

Minute Extract
Scrutiny Management Commission
23 October 2007

59/07 Consideration of Petition – Crisis in Community
Theatre in Derby

Keith Bryers presented a petition entitled Crisis in Community Theatre in Derby to the Commission . The petition which was signed by the chairmen 23 local amateur theatre groups asked Derby City Council to take the following actions: reduce the hire charges for amateur groups at the Assembly Rooms and Guildhall, or provide grants towards meeting ever-increasing costs;

- apply pressure on Derby Playhouse to make its Main House accessible to amateur groups at reasonable times and at an affordable hire charge.
- Honour its commitment to reconvene the Steering Group on performance spaces in the City to decide on a way to take forward the proposals in the Locum report;
- Actively pursue ways to ensure that Derby's last remaining traditional theatre building – The Hippodrome in Green Lane – is preserved and brought back into use as a theatre for use by amateur groups.

Commission members agreed that the petition should be referred to the Community Commission for further investigation, including looking into budgetary considerations.

It was noted that amateur groups throughout the city were actively looking for other venues to in which to perform. A previous report had recommended to Cityscape that a new theatre that could accommodate the amateur groups was built in the City but unfortunately the bid for this failed.

The use of the former Hippodrome theatre on Green Lane had been considered by the Culture and Prosperity Commission in its review of culture in Derby and the Commission had recommended that this initiative was supported. However the Hippodrome theatre had now been acquired by a developer who had applied to have the Grade 2 Listed status removed from the building. The Commission were told that the Council's enforcement officers were aware of this and were seeking to ensure the building was properly maintained and protected..

Resolved to refer the report to the Community Commission to request they look at the circumstances of the petition the budgetary issues relating to the support of amateur theatre in Derby. The Commission also requested that a report on the petition be made to Council Cabinet.