

Culture and Communities Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 17 November 2020

Capital Theatres Company Performance Report 2019/20

Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	All
Council Commitments	46

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
 - 1.1.1 note the positive performance of Capital Theatres during 2019/20;
 - 1.1.2 notes that whilst the report focus is on 2019/20 company performance, it is essential to acknowledge the context of the COVID-19 crisis and the subsequent fundamental impact and essential mitigation, advocacy and revised planning activity which has had to be implemented by Capital Theatres since March 2020; and
 - 1.1.3 refer this report to Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

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Report

Capital Theatres Company Performance Report 2019/20

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This is the seventh annual performance report prepared as a requirement of the Services and Funding Agreement process adopted in 2013/14.
- 2.2 Capital Theatres had another successful year in 2019/20 which offers a relevant reference point from which to acknowledge the subsequent impacts of COVID-19 since March 2020. The continued strong financial and programme performance in 2019/20 has subsequently served to highlight the exceptional business resilience and management of the Trust for the first several months of the crisis.
- 2.3 Following a short delay in progress and planning in the light of COVID-19, Capital Theatres now continue with the development of the King's Theatre Capital Project and formal reporting will be re-introduced into the committee calendar. A brief overview of the current project is contained in Appendix 1.

3. Background

- 3.1 This is the seventh annual performance report prepared as a requirement of the Services and Funding Agreement process adopted in 2013/14.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Capital Theatres reports on its performance to Council Monitoring Officers as required by the Services and Funding Agreement on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis.
- 4.2 The Services and Funding Agreement for 2019/20 was aligned to Council Commitments and had 23 targets (attached at Appendix 2). All except two of the targets were achieved. The targets partially achieved (6 and 16) are highlighted in the Appendix. The agreement targets are aligned to performance headings reflecting the citywide Culture Plan objectives. These were:
 - 4.2.1 ensuring that everyone has access to world class cultural provision;
 - 4.2.2 encouraging the highest standards of creativity and excellence in all aspects of cultural activity;

- 4.2.3 supporting greater partnership working in the cultural and creative sectors and maximise resources available to help them thrive all year round;
 - 4.2.4 articulating the positive impact to culture in Edinburgh and promoting Edinburgh's cultural success locally, nationally and internationally;
 - 4.2.5 developing and supporting the infrastructure which sustains Edinburgh's cultural and creative sectors; and
 - 4.2.6 investing in artist and practitioner development and supporting and sustaining the local artistic community.
- 4.3 To offer in brief an overview of the scale and reach of the work of Capital Theatres in 2019/20:
- 4.3.1 more than 415,000 people visited the Festival, King's and Studio Theatres;
 - 4.3.2 144 shows were programmed of which 87 were accessible (BSL, Audio Described, Captioned, Relaxed and Dementia Friendly); and
 - 4.3.3 over 300 Learning and Participation activities were delivered to over 13,000 participants and tickets provided to over 3,000 of those participants.
- 4.4 The breadth and quality of offer is evident, and genres include ballet, children's, comedy, drama and musical performances as well as offering the option of screenings, and of course, one of the top three most popular Pantomimes in the UK.
- 4.5 2019/20 programme examples include:
- 4.5.1 *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, the Panto produced with QDos at the King's Theatre;
 - 4.5.2 Scottish Ballet's *The Snow Queen* at the Festival Theatre;
 - 4.5.3 *Six* – the musical at the Festival Theatre - originally premiered at the Fringe, and subsequently developed using the Studio Theatre, going on to become a West End hit, and returning to Edinburgh in 2019 as part of the UK tour;
 - 4.5.4 *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* – musical at the Festival Theatre;
 - 4.5.5 *The Magic Flute* – Scottish Opera at Festival Theatre;
 - 4.5.6 *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* – BBC Radio 4 programme hosted at the Festival Theatre;
 - 4.5.7 Four local amateur productions, including *The Gang Show*, staged at the King's Theatre.
- 4.6 The Learning and Participation Team address health and social inequalities that exist for communities in the city, delivering their strategy seeking to make arts accessible for all, and continuing the Trust's commitment to relaxed and dementia-friendly performances, thereby widening access and sharing lessons learned locally, nationally and internationally.
- 4.7 A relevant example of both programme development, and sharing lessons learned as a result, is the Learning and Participation Team's project, FUSE, a two-year care

experienced young people's project, funded by Creative Scotland. It is the largest project of its kind in Scotland which aims to increase engagement in the performing arts amongst those who are care experienced. To date, the team has worked with young people from all types of care (looked after at home, foster care, residential care, kinship care, through care and after-care). Participants have had opportunities to see live theatre including the King's panto, CBeebies dress rehearsal, *Frankenstein*, *Everybody's Talking about Jamie* and *Six*. They also took part in a range of performance art workshops to let them try new things and develop new skills.

- 4.8 The Festival, King's and Studio Theatres also continue to work with several festivals hosting programmes including the Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, and Edinburgh International Jazz and Blues Festival.
- 4.9 Capital Theatres celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Festival Theatre in June 2019. Amongst many others, both the Lord Provost and the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs celebrated the theatre's longstanding history and exceptional reputation in the city.
- 4.10 225 participants from 14 different community groups came together to perform in front of nearly 600 people on a night of 25th Anniversary celebrations '25 Live' The Big Birthday Show. The variety of performances demonstrates Capital Theatres' support and development of talent whilst providing year-round opportunities to engage in their learning and participation programme. The '25 Live' variety show celebrated the talent of their participants and the breadth of their engagement work.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Capital Theatres will continue to deliver against both their Business Plan as well as Council Funding Agreement. The Third Party Cultural Grants Review agreed by Committee in [June 2019](#) recommended the creation of a Strategic Partnership Theatres Grouping of which Capital Theatres is the lead partner. The grouping includes the Lyceum Theatre, the Traverse, Edinburgh Performing Arts Development (EPAD) and Lung Ha Theatre Company. Evidently, the Priorities and Targets included in the related Funding Agreement have been overtaken by the COVID19 crisis. All Strategic Partners (revenue funded organisations and groupings) are being asked to report on the re-purposing of their funding with reference to the original Priorities included in the original Funding Agreements, and on subsequent mitigation, resilience and activity/event re-design activity.
- 5.2 Business and programme planning options continue in the exceptional context of the on-going COVID19 pandemic and associated Public Health Guidelines.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The Council awarded a grant of £586,154 to Capital Theatres in 2019/20.

- 6.2 Capital Theatres continue to successfully manage and deliver a very robust financial performance.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Capital Theatres has an extensive and successful Learning and Participation programme reaching a very wide community base alongside its main theatres and Studio programmes seeking to deliver accessible programme of activities and theatre.
- 7.2 Capital Theatres meet their Council Funding Agreement Conditions.
- 7.3 Capital Theatres has an Environmental Policy – [Towards a Greener Future](#).

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Capital Theatres website: [Capital Theatres](#)
- 8.2 [Capital Theatres Annual review 2018/19](#)
- 8.3 [Capital Theatres Company Performance Report 2017/18, report to Culture and Communities Committee, 13 November 2018](#)
- 8.4 [Capital Theatres Company Performance Report 2018/19, report to Culture and Communities Committee, 12 November 2019](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – King's Theatre Capital Project Update.
- 9.2 Appendix 2 – Funding Agreement 2019/20 Targets.

King's Theatre Capital Project Update

The planned £25m redevelopment of the Grade A listed King's Theatre will save the much-loved venue for the enjoyment and inspiration of generations to come.

In 2020-21 the following progress has been made:

- £17m funds secured, including £4m City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) commitment;
- Stage 1 pass from National Lottery Heritage Fund;
- RIBA Stage 3 completed; and
- Planning permission secured.

In light of COVID-19, the project was paused in March 2020. This impacted on meeting the funding and development timetable of the project and the start of works in September 2021.

Capital Theatres Board met at the end of September to analyse the risk associated with potential options such as delaying the project, phasing the project or scaling the project. The detailed risk analysis focused the Board's decision that the only feasible option is to progress the current scale and scope of project by a start date of 2022 at the latest. To do this Capital Theatres needs to secure, or at the very least have underwritten, the remaining £8m and has commenced discussions with Scottish Government.

With the extent of the pandemic on theatres' ability to reopen their doors, this is the best time to progress the project, utilising this inevitable downtime when the theatre will experience a slow return of customers upon reopening after closure due to COVID-19.

The next step will be to instruct the design team to move forward with RIBA stage 4 and on securing the balance of the budget, drawing down £1m of the committed Council funding to resource this, and allow the project to be completely "shovel ready" within seven to nine months, providing a much needed contribution to a kickstart to the construction sector, and allow Capital Theatres to come back in a more resilient way with a key community asset open for all by day and night when the pandemic is over.

Capital Theatres Funding Agreement Targets 2019/20

TARGETS

1. Ensuring that everyone has access to world class cultural provision

Targets:

The Recipient will:

1. Programme at least 2 pieces of international work in addition to Dance Consortium Tours.
2. Deliver at least 2 staged productions, 2 events and 2 facilitated theatre visits to ensure that people with a track record of low engagement/non-engagement have access to the arts, as artists, makers, producers and audience members. This may include disabled people, economically deprived and those otherwise underrepresented in their venues.
3. Programme inclusive performances (relaxed and/or dementia friendly performances and/or other performances) of at least 2 large-scale productions and 1 small-scale production.
4. Programme at least 25 described, 15 captioned and 25 sign language interpreted performances.
5. Expand programme of work with care-experienced young people, to comprise at least 1 family day, 1 creative project and 2 workshops for carers.
- 6 Increase access to Capital Theatres venues by expanding their programme of foyer activities and events, a minimum of 100 events (workshops, rehearsals, talks, activities). **Delivered in part c. 50 activities took place.**
7. Deliver Year 5 of the Dementia Friendly Communities (formerly Forget Me Not) project measured against its action plan.

2. Encouraging the highest standards of creativity and excellence in all aspects of cultural activity

Targets:

The Recipient will:

8. Achieve or exceed attendance targets. Attendance (including rentals) 405,000.
9. Facilitate high-quality engagement work (such as workshops, CLPL sessions, pre/post-show talks, open rehearsals, supported theatre visits etc) in

partnership with at least 5 visiting companies, representing a range of work from across the artistic programme.

10. Commission professional artists to create a new, small-scale dementia friendly work that goes on to complete a tour to appropriate settings in Edinburgh and the region.

3. **Supporting greater partnership working in the cultural and creative sectors and maximise resources available to help them thrive all year round**

Targets:

The Recipient will:

11. Continue to take an active part in the Edinburgh Cultural Venues Group, including attending a minimum of 75% of meetings.
12. Work with Lyceum and Traverse Theatres to deliver at least 1 career day for schools.
13. Programme quality work from consortia in which Capital Theatres are involved, at least 1 production from each group. These consortia are: Dance Consortium, Music and Lyrics, and Touring Partnership.

4. **Articulating the positive impact to culture in Edinburgh and promoting Edinburgh's cultural success locally, nationally and internationally**

Targets:

The Recipient will:

14. Programme at least 10 weeks of quality drama measured by critical appraisal in a range of digital and print publications aiming to achieve between 10 and 15 reviews for each production with at least 75% 4-star ratings.
15. Measure success by retaining or improving performance as measured against the Indigo customer experience benchmark which includes venues across the country. Current benchmark base of 4.31/5 from 19,006 respondents from various venues. Capital Theatres responses: Festival Theatre 4.50/5; and the King's Theatre 4.04/5.
16. Undertake initial audit of Capital Theatres performance against the Customer Service Excellence Standard by the summer of 2019. **Background work done, but audit not completed – had intended to implement 2020.**

5. **Developing and supporting the infrastructure which sustains Edinburgh's cultural and creative sectors**

Targets:

The Recipient will:

17. Progress the King's Theatre redevelopment project to RIBA Stage 3 – Developed Design.
18. Raise capital funds for the King's Theatre Redevelopment Project in line with the fundraising strategy.
19. Maintain and deliver rolling 5-year Capital Expenditure Plan for essential works and core maintenance at the Festival Theatre.

6. Investing in artist and practitioner development, and supporting and sustaining the local artistic community

Targets:

The Recipient will:

20. Develop and deliver a pilot project to support and collaborate with a minimum of one associate artistic company. This may include (but is not limited to): sharing the expertise of Capital Theatres staff, giving space in kind to develop new work, delivering Learning & Participation activities in partnership. Success will be measured by peer and user feedback.
21. Act as parent company, offering support in kind through offices and administrative facilities, and participate in the delivery of the aims of the Edinburgh Performing Arts Development project (EPAD), including its Action Plan. This project aims to support smaller arts organisations and individual practitioners and build capacity in the sector.
22. Support industry colleagues by continuing to participate in EPAD's Pool of Expertise.
23. Continue to provide financial and management services to 3 small Edinburgh arts organisations (one free and two fixed fee).