

## **Proposed scheme for temporary street trading applications (excluding the sale of alcohol) within the road closure pedestrianised area of the Fleadh Belfast 2-9 August 2026**

### **Streets within the Fleadh road closure pedestrianised area available for temporary street trading**

Within the road closure pedestrianised area, a number of streets have been identified as 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 these streets have been 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.

At this stage, the streets that have been approved as suitable locations for temporary street trading are:

- Bridge Street, High Street and Royal Avenue (Sunday – Sunday)

Further work is required to finalise the number of potential sites. Engagement with organisations representing businesses in the city centre, including the BIDs will help to mitigate against any issues regarding the details of individual trading site locations and commodities that may or may not be appropriate.

Applicants will not be able to specify a preferred individual site, the Service will allocate traders to site taking into account the proposed commodities, the existing near-by businesses and in order to get a spread of offerings over the streets.

### **Impact on existing stationary street traders**

All existing stationary street traders trading on designated sites within the road closure pedestrianised area will be contacted to discuss their specific situation and how access to their normal site can be facilitated throughout the Fleadh period. A few traders are required to move and through agreement will be accommodated at another location.

No temporary street trading licence with similar commodities will be granted within the vicinity of an existing stationary street trader.

### **Inviting and Processing of applications**

**Applications will be invited within a 6 week time frame from Monday 20 April 2026 with a closing date of Friday 29 May 2026.**

The opening and closing dates and details of the application process and requirements will be communicated on the council website and various media channels by the Service and the Fleadh Event Team 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 was returned and refunded.

We will not process applications until after closing date, when a set of assessment criteria will be applied.

After the closing date any applications received will be held in a waiting list (fee not paid) in case unallocated sites remain after all acceptable applications are assessed.

**Applications will only be accepted for the streets identified as suitable locations based on public safety with applicants being asked to state their preference of street, however allocation in this street will not be guaranteed.**

Reason – to help ensure health and safety, taking into account likely crowd densities at certain times and locations during the period of the Fleadh and to avoid multiple applications for any one particular site.

Within the road closure pedestrian area we will only be accepting applications under this scheme for temporary street trading licences from street traders proposing to sell commodities, excluding alcohol, for these identified streets and sites, with any applications for other streets or sites within this area being considered invalid, and applicants being informed of the acceptable locations for applications.

**There will be another scheme for dealing with street trading applications for the sale of alcohol.**

Applications from businesses within the road closure pedestrianised area to enable trading from a pavement café area will be dealt with outside this scheme and will follow normal processes and assessment, including careful consideration of public health and safety during the event.

**Applications for street trading at locations outside of the road closure pedestrianised area will be accepted as normal and will follow normal processes.**

**Only one application per individual will be accepted.**

(However, this does not exclude an applicant from applying for the whole duration of the Fleadh which would normally require two applications - see below.)

Reason: To help ensure a spread of successful applicants and a variety of offerings in terms of stalls and commodities sold or services offered, to enhance the vitality of the event.

**Applicants can 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. If issued temporary licences are not used this may be taken into account when the Council is considering any street trading licensing applications made by those individuals in the future.

Reason: To help ensure temporary street trading sites are occupied on as many days as possible to enhance the vibrancy of those streets and variety of offerings available while they are pedestrianised for the event.

## **Fees**

**If applying for the full eight days of the Fleadh, we will only ask for one completed application form to be submitted along with one application fee of £180, although the daily licence fees must be paid if the application is granted. This will equate to a total fee of £570 for the eight days.**

Reason – the legislation only 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 particular scheme.

We will process eight-day applications as two applications, but the Council will waive the second application fee, both for this scheme for inside the Fleadh road closure area and also for any other applications related for the period of the Fleadh anywhere in Belfast.

However, applicants should be aware that the application will count as two of the five temporary applications any individual is permitted under the legislation to make to the Council in any one year.

## **Commodities**

The suitability of commodities will be considered as part of the assessment of applications and in the allocations of specific sites.

Alcohol is not a suitable commodity under this scheme, and applications proposing to sell alcohol will not be accepted.

Arts and crafts goods and artisan products as well as high quality souvenirs and food and soft drink offerings are considered among the commodities considered suitable.

However, sites permitted to sell hot and cold food and drinks (excluding ice cream), in particular the selling of hot 'fast food' such as burgers will be limited. This is to support the Event's food markets, St George's Market, existing city centre food retailers and the hospitality sector in general, and to reduce the potential for litter.

In allocating individual sites, where possible temporary street traders will be positioned remote from those shops and hospitality businesses selling similar offerings – for example we will not locate a trader selling jewellery outside a jeweller's shop.

## **Statutory Consultations**

DfI (Roads) and the PSNI are the Statutory Consultees for street trading applications, who provide responses on location and commodity suitability.

Due to the expected volume of applicants and necessary length of time that consulting individually could take, and as both these statutory consultees have been involved in the identification of the suitable streets and sites; and hence have been consulted through this process already, we do not intend to consult with them on each individual application we receive.

Statutory consultees will, as normal, receive copies of all issued licences.

The Council may also consult with other individual individuals and organisations as it considers appropriate, such as the organiser of the event, Belfast City Centre Management, BIDs etc.

The Fleadh Event Team and the Service are involved in ongoing consultation with relevant groups representing businesses in the city centre, to mitigate against any issues regarding the details of individual trading site locations and commodities that may or may not be appropriate.

Proposals will be presented at the Event Operations Sub-Committee for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Belfast 2026 for consideration and agreement. This forum has representatives present from BIDS, Belfast Chamber, NIAS, PSNI etc.

### **Documentation required**

As part of the application process prospective applicants will still be required to provide all normal documentation including a current Access NI Certificate and Public Liability Insurance.

If an applicant has not submitted all standard documentation required for a street trading licence within six weeks of making the application, the application will be deemed refused, and the site reallocated.

### **Refusing applications – due to non- suitability of application or commodity**

Temporary applications will be refused when:

- 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.

### **Criteria with respect to granting temporary applications under the scheme**

**The appropriateness of the proposed commodities** – proposed commodities will be assessed in relation to the location, including the extent to which the sale of the commodity will provide a useful service to the event not otherwise provided in the area, including if a stationary licence for the same commodities has already been issued within the same street.

The potential environmental effects such as additional litter, cleansing requirements, odour and noise and the context of the commodity or service proposed to be offered will also be considered.

If commodities are deemed unsuitable, the application will be refused. Alcohol is an unsuitable commodity under this scheme and applications for selling alcohol will not be accepted.

**Criteria for making decisions when more acceptable applications (for a street/limited sites identified for hot food/overall) than licences available (Competing Applications)**

Competing applications do not normally occur with temporary street trading licences; however, it is likely in this case that there will be too many acceptable applications for available licences. It is proposed to select successful applicants by assessing each application under each of the following criteria in turn.

The criterion for differentiation is based existing competing applications policy for designated stationary street trading sites; however, further criteria have been included to help determine successful applications.

- Differentiation in terms of merits of each application in the context of the street and event, the quality of the offerings, the design of the stall, the detail of the commodities and whether it will provide a useful service and add to the area and event and how the business will be operated. (Based on existing competing application policy for stationary licences)
- Eight-day applications preferred over shorter periods
- Applications from existing Belfast City Council stationary or mobile street trading licensees
- Applications from individuals representing a business located in Belfast
- The shortest geographical distance from Belfast City Hall to the home address of the applicant or business location for an individual applying on behalf of a business
- Date and time of receipt of application.

Once a sites in a preferred street are all filled, unallocated applications will be offered spaces in other streets if available. Any remaining applications will be held on a waiting list in case a space becomes available, and applicants kept informed.