



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject	Belfast Mela 2013
Date:	15 November 2012
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Stephen Stockman, City Park Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
	<p>The Committee is asked to note that the Council has received a request from the Director of ArtsEkta to use Botanic Gardens for the “Belfast Mela” on 25 August 2013.</p> <p>The Mela is a large multicultural festival that has attracted in excess of 20,000 people from all communities across Northern Ireland to the 2012 event in Botanic Gardens. This event has developed a shared, culturally rich inclusive space that also connects minority ethnic and local indigenous communities. The Mela has been successful in raising cultural awareness, encouraging civic identity and promoting a positive image for Belfast and Northern Ireland.</p>

2.	Key Issues
	<p>The key issues for the Committee to note are:</p> <p>The Council wishes to promote the use of its parks and open spaces and where appropriate we will permit the use of these facilities for large events and concerts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In this particular instance the Council has received a request for use for Upper Botanic Gardens for the Belfast Mela on 25 August 2012, from 12pm to 6pm

	<p>2. The total proposed timescale from set up to take down of the event is six days, 22-27 August 2012.</p> <p>3. Due to the economic climate ArtsEkta has requested permission to collect a fee of £3 to attend the event depending on funding.</p> <p>4. ArtsEkta has highlighted the possibility of varying the admission fee subject to the success of pre-event fund raising strategies. It is proposed that the Director of Parks and Leisure is given delegated authority to make this decision prior to the event and based on financial evidence provided by ArtsEkta.</p> <p>5. As part of the event, alcohol may be sold within one element of the overall activities, but will not be used in the promotion to maintain the main focus of the Belfast Mela.</p> <p>6. The event would be subject to the preparation of an event management plan which would cover all aspects of management including health and safety, access and will comply with the current events policy.</p> <p>7. A legal agreement will be provided by Legal Services.</p> <p>8. Consultation by ArtsEkta will be undertaken with other local stakeholders such as Queen's University, Lyric Theatre, local residents groups and friends of Botanic.</p>
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3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u> The bond of intent shall be waived but the bond of reinstatement of £1000 shall be provided by ArtsEkta as in previous years.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> There may be overtime required by staff to assist with the management of the proposed event.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u> ArstEkta shall ensure all minimal impact on Council property and will provide a bond of reinstatement prior to the event.</p>

4.	Equality and good relations implications
	<p>There are no equality implications as the event promotes cultural diversity and recognizes minority and local indigenous groups.</p>

5.	Recommendations
	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant permission to ArtsEkta to provide the Belfast Mela event in Botanic Gardens subject to satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of Parks and Leisure and on condition that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the event organisers resolve all operational issues to the council's satisfaction; ○ an appropriate legal agreement, to be prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor is completed; and ○ the event organisers meet all statutory requirements. • Permit an admission fee of £3 into Botanic Gardens to access the Belfast Mela if this is deemed necessary to support the financing of the event. • Grant delegated authority to the Director of Parks and Leisure to flex the admission fee subject to the provision of financial evidence by ArtsEkta to support this decision.

6.	Decision Tracking
	All actions will be completed by the City Park Manager (East).

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	None

8.	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Letter of Request from ArtsEkta