

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF
THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH
HELD AT SWANSPOOL HOUSE, WELLINGBOROUGH
ON TUESDAY 18 JULY 2017**

Present: The Mayor, Councillor P Bell and Councillors Abram, Anslow, Aslam, Bailey, Bone, Carr, Emerson, Francis, Gough, Graves, Griffiths, Hallam, Harrington, Lloyd, Maguire, Morrall, Patel, Scarborough, Simmons, Skittrall, Walia, Ward, M Waters, V Waters and York.

Officers present: Mrs L Elliott, (Managing Director), Mrs B Gamble, and Miss J Thomas (Directors) Miss S Lyons, (Solicitor/Monitoring Officer, District Law), Mr G Betts, (Mayor's Sergeant) and Mrs C A Mundy, (Democratic Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allebone, Beirne, Ekins, Henley, G Lawman, L Lawman, Partridge-Underwood, Scanlon, Stevenson and Watts.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the following declarations were made.

Name of councillor	Item	Interest
Abram	4	Other – son will soon be starting employment with the Castle Theatre

3. SUSPENSION OF NORMAL CONVENTION

RESOLVED that the suspension of the normal convention, whereby officers do not speak at a council meeting, be approved, to allow officers to answer any questions of members.

4. CASTLE THEATRE TENDER AND ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY 2017-2020

The annexed circulated report of the managing director was received in relation to the tender process of the operation of the Castle Theatre in Wellingborough and was presented to the meeting by the leader of the council, Councillor Griffiths.

The report sought approval to delegate to the managing director, in consultation with the leader of the council and the leader of the opposition, the signing off of the detailed criteria for the tender of the operation of the Castle

Theatre following discussions with the castle advisory group and the senior management team. Agreement was also sought to the Arts and Culture Strategy.

The Borough Council of Wellingborough had taken over the running of the Castle Theatre at the end of June 2016 and had engaged a theatre management specialist who, along with the council's senior management team, had implemented a short term plan to re-open the venue and to advise on long term management options for its continued sustainability.

In August 2016 the council re-opened the Castle Theatre with a small core team based at the theatre. The castle advisory group, made up of members and senior managers, with input from industry experts and community stakeholders, had been established to assist the council in producing a strategy to inform the long term management of the theatre. The key elements to be included in the Arts and Culture Strategy had been consulted on during 2016 when the interim theatre manager was in place, and the draft was appended to the report.

Clover Theatre Management had produced draft tender documentation, and this had been reviewed by the council's legal and procurement teams to ensure it met with legislative and procurement requirements. Supporting documents, containing a range of data, including information relating to the programme, finance and maintenance, were under review to ensure that the most up-to-date information was available to best inform tenders.

The tender document, based on the Arts and Culture Strategy, was required to enable the 'Invitation to Tender' (ITT) to be sent out to all interested organisations. The strategy reflected the wish that, whilst operating as a business, the theatre would be available for a variety of uses by local groups. The council's priorities also needed to be reflected; particularly in relation to financial support for both the Castle Theatre and other relevant organisations.

The report detailed the tendering process and recommended a restricted tender process for the initial term, with the possibility of changing to a concession tender in the future. The report explained that a restricted tender process was a procurement method that limits the request for tenders to a select number of suppliers, contractors or service providers.

The report also made reference to the fabric of the building and its fixtures and fittings. Reports in relation to the building and theatre equipment indicated the amount of revenue and capital expenditure required to bring the premises back to a good standard. This information would be made available to tenderers.

The draft tender brief was appended to the report along with the timetable for the process.

Members discussed the content of the Arts and Culture Strategy, suggesting a few amendments thereto, which were agreed. With regard to the performance venues as detailed in the strategy, members made reference to a number of other significant venues, located in the borough, which had not been included.

Director, Mrs Gamble, explained that consideration had been given to including a number of other performance venues but, at the current time, it had been decided to restrict these to the venues controlled by the council. Over time the strategy would be further developed.

The mayor put the proposals contained within the report to the meeting. These were voted on and declared carried.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Arts and Culture Strategy 2017-2020, as amended, be approved;
- (ii) authority be delegated to the managing director, in consultation with the leader of the council and the leader of the opposition, to agree the detailed criteria for the tender documents in relation to the operation of the Castle Theatre following discussion with the castle advisory group and the senior management team;
- (iii) the leader and the leader of the opposition be included in the evaluation panel for both the standard selection questionnaire and tender, before reporting the highest scoring tender to council, because of the public interest in the Castle Theatre;
- (iv) approval be given to the decision to use a restricted (two stage) process for the tender of the operation of the Castle Theatre;
- (v) approval be given to the funding and building improvement approach, by including appropriate sections in the tender documents so that operators may propose the most effective way of addressing this.

There being no further business the mayor closed the meeting.

Mayor

The meeting closed at 7.20pm

