



Civic Centre,
Arnot Hill Park,
Arnold,
Nottinghamshire,
NG5 6LU

Agenda

Cabinet

Date: **Thursday 19 May 2016**

Time: **12.30 pm**

Place: **Reception Room**

For any further information please contact:

Lyndsey Parnell

Senior Elections and Members' Services Officer

0115 901 3910

Cabinet

Membership

Chair Councillor John Clarke

Vice-Chair Councillor Michael Payne

Councillor Peter Barnes
Councillor David Ellis
Councillor Kathryn Fox
Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth
Councillor Henry Wheeler

Observers: Councillor Chris Barnfather

AGENDA

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- 2 To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2016.** 5 - 10
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Report of the Food, Health and Housing Manager.
- 5 Scrutiny review - Final recommendations of Bonington Theatre working group.** 19 - 28
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- 8 Any other items the Chair considers urgent.**

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MINUTES CABINET

Thursday 17 March 2016

Councillor John Clarke (Chair)

Councillor Michael Payne
Councillor Peter Barnes
Councillor David Ellis

Councillor Kathryn Fox
Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth
Councillor Henry Wheeler

Observers: Councillor Chris Barnfather

Officers in Attendance: L Parnell, H Barrington, M Kimberley, J Robinson,
D Wakelin, J Gray, A Hardy and L Juby

80 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

No apologies for absence were received.

81 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 11 AND 18 FEBRUARY 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

82 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

None.

83 LOCAL PLANNING DOCUMENT - PUBLICATION DRAFT

Councillor Payne declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Local Planning Document on behalf of all Members present as a number of sites contained within the document are in the ownership of the Borough Council.

The Planning Policy Manager presented the report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, seeking approval of the publication draft of the Local Planning Document to be issued for a six week consultation period and, subject to no substantial issues arising from this consultation, for referral to Council for approval of the Publication draft, Policies Map and Sustainability Appraisal to be submitted to the Secretary of State.

The Planning Policy Manager provided information relating the key development policy changes/additions, site specific allocations and outlined an additional recommendation in relation to providing clarity for Members regarding the weight to be given to the emerging documents in determining planning applications.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To agree that the Publication draft of the Local Planning Document, Policies Map, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment be submitted to Council for approval to go out for a six week consultation period;
- 2) To recommend that Council approve the submission of the Publication draft of the Local Planning Document, Policies Map, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment to the Secretary of State with associated evidence documents for independent examination under section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 subject to there not being the need for any substantial changes following consultation on the Publication draft. Should the consultation confirm the need for substantial changes then this would require referral back to Council for approval at a later date;
- 3) To recommend that Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of Planning Committee to make any minor changes such as typographical, formatting or changes to imagery necessary to the Publication draft prior to consultation and/or submission; and
- 4) That Officers be requested to provide clarity as to how sites will be considered during the process for producing the Local Plan Document and the weight to be attached to the emerging document.

84 BESTWOOD ST ALBANS HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PROJECT

The Service Manager Leisure, presented the report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, seeking approval for the delivery of a Healthy Communities Project in Bestwood and the establishment of relevant budgets through virement.

The Portfolio Holder presented amended recommendations, following consultation with local residents, groups and the Parish Council, reducing the scope of the project from 2 years to 12 months and establishing additional operational budget.

RESOLVED to approve:

- 1) The delivery of a Healthy Communities Project to be funded by S106 developer contributions subject to delivery being for a period of 12 months; and
- 2) The following budget virement to establish the project expenditure and income budgets:

Employee Expenses	£24,000
Operational Expenses	£42,000
S106 Contribution	(£66,000)

85 FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to a report of the Service Manager, Elections and Members' Services, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, detailing the Executive's draft Forward Plan for the next four month period.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

86 PROGRESS REPORTS FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.

Councillor Peter Barnes (Environment)

- The "Clean for the Queen" project had been a success and had reached over 400,000 people on Social Media. The Portfolio Holder wished to express his thanks to the community for their involvement.
- Nottingham Trent University architecture students had recently presented ideas and plans for consideration in relation to the Gedling County Park visitor centre. The Portfolio Holder noted the exceptional quality of the work and how much effort they had put into their plans.
- Good support had been received for the Bulky Waste Collection Amnesty.

Councillor Henry Wheeler (Housing, Health and Wellbeing)

- The Better Care Fund Plan 16/17 has now been signed off to allow access to additional funding for disabled facilities grants.
- The Council would be taking part in the Local Government Mental Health Challenge and would be bringing a motion before Council and, hopefully, appointing a Mental Health Champion.
- Dementia Friend training for Members and Leisure Centres is ongoing.

- Work is currently underway to look at the signage at Bonington Theatre, who are currently running a successful theatre programme.
- Work is ongoing regarding bringing empty homes back into use and there are currently discussions with Gedling Homes regarding the potential to lease some of their properties to assist with temporary accommodation.
- It is hoped that Stop Smoking Services for pregnant women will be extended into the Borough from Kingsmill Hospital.

Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth (Growth and Regeneration)

- 870 students from 5 schools attended an employment programme, which was supported by 40 private sector employers.
- The Department of Work and Pensions, Gedling Borough Council and Bassetlaw District Council were undertaking a project looking at barriers to employment in Arnold and Worksop.
- 128 young people attended the National Apprenticeships Show at Arnold Methodist Church.
- Carlton Brass Band have recently relocated to Burton Joyce; there are plans for the former band room site to become starter homes.
- Discussions regarding the development of an extra care village in the Borough are ongoing.

Councillor David Ellis (Public Protection)

- Crime and anti-social behaviour continues to decline in the Borough. This trend does not, however, reflect all crime, for example cyber-crime is increasing.
- Training had been undertaken by Members, Officers and a number of partner agencies regarding preventing radicalisation.
- Officers from various agencies had liaised to reduce the impact of a short term traveller encampment at Teal Close.

Councillor Kathryn Fox (Community Development)

- The Council's COMA project had been selected by the Cabinet Office as a case study in local authority led asset transfer.
- A resource pack relating to community asset transfers would be available in April and a number of workshops would be available to community groups regarding business planning and sustainability, finance, governance and organisational structures.
- A Spring craft event will be held on 9 April from 1-5pm at the Civic Centre, with special educational needs support.
- Funding had been provided for young and elderly concessionary tickets to Nottingham Playhouse.
- Theatre outreach sessions would be held in Newstead, Killisick and Netherfield.

- Hope Nottingham and Eudaimonia have received funding to open a super kitchen and foodbank network.
- From October-November 2015 247 people were helped by the Citizens Advice Bureau. A debt case worker had assisted 52 people; managing almost £400,000 of debt and having £500,000 written off.
- International Women's Day and an associated programme of events had been successful, including an awards ceremony celebrating women in the community.
- An election to Gedling Youth Council had recently taken place and new Youth Councillors would hold their first meeting on 21 March.

Councillor Michael Payne (Resources and Reputation)

- A new edition of Contacts magazine had just gone to print following a meeting of the Editorial Board. Feedback on content is welcomed.
- The Council had responded to the government's consultation on the New Homes Bonus.
- Some Gedling Homes Services will continue to be provided from the Civic Centre, with Gedling Borough Council Advisors providing some counter services.
- All of Borough Wide community grants had been awarded and the Portfolio Holder encourage Members with remaining funds to allocate before the end of the financial year.
- The Portfolio Holder mentioned the outstanding work of all involved in the Women's Day events.

Councillor John Clarke (Leader of the Council)

- Talks regarding a devolution deal are ongoing with Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire authorities.
- Feedback from a recent Erasmus visit had been positive and the Leader had requested a presentation to Cabinet on the project.
- Following recent visits to locality co-ordinators, the Leader had requested an update to Cabinet on their work.

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MEMBER'S QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.

Councillor Collis asked a question of the Portfolio Holders for Public Protection and the Environment regarding control of dogs on Gedling Country Park, following a dog biting a member of the public.

The Portfolio Holders and Director responded to the question, informing the Member that the identification of the dog's owner will be pursued by Police should a complaint be filed by the victim and that the Friends of Gedling Country Park and neighbourhood wardens do remind dog walkers of the need to keep their dogs under control.

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ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.

Councillor Clarke informed Members that this would be Mark Kimberley's last meeting of Cabinet before leaving the authority. Councillor Clarke, on behalf of Cabinet, thanked Mark for his work in service of the Borough and wished him well for the future.

The meeting finished at 2.00 pm

Signed by Chair:

Date:



Report to Cabinet

Subject: Better Care Fund Allocation and the Disabled Facilities Grants Service

Date: 19 May 2016

Author: Food, Health and Housing Manager

Wards Affected

All wards

Purpose

- 1) To approve an increase in the 2016/17 capital programme budget for Disabled Facilities Grants following notification of an increase in Government grant via the Better Care Fund.
- 2) To outline headline proposals to utilise the increased Disabled Facilities Grant / Better Care Fund budget.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision

Background

1.1 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are a mechanism to provide financial assistance for adaptations to dwellings occupied by disabled people. DFGs are administered by Gedling Borough Council following referral from or consultation with Nottinghamshire County Council. DFGs can either be mandatory, where specified conditions under legislation are met or discretionary for other purposes in accordance with the Council's adopted policy. The Council has not previously had the resources to offer discretionary DFGs.

1.2 Examples of adaptations include:

- Providing ramps, widening external / internal door, shallow steps;
- Adapting, or providing, suitable washing / bathing / showering /

toilet facilities;

- Ensuring the disabled person can moved around and access parts of the home so they can look after someone else;
- Facilitating the preparation of food and cooking in the kitchen;
- Installing a stairlift or a 'through the floor' lift; and
- Providing access to gardens.

- 1.3 The current approved 2016/17 DFG budget is £689,000 and is financed by Government grant of £464,000 via the Better Care Fund (BCF) and a £225,000 Gedling Borough Council contribution financed by borrowing.
- 1.4 The BCF (formerly the Integration Transformation Fund) was announced by Government in the June 2013 spending round, to ensure a transformation in integrated health and social care. The BCF is allocated to upper-tier authorities by Government and part of the allocation is ring-fenced for DFG and passed onto District Councils. In the 2015 spending review Government indicated that nationally funding for DFG will increase to over £500million per annum by 2019/20 compared to £220million in 2015/16.
- 1.5 The County Council is required to prepare and submit a BCF Plan to Government outlining how the funding will be distributed and spent. Any funding proposals outlined by the Council must be in accordance with the BCF Plan. The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Community Wellbeing approved a separate report supporting the Council's commitment to the BCF Plan.
- 1.6 The grant determination and conditions have now been issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government to Nottinghamshire County Council for the DFG element of the BCF and identifies an allocation of £820,019 to Gedling Borough Council. This is an increase of £356,019 for the Council to spend in accordance with the BCF Plan – which include mandatory DFG but allows spend on broader strategic capital projects subject to housing authorities being able to meet their statutory duty in respect to DFG. It is considered that the £820,019 allocation is sufficient to meet the statutory DFG and also enable contribution to wider BCF spending. Government has indicated the Better Care Fund DFG element will increase each year up-to 2019/20
- 1.7 In 2015/16 Gedling Borough Council's BCF allocation for DFG of £464,000 and this was fully spent by the service. The 2016/17 BCF

allocation of £820,019 is a welcome allocation for the Council. Historically the Council has not received sufficient DFG funding from Government to deliver the service and the Council has made the additional budget of £225,000 available to meet local demand. However, as stated above it is considered that the Council's increased BCF allocation for 2016/17 will be sufficient to meet the statutory demand for DFG and to provide an enhanced service without the need for the Council to contribute its own resources to the DFG budget.

- 1.8 Part of the reason for the increase in the DFG allocation is due to the inclusion of the Social Care Capital Grant which was £1.9 million for Nottinghamshire in 2015/16. This funding was used to support a number of schemes in the 'Living at Home' programme for 'Extra Care Housing' to provide supported housing for adults reducing the need for long term residential care.
- 1.9 Proposals for spending the monies available for wider BCF projects will need to be approved as part of the BCF spending plan and meet the definition of capital spending as required by the grant conditions. The potential project options to be put forward for consideration by the Housing and Health Integrated Commissioning Group to the Chief Executives Group and BCF Project Board are detailed at paragraph 2.2.
- 1.10 The proposed increase in the DFG budget will result in an increased workload for the administration of DFG and the wider BCF spending and it is anticipated that additional staffing resource will be required to ensure successful project delivery. Gedling Borough Council currently capitalises salaries for the administration of DFG which equates to 10-15% of the DFG budget. Any proposed increase in staffing will be funded from the increased capital grant and will remain within the set 10-15% parameter for capitalised salaries. The Chief Executive will be asked to approve the increase in staffing under delegated authority subject to approval of this capital budget increase by Cabinet.

Proposals

- 2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet provides approval to increase the DFG / Better Care Fund capital programme budget for 2016/17 to £820,000 to be fully funded by Government Grant which will fully accommodate the demand for DFG;

by approval of the following virement:

Additional DFG/BCF Expenditure	£131,000
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Additional Government Grant Income (£356,000)

Reduced Gedling Borough Council Contribution £225,000

2.2 It is proposed that Cabinet notes the headline proposals to be explored to utilise the increased DFG budget and provide an enhanced service to local disabled residents:

- a) The Handy Person Preventative Adaptation Service (HPAS). The Department of Health (which is jointly responsible for BCF) is keen that the BCF is used for innovative approaches to improve health and has indicated the funding can be used for schemes such as the HPAS. HPAS is a partnership scheme to provide help and support to residents aged over 60 with low cost but high quality essential adaptations and small practical jobs. The scheme costs the service user £15 for up-to 4 hours work from a local trader plus the cost of any materials. Officers will explore with the County Council whether it is acceptable to utilise the DFG grant to fund the HPAS service and if approved this will offer an opportunity to consider removal of the Council's current approved revenue budget of £14,300 for this service. This will be subject of a future report to Portfolio Holder;
- b) The Council's Private Sector Housing Grants and Assistance policy will be revised to provide additional discretionary assistance to disabled residents in addition to the mandatory DFGs currently described in the policy. A report to Portfolio Holder will be submitted to authorise the changes to the policy. Additional discretionary DFGs include:
 - I. Discretionary 'top-up' to mandatory DFG. The maximum DFG awarded is £30,000 - some schemes such as extensions for a ground floor bathroom or bedroom exceed the maximum grant. It is proposed that an additional £10,000 will be made available to service users, making the maximum grant for one scheme to be £40,000.
 - II. Dual residency of a disabled child. In cases where families separate and a court order provides that residency of the disabled child is split between the mother and father - the Council only provides mandatory DFG to the 'sole or main residence' of the disabled applicant. It is proposed that in addition to the mandatory DFG a discretionary DFG of up-to £30,000 will be made available to the parent's property not eligible for a mandatory DFG.
 - III. Relocation assistance. A relocation grant may be available

to an applicant who owns their property if adaptations to their current home are determined not to be feasible or reasonable and they are considering relocation to a property they intend to purchase. A relocation grant of £5,000 will be made available with up-to £10,000 made available to adapt the new property.

IV. Discretionary 'wet-room' adaptation grant. Currently Nottinghamshire County Council only assess disabled residents who have a 'substantial' or 'critical' need in accordance with their 'Fair Access to Care' assessments. This has the potential to exclude clients who could be considered for a mandatory DFG as the County Council will not be assessing them further and referring them for DFG. It is proposed that residents that have been deemed to have a 'moderate need' by the County Council can be referred for a 'wet-room' or 'easy access shower' adaptation - each of these grants would typically cost under £5,000.

c) Extra Care Housing. Officers will explore in further detail whether there are sufficient funds remaining within the DFG budget to contribute to local schemes for 'Extra Care' housing. Such schemes would enable suitable housing for older residents with specific support needs to maintain their independence in a residential setting as opposed to requiring them to move into long term residential care. If considered to meet the grant conditions any proposals in respect of this will be subject of a future report to Portfolio Holder or Cabinet.

Alternative Options

- 3.1 Cabinet could decide not to establish the DFG budget but this would be difficult to justify as the Government have made the funds available based on assessment of local need.
- 3.2 Cabinet could decide to maintain the Council's contribution to the DFG budget or provide a reduced contribution but it is considered that there is sufficient resource within the DFG grant 2016/17 (through the BCF allocation) to meet demand for mandatory DFG and the discretionary proposals outlined in this report.

Financial Implications

- 4.1 The increase in Government Grant for DFGs will fully accommodate the demand for DFGs and makes it possible to reduce the Gedling Borough Council contribution to the DFG budget. The current budget for the

Gedling Borough Council contribution is financed by borrowing and its removal will result in a revenue budget saving in the region of £18,000 per annum and will be cumulative for each year of reduced borrowing. This equates to a £90,000 annual budget reduction by the end of the current MTFP i.e. 2020/21. This proposal will make a contribution to the delivery of the Council's approved Efficiency Target of £1.15m with no detriment to the current service delivery levels of DFGs. Indeed the increased grant allocation will enable the provision of an enhanced service to disabled residents.

- 4.2 As detailed at paragraph 1.6 above the Government has indicated that the Better Care Fund DFG element will increase each year up to 2019/20 and so provides some reassurance that the increased grant funding level will continue in the medium term and that savings can be achieved on an ongoing basis without reducing service level. The position will be reviewed on an annual basis as grant announcements are made.

Appendices

- 5.1 None.

Background Papers

- 6.1 None.

Recommendations

- 7.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- I. authorise the increase in the DFG/Better Care Fund capital programme budget for 2016/17 to £820,000 to be fully funded by Government Grant by approval of the virement as detailed at paragraph 2.1;
 - II. note the headline proposals to be explored to utilise the increased DFG budget and provide an enhanced service to local disabled residents.

Reasons for Recommendations

- To enable the Council to deliver an enhanced DFG service
- To contribute towards the Council's efficiency savings targets
- To deliver the DFG service consistently with other Nottinghamshire District Councils.
- To contribute towards the Council's objectives of 'improving health and wellbeing', and 'reducing hardship and provide support for the most

vulnerable'

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Report to Cabinet

Subject: Scrutiny Report:

Report and Recommendations of the Bonington Theatre Working Group

Date: 19 May 2016

Author: Councillor Viv McCrossen, Chair of the Overview Scrutiny Committee

1. Purpose

To inform Cabinet members and relevant Portfolio Holders of the findings and recommendations of the Bonington Theatre Scrutiny Working Group.

2. Key Decision

This is not a key decision

3. Background

Members are reminded that part of the remit of Scrutiny is to deal with wider service or policy issues through the establishment of working groups, which take an in depth view of Council policies and plans as directed by the Overview Scrutiny Committee, and make recommendations to Cabinet accordingly. In accordance with the Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2010, a review is commissioned when:

- There is added value that this work will bring to the core priorities of the Council
- It is likely to make a difference if a working group undertake this work
- It is likely to lead to improved performance
- It is likely that the working group's recommendations will improve the lives of the residents of Gedling Borough

- It will increase Member awareness of important issues

3. Proposal

Members are asked to consider the report and recommendations of the above review, which has been approved by the Overview Scrutiny Committee for referral to Cabinet.

4. Alternative Options

Under Executive governance arrangements the Cabinet is required to consider reports from the Scrutiny Committee so there are no alternative options

4. Recommendations

- 1) To consider the report of the working group and make appropriate comments; and
- 2) To refer the report to the appropriate Cabinet Member in order for a response to be made to the Overview Scrutiny Committee at the next meeting on 27 June.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Report and Recommendations of the Bonington Theatre Scrutiny Working Group.

6. Background Papers

None identified

7. Reasons for Recommendations

To comply with Executive governance arrangements and fulfil the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Report to: Cabinet

Subject: Report and Recommendations of the Bonington Theatre Scrutiny Working Group

Date: 19 May 2016

Author: Councillor Gary Gregory

Working Group Members: Councillors Gregory (Chair), Paling, Andrews and S Barnes.

Members from the Gedling Youth Council: Ashlea Pringle, Florence Orchard, Miles Kirk.

1. Purpose of the Report

To present the final report and recommendations of the Bonington Theatre Scrutiny working group.

2. Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a working group to undertake a short scrutiny review to examine the Bonington Theatre's current offer and to consider what can be done to further develop the theatre into an established arts venue that the community values and uses. This review was not intended to provide a full detailed analysis of the management and administration of the theatre but had one principle aim, to explore the potential for increasing use of, and visits too, the theatre and to consider ways of improving community take up and participation.

The working group had two evidence gathering meetings and received briefings from the Service Manager Leisure, the Theatre Manager and Gedling Borough Council Communications Officer.

3. Findings

The Bonington Theatre has a unique offer. It provides an alternative to theatres and cinemas in the city and is available for use by the community, for the community, providing a venue for a wide range of amateur and professional events. The theatre

aims to provide a variety of arts and entertainment events encompassing many aspects of performing arts and associated educational activity. The number of theatre productions, shows and events is increasing steadily year on year. It has forged strong community links and is used by local amateur and visiting theatre companies, the Nottingham Organ Society, theatre and dance schools and has a regular programme of jazz concerts. The theatre programme includes a range of productions attracting acclaim from audiences however, lack of profile and the need to attract new hirers and audiences, particularly of first time bookers, needs to be addressed. In the daytime the theatre is used for exercise classes provided by the leisure centre and attendance numbers are attributed to their statistics.

The theatre has a number of strengths; it is a well-equipped small scale theatre with a loyal customer base. However lack of profile in the local community and the challenges presented of raising awareness locally impacts on the use of and audience attendance at the theatre. There is a need to increase the profile of the theatre and the developing cinema programme particularly in Arnold, but also in the whole of the borough and wider; the question is how to do this.

Currently a brochure is published every six months encapsulating the theatre programme; this uses a similar format to that of the commercial theatres in Nottingham. The brochure promotes performances for organisations that hire the venue and is seen as a positive gesture for the groups who use the facility. The brochure is distributed to libraries and other venues in addition to being mailed out to over 2,000 people on the database. Members appreciated the quality, concept and production of the programme as a mechanism to establish the Bonington Theatre 'brand', emulating the marketing undertaken by the larger commercial venues, but were unsure if this was the most cost effective way of promoting the programme. Mailing the brochure out to people who had previously attended the theatre is an effective way to inform people who already are aware of the venue, but does little to inform new potential audiences. 'Keep Me Posted' emails are sent out fortnightly to people on the database and social media (Facebook and Twitter) are also used. The theatre has now registered its own web domain but issues around obtaining quality images provided by hirers or visiting artists presents problems. The website design is seen as satisfactory but the link to online booking is protracted and keeping the website up to date can present problems. Bookings can be made online but as the system is linked to the leisure centre computer booking system this is a lengthy process. This is currently under examination to see how it can be improved or is an alternative system can be installed.

Members considered that a targeted marketing strategy needed to be developed which focused on new users with a particular emphasis on increasing the age range currently attending. Members learnt that attendance for both the theatre and the cinema is predominantly at the older end of the age spectrum. Publicity needs to be designed that appeals to younger age groups and the genre of films modified to appeal to specific age ranges, including children and young people. The best

publicity is word of mouth and a free screening for young people to advertise the venue and programme is currently being considered. Members thought that in order to increase the number of people attending the cinema age appropriate and special interest and themed films should be trialled, including those for mothers and preschool children. The use of family tickets, cinema parties relaxed performances and teen screenings could also be introduced. This is currently being addressed and the cinema programme reflects this; the summer schedule will include daytime children's film screenings. Members recognised that the Theatre Manager had limited time and inadequate resources to develop a comprehensive targeted strategy and members felt that this was an area that needed addressing if audiences were to grow and the input of more resources could in the long term lead to an increase in revenue. Additional leaflet distribution, targeted mail outs, improved website design and use of social media all require additional resources both monetary and in staff time and the theatre requires additional long term support to fully develop strategies if it is to increase its audience. Members suggested the production of a poster that could be displayed in a variety of locations could prove to be useful, and this could be distributed through a range of different channels including via schools using representatives from the Youth Council and by Members to groups and organisations they felt were appropriate. Members considered that it was important to establish the theatre's identity locally and suggested the use of free newspapers like the Calverton Echo, Neighbourhood News and NG5. Members concluded that although there were a number of channels currently used to advertise the theatre and cinema programme, consideration should be given to advertising in a range of local papers.

Recommendations

- **An A4 poster displaying the cinema and theatre programme is produced monthly for distribution to local groups.**
- **The free cinema screening for young people is progressed.**
- **The viability of marketing a student night with appropriate films and concessionary prices is considered.**
- **Use of local papers for advertising is fully explored.**

Installation of new cinema projection equipment has enabled the development of a new cinema programme comprising of current films and this also provides the potential for live broadcasts. The Theatre Manager worked diligently to get the cinema equipment installed and a programme developed and will continue to take other improvements forward and further develop a marketing plan. Timing, pricing and advertising of films were all considered when developing the cinema programme and at £5.00 for adults and £4.50 for concessions prices were very favourable when compared to commercial cinemas. The impetus for this programme came from the Theatre Manager and a great deal of effort was put into negotiating the rights with

film distributors to screen current films. 25% of box office revenue has to be paid to film suppliers for use of the film and in the future there may be a possibility of additional income from film advertising. There is scope to show films on virtually all non- theatre evenings as well as matinee screenings during school holidays. The success of this venture is dependent on the theatre's ability to attract audiences and ultimately this again rests on the success of the marketing and publicity strategy and the ability to target local people. There has already been a noticeable increase in cinema attendance and the success of the cinema programme has to be balanced with the need to maintain the theatre's community engagement role and remit to encourage and facilitate a range of arts performances. The two elements of the programme need to work together to promote and increase awareness of the venue's facilities and grow the audience. Increased use of the venue both in terms of theatre and cinema should in itself lead to an increase in revenue. This, however, has to be balanced with limitations on the staffing available and the need to employ additional staff or the development of an effective volunteer scheme to act as front of house staff. Members appreciated the improvements made to establish the theatre's unique offer and the work currently undertaken to create a vibrant and interesting cinema programme. They concluded that there is a limit to what can be done within the current budget and that additional investment would support the theatre to grow and establish a 'brand'.

Recommendation

- **Revenue from increased ticket sales/hires and increased film screenings should be reinvested in publicity and marketing to reach a wider audience.**

One of its principal assets of the theatre is an experienced Theatre Manager, however currently because of staffing issues it is not always possible to make the best use of his skills and knowledge. The Theatre Manager has to undertake a multitude of roles, not just theatre management, but also day to day activities like selling programmes, making coffee and moving furniture, in addition to writing and creating a marketing strategy and developing a programme of performing arts. The reliance of the theatre on one member of staff is seen as a brake on the progress of the theatre and there were concerns about the resilience of the theatre should he leave.

Limited staffing arrangements exist whereby technicians and bar staff are employed on a casual basis with additional support for the reception and box office provided by leisure centre staff, as a consequence this does not always present a professional and welcoming experience. Customer care training has been introduced across Leisure Services and recent staff changes should result in some improvement. There are no specific resources available for the staffing of the box office but every effort is made to do this before and after every show and film screening, recruitment of a

casual box office assistant will ensure Saturday evenings are covered. The bar is open at times to compliment and enhance the theatre experience. To further increase the 'brand 'of the theatre identification of theatre staff would be valuable. Identification of theatre staff by the display of photos in reception and a uniform would assist with this.

Recommendation

- **The theatre brand is reinforced by the identification of theatre staff.**

Whilst acknowledging the improvements made by the establishment of the Theatre Manager post Members considered that the staffing structure does not currently meet the needs of the venue, and that the specialised skills of the Theatre Manager are underutilised as he is required to undertake routine tasks to enable the theatre to open. The development of a team of volunteers to assist with some of these tasks freeing up some of the Theatre Manager's time would help, although to establish a scheme would again impinge on the manager's time. Members acknowledged the excellent work done by the Theatre Manager but concluded that his time could be better utilised using his specialist skills and knowledge rather than some of the more routine roles he has to undertake to ensure the theatre functions. To ensure that the best use of his expertise is identified appropriate staffing should be put in place and consideration should be given to securing an apprentice/intern student who could assist with the marketing, web and theatre management in addition to helping with the theatre's routine tasks.

Recommendations

- **That a staffing structure be implemented that reflects the needs of the venue.**
- **The feasibility of appointing an apprentice or intern, particularly one with theatre management, marketing, graphic design or social media skills, should be fully explored, possibly through initiating a link to Nottingham Trent University.**

There are a number of weaknesses which hold back the theatre's potential. The construction and configuration plus the location in the swimming pool building limit the capacity of the theatre to stage some productions. No lift facilities and lack of adequate dressing room space can deter potential hirers, and the absence of air conditioning can deter audiences in the summer months.

Members considered the location of the reception in the leisure centre needed to be more evident and publicity for forthcoming events more visible. Leisure centre reception staff require flyers to distribute and adequate information to help assist prospective customers. Posters in the reception displaying the theatre and cinema programme should be prominently sited and better use made of the screens in

leisure centres and the Civic Centre. These issues are currently under consideration but the production of large scale ever-changing posters is expensive and there is a limit on the number of images that can be displayed on the digital screens. Issues relating to the positioning of the theatre entrance are currently being addressed by the installation of new internal signage and modular displays by the front doors. New signage outside the theatre is currently being installed, and the exterior of the building which is poorly lit and has weed and litter problems is being monitored, improvements are planned. Increased use of the facility will inevitably in itself have a cost element. In order to maintain the equipment, fixtures and fittings to a standard that the public would expect from a local authority maintained venue requires continuous improvement and maintenance. The venue has to at the very least maintain its current standard particularly as it now faces competition for hirers of performing arts spaces available from academies.

Recommendation

- **Additional external advertising is displayed particularly in the area around the leisure centre.**

Members appreciated the progress that has been made to raise the profile of the theatre and the new developments that the Theatre Manager is progressing. They acknowledge the new cinema programme, and developing marketing and publicity strategies will take time to mature but consider that the theatres future is being thoughtfully prepared and will be successful.

Summary of Recommendations

- 1. An A4 poster displaying the cinema and theatre programme is produced monthly for distribution to local groups.**
- 2. The free cinema screening for young people is progressed.**
- 3. The viability of marketing a student night with appropriate films and concessionary prices is considered.**
- 4. Use of local papers for advertising is fully explored.**
- 5. Revenue from increased ticket sales/hires and increased film screenings should be reinvested in publicity and marketing to reach a wider audience.**
- 6. The theatre brand is reinforced by the identification of theatre staff.**
- 7. That a staffing structure be implemented that reflects the needs of the venue.**
- 8. The feasibility of appointing an apprentice or intern, particularly one with theatre management, marketing, graphic design or social media**

skills, should be fully explored, possibly through initiating a link to Nottingham Trent University.

9. Additional external advertising is displayed particularly in the area around the leisure centre.



Overview and Scrutiny Review Scoping Report

Review Title: The Bonington Theatre

Chair of the review group: Councillor Gary Gregory

Working Group members: Cllrs. S Barnes, M Paling and B Andrews.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. H Wheeler

Director:

Lead Officer: Helen Lee

Reason for the review

To evaluate the Bonington Theatres current offer and consider what can be done to further develop the theatre into a flagship arts venue that the community values and uses.

Specific focus of the review

Review the scope for further income generating activities, to examine ways of improving community engagement with the theatre, to assess the success of the current film programme, evaluate the 2015/16 Action Plan and the progress of the recruitment of casual and volunteer staff.

What we hope to achieve?

To make recommendations that impact on the use of and improve community engagement with the theatre.

Information required from whom.

Theatre Manager

Service Manager

Members of the Youth Council

Communications

Friends of the Bonington Theatre

How we will get the information.

Briefings from relevant officers and organisations

Public Involvement.

Equalities issues.

There should be no adverse effect on the groups which fall within the protected categories as defined in the Equalities Act 2010.

Timescales for the review

Action		Date
Approval from O & S	The formal process prior to commencing the review	20 July 2015
Drafting the scoping document		10 November 2015
Meeting and evidence gathering meetings		19 th January 2016 23 March 2016
Drafting the recommendations and report		
Report to Overview Committee		25 April 2016
Report to Cabinet		19 May 2016
Response to Overview (within 28 days)		27 June 2016
Six month update		