



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	Belfast Zoological Gardens – request for filming
Date:	10 April 2014
Reporting Officer:	Rose Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Mark Challis, Zoo Manager

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Belfast Zoo has been approached by DNS Five Film Productions Ltd who are currently scouting locations for the fifth series of RTE crime series, Love/Hate, with a request to film scenes at Belfast Zoo.
1.2	Television. The show premièred on 3 October 2010 at 21:30 on RTE One and on RTE Player. The show depicts fictional characters in Dublin's criminal underworld. The show is mostly filmed in and around Dublin. Initial viewer reaction towards early episodes was mixed; with some critics hailing it as a major shift in programming production by RTE, with others criticising it for its strong scenes of violence and also for glorifying such acts of criminality.
1.3	Love/Hate is an Irish crime drama series broadcast on RTE. Series four of Love/Hate attracted between 750,000 and 950,000 viewers per episode. The season finale averaged over a million viewers for RTE which is a 54% share of the available audience. The show has been sold to a number of countries and will be available to increased audiences. The DVD box set is also extremely successfully and is placed in the charts every year.
1.4	Producers of the show have forwarded a copy of the script intended for use during the requested filming at the Belfast Zoo.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	The request for filming involves some scenes in a zoo. These scenes involve four actors meeting and chatting.
2.2	The filming would take place at Belfast Zoo's chimpanzee enclosure, with a crew of approximately 40 people (which could be limited and diluted to essential crew of 20 people). The RTE team would not need exclusive access to the zoo while filming and are happy to work around the general public/visitors. The zoo would organise relevant communications to ensure that visitors are aware of the onsite film crew.
2.3	Previous episodes of the programme have achieved good viewing numbers and a significant audience share on airing on RTE, it thus has the ability to generate increased marketing opportunities and awareness of Belfast Zoo in the RTE region.
2.4	Such requests are usually permitted. Members should note that the presented script, whilst in keeping with the premise and context of the show, uses coarse language and swearing and alludes to criminal activity.

3.	Resource Implications
	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>If permitted, filming will generate some income using the approved Parks and Leisure pricing structure for filming on BCC sites, ie £123.60 for a 5 hour booking, and £40.20 for each additional hour.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>There are no immediate resource HR implications, liaison with the production company and operational considerations on the day of filming can be accommodated by zoo staff.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>There are few other implications, filming can take place with little disruption to zoo visitors on the day. The series has achieved good viewing numbers and a significant audience share on airing on RTE, it thus has the ability to generate increased marketing opportunities and awareness of Belfast Zoo in the RTE region.</p>

4.	Equality Implications
4.1	While the programme will use a BCC site for filming, as this is not a BCC activity, and the programme is clearly fictional, it is considered that there are no equality or good relations implications.

5.	Recommendations
5.1	The committee is asked to note the above report and consider whether

	permission should be granted for the filming to take place.
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6.	Decision Tracking
6.1	None required.

7.	Key to Abbreviations
	RTE = Raidió Teilifís Éireann = public service broadcaster of Ireland

8.	Documents Attached
	None