



Subject:	Temporary amendments to guidelines relating to the distribution of free printed material
Date:	9 October 2018
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services Vivienne Donnelly, Enforcement Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
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	Traders within the city centre have been adversely affected by the recent fire at Bank Buildings in Castle Street. The purpose of this report is to provide information relating to temporary amendments in the guidelines relating to the enforcement of the Free Printed Matter (Belfast) Designation Order 2012. These changes will allow affected businesses to distribute free printed material, such as leaflets, within the city centre under amended guidelines during the period the cordon exists at Bank Buildings.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree temporary amendments in the guidelines relating to the enforcement of the Free Printed Matter (Belfast) Designation Order 2012

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the contents of the report.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>The current guidelines relating to the distribution of free printed material within Belfast were approved by the Health and Environmental Services Committee in September 2014. This followed a one year review resulting from Belfast City Council enacting the Free Printed Matter (Belfast) Designation Order 2012 on 4 March 2013. The 2012 Order designated the land within Belfast City Centre and the Wider University Area on which consent of the council was required to distribute free printed material. The guidelines published in September 2014 included a number of streets in the city centre which the council will not permit the distribution of free printed matter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Hall Grounds Donegall Square North Donegal Square South Donegall Square East Donegall Square West Castle Lane Corn Market Castle Arcade William Street South Arthur Square Arthur Street Arthur Place Callender Street Fountain Street Fountain Lane Ann Street
3.2	<p>The guidelines also included the cost of the Annual Permit which was and remains at £450 per badge. The Council currently has 28 valid annual permits for the city centre. With regard to enforcement of the legislation the guidelines stated:</p> <p><i>The permit conditions will be rigorously enforced by the Council. Any contraventions of the permit conditions may result in individual badges being revoked; full permits and any associated badges being revoked and/ or a refusal to grant further permits for a period of one year.</i></p>

Proposal

- 3.3 Following representations from traders affected by the recent fire at Primark, Bank Buildings, Castle Street, it is proposed that the current guidelines are suspended for affected traders pending the removal of the cordon around Bank Buildings, Castle Street. To support all businesses, the Council proposes to animate the street scene through street artists and entertainment who may publicise future events.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the Council will consent to the suspension of these guidelines in relation to Council approved events and affected traders and give assurances to businesses that no enforcement action would be taken against them for handing out leaflets dependent upon certain conditions:
- That they must make a written request in advance to distribute free printed material;
 - The business has been identified as one of the businesses affected by the cordon;
 - The business must notify the Council of the date, location and the duration/timescales of any distribution, that is to take place in advance;
 - A maximum of two distributors will be allowed per business;
 - That all litter generated as a result of the activity is removed during and after any distribution.
- 3.5 If all these conditions are met, the Council will consent to the suspension of the guidelines and agree not to take any enforcement action. The Council will provide written confirmation to that effect to the trader.
- 3.6 This will mean that affected traders and Council organised events do not have to fill in an application which means that no cost will be charged to the affected traders. The scheme could potentially apply to approximately 50 businesses outside the cordon whom Price Waterhouse Cooper have identified as affected by it. Relevant traders will be identified through the Economic Development Division within the Council.
- 3.7 The Council will therefore not enforce the current September 2014 guidelines in relation to affected traders who have properly notified the council during the period whilst the cordon is in place. Consent for any trader under this scheme may be withdrawn should they fail to comply with the requirements specified by the Council. If the Council does intend to withdraw its consent the business will be notified of that in writing before any enforcement action is taken.

3.8	<p>The temporary scheme outlined within this report will cease to apply after the removal of the cordon in place around Bank Buildings, Castle Street.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.9	<p>There are no additional financial implications associated with the scheme as enforcement of it is currently delivered within existing budgets.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.10	<p>There are no implications associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None