

Council charity permits and the Tale of Tom Gilzean

The City of Edinburgh Council has clarified its position regarding Public Charitable Collection (PCC) permits following press reports alleging that a ban had been imposed on a well-regarded and longstanding collector.

Deputy Leader Councillor Steve Cardownie said that contrary to reports, there was no question of Mr Tom Gilzean being prevented from continuing his charity collections.

He said: "I met with Tom Gilzean this morning and reassured him that we will look to take exceptional measures for such an exceptional case as this. I hope we will all be seeing him resplendent in his Highland garb on the Royal Mile for a long time to come.

"The Council does have a policy which regulates the number of permits given out to charity collectors – this is necessary to ensure that residents and visitors to Edinburgh are not faced with an overwhelming number of requests for charity donations as they go about their daily business.

"Tom Gilzean is an extremely well-regarded citizen who has won widespread recognition for his charity work. In fact, earlier this year I attended an afternoon tea at the City Chambers hosted by the Lord Provost City Chambers in honour of Tom and his inspirational achievements.

"Mr Gilzean has already applied for and been granted a PCC permit for the period 15 – 20 August 2011. He has subsequently applied for a further permit which would enable him to collect in the earlier part of 2011 and it is this application which will be subject to further discussion."

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Council's policy on PCC permit applications states that "Normally an applicant will only be granted one permission for up to six days per annum...".

Mr Gilzean has applied for and been granted, Public Charitable Collection (PCC) permits over the past few years.

Since the beginning of 2008, he has been granted five separate permits – one for a single day and the other four for six day periods.

He also has a permit for the period 15th – 20th August 2011.

Most recently, Mr Gilzean applied for a further permit for 2011 from 1st March to 31st October.

The Council can depart from its PCC policy if requested, so if Mr Gilzean wanted an extended period during which to conduct his charitable collection, he would be able to submit an application, together with a letter explaining why he wanted the additional period.

Any PCC application made which departs from policy has to go to the Licensing Sub-Committee for consideration, and we can confirm that the committee has granted PCCs for longer than the 6 day period in the past.

The Licensing Section maintains a diary of permits issued.