



Alive West Norfolk

Board Report

Meeting Date: 10th November 2020

Report Title: Alive Corn Exchange Cinema

Author	Report Type		Impact		
	For Decision		High	Medium	Low
	For Information	X	X		
Consultation	Neil Gromett & Philip Bayfield				

Purpose:

To update the R&D panel on the Alive Corn Exchange Cinema & Programme

Recommendations:

1. For Info ONLY

Information:

As you were aware it was also decided to include other capital and maintenance works during this shutdown period. These works included a new Roof, Front of House toilets, new foyer floor, repairs to the façade and new lighting on the front of the building. Included in the cinema project were the 2 screens, new kiosk & new poster boards.

The 1st phase, which started on the 13th January, was the installation of the new foyer & toilets and steelwork in the upper floor. This was completed on time and we were able to re-open as planned on the 5th March. Live shows were then postponed from the 16th March and Phase 2 of the building work was delayed due to COVID

Original Completion date for the whole cinema project was 7th May 2020

Actual opening completion and opening was 25th September 2020.

Film programming

We have hired the services of a very experienced Film Programmer, Robert Johnson, based in Kent who works for and owns similar sized venues to us.

We talk every Monday and discuss the past week and future week bookings & requests. Robert does all the hard work booking the films with the distributors and I put together a film programme working out the start times to fit in with LIVE events in the theatre.

We meet 6 weekly with Tom the Manager at the Majestic Cinema. We discuss pricing and film programme going forward. Although we have an understanding that we will give them the first week of a major release, currently there are not as many films being released so we may at times be showing the same film. Our ticket price is currently more expensive than the Majestic but at the last meeting they said they would be increasing their prices more in line with ours. I believe we will continue to have a very good relationship with the Majestic, which will benefit the town and the whole cinema community going forward.

Attendance

These following figures are for our 1st month of opening. We have had 127 screenings with an attendance of 680 with a ticket income of £5286.00. Our average attendance is 5.5 persons per screening. Our predicted average ticket price was £6.40; we are currently at £7.70, which is positive.

Our most successful screenings are the Event Cinema films with 47% of tickets sold for these screenings. These include Michael Ball & Alfie Boe, War Horse and our most popular Kinky Boots which we have had to increase the screening 3 times. These are the high ticket price of £10. Although we have sold out 3 times the attendance for 2 screenings was 20 because of the social distancing measure in place, however we had groups of 6 attend 1 performance, which meant it rose to 36 out of 59 seats.

The Personal History of David Copperfield was another film which proved very popular so we had to increase the screenings another 4 times.

How does this align with our budgets Pre-COVID?

Our income for the month was predicted at £16,000 and revised to £8,000 in July on the expectation that social distancing may still be in place with major films being released. This has not been the case with all big film releases postponed until 2021. As we know the cinema industry is suffering with many operators closed completely or closed part of the week. Some independents have also closed altogether. Nationally Cinema has seen income drop by 75% comparing September 2019 to September 2020. This information is from Pearl & Dean who we use for our film advertising. Secondary spend was predicted at £2.16 and is currently at £2.17. Our most popular sales being Popcorn and a glass of wine, which customers take in mainly for the event cinema.

Theatre programme.

The theatre programme has been hit drastically and it looks like all shows in January to March will also be moving to late 2021, early 2022. With social distancing in place it is just not viable to have a Live theatre programme.

As you know we were successful in our bid to the Government Cultural Recovery grant and received the full £247K applied for. With this we will keep the venue open and this will allow us to put on some carefully managed events up to Christmas

We have 3 comedy nights with top named comics, A Strictly Come Dancing show featuring Kevin & Joanne Clifton and Xmas cabaret meals in association with the Bank House who will provide a 3 course meal.

We will also be housing the Farmers Market in November & December as well as showing the Live stream of all King's Lynn Town Football Club home matches in our auditorium, up to 100 supporters.

To conclude

There is no doubt that the Alive Corn Exchange cinema is a great asset to Kings Lynn and will eventually thrive post Covid. Currently we are finding it tough as with every cinema but every customer who has been has loved the experience with excellent vision, sound and comfortable seats. Most importantly they have all felt safe with our covid secure plan and measures in place. We will continue to ensure we have a full and exciting film programme for all tastes and hope that very soon customers will return to the cinema and levels of attendance will rise to those seen pre-covid.