



Report to Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

14 October, 2015

Report of
Councillor Kershaw

Title

Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – Albany Theatre Trust

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the work of the Albany Theatre Trust over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee notes the report and the work undertaken by the Albany Theatre Trust.
- 2.2 That Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommends that the City Council continues to appoint members to the Board of the Albany Theatre Trust on an annual basis.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

3.1 Audience Figures

In 2014, the number of events held at the Albany Theatre increased by over 50% to 55 events from the previous figure of 36 in 2013. Total audience figures at the Theatre increased by almost 40% to 27,070 from 19,808 in 2013. The average audience figures per month also increased by a total of 80% per month. This reflects a greater awareness that the theatre exists and better promotion of events and more appropriate programming of the theatre.

3.2 Programming

The range of events and use of the theatre by different groups continues to widen: the Programming Committee is slowly but surely developing the Albany Theatre's identity. The Albany is now the home for premieres by the renowned touring company, Ballet Theatre UK and we are to host the theatres first Shakespeare play since re-opening. All of the local Musical Theatre Societies have presented successful shows and our effort to encourage different community groups to use our facilities is beginning to bear fruit.

3.3 Community events

Community events are when the Trust hires the theatre to local musical theatre societies such as YOG, Guildhall and Three Spires who put on shows for a period of a week. In 2014 the number of community events doubled, and the audience for these events has increased by 50% to 10,401. This is one of the two areas where the Trust wants to increase the theatres activity exponentially by focusing the CCC grant aid on it. The Trust's share of revenue from community events is high despite lower hire charges being offered. This is because audience numbers are growing from a low base after the period when the theatre was closed.

3.4 School and Charity Events

Use of theatre by schools is concentrated in "Schools' Week" – which has grown to cover a two week period. In the five-week period from Saturday June 14 2014 over 1100 young people up to the age of 16 performed on the Albany stage.

3.5 Charging policies

Shifts in the Theatres charging policy have enabled the Trust to reduce hire costs for community and school groups by transferring the burden to professional groups. The Trust relies on revenue from usage to keep the Albany Theatre open. This prudent approach means the Trust have survived the loss of revenue from MCD (Coventry) Ltd who went into receivership in late 2014 owing the Trust £55,000.

3.6 Staffing

Over the previous twelve months, supported by the new Theatre Manager, the Trust have continued to ensure the charity's financial stability and security, and to renovate and improve the theatre infrastructure, but most importantly the focus has been on strengthening and developing the volunteer infrastructure to provide the best possible environment for volunteers to give their time and services in the most productive ways, and get the greatest enjoyment and satisfaction out of the experience.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment

- 4.1 The City Council benefits from having 1 representative on the Board of the Albany Theatre Trust who acts as an independent director, and ensures that the requirements of local people are properly represented.

5 What Financial Contribution Does the Council Make to this Organisation

- 5.1 The City Council pays an annually reviewed core grant to the Albany Theatre Trust of £38,775.

6 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

- 6.1 The City Council representative is Councillor Kershaw. In the period from January 2014 to December 2014 seven meetings were held. Councillor Kershaw attended five of the seven meetings he was entitled to attend.

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper

Schedule of City Council Appointments to Outside Bodies

Location: CH59