



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY COMMISSION
11 FEBRUARY 2010

ITEM 11

Report of the Director – Derby LIVE

Derby LIVE – Progress Report

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Commission is asked to note the report regarding the progress of Derby LIVE and additional information regarding its programme of outdoor events.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 A progress report on Derby LIVE was brought to this Commission in September 2008. As part of its agreed work programme the Commission requested that a further update be provided.
- 2.2 Since the last report, in addition to its existing diverse and busy programme, Derby LIVE has achieved the following:
 - Launched the Derby LIVE Youth Theatre with its inaugural performance '*Nicholas Nickleby*' performed at the Guildhall Theatre.
 - Launched the Derby LIVE Community Theatre with its first production '*Peer Gynt*' performed at the new outdoor performance space on Cathedral Green
 - Secured the full amount (£762,000) of Arts Council England funding for produced theatre in Derby
 - Produced or co-produced 8 high quality theatre productions made in Derby for Derby
 - Negotiated a deal for an innovative partnership arrangement with the University of Derby to run the theatre operation at Derby Theatre (formerly Derby Playhouse).
 - Worked in conjunction with the University of Derby to re-commission and re-open Derby Theatre including networking the venue to the Council's IT systems and the procurement and installation of new sound and lighting systems.
 - Created and recruited to a new 'fit for purpose' staffing structure.
 - Established a new governance structure including an advisory board and team of highly respected artistic associates including Jonathan Church, Artistic Director of Chichester Festival Theatre.

2.3 Derby LIVE's programme of in-house produced theatre has achieved critical acclaim with reviews in both local and national media. Productions have included:

- Williams Shakespeare's '*Much Ado about Nothing*' at the Guildhall Theatre
- '*Wasteland*' and '*Faith Healer*' both co-produced with New Perspectives Theatre Company staged in the Darwin Suite before undertaking regional rural tours.
- The regional premiere of Conor Macpherson's '*Shining City*' and Virginia Radcliffe's '*Christmas Quangle Wangle*' in the Guildhall Theatre
- The 'world premiere' of '*The Pros, The Cons and a Screw*' by local playwright Tim Elwood at Derby Theatre
- A new adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's '*The Snow Queen*' at Derby Theatre

2.4 Derby LIVE has encountered a number of challenges over the last year which have included:

- Reopening Derby Theatre with a fraction of the industry standard timescale in which to produce and market the programme
- Extremely difficult trading conditions in the face of the worst recession in living memory
- The challenge of regaining the trust and rebuilding audiences at Derby Theatre, many of whom had lost money to the previous operators
- Some confusion amongst customers over the renaming and re-branding of Derby Theatre

The above have led to audiences and ticket income for Derby LIVE's produced theatre programme at Derby Theatre being less than anticipated.

The producing theatre grant to Derby LIVE from DCC was reduced by £100K to £295K during this year's budget setting process. No efficiencies have been identified to cover this shortfall which will be underwritten from Derby LIVE's reserve fund in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

2.5 Going forward, Derby LIVE has announced for 2010 its most exciting and diverse programme ever including two major theatre coups of national significance.

1. The world premiere of '*Broken Hearted*' the first stage play for almost 20 years by renowned author Lucy Gannon
2. Derby LIVE's production of '*Onassis*' in association with Chichester Festival Theatre starring Robert Lindsay, prior to its transfer to London's West End

With the requirement to meet the needs of a number of stakeholders and an uncertain future funding environment, Derby LIVE will continue to face a number of challenges including:

- Arts Council England's funding to Derby LIVE currently runs until March 2011 and the continued level of funding beyond this date will depend on the next Comprehensive Spending Review and ACE's evolving objectives.
- Derby LIVE's contract with the University of Derby currently runs until September 2011, although there is the potential to extend the initial contract for a further three years and to renegotiate a further contract beyond that.
- By 2011 Derby LIVE's reserve fund will be depleted and be unable to backfill the 100K cut in the producing theatre grant from DCC.

2.6 Derby LIVE Events

- Derby LIVE organises 4 large scale events namely The Big 1 @ Chaddesden Park, Darley Park Concert, Derby's Bonfire & Fireworks display and the Christmas Lights Switch On
- The attendance at these events is 75,000; including 30,000 people attending the Darley Park Concert, the UK's largest free outdoor classical concert.
- Derby LIVE also organises events around the Big Screen such as the Royal Opera House live relays and is also involved in the organisation of the Caribbean Carnival.
- Along with Deda and QUAD, Derby LIVE is one of the organisers of Derby Feste.
- Derby LIVE's outdoor events budget is £171,800 with 1 dedicated member of staff, considerably less than Nottingham City's at £578,000 and 12 staff and Leicester's at £185,000 and 8 staff.
- The biggest challenge for Derby LIVE when organising a large scale event is keeping within budget, with pressures coming from increases in contractors costs for event infrastructure and the costs of meeting new regulations and health and safety requirements
- 84% of the outdoor events budget is spent on health and safety and infrastructure and only 6% on artistes' fees;
- Derby LIVE's outdoor events are of course vulnerable to the weather which can create extra expensive, for example the requirement to install a metal roadway in Darley Park, or indeed the cancellation of an event as happened with The Big 1 @ Chaddesden Park in 2009 with the event first postponed and then cancelled.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None.

Legal

2. None.

Personnel

3. None.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

4. This report links to 'Giving you excellent services and value for money' and 'Creating a 21st century city centre' with particular reference to the 'range of cultural experiences' .