



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Parks and Leisure Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Santa's Grotto in Botanic Gardens</b>
<b>Date:</b>	11 October 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alex McNeill, Community Parks Manager

### 1. Relevant Background Information

The department has received a request from Smallworld Music for permission to hold a Christmas event in Botanic Gardens.

Smallworld Music have worked with Belfast City Council over a fifteen year period and currently hold the contract for event production management services for the Development Department corporate events team. Similarly they have worked regularly with Botanic Gardens staff on a number of projects and have worked directly with the Friends of Botanic Gardens on a number of events.

Smallworld Music has requested free use of a building in Botanic Gardens to host a Santa's grotto. The building is commonly known as the "Little Pavilion" situated on the East walk of the great lawn in Botanic gardens.

The event organiser has requested use of the "Little Pavilion" on the following dates:

- Sat 24 Nov and Sun 25 Nov 2012
- Sat 01 Dec and Sun 02 Dec 2012
- Sat 08 Dec and Sun 09 Dec 2012
- Sat 15 Dec and Sunday 16 Dec 2012
- Sat 22 Dec and Sunday 23 Dec 2012
- Christmas Eve Monday 24 Dec 2012

The grotto will be open on each of the dates from 10 – 4pm

The event organiser has also requested access to the pavilion one week in advance of these dates to set up the event.

	<p>The proposed event would be both a unique experience for regular park users and also raise some much needed funds for the Friends of Botanic Gardens appeal for the Tropical Ravine. It is anticipated that approximately 1,000 children will visit the Grotto over the 11 day period.</p>
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<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Key Issues</b></p> <p>Smallworld will operate this project as a commercial venture with no direct costs to BCC and based on experience would suggest the following pricing structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single child admission £5.00</li> <li>• Family of three children £12.00</li> </ul> <p>Each child will receive a wrapped gift from Santa and also a 6"x8" framed glossy photo to commemorate their experience.</p> <p>Additional copies of the photo and a variety of other photo based merchandise (snow globes, key rings etc) would be available to purchase at pocket money prices.</p> <p>Council officers have considered the option to manage this request and have identified there would be no cost to the Council for the event as the "Little Pavilion" will be opened in line with the Park opening times and therefore does not require additional staffing cover.</p> <p>As with all such events, health and safety issues with regard to the holding of the event will be addressed through the preparation of an event management plan by the organisers to the satisfaction of council officers.</p> <p>This event is in line with both Council objectives around economic development and Parks and Leisure departmental objectives in terms of animating the city's parks and increasing community activities and access to the parks.</p>
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<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Resource Implications</b></p> <p><u>Financial</u>  This is a commercial venture for the event organiser however Smallworld has assured the council that a financial contribution will be made to the Friends of Botanic Gardens towards their Tropical Ravine fund. It is proposed that the contribution will be 25% of net profit.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u>  There are no other human resource implications anticipated with this request</p> <p><u>Asset and other implications</u>  None</p>
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<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality and good relations implications</b>
	There are no known equality or good relations implications in relation to this request.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Committee are asked to note the content of the report and give approval for free use of the “Little Pavilion” in Botanic Gardens to host the Christmas Grotto subject to the event organiser entering into an agreement for use of the site, submitting an event management plan, public liability insurance and associated risk assessments to the satisfaction of Council.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	All actions will be carried out by Community Parks Manager and Community Parks Outreach Manager.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	None

<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None