



URN: 20-194

Subject: St Georges Trust – Funding Agreement extension

Report to: Policy and Resources Committee, 9th February 2021

Report by: Michelle Burdett, Head of Inward Investment

SUBJECT MATTER

On 10th January 2019 the Policy and Resources committee resolved to support St Georges Trust programming and business plan deliverables for the remainder of that year to be funded from the special projects reserve. In addition, members resolved to provide an additional £25,000 per annum for years 19/20 and 20/21 and that a formal grant agreement was prepared and agreed. Finally, it was also resolved to create a Member Liaison Board where reports are provided for sign off and funding draw down agreed.

This paper provides an update to the Policy and Resources Committee as to the delivery of the Trust over the past two years and seeks approval for an extension of the Funding Agreement to the Trust for another year with a £25,000 grant to be available to the Trust for the next financial year (2021/22) with draw down of funds being subject to Liaison Board approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee:

- 1) note the progress of the Trust over the past two years**
- 2) agree £25,000 grant funding (for 2021/22) to cover the Trust’s programming against a business plan for the next financial year, and that the existing Funding Agreement is extended on that basis.**

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 On 10th January 2019 the Policy and Resources committee resolved to support St Georges Trust programming and business plan deliverables for the remainder of that year to be funded from the special projects reserve. In addition, members resolved to provide an additional £25,000 per annum for years 19/20 and 20/21 and that a formal grant agreement was prepared and signed. Finally, it was also resolved to create a Member Liaison Board where reports are provided for sign off and funding draw down agreed.
- 1.2 Over the course of 2018 and 2019 St Georges Trust made significant changes to its governance, programming, organisational structure and financial affairs. The Council agreed to provide £25,000 per annum to deliver the proposed and approved Business Plan and artistic programme.

- 1.3 Since Members agreed to an annual grant to St Georges Trust in January 2019, the Council, along with its partners worked collaboratively to draft and seek approval from Members of the Culture, Heritage and Tourism Strategy and Action Plan. Policy and Resources committee (July 2020) fully endorsed the objectives and deliverables, as such, the work undertaken by various delivery bodies such as St Georges Trust, Out There Arts, The Hippodrome, Norfolk Museums Service, GYPT and others are all an important part of the success of that strategy.

2 PROGRESS OF ST GEORGES TRUST PROGRAMME

- 2.1 Following the Policy and Resources paper in January 2019, much work has been undertaken by the Creative Director of St Georges Trust. The Trust have now fully refreshed the Board of Trustees whereby each Trustee now has a lead role focused on a sector or skill. This covers Trustees representing: business, community liaison, marketing, finance / fundraising and projects. This has provided the Trust with a more robust approach to the oversight of the business plan, bringing in funds and developing partnerships within the Borough and within the field of arts and culture.
- 2.2 During the financial year 2019/20 the Trust delivered a wide range of activities, focusing on the approved objectives and key performance indicators in their business plan. Annex A provides members with an overview of the Trusts achievements during 2019/20. This shows that aside from the last 6 weeks of the year which was impacted by the first lockdown as a result of COVID, the Trust delivered the majority of what it set out to achieve and in many areas, overachieved against their agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 2.3 Unfortunately, due to the issues faced by all businesses effected by COVID and the resultant lockdowns, the Trust found it difficult to deliver the programme as laid out in their business plan during 2020/21. However, as reported to Policy and Resources in July 2020 the Trust took steps to deliver a series of performances outside, including; a family show, a musical show, a youth production in the plaza, cinema showings and community engagement and training programmes.
- 2.4 In addition to the Trust adapting to the impacts of COVID as referred to in paragraph 2.3, the Trust also sought funding from a variety of sources that were launched to support the arts and culture sector due to the impacts of the COVID restrictions. This has assisted them in being able to sustain themselves over the period of business closures. As a result, the Trust successfully brought in over £154,000 – this came from £35k from Arts Council England (emergency funding), £25k from the RHLG (Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant) and then another £94k Recovery grant fund from Arts Council England again.
- 2.5 The funds have been used to sustain their operations over the last year as well as continued development of new partnerships including a number of schools to support the Trusts transition to a Community Theatre. One significant outcome of this funding and the work of the Trust moving towards community engagement (often online) was the success of the Online Panto which saw over 200,000 children across the whole country view the show via online methods. In addition, the Trust used the funds to continue the resourcing of the team to deliver the online activities, as well as manage and maintain the building
- 2.6 The Trust has presented their progress to the Arts and Culture Liaison Board where monitoring takes place and financial draw down is approved. The Trust now has sound financial management in place, it has built successful relationships with others to deliver programmes

in partnership (such as Out There Arts) and has commenced discussions with other provider of funds such as the EXPERIENCE project. The Board recognises the achievements of the Trust and has proposed that the Trust develop a new business plan with a view to seeking additional funding from the Council alongside other funders.

3 ST GEORGES TRUST – FUTURE FUNDING AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Annex B provides the overarching business plan that builds upon the one that has been delivered during the last 2 years against an agreed funding agreement. This shows that the Trust will continue to be a Community Arts Centre and Theatre delivering activities to build upon; artistic programming, community engagement, partnership working, fundraising and commercial income streams. These are clearly laid out with quantitative key performance indicators that will be reported to the Arts and Culture Liaison Board on a quarterly basis (should members be minded to support this papers proposal) and the approval of these reports and therefore drawn down of the funds agreed by the members of the Liaison Board.
- 3.2 The Trust have also carefully constructed a financial forecast model. This shows that to break even in terms of their programming and other operational costs they need around £100,000 income per annum. They have forecast that they will generate a proportion of that income from shows and other fundraising – using modest figures as the economy recovers from COVID-19 and social distancing measures are reduced. The result of this work indicates that due to sponsorship from commercial sources being reduced, they request £25,000 from the Council per annum for the next financial year.
- 3.3 Unlike the report provided to members in January, the budget for this proposal is not within the base budget and would therefore be growth to the revenue account, funded by the special projects reserve.
- 3.4 At the January (2019) Policy and Resources meeting, members agreed to hold the electricity bill debt until the outcome of the Arts Council application was known. As the Trust was successful with the bid and have subsequently brought in additional external funding, they were and continue to be keen to repay this debt. As such, the Trust have repaid £6682 and have a remaining debt to pay of £10,480. An agreement has been drafted to stabilise the monthly repayments as we go into the new season and commence delivery of the new business plan.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Should members choose not to continue providing financial support to St Georges there is a risk that it would not be able to deliver its artistic programme and whilst other funds would be sought – the financial strain on the Trust would be significant and it may jeopardise the viability of the programme and the Trust going forward.
- 4.2 Secondly, whilst the Trust have a full financial package in development, there is a risk that should members not support this request other funders will lose confidence and also withdraw funding, thus potentially jeopardising the Trusts viability in the long term. The continued support of the Council demonstrates to other partners the commitment to the Trust and the sector as a whole which is particularly important given the targets and objectives of the recently approved Culture, Heritage and Tourism Strategy.

5 SUMMARY

- 5.1 On 10th January 2019 the Policy and Resources committee resolved to support St Georges Trust programming and business plan deliverables for the remainder of that year to be funded from the special projects reserve. In addition, members resolved to provide an additional £25,000 per annum for years 19/20 and 20/21 and that a formal grant agreement was prepared and agreed. Finally, it was also resolved to create a Member Liaison Board where reports are provided for sign off and funding draw down agreed.
- 5.2 This paper provides an update to the Policy and Resources Committee as to the delivery of the Trust over the past two years and seeks approval for an extension of the Funding Agreement to the Trust for another year with a £25,000 grant to be available to the Trust for the next financial year (2021/22) with draw down of funds being subject to Liaison Board approval.

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Engagement in advance of the drafting of the paper and advice embedded as part of the paper
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Engagement in advance of the drafting of the paper and advice embedded as part of the paper
Existing Council Policies:	Culture, Heritage and Tourism Strategy, Economic Growth Strategy, Pathway to Recovery Plan
Financial Implications:	As outlined in the report
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Only those referred to in paragraph 3.4. NPLaw have been engaged and have completed the drafting of the agreement.
Risk Implications:	As identified in report
Equality Issues/EQIA:	None
Crime & Disorder:	None
Every Child Matters:	N/A

St. George's Theatre continues to play a distinctive role in Great Yarmouth and the surrounding areas. The town already enjoys popular entertainment venues with Britannia Pier and The Hippodrome. A Community Theatre is needed to complement these venues and offer opportunities for engagement and participation by local people. The outcomes from a recent implemented Audience Development Plan, prove an interest in Theatre and locally produced shows. Success has been enjoyed with youth productions and amateur shows, as well as projects which explore arts activity as a path to wellbeing. As a Community Theatre, St. George's encourages regular groups and organisations to use the venue as their base and is developing long term relationships. It has a year round programme which includes professional Theatre and attracts different elements of the community.

The vision for this Community Theatre can be summarised as follows:

'A thriving venue embraced by local people and visitors.'

- *It will have a varied programme including, music, comedy, plays & film*
- *It will engage the community through participation, productions, workshops & arts activities*
- *It will integrate and involve a range of diverse communities through joint programming*
- *It will be home to local amateur groups & various clubs*
- *It will be relevant & accessible for young people*
- *It will be recognised by visitors as having a unique entertainment offer*
- *It will offer a top quality all round customer experience*
- *It will celebrate its status as an historic building & an important part of the town's heritage*
- *It will be significant to the County & the wider arts scene, working with partnerships*
- *It will have a strong commercial arm, helping it to become financially viable and sustainable*

To achieve the vision in line with the three year business model, we have been engaging everyone involved with the organisation in delivering five strategic objectives.

- Programming
- Community Engagement
- Partnership Working
- Fundraising
- Commercial Income Streams

Each objective is monitored through key performance indicators.

Programming

In order for St. George's Theatre to fulfil its role within the Town as a Community Arts Centre and Theatre, the programme reflects the various elements of the community and their interests.

- Continue to implement the Audience Development Plan while consolidating and refining the offer in response to audience figures, which indicate areas of success.

Key Performance Indicators – Programming – All year round events – 12 month targets

Programme a minimum of 80 theatre events per year which otherwise would not be available in the Borough. Base line annual audience number of 10,000 to rise by 500 every year.
Book 4 Charity shows per year which support and celebrate different organisations within the Borough and helps raise money for St. George's Theatre Trust. Base line audience number of 60 to rise by 20 per quarter -depending on Social distancing regulations
Present 12 talent showcases per year and increase local audience attendance. This includes Jam sessions to create a future 'Battle of the Bands' event. Base line audience number of 30 per show to rise by at least 15 each year.
Programme 2 accessible children's shows per month. Base line audience number of 70 to rise by 30 each year - depending on Social distancing regulations
Present an event film screening per month. Base line audience number of 70 to rise by 20 each year - depending on Social distancing regulations.
Programme one comedy event per quarter which generates commercial revenue. Base line audience number of 50 to double each year - depending on Social distancing regulations.
Present 1 music event per month to showcase a range of music styles and generates commercial revenue. Base line audience number of 60 to double each year - depending on Social distancing regulations
Present two live theatre shows a month. Base line audience number of 60 to double each year - depending on Social distancing regulations
Attract one event a quarter which reflects the diverse communities within the Borough and increase. Base line audience number of 50 to rise by 5 every quarter - depending on Social distancing regulations

- Adapt the unique offer for visitors to complement seasons based on visitor feedback.

Key Performance Indicators – Programming – Seasonal events – Annual targets

Present Three Outdoor Events during the summer season. Base line audience number of 60 to rise by 20 each year.
Create a series of one day workshops for families and young people to run throughout the summer holidays. Base line audience number of 20 to rise by 10 each year.

Produce two community productions a year in August and October. Base line audience number of 60 per show to rise by 20 every year - depending on Social distancing regulations.
Produce a family Pantomime which attracts visitors and local audiences for 25 shows and 5 extra performances for schools and generates commercial revenue. Base line audience number of 70 per show to rise by 20 each year.
Present an Adult Pantomime each winter season which attracts local people and visitors for 10 shows. Base line audience number of 60 per show to rise by 20 every year - depending on Social distancing regulations.

Continue to integrate both the café and Plaza area into the programme, so that there are various activities on offer in these spaces such as Jazz in the café, comedy and themed events.

Key Performance Indicators – Programming – Cafe events

Programme extension of season Twilight Jazz events in the café to build a local Jazz Club.
Programme extension of season Twilight Comedy in the café to develop local Comedy Club.
Programme extension of season arts activity on the Plaza

Key Performance Indicators –Addressing Barriers

New Signage
Research and consult with Conservation Officer regarding external lighting options
Calculate costings for hand rails to distinguish access path
Work with Town Master Plan regarding walk from King Street car park
Collaborate with Heritage Action Zone Consortium to promote area

- Implement a Marketing Action Plan which includes promotion and membership schemes

Key Performance Indicators – Marketing Plan

Refresh Marketing strategy for venue
Develop Marketing plan for programme

Community engagement

- Continue to develop the Community Engagement Plan building on the past success of the community productions. Continue to develop the range of participation workshops.
-

Key Performance Indicators – Community Engagement

Develop 3 weekly activities for adults such as Art classes, Community singing and a film course.
--

Develop 2 weekly activities for young people such as drama classes and music sessions.
--

Develop 2 holiday workshops for families such as puppet making and storytelling.
--

- Continue to forge links with the minority community groups.

Key Performance Indicators – Community Engagement

Translations to a range of languages for publicity
--

Programme diverse events to target different minority groups
--

- Build on the relationships with local schools through specific school performances, which have accompanying education packs and engage a community outreach leader to deliver workshops in outlying areas of the Borough.

Key Performance Indicators – Community Engagement

Develop the streaming offer to Primary Schools across the Country in 2021.
--

Create Schools Shakespeare Festival in 2021 with 5 schools to grow each year by one extra school.

Book 3 schools to perform in the Theatre annually and raise by one each year.

- Research all potential funding opportunities and make applications for specific projects.
-

Key Performance Indicators – Community Engagement

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create arts activities which focus on Arts and Wellbeing |
|--|

Partnership working

Continue to work in conjunction with:

- Other venues such as Sheringham Little Theatre, Norwich Theatre Royal, Norwich Arts Centre and The Garage.
- Festivals such as Out There, GY Arts Festival, Yarmonics, Young@Arts Festival, Family Arts Festival, Norfolk and Norwich Festival
- Touring schemes building on the work this year achieved with Eastern Angles, House and Creative Arts East.
- National events such as Heritage Open Days, Museums at Night and BBC new comedy.

Key Performance Indicators – Partnership working

Work in partnership with festival producers to identify appropriate performances/events /activities which contribute to the festival offer while generating a small surplus for the theatre.

Programme 6 pieces of touring theatre each year which would otherwise not appear in the Borough.

Engage with 4 national events each year to raise the profile of Great Yarmouth.

Engage with the GYBC Cultural Board and liaise further with tourism bodies to ensure St. George's is involved with local and National strategies.

- Continue to collaborate with local organisations, such as Time & Tide Museum, Out There Arts, MAP, Golden Threads, Norfolk Music Hub and Harbour Radio to inform programming and ensure St. George's Theatre is included in community focussed activities.
- Engage in the development of a Cultural Quarter of Great Yarmouth working with local partners to link The Drill House, Time and Tide, Skippings Gallery and St. George's.

Key Performance Indicators – Partnership Working

Increase regular hires with local groups to 6 per week

Increase regular events with local partner organisations to one per month

- Explore stronger collaboration with Out There Arts

Key Performance Indicators – Partnership Working

Trustee from Out There Arts to join St. G Board and inclusion in next NPO bid.

Fund Raising

- Refresh the fund raising strategy
- Create a 'Fund Raising' Committee to organise local activity and develop strategies for generating donations

- **Key Performance Indicators – Fund Raising**

Trustees to refresh the fund raising strategy and allocate tasks

Commercial income streams

- Research the most profitable and appropriate options for the café including leasing it out, or making a full capital investment to improve the kitchen facilities.

Key Performance Indicators – Commercial Income Streams

Present a detailed report outlining the options for the future of the café
--

- Depending on the regulations, increase commercial hires and events.

Key Performance Indicators – Commercial Income Streams

Increase regular weekly hires to 6 per week

Raise profile of Theatre as Wedding venue with a Wedding Fayre
--

Increase conference and event hire to 2 per month

- Adapt the plan for corporate and business engagement including an appropriate sponsorship scheme based on the current economic situation.

Key Performance Indicators – Commercial Income Streams

Re- launch the Sponsorship scheme

- Maximise the secondary spend in the Theatre to include advertising space and merchandise as allowed.

Key Performance Indicators – Commercial Income Streams

Sell seasonal merchandise to 25% of audience members
--

3 Year Business Plan Financial Forecasts

Please see the attached forecasts. The lack of clarity on what the future regulations might be, make it challenging to accurately forecast. We are assuming that social distancing will be removed by the Autumn 2021.

The forecast shows an annual requirement of £102K support in funding to deliver the programmes. We request a 3 year commitment of an annual funding agreement of 30% from the Borough to support the local community activity.

KPIs final report 2019-20

Strategic Objective	Targets	Actual	RAG of achievements
Programming - Annual	Audience numbers		
36 locally unique live theatre events per year	Base 60 +20 each event	66 live theatre events with average audience attendance of 92 per show	
Four charity events per year	Base 100 + 20	4 events (Sat Night/Showtime x2/Sparkle) with average audience attendance of 129	
Four amateur shows per year	Base 100 + 20	4 shows (youth x2/community/Dance) with average audience attendance of 124	
Two accessible childrens shows per month	Base 30 + 20	14 shows with average audience attendance of 70	
One popular film per month	Base 50 + 20	11 film screenings with average audience attendance of 35	
One comedy event per month	Base 50 + 20	6 events with average audience attendance of 40	
Two music events per month	Base 70 + 20	24 events with average audience attendance of 79	
One event reflecting Borough diversity per month	Base 40 + 20	12 events with average audience attendance of 72	
Programming - Seasonal	Audience numbers		
One day workshops	Base 20 + 10	3 workshops with participation numbers averaging at 20	
Summer Music and Magic show	Base 30 + 20	5 shows with average audience attendance of 83	
Family Pantomine	Base 30 + 20	31 performances with average audience attendance of 119	
Community Engagement	Participation numbers		
Adults	6	Weekly drama session with 8 adults and Community Choir with 36 adults engaged	
Young people	10	Weekly drama sessions with 25 young people and weekly 'Chill Spot' with 21 young people	
Families	20	Freemen's 'Pay What you Can' events have seen audience grow from 20 - 178 for family events	
Portuguese music event	50	3 Fado events with average audience attendance of 86	
Pantomine school shows	400	5 schools attended with total audience of 556	
Schools performing in theatre	3	5 local schools performed	
Arts activities project	10	6 arts activities were presented with average participation number of 12	
Partnership Working - Annual	Number of Partners		
Festival producers	2	Worked with NNF with Radio Local, worked with Out There in September and Hostry in October	
Touring theatre	5	Visits from 7 touring shows	
National Events	1	Part of Heritage Open Day events this September , BBC Comedy and BBC Introducing	
GYBC Cultural board/tourism bodies liaison	1	St.G featured as part of the new cultural strategy	
Partnership Working - Annual			
Local groups hire	3	7 groups -LANS Dance, Art Appreciation, Golden Threads, Knit and Knatter, MAP, YAB and FABBA	
Local partner organisations events	2	4 Arts Festival, Yarmonics, Young@Arts festival, Norfolk Music Hub	