



Subject:	Temporary Street Trading Scheme (excluding alcohol) at the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann
Date:	18 March 2026
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning & Building Control, Ext. 2300
Contact Officer:	Stephen Hipkins, Building Control Manager, Ext. 2435

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted? Yes No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	This report outlines the proposed processes for a temporary street trading application scheme (excluding the sale of alcohol) for streets and sites within the city centre road closure pedestrianised area for the Fleadh in Belfast 2-9 August 2026.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to note the contents of the report and agree to the processes as outlined for a temporary street trading application scheme for period of the Fleadh 2-9 August 2026, and specifically to agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That applications should only be accepted under this scheme within the road closure area for the streets and locations identified as suitable for street trading and that applications will not be accepted for the sale of alcohol. • The procedure to invite applications and criteria for applications. • To waive the second application fee for applications for an eight-day licence to cover the whole of the Fleadh period. • The method of selection of successful applicants including how a surplus of applications will be dealt with (competing applications) • That delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Building Control in conjunction with the City Solicitor for rejecting applications and making decisions concerning oversubscribed /competing applications under the scheme.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Members will recall that at your meeting of the 18 February 2026 as part of a report on Licensing Procedures and the Fleadh you agreed that to ensure fairness, applications for any temporary street trading licence opportunities for the Fleadh would be invited within a set timeframe, and you were asked to note that a further report on Street Trading at the Fleadh would be brought to the Committee to determine locations and processes.</p> <p>Under Section 14 of the Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 the Council may grant a temporary street trading licence to an individual where an annual stationary licence is not appropriate, such as for special events. The legislation allows a council to formulate criteria and have regard to those criteria when considering whether to grant a temporary licence.</p> <p>Applications for temporary street trading in locations outside of the Fleadh’s road closure pedestrianised area will be accepted as normal and will follow normal processes. To allow processing we suggest applications to be made by the end of May 2026, failure to submit by this date may result in applications not being able to be processed in time.</p>

3.4	However, due to the length and scale of the Fleadh and the potential large volume of applicants requesting a licence within the Fleadh's road closure pedestrianised area in the city centre, a different approach is necessary to how applications are sought and processed for this area for the period of the Fleadh.
3.5	While most of the Council's existing temporary street trading policy (See Appendix 1) is still applicable, a number of changes are required to be included in such a scheme.
3.6	The proposed scheme is only for temporary street trading (excluding the sale of alcohol) on identified sites in within the Fleadh's road closure pedestrianised area by street traders. Applications from street traders for other locations within the road closure pedestrianised area will not be accepted under this scheme.
3.7	The details of the proposed temporary street trading scheme for applications within the road closure pedestrianised area of the Fleadh including assessment criteria are contained in Appendix 2.
	<u>Key points of the scheme</u>
	<u>Streets and sites within road closure/pedestrianised area suitable for street trading</u>
3.8	Within the road closure pedestrianised area, specific streets have been identified as potentially suitable in terms of public health and safety for temporary street trading by the Fleadh Event Team's Health & Safety consultant, using crowd dynamics modelling, and agreed with Statutory Partners involved in Fleadh working groups. However, it should be noted that whilst detailed plans are in place for the key components of the Fleadh there continues to be the potential for change, including proposals which may come forward from the private sector. This may impact on final decisions in relation to the suitable locations for temporary street trading
3.9	At this stage, the streets that have been approved as potentially suitable locations for temporary street trading are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge Street, High Street, Royal Avenue (Sunday – Sunday)
3.10	Further work is required to finalise the number of potential sites and site locations. Engagement with organisations representing businesses in the city centre, including the BIDs is ongoing, to mitigate against any issues regarding the details of individual trading site locations and commodities that may or may not be appropriate.
	<u>Inviting and processing of applications</u>
3.11	Once the exact number and location of site locations are determined, applications will be invited within a six week time frame – anticipated to be from Monday 20 April to Friday 29 May 2026.
3.12	Applications will only be accepted for streets agreed as suitable locations based on public safety with applicants being asked to state their preference of street, however this will not be guaranteed.
3.13	Only one application per individual will be accepted.
3.14	Applications will not be determined until after closing date, when a set of assessment criteria will be applied.

3.15	<p>Applicants may apply for whatever number of days of the Fleadh they wish to trade on. However, preference may be given to applicants wishing to trade throughout the available days for the street applied for. Prospective applicants should not apply for days they do not intend to trade on.</p>
3.16	<p>Applications for the full eight days of the Fleadh will only be asked to submit one completed application form along with one application fee of £180, although the daily licence fees must be paid if the application is granted. (Total fee of £570)</p>
3.17	<p>The legislation allows a temporary street trading licence to be issued for a maximum of seven consecutive days, and therefore two applications should be made and two application fees paid. We do not believe this to be appropriate for this scheme and therefore ask the Committee to agree to waive the second application fee, both for this scheme and for any applications received for outside the road closure/pedestrianised area for the Fleadh period.</p>
3.18	<p>The opening and closing dates and details of the application process and requirements will be communicated on the council website and various media channels with the assistance of the Corporate Communications team. The Service will also directly inform those individuals that have contacted us or previously made an application that has been returned.</p>
	<p><u>Commodities</u></p>
3.19	<p>While it is anticipated that applications for a wide variety of commodities will be received, experience suggests the majority may be for hot 'fast food' offerings.</p>
3.20	<p>It is proposed to limit the number of street trading sites permitted to sell hot food. This is to help support the Event's food markets, St George's Market, existing city centre food retailers and hospitality sector, and to reduce the potential for litter.</p>
3.21	<p>Applications for the sale of alcohol will not be accepted under this scheme. Street trading involving the sale of alcohol may be subject to a further consideration by the Committee where this impacts on the City Council's licensing regimes.</p>
	<p><u>Statutory consultations</u></p>
3.22	<p>DfI (Roads) and the PSNI are the Statutory Consultees for street trading applications, who provide responses on location and commodity suitability. As both these statutory consultees will have been involved in the identification of the suitable streets and sites; to expedite the process we do not intend to consult with them on each individual application.</p>
	<p><u>Dealing with a surplus of applications (competing applications)</u></p>
3.23	<p>Competing applications do not normally occur with temporary street trading licences; however, for the Fleadh it is likely that there will be too many acceptable applications for available licences for the sites available.</p>
3.24	<p>It is proposed to select successful applicants by assessing each application under a set of criteria, based on the policy for competing applications for designated sites, but with additional criteria, for example whether application is from an existing Belfast street trader or business. See Appendix 2 for the full criteria.</p>
3.25	<p>Once sites in a preferred street are all filled, unallocated applications will be offered spaces in other streets if available and any remaining applications will be held on a waiting list.</p>

3.26	<p><u>Refusing applications</u></p> <p>It is likely that some applications received under the scheme will need to be refused, in particular as it is expected that many more applications will be received than licences available. Refusing street trading licence applications is not currently a delegated matter and therefore must normally be brought to the Committee for consideration. In order to expedite the process of dealing with applications for street trading within the Fleadh’s road closure pedestrianised area, we request the Committee to give delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Building Control to refuse applications in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than one application from that individual has been received • The application is for a street/site within the road closure/pedestrianised area other than that identified. • An objection is received from the PSNI, DfI or Fleadh Event Team. • The commodities applied for are deemed inappropriate, or any other application criteria considered not met. • When more applications are received for a street, for limited sites for a particular commodity, or overall, than there are licences available (Competing Applications) <p>and also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to deem refused any application where all required supporting documentation is not provided within 6 weeks of the application being received.
4.0	<p>Financial and Resource Implications</p>
4.1	<p>This significant event will bring an increased workload in terms of the administering of street trading applications, which will be covered with existing resource and within the existing budget and fee income for this activity. However, the enforcement activity that is anticipated for the Fleadh may require additional resources to be allocated.</p>
5.0	<p>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</p>
	<p>There are no issues associated with this report.</p>
6.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 - Existing temporary street trading policy • Appendix 2 – Temporary street trading scheme for the Fleadh