100% of deposit plus 50% menu price.
 - **Less than 3 working days notice (Monday – Friday 9am-5pm)** – full charge menus and room hire (where applicable), based on latest number or minimum numbers, whichever is the greater.

9. Cancellation by the House of Commons

- 9.1 In the event of the dissolution of Parliament, all functions during this period will be cancelled without any liability to the Sponsor or Organiser.
- 9.2 The House of Commons Catering & Retail Services department may also cancel a function without liability to the Sponsor or Organiser if:
- The House is unexpectedly recalled during a recess.
 - The House of Commons Premises or any parts of them are closed for reasons beyond the control of the House authorities.
 - The Sponsor ceases to hold a position eligible to host a function.
 - The Sponsor or Organiser is in breach of the terms and conditions of the booking.

10. Charges

- 10.1 An estimate of number of persons attending functions must be provided by Sponsors or Organisers when completing the booking form.
- 10.2 Charges will be based on the final attendance numbers confirmed *or* number of guests attending the event if greater. **Final numbers must be confirmed to the banqueting office not less than 3 working days (Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm) before the date of the function. A table plan will also be required for all seated events in the Members, Strangers and Churchill Dining Rooms.**
- 10.3 Where catering is less than the required minimum food spends or the minimum required number of guests per room, the advertised Room Hire charge will be levied. Both the minimum food spends and the minimum number of guest's criteria must be met to avoid a room hire charge. Room Hire is applied to each time slot throughout the day. Room hire will be applied if you require use of your private dining room outside of the allocated time slot. Please contact your coordinator if you require advice on allocated time slots.
- 10.4 All functions taking place on Friday evenings (after 4pm) and Saturdays will incur a weekend supplement. Details are set out in this brochure.
- 10.5 If numbers attending fall below the minimum required for the room booked, the Catering & Retail Services department reserves the right to relocate the function to a smaller room. Should no such room be available, the advertised room hire charge for the booked room will be applied.
- 10.6 All charges will be based upon the banqueting tariff current on the date of the event, not the date of booking. Organisers are therefore advised to allow a contingency for any such price increases when allocating budgets to a function.
- 10.7 Prior to departure at the end of their function, Organisers and Sponsors are advised to agree and sign for all drinks consumed. **The Catering & Retail Services department cannot be held responsible for a discrepancy after the event.**
- 10.8 The final account charged to the Sponsor's Catering & Retail Services department Account will remain as an outstanding debt until it has been paid by either the Sponsor or Organiser.
- 10.9 All queries relating to the invoice should be addressed to the banqueting office.

- 10.11 Cheques must be crossed and payable to the: **House of Commons Administration**
- 10.12 **All menu and wine/bar prices are quoted inclusive of service charge @ 12.5% and VAT @ 17.5%.**
- 10.13 All payments are required in £ sterling.

11. Access

- 11.1 Entrance to the Palace of Westminster is via St Stephen's Entrance for all guests or at 1 Parliament Street for the Astor Suite or Bellamy's Clubroom.
- 11.2 **All guests attending an event must be in possession of an official invitation**, to be shown on demand to the House of Commons Security. This invitation card is to be produced by the event organiser and verified by the Banqueting Office before going to print. See below for an example of the approved wording.

.....MP	
Will act as Host at a (<i>Reception/Dinner etc</i>)	
for the	
(<i>Name of Organisation</i>)	
on (<i>Date</i>)	
and requests the pleasure of your company	
Entrance: Cromwell Green	Name of Room
Smoking Not Permitted	Time of Function
No parking facilities available	Admittance by this invitation only

- 11.3 A typed list of attendees' names must be supplied to the banqueting office a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the function. A duplicate list should also be given to security at St Stephens' entrance when the event organiser arrives.
- 11.4 The banqueting office will be pleased to advise on access arrangements for disabled guests.
- 11.5 No car parking facilities are available.
- ## 12. General
- 12.1 No display of any sort is permitted outside the room hired for the function.
- 12.2 Sponsors or Organisers must ensure that all stage sets, stands, materials and decorations are non-flammable and comply with all relevant safety regulations.
- 12.3 No flammable, noxious or dangerous items may be brought into the Parliamentary premises.
- 12.4 All fire exits, stairways, gangways, enunciators and doors must be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times.
- 12.5 The House of Commons accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions appertaining to function details not confirmed in writing to the banqueting office.
- 12.6 The Director of Catering Services has the authority to accept, refuse or re-schedule bookings at any time. Such authority will not be exercised unreasonably.
- 12.7 The banqueting office is happy to advise Organisers about catering for special dietary needs. Organisers should enquire whether their guests have any special dietary requirements or food intolerances and should communicate this information to the banqueting office before the function. **All additional dietary requirements requested after 72 hours notice of the event will be charged for.**
- 12.8 All menus must state '**Guests who have food allergies should ask the supervisor for assistance**'.
- 12.9 A **no smoking policy** operates in all House of Commons Banqueting areas.
- 12.10 The Catering & Retail Services department is unable to offer storage facilities either prior to an event or after an event has taken place. The Catering & Retail Services department will not take responsibility for any items left on the Parliamentary Estate.
- 12.11 The designated event organiser may have access to the booked function room 45 minutes before the event is due to start.