

Time commenced - 6.05 pm
Time finished - 7.30 pm

CULTURE AND PROSPERITY COMMISSION
15 MARCH 2004

Present: Councillor Repton (in the Chair)
Councillors Jackson, Latham, Travis and Troup

51/03 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Hickson and Redfern.

52/03 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

53/03 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

54/03 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2004 were approved as a correct and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment:

45/03 Revenue Budget 2004/2005 – 2006 Paragraph 6

Councillor Troup asked whether the reason why people were not using the facilities was because they were **not** in the right place and stated that there was demand for football pitches in **Mickleover** but there was none available in the area for people.

Items for Discussion

55/03 Pantomime Report

The Commission received a report from Peter Ireson – Manager, Assembly Rooms and Guild Hall Theatre detailing the critical and commercial success of the first ever celebrity pantomime produced at the Assembly Rooms. Peter advised the Commission that the show played 44 performances attracting in an audience of 27,656 people representing 60% of capacity. The total Box Office takings were £281,000 producing a surplus after Production Company's fees of £71,684.98. The report also detailed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats highlighted following analysis carried out by the Management Team. The major weakness was the inadequacy of the venue sound system and it was a priority detailed in the Action Plan to replace the system in the summer of 2004. The new sound system would then become a selling point for Snow White.

Councillor Repton commented that the Pantomime had been excellent and he had received lots of positive feedback. The Commission agreed that the sound system was the biggest weakness but the following should also be considered:

- stronger cast
- better scenery
- better script

The Commission agreed that the stars needed to be known by the children in the audience as it was the children that encouraged parents to go to the Pantomime. Peter advised there was some concern about coach parking for this year's pantomime, as it was not an option to use the Market Place again. The Assembly Rooms would be working closely with the traffic section to make arrangements for parking for this year.

The Commission asked for a postcode analysis of who went to the Pantomime in Nottingham to compare the cross county attendance at the pantomimes in each city.

Resolved to ask Peter Ireson to advise staff at the Assembly Rooms that the Commission fully appreciated their time, effort and enthusiasm shown in preparation for and during the Pantomime. The Commission would support the Assembly Rooms in requesting expenditure to make this year's show a greater success.

56/03 Arts Spend in Derby

The Commission considered a report detailing the Arts Spend in Derby to be included in their report on the Commission's review of Culture in Derby. Donna Fox the Arts Manager provided the figures contained in the report.

The Commission asked that the table on the last page be removed from the final report.

Resolved to note the report.

57/03 Development of Library Services in Derwent

The Commission considered a report from the Director of Development and Cultural Services detailing the arrangements negotiated by the Head of Library Services for the establishment of a small scale public library service point in Derwent Ward, within the proposed Healthy Living Centre.

The Commission commented that they were pleased to see the library services were being developed in the area.

Resolved to note the report.

58/03 St Helen's House

The Commission received a presentation from Peter Steer and John Farnsworth representing an organisation investigating the possibility of forming a trust for the restoration and future community use of St Helen's House.

They proposed that St Helen's House be retained as a centre for education, vocation and recreation for the people of Derby by taking over the building and operating these activities through a registered charitable trust. The trust would carry out a two-stage feasibility study. Subject to an acceptance of these feasibility studies the site would be transferred on a long-term lease to the Management Trust. The feasibility study carried out by the Management Trust will be in two stages, the first at minimum cost to the Management Trust, to confirm the viability of the proposed uses in principle and seek grant aid for the second more comprehensive presentation for Council consideration. The first feasibility study would be dependent upon the development and conservation brief to be prepared by the Council and would be completed within 3 months of the availability of the brief. The second part of the feasibility study would take approximately 3 months from the approval of the first part.

Resolved to recommend Council Cabinet to

- 1 delay their decision to market St Helen's House and consider the proposal for the creation of a charitable trust outlined by Peter Steer and John Farnsworth.**
- 2 allow Peter Steer and John Farnsworth's group the time that they need to carry out their feasibility studies.**
- 3 consider the outcome of the feasibility studies and on the basis of the information they contain decide whether to market St Helen's House or just transfer it to a charitable trust.**

59/03 Call In

There were no items.

60/03 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

Members identified the following items from the Council Cabinet Forward Plan for consideration at a future meeting:

133/03 Events Programme

61/03 QUAD: Result of Architectural Competition and further Update

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Development and Cultural Services on the outcome of the bid to the Arts Council for England (ACE) for support for the QUAD project, and the arrangements that have been put in place with strict consultation for the QUAD architectural competition and for the judging procedure.

The Commission were advised that the development of the project up until now had been funded by the Arts Council for England and Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership and in kind by the QUAD Partners and the City Council. An architectural competition to arrive at a design for the QUAD building was triggered at end of 2003 and six architectural practices had submitted their designs. This would be followed by a period of public consultation that would end on 24 March 2004. The arrangements for the public consultation included a mobile exhibition mounted on the Market Place for two weeks.

The judging panel consisted of representatives of the City Council, the QUAD Partners (Metro Cinema, Q Arts, MACE), the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, an eminent architect, representatives of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and the Arts Council.

The judging panel would meet on three occasions culminating on 29 March 2004, when a choice was expected to be finalised. At that time a more detailed design phase of the QUAD project would be triggered immediately, so long as a satisfactory design had been found.

Resolved to note the report.

62/03 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission

There were no items.

63/03 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

There were no items.

64/03 Work Plan

David Romaine advised the Commission that the Review Report had been finalised and would be presented to Council Cabinet on 6 April 2004.

MINUTES END