

**SUBJECT: BOROUGH THEATRE, ABERGAVENNY– REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME**

**MEETING: ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

**1. PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 To offer scrutiny on the proposed investment at the Borough Theatre, Abergavenny to ensure that the theatre remains fit for purpose for future generations and attractive to existing user groups and theatre goers.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To provide comments to Cabinet to help inform their decision for Executive endorsement of the proposal on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September prior to full presentation to Council for decision on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 The Borough Theatre is located on the second floor of the Grade II listed Abergavenny Town Hall building. Since it's opening, the Theatre has been, for the majority of its life, owned and managed by Monmouthshire County Council (MCC), save for its recent history when it was taken over by a Charitable Trust in 2013 however following Cabinet approval, ownership returned to MCC in February 2018, following the surrender of the lease.
- 3.2 In making its decision, the Council agreed to review all operations of the Theatre over a six-month period and, following a situation analysis and options appraisal, in July 2018, [Cabinet](#) approved the recruitment of a full time Theatre Manager, with supporting Front of House Supervisors, in order to put the Theatre on a more stable footing and determine the medium/longer term future for the Theatre.
- 3.3 Since then, the Theatre Team have been working with the Arts Council of Wales to develop a long-term plan for the Theatre which has included an approved funding application for the refurbishment of the theatre which has been largely untouched since an investment by Monmouth Borough Council in 1991.

**3.4 Situational Analysis**

Since returning to MCC, all the Theatre's operations have been aligned with the Council's systems, policies and procedures, addressing previous concerns raised by Internal Audit. Table One below details a current SWOT analysis of the Theatre for the benefit of Members:

**Table One: SWOT Analysis of the Theatre**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long established and high-profile Theatre venue;</li> <li>• Located in an Iconic Grade II Listed building;</li> <li>• Well established and loyal audience;</li> <li>• Committed and knowledgeable staff team;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall state of the building. The current offer is tired i.e., building, and physical layout with limited accessibility, leading to reduced income generation opportunities;</li> <li>• Poor state of customer facilities (toilets/bar/seating/carpets/etc.);</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energetic and creative Theatre Manager appointed to take the theatre forward;</li> <li>• Strong, skilled, committed, and growing volunteer base;</li> <li>• Patronised by an energetic local amateur dramatic arts sector;</li> <li>• Arts Council for Wales grant funding to replace ageing lighting and sound equipment;</li> <li>• Long established support and fundraising group, A4B;</li> <li>• A varied and established programme of events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff team have been disjointed due to differing work locations leading to communication failures and are also frustrated due to management changes over the last few years;</li> <li>• Limited digital marketing activity leading to increased traditional marketing costs i.e., direct mailing of hard copy brochures;</li> <li>• Due to the nature of the industry, grant support funding will always be required.</li> <li>• Venue under-utilised during periods of time particularly daytime.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MCC's capital improvement plans of the Town Hall/Market/Library "The HUB" with improved visitor accessibility;</li> <li>• New energetic and creative Theatre Manager appointed;</li> <li>• Revitalised Patrons Scheme;</li> <li>• Corporate sponsorship and public sector funding opportunities e.g., Arts Council for Wales (ACW), CADW;</li> <li>• Income generation via hire agreements;</li> <li>• Ability to deliver on ACW funding priorities – Creative Learning, Youth Engagement etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing public sector funding budgets;</li> <li>• Current closure due to Covid 19 and whilst capital improvement works were being undertaken in the Town Hall leading to loss in income;</li> <li>• Growing competition from theatre and arts venues in the town and wider environs e.g., Monmouth, Newport, Cardiff</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Proposed Refurbishment Programme

3.5.1 The Capital development plans for the Borough Theatre are designed to support and enhance the five key goals of its business plan:

- To be an open, efficient, effective, and sustainable operation that looks outward for best practice and shares its stories of success;
- To provide a premier quality of customer service and experience whether presenting international performers, local community groups or a primary school celebration;
- To be a venue where the amateur, non-specialist, student, apprentice or curious can become involved in presenting theatre and performing arts exploring professional practice and approaches in a safe and well facilitated environment;
- To be flexible to the needs of our community of audiences, visitors, and performers to enjoy performances, participatory arts sessions, and arts encounters in a number of different ways and to recognise their different needs, challenges, and aspirations;
- To present a programme of events that draws from the local to global and celebrates, entertains, challenges, and engages our community and those who come to visit us.

3.5.2 The proposed works will address many of the issues detailed in the SWOT in Table One above and will include the following:

Item	Rationale	Risks/Mitigation
<b>Replacement of old, tired fixed seating with retractable seating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conforms to latest H &amp; S requirements.</li> <li>• Comfortable, stable, carpeted – can be retracted effortlessly and quickly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Risk:</b> Retractable seating results in fewer seats 275 compared to 327 previously.</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Over a 12-month cycle financial model will not lead to loss in revenue due to the new</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers flexibility of space to hirers that fixed seating does not e.g., catwalk, Cabaret style seating, standing venue;</li> <li>• Greater opportunity for additional performances, a more diverse programme, increased customer base and access to additional funding and income streams.</li> </ul>	<p>opportunities offered by the flexible space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Risk:</b> Smaller orchestra pit will result in changes to visiting orchestra's configurations.</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Task and Finish User Group to identify alternative configurations for space.</li> </ul>
<b>Replacement combined Heating and Cooling System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current heating system ineffective leading to inconsistent temperatures.</li> <li>• Air conditioning units difficult to maintain.</li> <li>• Unacceptable noise levels.</li> <li>• Compromises visual aspect of Grade I listed carved wooden beams in ceiling.</li> <li>• Existing system slow to respond leading to customer complaints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Risk:</b> Current system recycles existing air so is not Covid compliant.</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Replace existing system with efficient fresh air system.</li> </ul>
<b>Replacement Wire Tension Lighting Grid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current system difficult to access resulting in H &amp; S risk to technicians.</li> <li>• Installation of wire tension grid over floor area, accessed safely from the lighting box;</li> <li>• Grid to enable lone focusing of the lights by venue staff and for non-specialists to set up lighting under the supervision and tutorage of the staff;</li> <li>• Visual impact would be minimal and, combined with replacement Heating and Cooling System, enables improved architectural lighting of beams and ceiling for certain events;</li> <li>• Removal of middle stage baffle, fitting of mechanical onstage lighting bar and a manual scenery bar for optional masking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Risk:</b> Current system is a safety risk to staff</li> <li>• <b>Mitigation:</b> Replacement grid to improve access, reduce safety risk and enable involvement of non-specialist staff thus reducing resource costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Improved Foyer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current area unwelcoming to guests</li> </ul>	<p><b>Risk:</b> If left as it is, opportunity lost and reduces impact of other works</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Remodeling of area to one bar will lead to better ambience,</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bar area split into two resulting in queues and loss of sales and additional resource costs.</li> </ul>	increase in bar sales and income generation opportunities through secondary spend, reduced staffing costs.
<b>Increase in number of toilets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current toilets unfit for purpose, tired, limited disabled facilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Risk:</b> Insufficient toilets for audience figures which do not meet current standards.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Replace and increase toilets to be gender interchangeable according to event needs.</p>
<b>Move Box Office to shared space with TIC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previous Box Office area now providing space for replacement customer lift</li> </ul>	<p><b>Risk:</b> Lack of Box Office will lead to a failure to meet service requirements and a loss in ticket sales</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Move Box Office into shared space with Tourist Information Centre to reduce costs and increase visitor footfall and sales.</p>
<b>Refresh the backstage area, dressing rooms and Corn Exchange</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently these areas are tired and shabby</li> </ul>	<p><b>Risk:</b> Failure to address will lead to an income opportunity lost.</p> <p><b>Mitigation:</b> Refresh i.e., repairs and painting, replacement kitchen to Coal Exchange to maximise income opportunities.</p>

#### 4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 The assessment of Equality and Future Generations Evaluation (Appendix A) is summarised below for Members' consideration:

This proposal seeks to undertake a significant refurbishment of the Borough Theatre that will re-establish the venue as a key cultural asset to the County, providing an opportunity to develop a sustainable service offer that is fit for future purpose and relevant for future generations.

#### 5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 Table Two below provides an options appraisal of the proposal:

**Table Two: Options Appraisal**

Options	Benefits	Risks	Comments/Mitigation
Close the Theatre and mothball the space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of iconic cultural venue in the town</li> <li>Loss of funding secured to date</li> <li>Loss of Professional Arts programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undermines the Council's commitment to safeguard the venue for future generations and one of the Council's five key policy priorities i.e., C: Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment - <i>We will continue to recognise the value of our culture and heritage in enhancing the liveability of our County.</i></li> </ul>

<p>Make safe the venue as it stands i.e., with old seating removed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat floor, community space for hire</li> <li>• Minimal staff resource required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of funding secured to date</li> <li>• Limited revenue generation potential</li> <li>• Loss of professional Arts Programme</li> <li>• Limited facilities offer</li> </ul>	
<p>Phased Approach to refurbishment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phased funding requirement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre unable to operate fully until all phases complete</li> <li>• Costs likely to rise and income generation potential limited until works are complete</li> <li>• Losses likely to outweigh benefits</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Preferred Option:</b> Identify funding and proceed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a fit for future purpose cultural arts facility in the county</li> <li>• Refurbished theatre will enable the team to build a sustainable business model</li> <li>• Detailed plans and arrangements are in situ and ready to go</li> <li>• Potential for borrowing and making repayments on some of the required funds is a realistic option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital funding request will be denied</li> <li>• Project will be stalled, and funding lost</li> </ul>	

**6. REASONS:**

- 6.1 The Borough Theatre, Abergavenny is a much loved and utilised cultural, community and civic asset. In its current state it is tired and shabby with fittings that are well beyond their service life. In addition, the current décor, signage and operation is separate from the rest of the Market Hall building detracting from the fact that the theatre provides an integral service to the local community and attracts visitors to the town.
- 6.2 This project seeks to capitalise opportunities presented by the recent works carried out to the Market Hall and Town Hall by the Council, to present a refreshed, professional theatre which will be equipped to continue to provide a space for the professional, the amateur, the regular or the newcomer to enjoy and experience high quality cultural experiences. The project will ensure the Theatre is an accessible, professional, artistic resource that alongside the library, community learning space and market, provides North Monmouthshire and the wider County, with an exciting cultural resource.

## 7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 The tables below detail the expenditure to date and the current costs of the proposed refurbishment programme alongside the proposed funding options that are currently being considered:

### 7.2 **Table Three:** Expenditure to date

Table Three below provides an analysis of the detailed design and survey activity that has already been undertaken to minimise future financial risks once the construction work commences:

Details	Forecast Expenditure £
Construction/Investigation and enabling Costs	62,500
Professional Fees	63,129
Internal project management costs	68,632
Planning and building control costs	3,048
<b>Total Project Expenditure to date</b>	<b>£197,309</b>
<b>Funding Drawn down</b>	
Arts Council for Wales Grant	12,136
Abergavenny Town Council	50,000
MCC Capital Budget	135,173
<b>Total Funding Confirmed</b>	<b>£197,309</b>

### 7.3 **Table Four:** Refurbishment Costs and funding options

Table four below outlines the current financial position of the project. The estimated outstanding cost of the refurbishment is £1,042,624 (this is on top of the £197k already incurred), current available budget stands at £309,624 so there is a £728,943 shortfall to be managed. The bottom half of the table identifies how Officers intend to fund the shortfall, currently £450k of funding has been secured via WG Transforming Towns grant and MCC grant match funding leaving £278k still to be found. A £107k contingency figure of circa 10% has been built into the cost model, this is standard practice and will be held outside of the contract, it will be used to cover any additional costs that may arise that have not been identified as part of the surveys. The Council's Property Service team will also continue to investigate opportunities to value engineer the project in order to reduce the costs.

Details	Forecast Expenditure £
Construction Costs	918,848
Professional Fees	16,673
Contingency	107,103
<b>Total Project Expenditure</b>	<b>1,042,624</b>
<b>Funding Confirmed</b>	
Arts Council for Wales Grant	198,854
ACW Additional Award	50,000
MCC Capital Budget	60,635
<b>Total Funding Confirmed</b>	<b>309,489</b>
<b>Funding To be Confirmed</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>728,943</b>
WG Transforming Towns	175,000*
MCC Match Funding Transforming Towns	175,000
MCC Access for All	100,000
Resource still being determined	278,943
<b>Total</b>	<b>728,943</b>

\*Endorsed by Welsh Government Senior Official, awaiting final sign off

- 7.4 An Extra Ordinary meeting is being held with Abergavenny Town Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the extended refurbishment project and the funding shortfall that is still be addressed. The Council consider the Town Council to be a key stakeholder and are appreciative of the financial support offered to date and hope that they will consider this proposal favourably.
- 8. CONSULTEES:**  
Senior Leadership Team;  
Cabinet;  
User Stakeholder Group;  
Economy and Development Select Committee  
Abergavenny Town Council
- 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**  
**Service Business Plan – Appendix B**
- 10. AUTHOR:**  
Cath Fallon (Head of Enterprise and Community Animation)
- 11. CONTACT DETAILS: E-mail: [cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk) Tel: 07557 190969**

## Appendix A



# Future Generations Evaluation (includes Equalities and Sustainability Impact)

<b>Name of the Officer</b> Cath Fallon	<b>Borough Theatre Refurbishment</b>
<b>Phone no:</b> 07557 190969 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk">cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Name of Service:</b> Enterprise and Community Animation	<b>Date:</b> Future Generations Evaluation 30 <sup>th</sup> July 2021

***NB. Key strategies and documents that may help you identify your contribution to the wellbeing goals and sustainable development principles include: Single Integrated Plan, Continuance Agreement, Improvement Plan, Local Development Plan, People Strategy, Asset Management Plan, Green Infrastructure SPG, Welsh Language Standards, etc.***

- 1. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

<b>Protected Characteristics</b>	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Age	Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any group.	The proposal seeks to address the negative issues that currently prevent the Theatre from offering an equitable service to all users.	The refurbishment proposal seeks to provide a fit for future purpose professional theatre which is accessible to all, regardless of their age, disability or any other protected characteristic.
Disability	Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any group,	As above	As above



<b>Protected Characteristics</b>	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Gender reassignment	Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any group,	As above	Positive impacts of the proposal will be addressed on an on-going basis.
Marriage or civil partnership	Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any group,	As above	As above
Pregnancy or maternity	<i>Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any particular group,</i>	As above	As above
Race	<i>Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any particular group,</i>	As above	As above
Religion or Belief	<i>Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any particular group,</i>	As above	As above
Sex	<i>Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any particular group,</i>	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	<i>Each new proposal will need to be assessed individually to consider if it impacts disproportionately on any particular group,</i>	As above	As above

## 2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</b>	<p><i>Socio-economic disadvantage can be defined as living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in society. Social justice is about reducing inequalities in society by working towards more equal distribution of wealth and opportunities so everyone can achieve their full potential. What evidence do you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to this proposal? Will it impact disproportionately on certain groups? Can the proposals be improved to reduce inequalities of outcome?</i></p>	<p><i>Describe any negative impacts that your proposal/s will have on people or groups of people who suffer socio-economic disadvantage.</i></p> <p><i>None identified</i></p>	<p><i>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts in relation to the Socio- economic disadvantage.</i></p> <p>The refurbishment project contractors will be using local employees and suppliers which will have a positive impact on the local supply chain.</p> <p>We will be broadening our volunteer programme to provide opportunities for people to gain new work skills.</p> <p>The Team will also continue to develop the work with young people with experience of the care system, creative work around food poverty and work for young families.</p>

### 3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

<b>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:</b>	<b>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</b>	<b>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</b>	<b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</b>
<b>Policy Making</b>  Effects on the use of the Welsh language,  Promoting Welsh language  Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably	<i>1. When considering a new proposal, you must factor in the potential effect on the Welsh Language whether it be positive or negative. 2. Every opportunity must be taken to inform the public that they can communicate with us through the medium of Welsh.3. We must do everything to the same standard in both languages and not treat the Welsh Language less favourably.</i>	To ensure any potentially negative impacts are mitigated the team will ensure that all procurement and promotional exercises comply with the Welsh Language Act and the Council's Welsh Language Standards.	Every opportunity will be taken to increase the use of the Welsh language where appropriate.
<b>Operational</b>  Recruitment & Training of workforce	<i>If you are advertising new posts, you must carefully consider whether these roles require the ability to communicate through Welsh and English (either desirable or essential). This is especially pertinent with front line roles as more than 10 % of the population of Monmouthshire speak Welsh. Also, we need to consider additional training when appointing staff that have existing Welsh language skills.</i>	As additional posts become available within the Theatre Team consideration will be given to the need for an ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh.	As above
<b>Service delivery</b>  Use of Welsh language in service delivery  Promoting use of the language	When advertising our services, you must promote the fact that people can deal with the council in Welsh by phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.	Consideration will be given to the promotion of welsh language services during the procurement process and during the day-to-day delivery of the Theatre service.	As above.

**4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

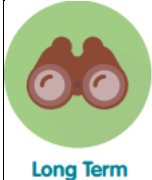
<b>Well Being Goal</b>	<b>Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.</b>	<b>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will continue to provide wider activities, training and events to support our volunteers beyond their activities in the theatre and during the refurbishment process.</li> <li>• We will look at what qualifications and benefits such as time credits that may be appropriate to our volunteers.</li> <li>• We will identify what different kinds of volunteering opportunities we can offer and identify partners such as the local schools or Abergavenny Community Centre who may support us in this goal.</li> </ul>	<p>Robust monitoring arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the mutually beneficial arrangements comply with legislative requirements particularly regarding contributions to the Well Being goals.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to establish an outreach programme working with partners both within Monmouthshire County Council and beyond to particularly but not restricted to continue and develop the work with young people with experience of the care system, creative work around food poverty and work for young families.</li> </ul>	<p>As above</p>





Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the Theatre re-opens following the refurbishment, we will work with our colleagues in the Community Learning team, Youth Employment and skills team and Library service to maximise opportunities for learning created by the programme and activities of the theatre.</li> <li>We will continue to find ways to present performative and creative "moments" around the Market Hall and town centre. We recognise the anxiety and worry that venturing out for essential shopping and for many people who have been particularly isolated this will continue to an extent as restrictions are lifted. We found that the gentle cultural interventions presented bring a calmness and joy to the public realm that has been missing without creating crowding or inappropriate risk.</li> </ul>	As above
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will proactively seek to present authentic work and artists from cultures that are less prominent or visible in Abergavenny and North Monmouthshire as part of our programme mix.</li> <li>We will mount a series of open stakeholder events in different formats and contexts to engage with a variety of voices and communities to test and explore the services the theatre offers.</li> </ul>	Where opportunities arise more specific details regarding contributions to the wellbeing goals will be identified through regular reviews of activities.
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are rolling out e-tickets to reduce the use of paper and energy use in the production, distribution and collection of paper tickets.</li> </ul>	As above

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
social, economic and environmental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our current refurbishment is bringing improvements to the energy efficiency of our heating and cooling and the general energy efficiency of the heating, cooling and lighting of the space.</li> <li>• We have increased the use of digital marketing materials and e-lists to reduce use of paper brochures and posters.</li> <li>• We have moved to compostable cups in our bar to replace single use plastic and will investigate the introduction of offering customers reusable cups and providing facilities for customers to refill their own water bottles.</li> <li>• We are committed to stocking local produce where possible. For rider and function catering we look to work with food suppliers from the market we share a building with to reduce food miles.</li> <li>• We have streamlined the product lines to reduce wastage and reduce the amount of stock needed to be kept chilled.</li> <li>• We have been steadily increasing the use of LED and energy efficient lighting in the theatre and the wider building and our refurbishment will accelerate this.</li> </ul>	
<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team will continue to develop the website and digital channels content ensuring that it has the</li> </ul>	n/a

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	<p>relevant information needed and it is accessible and bilingual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Team will continue to develop a full, cultural arts programme that supports and promotes the use of the Welsh Language.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will look at the diversity of our catchment area compared to the postal codes who have historically attended our shows. We will then devise specific strategies to engage and build audiences in these 'not' or 'cold' spots.</li> <li>We will develop a clear written programming strategy articulating our priorities and intentions.</li> </ul>	Where opportunities arise more specific details regarding contributions to the Well Being goals will be identified through regular reviews of activities.

### 5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	This proposal seeks to transform the existing Theatre into a fully functional professional Theatre that is suitable for the needs of future generations.	New activities associated with this proposal will be expected to produce a Future Generations Evaluation when they are brought to Cabinet or council for a decision.

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>This proposal seeks to actively engage with local stakeholders and user groups.</p>	<p>New activities associated with this proposal will be expected to produce a Future Generations Evaluation when they are brought to Cabinet or council for a decision.</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p>Involvement</p>	<p>Stakeholder engagements events have been held to seek views regarding the proposed refurbishment programme.</p>	
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p>Prevention</p>	<p>The Theatre in its current state is tired and shabby with fittings that are well beyond their service life. This refurbishment programme has been extensively investigated to ensure that the interventions proposed will prepare the service so it is fit for future purpose.</p>	<p>New activities associated with this proposal will be expected to produce a Future Generations Evaluation when they are brought to Cabinet or council for a decision</p>
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> <p>Integration</p>	<p>The Theatre Team continue to work with the Arts Council for Wales and Creu Cymru to develop sustainable relationships to benefit Monmouthshire's artistic and cultural community.</p>	<p>As above</p>

**6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities:** Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?



	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Safeguarding	<i>During the delivery of the programme of activities associated with the proposal, safeguarding will be at the forefront to ensure that any future service delivery promotes the well-being of children and vulnerable adults, preventing them from being harmed and protecting those who are at risk of abuse and neglect.</i>	The purpose of this proposal is to be inclusive to all therefore no negative impacts are anticipated in relation to this particular activity.	Where any negative impacts are identified the team will seek to address them by taking an inclusive approach.
Corporate Parenting	n/a	As above	As above

### **7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

<p>This policy is founded upon the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act;</li> <li>• Prosperity for All;</li> <li>• Welsh Language Act;</li> <li>• Socio-Economic Duty;</li> <li>• The Well-being Assessment and the Population Needs Assessment;</li> <li>• Equality Act 2010;</li> <li>• The Equality and Human Rights Commission’s “Is Wales Fairer 2018” report;</li> </ul>
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### **8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

<p>This proposal seeks to undertake a significant refurbishment of the Borough Theatre that will re-establish the venue as a key cultural asset to the County, providing an opportunity to develop a sustainable service offer that is fit for future purpose and relevant for future generations.</p>
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### **9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

<b>What are you going to do</b>	<b>When are you going to do it?</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>	<b>Progress</b>
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Seek considered views of the proposal	Economy and Development Select Committee – September	Cath Fallon	
Cabinet	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Cath Fallon	

**10. VERSION CONTROL: The Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stages of decision making, and then honed and refined throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable development wherever possible.**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Decision making stage</b>	<b>Date considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consideration</b>
<i>1</i>	<i>Scrutiny</i>	<i>September 2021</i>	
<i>3</i>	<i>Cabinet</i>	<i>15<sup>th</sup> September 2021</i>	

# SERVICE BUSINESS PLAN 2021 - 2024

## SERVICE:

Manager: David Baxter

Directorate: Enterprise

Head of Service: Cath Fallon

Date of most recent update: Wednesday, 1 September 2021

## OUR VALUES

- Teamwork
- Openness
- Fairness
- Flexibility

## OUR SERVICE AIM

“We operate a **theatre** in the heart of Abergavenny where we promote **community, enjoyment, discussion, inspiration, education and joy** by providing a **stimulating, suitable, safe, and supportive** physical space where **artists, philosophers, orators, poets, academics, teachers, civic leaders, experts and enthusiasts** can **share stories, sounds, ideas, insight, opinions and passions** with their **peers, the local community and the wider world.**”

## RESOURCES

### Staffing

- We currently have 5.3 Full Time Equivalent Posts. (This includes casual posts)
- Professional staff have significant expertise and training and there is a well-motivated volunteer base.

### Facilities

- The refurbishment and internal improvements will create an attractive and high-quality facility.

### Audience/Customer Base and data

## WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

### Operational

1. To refurbish and upgrade the theatre so that it meets contemporary standards of safety, operation, and comfort.
2. To ensure we have fit for purpose processes and procedures to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the theatre that meets industry norms and standards.
3. To ensure we have the appropriately staff and volunteer resources and structures to be able to operate efficiently and effectively and be a place for learning and development.

### Artistic

4. To present a balanced programme of events and activities that are financially sustainable.
5. To be a suitable space for local productions, events and creative ambition.
6. To support Abergavenny and the wider area as an attractive place to live, work and visit by developing events and cultural series of interest beyond our borders.
7. To be a leader for the development of cultural activities that promote the economic and social wellbeing of Abergavenny and the surrounding area.

### Marketing and Sales

8. Develop our website and digital channels content ensuring that it has the relevant information needed and it is accessible and bilingual.
9. Investigate, develop, and instigate a “Friends” scheme and an “adopt a seat” scheme.
10. Look to maximise customer spend through up-selling at point of sales, looking at branded merchandise and identifying and exploiting promotional channels.
11. Utilise our marketing and sales systems to create regular customer analytics to grow our audience and their attendance frequency.

### Business and administration.

12. To create a comprehensive 5-year business plan that reflects the opportunities and possibilities of the refurbishment.
13. To identify and install a new Bar Point of Sale system

## MEASURES/MILESTONES

1. Refurbishment of the theatre auditorium, bar, and toilets alongside the installation of a new heating cooling system and wire tension grid.
2. Completion of the new Box office area.
3. Completion of the inhouse improvements to the backstage areas.
4. Completion of “Operating handbook”
5. Completion of review of staffing levels.
6. Completion of our service “offer” document.
7. Completion of our sales and marketing plan.
8. Completion of 5yr Business Plan.
9. Hitting our retained income, attendance, and events target.

## KEY RISKS

1. Public funding for non-saturary services face significant pressure.
2. Available financial resources don't allow us to deliver the vision that will allow us to become more sustainable and cost effective in the medium term.
3. The refurbishment work has faced significant challenges and delays and this causes concerns and friction with the wider public.
4. The current human resources are based on a historical model and struggles to support the expected level of activities without significant additional overtime.
5. This could mean available staff and volunteers too insufficient to deliver service .
6. Activities and operations of other services in the building impact on the succesful delivery of the theatre's service and vice versa.
7. Audience and public attendance habits are unknown post Covid-19.

- There is a wide audience base, and our box office system has significant analysis tools that with trained staff resource can be utilised to better target sales.

**Revenue Budget**

- Retained income (the money retained by the theatre after the deduction of production costs/fees/promoter share and royalties etc)

**Other Resources**

- We receive funding and support from the Arts Council of Wales, and this is a key relationship as is Creu Cymru the network for theatre in Wales which provides training and networking opportunities in addition to some funding.

**Income Growth**

- Through a strong brand, cultural offer, and quality service we are looking to grow our retained income, secondary spend (bars, merchandising), service income (marketing and box office), sponsorship and external funding.

8. Resistance to changes to hire arrangements – challenge of setting sustainable charges that are affordable to the theatre and the hirers/users.



## TRACK, ASSESS & PROCEED

RAG  
key:

Progressing  
well



Progressing but not on  
target



Attention needed



Our Actions	Who & When	Alignment: Objective & Plan	What have we done	RAG	What impact is this action having?	How we can evidence this?	What next?
			<i>Section Completed Quarterly</i>		<i>Section Completed Annually</i>	<i>Section Completed Annually</i>	<i>Section Completed Annually</i>
<b>Refurbishment of the theatre auditorium, bar, and toilets alongside the installation of a new heating cooling system and wire tension grid.</b>		Maximise the potential of the Natural and Built environment.		A			
Appoint Principal contractor for refurbishment	Theatre refurbishment team – Q1	Maximise the potential of the Natural and Built environment.	Completed design work and started the procurement process	G			
Identify any budget shortfall and secure additional funds needed to complete project	Q1	Maximise the potential of the Natural and Built environment.	Costs clearer through procurement process, details being drafted to discuss internally and with Arts Council Wales.	R			





<b>Completion of our service “offer” document.</b>		Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
Create menu of services	Q2	Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
Create price list		Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
Finalise Terms and Conditions.		Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
<b>Completion of our sales and marketing plan.</b>		Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
Develop our website and digital channels content ensuring that it has the relevant information needed and it is accessible and bilingual.	Q1	Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
Investigate, develop, and instigate a “Friends” scheme	Q2	Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
Produce quarterly customer analytics reports.	Q3	Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
<b>Completion of 5yr Business Plan. Hitting our retained income, attendance, and events target.</b>		Future-Focused council		<b>G</b>			
Completion of programme strategy	Q2	Lifelong well-being & Best Possible Start in Life		<b>G</b>			



Development plan for local users	Q2	Lifelong well-being		G
Create working group for development of an Abergavenny "Folk" Festival	Q3	Lifelong well-being		G


## How does our work contribute to the seven national wellbeing goals?

### *Section Completed Annually*

#### **A Wales of vibrant Culture and thriving Welsh Language**

- We will present Welsh language and bilingual theatre and music events and examine how events can serve Welsh speakers and support Welsh learners.
- We will work with partners to find ways to promote the Welsh language.
- We will treat the Welsh and English languages equally in our print and digital communications.

#### **A Globally responsible Wales**

- We are rolling out e-tickets to reduce the use of paper and energy use in the production, distribution and collection of paper tickets.
- We have increased the use of digital marketing materials and e-lists to reduce use of paper brochures and posters.
- We have moved to compostable cups in our bar to replace single use plastic and will investigate the introduction of offering customers reusable cups and providing facilities for customers to refill their own water bottles.
- We are committed to stocking local produce where possible. For rider and function catering we look to work with food suppliers from the market we share a building with to reduce food miles.

- We have streamlined the product lines to reduce wastage and reduce the amount of stock needed to be kept chilled.
- We have been steadily increasing the use of LED and energy efficient lighting in the theatre and the wider building and our refurbishment will accelerate this.
- Our current refurbishment is bringing improvements to the energy efficiency of our heating and cooling and the general energy efficiency of the heating, cooling and lighting of the space.

#### **A Prosperous Wales**

- We will continue to provide wider activities, training and events to support our volunteers beyond their activities in the theatre.
- We will look at what qualifications and benefits such as time credits that may be appropriate to our volunteers.
- We will identify what different kinds of volunteering opportunities we can offer and identify partners such as the local schools or Abergavenny Community Centre who may support us in this goal.

#### **A resilient Wales**

- Work to establish an outreach programme working with partners both within Monmouthshire County Council and beyond to particularly but not restricted to continue and develop the work with young people with experience of the care system, creative work around food poverty and work for young families

#### **A healthier Wales**

- As we open, we will work with our colleagues in the Community Learning team, Youth Employment and skills team and Library service to maximise opportunities for learning created by the programme and activities of the theatre.
- We will continue to find ways to present performative and creative “moments” around the Market Hall and town centre. We recognise the anxiety and worry that venturing out for essential

shopping and for many people who have been particularly isolated this will continue to an extent as restrictions are lifted. We found that the gentle cultural interventions presented bring a calmness and joy to the public realm that has been missing without creating crowding or inappropriate risk.

#### A more equal Wales

- We will look at the diversity of our catchment area compared to the postal codes who have historically attended our shows. We will then devise specific strategies to engage and build audiences in these 'not' or 'cold' spots.
- We will develop a clear written programming strategy articulating our priorities and intentions.

#### A Wales of cohesive communities

- We will proactively present authentic work and artists from cultures that are less prominent or visible in Abergavenny and North Monmouthshire as part of our programme mix.
- We will mount a series of open stakeholder events in different formats and contexts to engage with a variety of voices and communities to test and explore the services the theatre offers.

### Five Ways

#### Long-term

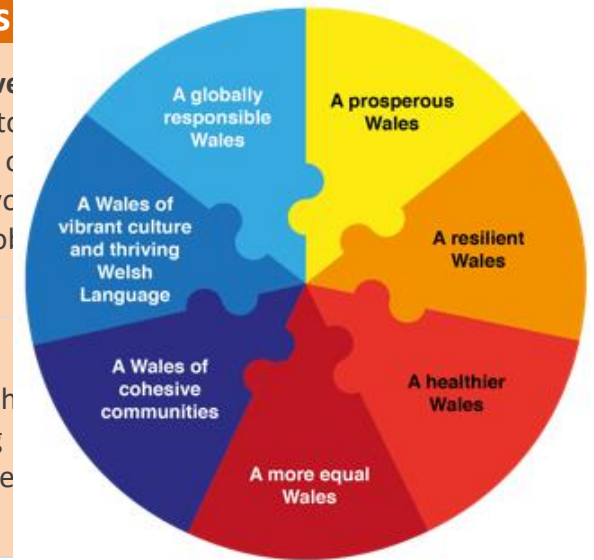
The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs

#### Prevention

Acting to prevent problems or getting worse, meeting or exceeding expectations

#### Involvement

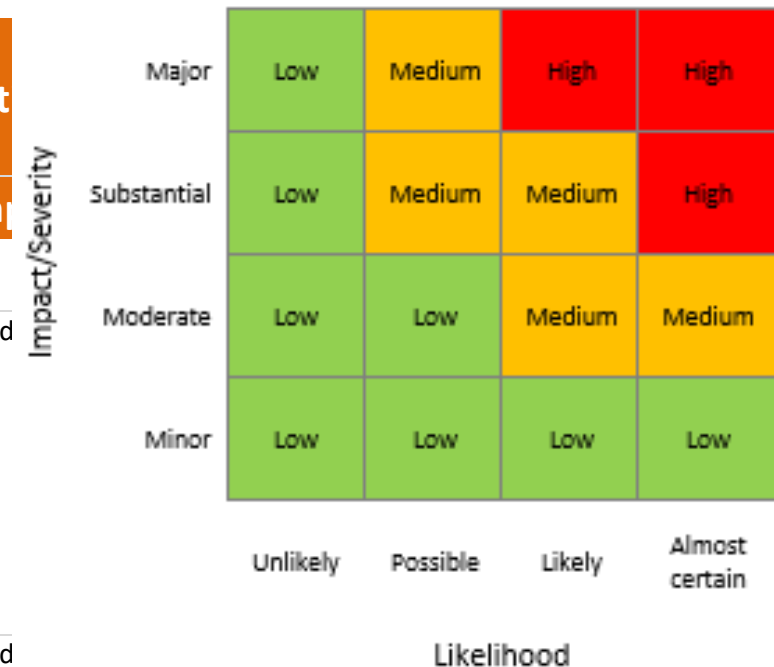
The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that they reflect the diversity of the area being served



Measures / Milestones	Previous (Year)	Target	Current	Comments	RAG
<i>Section Completed Quarterly</i>					
<i>Standard Measures</i>					
Average days lost to sickness absence per FTE employee					Green
Percentage of employees who leave the department					Green
Percentage of staff that received a performance review					Green
Percentage of staff who are trained to the appropriate safeguarding level					Green
Forecast overspend or underspend each quarter					Green
Number of complaints received					Green
Number of compliments received					Green
<i>Service area-specific measures</i>					
Refurbishment of the theatre auditorium, bar, and toilets alongside the installation of a new heating cooling system and wire tension grid.				All planned work completed and building open to the public.	Green
Completion of the new Box office area.				New fittings and furniture and screens in window.	Green
Completion of the inhouse improvements to the backstage areas.				Redecorating and refreshing of dressing room and backstage door areas by in -house team.	Green
Completion of "Operating handbook"				Document issued.	Green
Completion of review of staffing levels.				Report containing scenarios and numbers completed.	Green
Completion of our service "offer" document.				Hire packs and online brochure and booking system live and in place.	Green
Completion of our sales and marketing plan.				Marketing plan for 21-24 completed.	Green
Completion of 5yr Business Plan.				Detailed Business plan for 21-24 issued.	Green
Annual retained income target.				Targets to be set post Covid and refurbishment.	Red

Annual attendance.								Red
Annual events target.								Red

Risk	Level (Pre Mitigation)			Mitigating Action Update	Level (Post Mitigation)	
	Likelihood	Impact	Level		Likelihood	Impact
<i>Section Completed Quarterly</i>						
Public funding for non-saturary services face significant pressure.	Almost Certain	Major	High	Focus on service meeting funding criteria and priorities. Identify wider funding base. Increase earned income and efficiencies.	Possible	Mod
Available financial resources don't allow us to deliver the vision that will allow us to become more sustainable and cost effective in	Almost Certain	Major	High	Identify funding that supports investment. Careful management of budgets.	Possible	Mod





the medium term.							
The refurbishment work has faced significant challenges and delays and this causes concerns and friction with the wider public.	Likely	Substantial	Medium	Secure clear timetable and communicate clearly to manage expectations. Communicate and promote the benefits.	Possible	Moderate	Low
The current human resources are based on a historical model and struggles to support the expected level of activities without significant additional overtime.	Almost Certain	Major	High	Identify actual and specific need based on data and relate resource costs to events. Identify and implement solutions.	Unlikely	Minor	Low
This could mean available staff and volunteers too insufficient to deliver service .	Likely	Major	High	Based on need identify necessary, staff, volunteer and agency numbers ensure human resources in place	Unlikely	Minor	Low



				along with systems to manage them.			
Activities and operations of other services in the building impact on the successful delivery of the theatre's service and vice versa.	Likely	Substantial	Medium	Ensure close liaison and communications between services under same roof. Use Yes Plan system to issue precise schedule and details around activities.	Possible	Moderate	Low
Audience and public attendance habits are unknown post Covid-19.	Possible	Moderate	Low	Monitor sector trends through professional networks. Monitor impact of promotions and reach of audience against historical data	Unlikely	Minor	Low
Restistance to changes to hire arrangements – challenge of setting sustaible charges that are affordable to the theatre and the hirers/users	Possible	Substantial	Medium	Create a clear and justifiable offer with comprehensive Terms and conditions and work with users to precisely communicate and justify the T&C's.	Possible	Moderate	Low