



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

Neighbourhoods Commission

7 February 2011

Report of the Director – Derby LIVE

**ITEM 10**

## Derby LIVE – Progress Report

### RECOMMENDATION

1. Committee is asked to note the report regarding the progress of Derby LIVE

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 A progress report on Derby LIVE was brought to the committee in February 2010. The Commission requested that a further update be provided.
- 2.2 Since the last report, in addition to delivering its existing diverse and busy programme, Derby LIVE achievements have included the following:
  - Derby LIVE Youth Theatre moved from the Guildhall Theatre to Derby Theatre with its second production, a world premiere of the Derby LIVE commissioned 'The Lady with a Lamp'.
  - Derby LIVE Community Theatre also moved to Derby Theatre, from Cathedral Green performing another world premiere and Derby LIVE commission 'Cranford the Musical'.
  - Achieved 100% sell out at Derby Theatre for Derby LIVE's production of Onassis, starring Robert Lindsay which transferred to the Novello Theatre in London's West End where it was seen by an additional 50,000 people.
  - Persuaded Lucy Gannon to write her first stage play for over 20 years, for Derby LIVE to produce the world premiere at Derby Theatre.
  - Oversaw the return of mid-scale contemporary dance to Derby, by programming Akram Khan Company at Derby Theatre.
  - Launched corporate membership schemes attracting significant commercial sponsorship from companies such as East Midlands Trains to support Derby LIVE's programme.
  - Managed to return a small surplus for the financial year 2009/10 despite the challenge of re-opening Derby Theatre at short notice and entering into the worst recession in living memory.
  - Derby LIVE's Director was announced as the Theatrical Management Association (TMA) 'Manager of the Year 2010' at an awards ceremony in London.
  - Achieved record attendances at the Darley Park Concert, Derby Festé and the Bonfire and Firework display.
  - Christmas 2010 saw record breaking audiences for Derby LIVE up by 9.2% (4,926 tickets / £46,661.37) compared with 2009.

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

- Marie Jones' *'Women on the Verge of HRT'* (Derby Theatre)
- *Onassis* by Martin Sherman (Derby Theatre)
- The world premiere of Lucy Gannon's *'Broken Hearted'* (Derby Theatre)
- The world premiere of Tim Elgood's *'Mother Came Too'* (Guildhall Theatre)
- A new adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's *'The Wind in the Willows'* (Derby Theatre)
- A new adaptation of Charles Perrault's *'Puss in Boots'* (Guildhall)
- William Shakespeare's *'The Merchant of Venice'* (Derby Theatre)

2.4 Consultants Commissioned by Arts Council England produced a report in December 2010 called 'Scoping of Sustainable Models for Producing Theatre in Derby'. This report concluded the following:

- 'Derby LIVE has given very good service to Derby audiences and all its stakeholders in taking up the role of principal producer for the city'
- 'Starting in difficult circumstances, Derby LIVE has moved swiftly to put in place a busy and varied programme of produced work on a scale that Derby deserves'
- 'Derby LIVE appears to be financially robust and well managed, giving good value for money to its funders and other partners'

The consultants also concluded that Derby LIVE was the joint top scoring option as a model for providing producing theatre for the City in the future, however they also highlighted concerns over its current governance arrangement as part of a Local Authority

In Autumn 2010 Arts Council England (ACE) announced a new funding regime whereby its existing portfolio of 'Regularly Funded Organisations' (RFOs) would be replaced by 'National Portfolio Organisations' (NPOs). This scheme was open to all organisations and not just to the existing RFOs. Derby LIVE assembled a bid which, based on its track record of success and the recommendations of the ACE consultant's report, was thought to be extremely strong. However the University of Derby which owns the lease to Derby Theatre, committed to submitting its own bid through the entity 'University of Derby Theatre Ltd' (UDTL). As it was predominantly felt that two bids could be counterproductive and that UDTL's charitable trust status better met ACE's governance expectations, it was decided that Derby LIVE would not submit their bid and that instead, the Council would support Derby Theatre's bid. The closing date for the bids was 24 January 2011 and the result of the application will be made public on 31 March 2011. The new funding will run from April 2012.

Derby LIVE continues to have ACE funding for produced theatre until the end of March 2012 and has negotiated for the contract with the University to manage the theatre operation at Derby Theatre to continue until the end of March 2012.

From April 2012 Derby LIVE will cease any significant involvement into produced theatre in the City and UDTL will take over the full operation of Derby Theatre. The University has made an undertaking to transfer staff from Derby LIVE to Derby Theatre ensuring that the expertise and experience is embedded in their new operating model.

2.5 Derby LIVE also faces significant challenges along with the rest of the Council during the current budget process. Savings identified or proposed include:

- A reduction in the number of concerts in the International Classical Concert Series from 8 to 6 in 2011/12 and to 4 from 2012/13 onwards
- A 6.9% reduction in ACE funding for produced theatre in 2011/12
- A need to identify a saving of £100,000 from the Events budget from 2011/12
- To investigate the closure or alternative management arrangement of the Guildhall Theatre from April 2012

2.6 Going forward, 2011/12 will still see Derby LIVE producing and presenting one of the most exciting and diverse programmes of performing arts in the UK, productions include:

- The regional premiere of '*The Mountaintop*' which won the 2010 Olivier Award for best new play. To be directed by Tom Attenborough
- '*Be My Baby*' by Amanda Whittington directed by Esther Richardson
- A world premiere of a new musical adaptation of LP Hartley's '*The Go Between*' a co-production with the West Yorkshire Playhouse and Royal and Derngate
- World Premiere of '*The Honey Man*' by Tyrone Huggins a co-production with New Perspectives Theatre Company

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<b>Background papers:</b>	
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 - Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. None resulting from this update report.

**Legal**

2. None resulting from this update report.

**Personnel**

3. None resulting from this update report.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

4. None resulting from this update report.