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| Agenda item: | 6 |
| Report title: | Hotel Programme 2018 |
| Report by: | Gordon Duffus , Head of Procurement, Resources and Quality Assurance, gordon.duffus@gmc-uk.org , 0161 923 6632 |
| Action: | To consider |

Executive summary

The GMC has a hotel programme to ensure that suitable overnight accommodation for members, associates, staff and witnesses is available at competitive rates at our main sites. The current programme expires on 31st December 2017, and a new programme needs to be put in place for 2018.

We have been able to maintain a good range of hotels in Manchester within our existing expenses policy limit of £100 per night. However, hotel availability around Euston Road is likely to reduce in 2018 and this is driving up prices. To secure room availability we will need to increase the expenses policy limit for London hotels by £5 to £165.

Recommendations

The Executive Board is asked to approve:

- a** An increase in the expenses policy overnight rate in London by £5 to £165 in 2018.
- b** The preferred list of hotels for 2018.

GMC Hotel Programme 2018

- 1 The GMC preferred hotel programme is renegotiated annually to ensure that the availability of rooms meets our needs, at the best overall price, and at a reasonable standard. We take into account feedback from users (including associates), the availability of rooms at the GMC/MPTS rate, cancellation policies, hotel facilities, location and price.
- 2 Our estimated annual expenditure on hotels is £1.2 million, reflecting around 11,000 room nights in Manchester, 1,000 in London, and 300 across other UK locations.
- 3 Our current expenses policy limits for overnight accommodation are £160 for London; £100 for Manchester; and £130 for other locations. These limits are reviewed annually. We have been able to maintain the same limit in Manchester since 2009, but have needed to increase the limit in London for the past two years. Our travel management company has confirmed that GMC has secured some of the most competitive rates available in the hotels it uses.

2018 Programme

- 4 We have carried out an online survey of associates and staff who use hotels on the GMC programme regularly. 96% of the respondents were more than content with the hotels offered. The survey did highlight that travellers have very different personal preferences related to their accommodation. Our programme is based on four star accommodation and includes a mix of room types, size, proximity to office and on-site facilities.
- 5 The proposed hotel programme for 2018 is:

| Hotel | Location | GMC bed & breakfast rate |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Melia Whitehouse | London | £165.00 |
| Thistle Bloomsbury Park Hotel | London | £160.00 |
| Inside by Melia | Manchester | £100.00 |
| The Midland Hotel | Manchester | £100.00 |
| Doubletree by Hilton | Manchester | £100.00 |
| Renaissance | Manchester | £99.00 |
| Holiday Inn Manchester City Centre | Manchester | £98.00 |
| The Principal | Manchester | £96.00 |
| Novotel | Manchester | £89.00 |
| The Townhouse | Manchester | £89.00 |
| Staycity Apartments Piccadilly | Manchester | £85.00 |

Manchester

- a** Against a backdrop of rising hotel prices in Manchester we have successfully negotiated a programme for 2018 within the current policy limit of £100. We have also been able to agree a small increase in the number of rooms automatically reserved for the GMC.
- b** The Townhouse Hotel has been returned to the programme. Feedback from users showed that this hotel was popular with certain groups, and the hotel is able to offer increased room availability compared to their 2017 offering.
- c** The Mercure Hotel has been removed from the programme. Feedback from users showed that this hotel was unpopular, mainly due to concerns about security and location.
- d** Some users, particularly associates on longer hearings prefer serviced apartments. Options on serviced apartments in central Manchester are limited, as the Atrium and Place Serviced apartments have closed temporarily for relocation and refurbishment. We have therefore added the Staycity Piccadilly apartments to our programme.

London

- a** In the Euston area, the IBIS hotel and Thistle Euston hotel are due for demolition in late 2017. This will reduce supply in an already busy area of London and hotels have signalled an increase in their rates.
- b** Over 90% of our London room bookings are at the Melia Whitehouse hotel due to its convenient location. We propose to retain this hotel on the programme but will need to increase the expenses policy limit by £5 to £165 per night to secure it.
- c** However, we have seen an increase in complaints about the service offered by the Melia, which we are discussing with their senior management. We therefore feel it sensible to add an alternative to the programme, and propose adding the Thistle Bloomsbury to the programme.

Regional locations

- a** Due to the relatively low levels of demand in other locations, we are unable to negotiate preferential rates better than those available commercially and so we will continue to book these hotels on an ad hoc basis.