

June 3rd, 2026

Dear Council Members,

We wish to formally request approval for a temporary extension of the Entertainment Licence to permit operation until 1:00am for three nights during the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann event period — specifically Thursday 6th August, Friday 7th August, and Saturday 8th August.

The extension is sought solely for what are expected to be the three busiest nights of the Fleadh, when Belfast city centre will experience peak visitor numbers and increased pressure on hospitality capacity and crowd management infrastructure.

As part of our contribution to supporting the event, we are erecting a purpose-built marquee on North Street which will provide additional managed capacity for approximately 2,750 patrons, with final occupancy levels to be agreed in consultation with Belfast City Council and all relevant statutory agencies.

We believe the provision of additional regulated and professionally managed hospitality space is essential to helping Belfast safely accommodate the tens of thousands of visitors expected during the Fleadh.

The rationale for this request is based primarily around public safety, crowd management, and the overall visitor experience.

Without additional late-night licensed capacity, there is potential for:

- Increased overcrowding within existing venues
- Greater pressure on public spaces and city centre streets
- Large numbers of patrons dispersing simultaneously at standard closing times
- Increased pressure on transport infrastructure and taxi provision

By permitting operation until 1:00am for these three nights only, visitor dispersal can take place in a more gradual and controlled manner, helping reduce congestion and improve overall crowd management across the city centre.

The venue will operate under a comprehensive event management plan and will include:

- Controlled entry and exit points
- Dedicated queuing systems
- Crowd flow management procedures
- Clearly identified emergency exits
- Continuous venue management supervision
- Approximately 15 SIA-trained stewards at peak operating times
- External perimeter monitoring and safe dispersal procedures

We fully recognise the importance of balancing the success of the Fleadh with the needs of nearby residents and neighbouring businesses. Measures will therefore include:

- Managed customer dispersal procedures
- Additional stewarding presence at closing time
- Signage requesting patrons respect neighbouring properties and residents
- Ongoing cooperation with Council officers and relevant agencies throughout the event period

Importantly, this year's Fleadh also represents an opportunity for Belfast to demonstrate its ability to successfully host and manage an event of this scale in a safe, welcoming, and professionally organised manner.

Ensuring visitors have a positive experience — including access to sufficient managed hospitality capacity and safe evening entertainment options — will play an important role in encouraging repeat attendance and supporting the long-term success of the Fleadh when it returns to Belfast in 2027.

We believe supporting professionally operated and stewarded venues during peak periods will contribute positively to:

- Public safety
- Visitor experience
- Crowd management
- The city's hospitality offering
- Belfast's reputation as a host city for major cultural events

This request is limited exclusively to the three peak nights of the Fleadh and is intended to support the safe and successful operation of what will be one of the most significant cultural events ever hosted in Belfast.

We are making a significant private investment in the temporary infrastructure, staffing, stewarding, production, and operational delivery required to facilitate this event space during the Fleadh period.

The requested extension in operating hours will help ensure that this investment can be utilised effectively during the peak demand periods of the festival, while also enabling us to deliver the level of professional event management, customer experience, and public safety measures expected of an event of this scale.

We respectfully ask Belfast City Council to support this temporary licence extension in recognition of the positive operational, cultural, and economic benefits it will bring to the city.

Kind regards,

Kelvin Collins
Gavin Bates

Cairde Events Ltd