

REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER FOR DECISION

Open		Would any decisions proposed :		
Any especially affected Wards	Operational	(a) Be entirely within cabinet's powers to decide YES		
		(b) Need to be recommendations to Council NO		
		(c) Be partly for recommendations to Council NO and partly within Cabinets powers –		
Lead Member: Cllr Alistair Beales E-mail: cllr.alistair.beales@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cllr Nick Daubney, Cllr David Pope		
		Other Members consulted:		
Lead Officer: Chris Bamfield E-mail: chris.bamfield@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 616648		Other Officers consulted: Matthew Henry, Lorraine Gore, James Grant, Emma Duncan		
Financial Implications YES	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications (incl S.17) NO	Equal Opportunities Implications NO	Risk Management Implications NO
Date meeting advertised: 21 st April 2016		Date of meeting decision to be taken: 28 th April 2016		
Deadline for Call-In: 6 th May 2016				

HUNSTANTON PRINCESS THEATRE

Summary

The report details improvement to be carried out to the access for productions to the Princess Theatre. The Council owns the theatre and is responsible for external areas and the fabric of the building. Cost of works is estimated at £37,500 and is to be funded from the General Properties Reserve.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the proposals to improve the access arrangements for the Princess Theatre and the financial implications as detailed in the report.

Reason for Decision

To improve the Council's asset and enable effective use of the theatre.

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2012 the Princess Theatre was let on a peppercorn rent for a seven year period to Honeystone Productions. This followed a turbulent period for the theatre during which the Council had leased the theatre to C&R Cinemas who had found the operation not to be viable and ceased to operate late in 2011. The let to Honeystone Productions has enabled the theatre to continue to operate as part of the holiday infrastructure for

Hunstanton and at the same time, produced a significant revenue saving for the Council.

- 1.2 The theatre operators have advised that the theatre is starting to perform well and is starting to attract more prominent acts. Inevitably the larger, more prominent acts tend to use larger vehicles for their equipment, with some even having tour buses. The existing width of the rear access road is too narrow to accommodate the larger acts and this can impact upon other users of track, particularly when acts are loading and unloading their equipment.
- 1.3 As part of the lease arrangements the Council is responsible for maintenance of the structure of the facility including external areas and fabric of the building.
- 1.4 Over the last year a dispute has developed with rear access arrangements to the site for loading and unloading of productions. Disputes have arisen from other users of the rear access, who have legal rights of access documented within their Title Deeds, when the access is blocked by acts performing at the theatre.
- 1.5 After detailed investigation of access arrangements to the site it has been established that the Council has ownership of the rear access road but needs to provide rear access to properties to the west of the Princess Theatre that front onto The Green and Le Strange Terrace. The investigations have revealed that the Council owns the full width of the access road to the rear of the theatre and solicitors have been appointed to formally register the Council's ownership with the Land Registry.
- 1.6 In order to continue to provide access while meeting the requirements for the loading/unloading of shows, a scheme has been developed to rearrange the access arrangements in order to maintain access to the neighbouring properties at all times while allowing uninterrupted access to the theatre.
- 1.7 In addition, it is apparent that the wall between the car park entrance and the access to the theatre is in a poor state of repair and requires refurbishment.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 A copy of the proposed access scheme is attached at appendix 1.
- 2.2 Following discussions with Planning Officers it has been determined that the proposal would fit within permitted development and not require a planning application.
- 2.3 Tenders have been obtained for the work required.
- 2.4 The main elements of the proposal are;
- Remove traffic island in car park entrance.
 - Reduce footpath to 1.2m width.
 - Widen access to create loading point with vehicle passing space.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Capital Costs

The cost of works to create a suitable access are estimated at £40,000. The cost of the works can be funded from the general properties reserve within the Regeneration portfolio.

3.2 Revenue Costs

The work will improve the Council's asset and be a valuable addition to ensure that the theatre can continue to operate successfully both in the current lease arrangements and in any new lease post 2019.

Signed:

Cabinet Member for

Date