



Subject:	Reconsidered Matter - Belfast Festival Open Spaces (Deputation) / Policy Framework re: Large Scale Partnership Events
Date:	12 May 2015
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Caroline Wilson, Neighbourhood and Development Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	This report outlines a proposal for an outdoor event as part of the Belfast Festival 2015 programme, in partnership with the Council. The Committee will recall that this matter was deferred at the meeting held on 21 April to enable a deputation from the organisers of the Belfast Festival to attend. The representatives will be in attendance and will be admitted to the meeting for ten minutes to clarify issues for the Committee.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Authorise officers to initiate discussions with the Belfast Festival to agree the conditions of financial support for 2015, in line with the objectives outlined in the report; and2. Agree to support an outdoors event as part of the programme for the Belfast Festival up to £20,000, subject to conditions agreed and legal agreements drawn up to the satisfaction of the Town Solicitor. This will include the partial closure of Botanic Gardens for up to 8 days in October for the exclusive use of attendees. A further outreach event may be facilitated in the City Hall grounds, depending on terrain and performer requirements.3. Agree that a further report is presented to a future meeting which outlines a policy framework for a programme of supported, large scale partnership events in the city's parks and open spaces.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p data-bbox="260 154 416 188"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="260 219 1422 400">The Council established successful partnership arrangements with the Belfast Festival at Queen's and Mela in 2013. These operate at minimal cost to the public. These type of events are well-received by audiences and significantly add to the attractiveness of the Council's parks and open spaces.</p> <p data-bbox="260 432 887 465">Proposal for 2015 event with Belfast Festival</p> <p data-bbox="260 497 1382 624">Belfast Festival is proposing to work in partnership again with the Council to stage two outdoor performances in the Council's open spaces. Last year, over 5,000 people attended events in Botanic Gardens and City Hall grounds.</p> <p data-bbox="260 656 1442 736">At the request of the Committee, Richard Wakeley, Director from Belfast Festival has been invited to present the proposal to the Committee at its meeting on 12 May.</p> <p data-bbox="260 768 1422 896">The proposal for 2015 is for two leading circus and acrobatic troupes from Europe; The Jashgawronsky Brothers (Italy) with their comedy musical work, <i>Trash</i> and Lonely Circus (France) with their unique acrobatic performance piece, <i>Le Poids de la Peau</i>.</p> <p data-bbox="260 927 1442 1055">This would include an activity marquee in Botanic Gardens where families would be invited to participate in outreach workshops reflecting the nature of the two professional groups including music making, acrobatics and a variety of other activities.</p> <p data-bbox="260 1086 1437 1267">Taking into account artists' fees, installation expenses, accommodation, transport, and travel costs from Europe, Belfast Festival is seeking a contribution of £20,000 towards this project. Belfast Festival will take all responsibility for overseeing the installation, running and promotion of the work and will credit it as a joint presentation with the Council.</p> <p data-bbox="260 1299 1430 1529">Organisers are currently assessing the suitability of terrain. The proposed timescale from set up to take down of the event is up to eight days in October 2015 in Botanic Gardens. Consultation by Belfast Festival will be undertaken with other local stakeholders such as Queens University, Lyric Theatre, local residents' groups and the Friends of Botanic Gardens.</p> <p data-bbox="260 1561 858 1594">A detailed costing is included in the appendix.</p> <p data-bbox="260 1626 531 1659">Benefits to Council</p> <p data-bbox="260 1691 1437 1966">3.1.2 The Belfast Festival proposal is a good fit with the policy objectives of the Council in that it is family friendly work that is participatory and fun. It will animate our public spaces whilst also providing educational learning opportunities for children and young people. It is proposed that Council provides financial support to the event (up to £20,000), given the positive economic impact it has for the city, improved good relations and attractiveness of the Council assets.</p>

<p>3.1.3</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>	<p>As part of an agreement with Belfast Festival, a series of targets for participation, outreach and sponsorship would be set.</p> <p>Way forward</p> <p>The Committee recognises the value and benefit which a diverse and well-designed events programme in its parks and open spaces can bring to the city and its neighbourhoods.</p> <p>It is recommended that a policy framework is required to guide the number, size and nature of events which happen in its green space in the council area. This will ensure that a number of events are sustainable and feature as annual events, and encourage a diverse range of events which have wide appeal for the community as well as tourists and visitors.</p> <p>This could include working with the City Events Unit to promote the availability/suitability of a range of parks and open spaces for major city events.</p> <p>In addition, work would be undertaken to develop the criteria for the park grants funds to enable events to be sustainable year on year and more evenly spread across the city e.g. a higher score for working with partners; using under-used parks; community outreach.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>A fund has been provided for large-scale cultural events in Council parks within revenue budgets for 2015/16. There may be overtime required by staff to assist with the management of the proposed events which would be met by the Council.</p> <p>The Legal Agreement will include a Bond of Reinstatement (£1,000) to ensure minimal impact on Council property. The event organisers will prepare an events plan and meet all statutory requirements including Health and Safety and Licensing, to the satisfaction of the Assistant Director.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>The Events Policy for Parks and Leisure facilities and venues was previously screened as part of its consideration at Committee. The application of the policy is deemed to have no differential impact on any one group, given the diversity of applicant groups and range of events organised across the Council's properties.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Appendix 1 - Detailed costing for 2015 Belfast Festival partnership proposal</p>