



Subject:	Request for the use of Parks for 2026 Events
Date:	Tuesday 10 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services.
Contact Officer:	Stephen Leonard, Director of Open Spaces and Streetscene, Resources, Fleet & Transport.

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="text"/>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">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 matter5. 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
After Council Decision
Sometime in the future
Never

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	<p>The Committee is asked to note that Council has received a number of requests to hold events across Belfast Parks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CardioSoc Colour Run – Ormeau Park • Belfast Photo Festival – Botanic Gardens • Belfast Marathon Half & Full – Victoria Park, Ormeau Park & Waterworks Park • Belfast Barrio Fiesta – Botanic Gardens • Bloomfield Gospel Hall Gospel Outreach – Dixon Playing Fields • Belfast 24 Hour Run – Victoria Park
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to grant authority to each of the applicants for the proposed events on the dates noted and to delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to ensure the following:
2.2	Where appropriate negotiate a fee which recognises the costs to Council, minimises negative impact on the immediate area and takes account of the potential wider benefit to the city economy, in conjunction with the Councils Commercial Manager;
2.3	<p>Negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' & take down' periods, and booking amendments, ensuring the organisers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. resolve all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction; II. meets all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities; and III. shall consult with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary.
2.4	Please note that the above recommendations are taken as a pre-policy position in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which is currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Councils Commercial team.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>If agreed, the event organiser will be required in advance of the event to submit an event management plan for approval by the Council and all relevant statutory bodies. This will include an assessment of how the event will impact upon the surrounding area and measures to mitigate these impacts.</p>
3.2	<p><u>CardioSoc Colour Run – Ormeau Park</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council has received a request from Queens University Belfast's Cardiology Society to host a charity colour run event at Ormeau Park. The paint that is used is washable and will not damage any areas of the park. They have requested permission to collect money on site to raise funds for Heart Failure Warriors NI and Braveheart NI with a shared</p>

	<p>50% of all money raised being donated to them. The group successfully delivered the same event at Ormeau Park last year with no matters arising.</p> <p>3.3 The cost for participating is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5 for Adults • £3 for Children • £15 for groups of 4 <p>3.4 The Key Dates for the request are:</p> <p>Set Up – 8.30am, Sunday 28th March 2026 Main Event – 10am to 1pm, Sunday 28th March 2026 De Rig – 2.30pm, Sunday 28th March 2026</p> <p>3.5 <u>Belfast Photo Festival – Botanic Gardens</u></p> <p>Belfast Photo Festival is a not-for-profit organisation that presents one of the leading international festivals of photography in the United Kingdom and the Visual Arts Festival of Northern Ireland. Launched in 2011, this now annual photographic event has been described as one of the “best photography festivals in the world” (Capture Magazine) and attracts upwards of 100 thousand visitors a year, celebrating some of the finest National and International contemporary photography across 30 museums, galleries and public spaces. Capturing wide appeal through popular culture, accessible themes and unexpected encounters with photography, the festival aims to instil and inspire public enjoyment and participation by utilising the most accessible artistic medium and bringing it to new audience in cool and unusual ways. The festival consists of exhibitions, talks, symposiums, workshops, screening, masterclasses, portfolio reviews and tours.</p> <p>3.6 The primary location of the Belfast Photo Festival over the past years has been Botanic Gardens, where large audiences engage with the outdoor photographic displays each year. This is a free event, accessible to the public. It runs over the month of June and consists of a series of exhibitions mounted throughout the park. There are no registrations to any of the exhibitions mounted throughout the park. There are no registrations to any of the exhibitions in the park and charity collections made.</p> <p>3.7 The Key Dates for the request are:</p> <p>Set Up – Week commencing 18 May to 4 June 2026 Event Run Time – 4 June to 30 June 2026 De Rig – Week commencing 6 July 2026</p> <p>3.8 <u>Belfast Marathon Half & Full 2026– Ormeau Park & Waterworks Park</u></p> <p>Council has received a request from Belfast City Marathon to use both Ormeau Park and the Waterworks to deliver the full marathon event in May and the use of both Ormeau Park and Victoria Park to support the delivery of the half Marathon event in September. The Belfast Marathon was awarded World Label status in 2024 making it the only full marathon on the Island of Ireland to be awarded this. The event organisers have recruited 1000 volunteers to help officiate the marathons and in 2025 the full marathon generated over £12 million for the city and the half marathon generated £8 Million with around 70,000 spectators attending the event annually.</p> <p>3.9 The event has been shown live on BBC which allows the city to be showcased to a worldwide audience as it covers North, South, East & West showing the diversity of the city.</p>
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3.10	<p>The full Marathon will take place on 04th May and will be celebrating its 44th year of running in Belfast and will incorporate a 26.2 mile course that will cover all areas of the city. The route for this year's full Marathon will take participants through the Waterworks and once again the organisers have requested permission to have the finish line at Ormeau Park. In previous years this has included an entertainment zone in Ormeau Park to allow food trucks, sponsors and other activities to be placed on site for the participants and spectators to partake in the celebration with friends & family completing the marathon.</p>
3.11	<p>The key dates for the full marathon are:</p> <p>Set Up – Saturday 2 May 2026 – 7am – 8pm Main Event – Sunday 3 May 2026 – 9am to 6pm De Rig – Sunday 3 May – 7pm</p>
3.12	<p>The Half Marathon will take place on 20th September 2026. The event organisers have requested permission for the race to begin in Ormeau Park with the route taking the race through Victoria park and finishing again in Ormeau. Like the full marathon there will be an entertainment zone set up at the finish line in Ormeau Park. This will include sponsors stalls along with food traders.</p>
3.13	<p>The key dates for the Half Marathon are:</p> <p>Set up – Saturday 19 September 2026 – 7am – 8pm – Overnight security provided by EO. Main Event – Sunday 20 September 2026 – 9am to 6pm De Rig – Sunday 20 September 2026 – 7pm</p>
3.14	<p><u>Belfast Barrio Fiesta 2026</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council has received a request from Filipino Communities NI to bring their one-day Barrio Fiesta event to Botanic Gardens in 2026. Barrio Fiesta event is designed to celebrate Filipino culture, and to boost the morale of Filipinos living away from home their familiar culture.</p>
3.15	<p>Once a ticket is purchased it will allow the attendee to enjoy and celebrate the Filipino culture through music, dance workshops and classes, there will be live music and traditional Filipino performers attending from all over N. Ireland. This cultural event will showcase 35 diverse vendors. Attendees will have the opportunity to enjoy traditional dishes and explore a wide selection of Filipino products, highlighting the richness of the Philippines' culinary and cultural heritage.</p>
3.16	<p>This is the first time this organiser has applied to Council to deliver an event at a Belfast Park location; however, the organisation has run this event for a number of years and has experienced growth year on year. Last year's event at attracted 2,500 attendees and the group anticipate 3,000 attendees in 2026</p>
3.17	<p>There will be a charge for those who are attending the event with the price of tickets being set at the following:</p>
3.18	<p>VIP ticketing at £20.00 - Offers enhanced benefits & a photo opportunity with guest artists. Standard tickets at £5.00 Kids 12 and under – Free</p>
3.19	<p>The Key Dates for the request are:</p> <p>Set Up -Tuesday Friday 26th June 2026 from 8.00am -5.00pm Main Event – Saturday 27 June 2026, from 9.00am – 6.30pm De-Rig – Sunday 28 June 2026</p>

	<p><u>Bloomfield Gospel Hall Gospel Outreach - Dixon Playing fields</u></p> <p>3.20 The church has a small congregation with around 50 members who meet in Bloomfield Gospel Hall, Woodcot Avenue. As part of their community engagement initiatives, the church held a number of gospel outreach events in Dixon Park in recent years. This has involved the erection of a portable hall for a number of weeks. In 2024 the council granted permission for drive – in services on Sunday evenings throughout Spring and Summer months. Additionally, the church ran its outreach programme Monday to Friday throughout the month of June. The organiser has informed Council that this was very well received by the local community with a number of non-members attending the services.</p> <p>3.21 The organiser would like to repeat the success of the last 4 years in 2026. During the Sunday evening services a small curtain sided van will be used as a platform for the event speaker with a low volume battery portable loudspeaker being used to enable the persons speaking to be heard in the cars within the carpark. The group have also requested to carry out a Summer Bible Time outreach event that in previous years have included children from the local area and Polish, Slovakian and Romanian children.</p> <p>3.22 The organisers have a good working relationship with the Scirocco Football Club who use the playing fields. The football club help to advertise the services on their website and on the few occasions that football training occurs during the services, there is ample room for both groups to co-exist.</p> <p>3.23</p> <p>The Key Dates for the request are</p> <p>Sunday Evening Services Sunday 17 May 2026 to Sunday 27 September 2026, 7pm – 7.30pm.</p> <p>Gospel Outreach Saturday 18 April 2026 to Saturday 18 May 2026, Sunday 7pm – 8pm & Monday to Friday, 8pm - 9pm.</p> <p>Summer Bible Time Monday 10 August 2026 to Thursday 13 August 2026, 6.15pm – 7.15pm. Friday 14 August 2026, 5pm – 7pm.</p> <p>Set Up – 30 mins prior to main event. De Rig – 30 mins after main event.</p> <p><u>Belfast 24 Hour Run – Victoria Park</u></p> <p>3.24 Belfast City Council has received a request from Belfast Runs & We Run Wild to deliver their 24-hour running event in Victoria Park. The race is in its 15th year having moved to Victoria Park in 2017. It is estimated that around 200 – 500 runners will take part. The event will include a 24 hour-100-mile race, a team event and a 50k race all inside the 24 hour time period.</p> <p>3.25 This event takes place throughout the night. In previous years there have been a number of reports of noise disturbances so Council Officers will work closely with the event organiser again this year to ensure these disturbances are mitigated.</p>
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3.26	As Victoria Park has 24-hour access due to forming part of the Connswater Community Greenway there are no additional operational considerations that need addressed as part of this request.
3.27	<p>The Key Dates for the request are</p> <p>Set Up – Friday 24 July 2026, 10.00am</p> <p>Main Event – Saturday 25 July 2026 – Sunday 26 July, 12noon – 2pm.</p> <p>De Rig – Sunday 26 July 2026 – 2pm.</p>
	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no known implications.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no known implications</p>
4.0	Appendices
	None