

## **Camberley Theatre Frontage & Lighting Upgrades**

### **Summary**

To refurbish the frontage of the Theatre and upgrade the lighting desk and projector.

The cost of this work and the replacement equipment would be paid back over 5 years via the existing £1 restoration levy applied to each commercial ticket sold.

### **Portfolio: Places & Strategy**

**Date Portfolio Holder consulted: 11 November 2019**

**Wards Affected: All**

### **Recommendation**

The Executive is advised to RESOLVE that

- (i) improvement works to the Camberley Theatre be carried out as detailed in this report;
- (ii) the council funds the cost of the repair and purchase of new equipment of up to approximately £150,000 which will be recovered over the next 5 years by continuing the charge the restoration levy of £1 per ticket (circa £30k pa);
- (iii) a tender process to source and appoint a suitable contractor be undertaken; and
- (iv) the project delivery be delegated to the Executive Head of Business, in consultation with the Places & Strategy Portfolio Holder.

The Executive is advised to RECOMMEND that

- (i) £24,000 be added to the capital programme to fund the cost of a new lighting desk and commercial projector; and
- (ii) the proposal to add £125,000 to the Corporate Capital Programme for 2020/21 for the cost of the refurbished frontage be noted.

## **1. Resource Implication**

- 1.1 A refurbished frontage would deliver an improved first impression of borough's primary cultural and conferencing venue.
- 1.2 The works include removing the current tiles and canopy and replacing with a new scheme including render, new modern canopy and external

lighting (see Annex C).

- 1.3 The cost to deliver the proposed works is circa £125,000. This can be recovered at no cost to the council via the existing restoration levy.
- 1.4 The restoration levy was introduced in 2015 to pay for new seating in the auditorium which cost £90k but has now been paid back.
- 1.5 Since 2015, ticket sales have increased 33% and hire activity by 32% showing a strong desire for a Theatre in the town centre and a need to invest in the facilities.
- 1.6 The current theatre lighting desk will no longer be supported by manufacturer updates from November 2019. This will make repairs and maintenance less successful and there's a risk of failure which would make the service undeliverable. A replacement lighting desk will cost circa £13,000.
- 1.7 Projectors are used regularly for a host of activity from corporate clients, dance schools, charities and professional productions. The current projector is old and inefficient in its energy use and is not sufficient for the needs of those who use/hire it. A replacement commercial projector will cost circa £11,000.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 In August 2018, temporary protective netting was installed around the external frontage of the Theatre following a number of the tiles that have been in place since the 1970s coming loose and falling off. Upon expert investigation the concrete beneath the tiles has been deemed unstable so the tiles cannot be reinstalled and there a risk that further tiles may fall off. For health and safety reasons all of the tiles will need to be removed which will leave the theatre with an unattractive façade that would not be in keeping with quality of the venue and the wider aims for an improved Camberley Town Centre. This presents the opportunity to update the look of the theatre with a new rendered frontage and other improvements to the entrance to further enhance its attractiveness and appeal to current and future users of this important town centre facility.
- 2.2 An upgrade of the theatre lighting desk and projector are also needed due to the age of existing equipment and demands of hirers and professional companies.

## **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 Scheduling of these works to cause as little disruption and impact to audiences should be considered. The venue is busy all year around and contractors will need to keep the venue operational to customers at all times. Alternative temporary entrances to the building may be

utilised for short periods.

- 3.2 The frontage will make the entrance to the building safe, improve the customer experience and improve the aesthetic of the town centre.
- 3.3 The current tiles have been in place since the 1970s and current canopy in place since the early 1990s.
- 3.4 The Box Office and entrance to the venue may need to be relocated to account for these works. The contractor would be expected to work with public access in mind.
- 3.5 The Box Office and phone systems are cloud based so we can operate a full service despite the main entrance being inaccessible at times, meaning the disruption to customers will be minimal.
- 3.6 External signage directing customers to alternative entrances will be needed, as well as communication on website, social media and e-tickets.
- 3.7 Temporary traffic lights may be needed on the approach to Knoll Road Car Park (as there were when the temporary netting was installed in August 2018) to allow the removal of tiles and canopy. The diversion of traffic past Camberley worked efficiently.
- 3.8 The contractor may use the Theatre car park and chair store for storage of equipment and plant machinery.
- 3.9 A full fire risk assessment will be required which would be developed in consultation with SHBC Health and Safety Officer and the contractor.
- 3.10 Planning Permission is likely to be needed.

#### **4. Options**

4.1 The options are:

- 3.1 To proceed with the works as described
- 3.2 To recommend changes
- 3.3 Choose not to proceed with the proposed works

#### **4 Corporate Objectives and Key Priorities**

- 4.1 This project supports the Council's number one priority, to deliver an improved Camberley Town Centre and contributes to making Surrey Heath an even better place to live.
- 4.2 It will also support the improvement of the night time economy of the town centre and support the arts and leisure offering of the town centre.

## **5 Legal Issues**

- 5.1 Planning permission is likely to be required

## **6 Governance**

- 6.1 All financial matters will be carried out under strict audit guidelines.
- 6.2 The contractor will be appointed following a thorough tender process.

## **7 Risk Management**

- 7.1 The financial risk will be mitigated by recovering costs over time via the restoration levy
- 7.2 The works come with a 10 year guarantee
- 7.3 There is potential for reputational risk to the council. However this could be outweighed by the reputational risk of not doing anything significant to support the prosperity of the Theatre.

## **8 Equalities Impact**

- 8.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment will be completed when an exact specification and layout of the works has been supplied by the appointed contractor. However, it is anticipated that the theatre will remain accessible to those with reduced physical ability or low confidence via alternative entrances and access routes.

## **9 Community Safety**

- 9.1 It is not anticipated that this work will generate additional community safety issues.

## **10 Consultation**

- 10.1 If agreed, theatre members and regular attendees will be informed of the work and of any potential disruption/interim arrangements

## **11 PR and Marketing**

- 11.1 This works will enhance Camberley's image as an exciting place to visit and support the improving cultural offer of the borough.

<b>Annexes</b>	Annex A – Image of Current Frontage Annex B – Image of Fallen Tiles Annex C – New Frontage Concept
<b>Background Papers</b>	None
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**Annex A: Current frontage**



**Annex B: Fallen tiles**



**Annex C: New frontage concept**

