



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Use of City Hall for filming of a 'Bollywood' movie
Date:	10 th August 2012
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	George Wright – Head of Facilities Management Ext.5206/6232

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	A request has been received via InvestNI to permit the filming of a number of sequences of a 'Bollywood' movie in the City Hall during September 2012.
1.2	Members may be aware that India is the largest film producing country in the world, making over 1100 films every year (Hollywood averages 700). The industry's value is estimated at \$4 billion as compared with Hollywood's \$10 billion. The song-dance sequence shot in picturesque international locales - is recognized as the crux of Indian commercial cinema, and the revenue that it generates has resulted in a wide range of international destinations supporting the industry, most recently Venice, the Seychelles, Amsterdam, Macau, London, Havana, Berlin and Geneva.
1.3	The movie project is entitled 'David' and the team intend to be filming some of the UK scenes in Belfast for a period of 9 days between 5 th –14 th September 2012. They will be shooting in a number of locations around the city, and have requested the use of the City Hall for at least one full day's filming in the Great Hall and the main staircase area.
1.4	There are a number of potential economic benefits to the city, most notably that a crew of 45 people are travelling to NI for the duration of the shot, that local talent will be recruited to assist the crew, that around 500 extras will be needed and that some equipment will be hired locally for the shoot.
1.5	In terms of the movie itself the production company has provided the following précis: <i>"30-year-old David has served the Ghani family for almost a decade. Ghani, a devout Muslim is a local Gang Lord and is extremely possessive of his community. The nature of Ghani's work became quite clear to David very early in his life, when his father who was an accountant to the family died in a shootout saving Ghani's life. David looks up to Ghani as a father figure and will happily give up his life to save his. Due to Ghani's involvement in the funding of terrorist activities, the Indian government authorizes a covert operation to execute Ghani. A team is sent to UK to assassinate him. The team find themselves working with one of Ghani's strong rivals. David, who is fiercely loyal to Ghani, decides to join them after discovering a terrible secret from Ghani's past.</i> <i>Will David let Ghani - his mentor and father figure - get killed?"</i>

1.6	This movie project is partly the result of work done by InvestNI both locally and from their office in Bangalore, India, and a local company, Northern Ireland Screen, are assisting in the NI production and filming.
1.7	Members will also be aware that the Economic Initiatives unit of the Development Department is actively seeking to support the creative sector in order to assist in sector growth and overall economic development and regeneration activities within the City. The unit has made us aware that it is seeking to organise a major symposium in 2013 for the 6 key Indian film production companies to visit Belfast as this is a new market for them and will help to showcase the city as a competitive location, and being able to facilitate the project 'David' request would obviously assist in this work.
1.8	A meeting between the movie producers, InvestNI, NI Screen and the council's Facilities staff took place on 3 rd August 2012 on-site in City Hall to discuss the modalities and logistics of the request, and we have concluded from this that we can offer the access needed to the Great Hall and other areas during the period of filming and also that the request can be accommodated from a technical perspective, if members are minded to approve it.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The key issue is whether or not the Committee feels that this is an appropriate use of the City Hall. A number of precedents exist for the use of City Hall for filming for both TV and film, and the request can be accommodated from a practical perspective if members are so minded
2.2	There are clearly a number of economic benefits to the city (although these will accrue in any event as the team intend to be in NI to film whether or not the City Hall is available) and there is also the wider potential benefit of enhancing the city's image and reputation internationally as a viable and welcoming location for creative projects.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	In addition to the exclusive access to the Great Hall and main staircase/Rotunda, the film-makers will need a large area (probably the Banqueting Hall or Reception Room) adjacent to the Great Hall capable of holding 50-60 extras at any one time, an area set aside for changing etc, exclusive use of the East car-park area for generators, cars, vans and other equipment and access to a catering facility.
3.2	There will be no cost to the council and nor will any additional staff resources be required. The organisers would, of course, have to comply with the usual conditions of use, including the provision of the necessary indemnities and insurance cover etc.

4	Recommendations
It is recommended that the Committee approve the use of the City Hall for the filming of this project, subject only to the receipt by the Director of Property & Projects of all necessary indemnities etc from the production company.	

5	Key to Abbreviations
None	

6	Documents Attached
None	