



Subject:	Request for permission for Belfast City Council staff to participate in BBC One television series on Consumer Protection
Date:	7 August 2018
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director City & Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services

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	The council has received a request from Raw Cut TV for Belfast City council staff to participate in a BBC One Series called "The Defenders" later this year. Members are asked to consider the request.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The committee is asked to agree that staff from Belfast City Council; <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participate in BBC One television series "The Defenders", subject to a robust legal agreement being established between the council and Raw Cut TV and following

	<p>detailed discussions between Raw Cut TV, Environmental Health Managers, Corporate Communications and Legal Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Clean Slate TV to investigate their proposals for “A year in Botanic” and provide permission to proceed under delegated authority.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><i>The Defenders UK</i> will air on BBC One later this year; each episode will showcase the ‘behind the scenes’ work carried out by various local and national agencies to protect and safeguard the general public.</p> <p>The company has approached Belfast City Council following positive publicity about our services such as food safety, port health and home safety, as well as the coverage received following several successful prosecutions.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Programme outline</u></p> <p>The Defenders UK will have an initial run of 15 episodes, each of 45minute. The aim is to attract an audience of between 1.5 and 2 million people per episode.</p> <p>The production company will film various organisations such as Trading Standards and are also talking to other organisations such as The General Dental Council and The Sleep Council. The remit is wide, and they will examine a whole range of consumer issues.</p> <p>Each episode will feature retrospective stories and not live cases. The company states they will definitely avoid any issues that would have any legal implications on Belfast City Council prosecutions.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Safeguards</u></p> <p>Officers have carried out preliminary discussions with Raw Cut TV to ascertain the aim of the programme, and Raw Cut TV has confirmed they are not interested in running their own ‘Rogue Traders’ style investigations or in naming and shaming. Their aim is to showcase the work of agencies as they go about their daily work.</p>
3.4	<p>They are also willing to enter in to a legal agreement with the council to ensure adequate safeguards to provide reassurance that our image and reputation are protected and that our enforcement powers and cases (past and present) would not be jeopardised in any way.</p>

3.5	<p>In 2011, Belfast City Council agreed to participate in a similar TV show entitled “The Noise Squad”, which was well received and profiled our work in a positive way. At this time Belfast City Council’s Legal Services Team developed and signed a legal agreement with the production company; it is proposed a bespoke legal agreement would also be agreed with Prime Cut TV.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Timeframe</u></p> <p>Raw Cut TV began filming across the UK in July, however, subject to approval being granted, they will begin filming in Belfast in September 2018.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Other information</u></p> <p>At time of writing this report, Belfast City Council has been approached by Clean Slate TV who are investigating producing a show for BBC which would document “A year in Botanic”.</p> <p>The company have stated that their initial idea is to show the gardens, the Palm House and the Tropical Ravine, but also to take a look at the kind of people who visit the park including event goers and dog walkers; It would show how the park works in all seasons and the hard work it takes to maintain the gardens and park.</p> <p>The company has not made any reference to investigating any regulatory or enforcement aspect of council work, and Officers seek permission to progress discussions on this proposal.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>It is not expected that this filming would incur any costs on Belfast City Council.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs issues.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p> <p>None</p>