

MAYOR AND CABINET			
Report Title	Response to comments of the Health & Safety Committee in relation to the Broadway Theatre		
Key Decision	No	Item No.	
Ward	All		
Contributors	Executive Director for Community Services		
Class	Part 1	Date: 3 December 2014	

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides a response to the concerns raised by the Health & Safety Committee regarding health and safety issues at the Broadway Theatre.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Mayor
- Approve the response from the Executive Director for Community Services and
 - Agree that this report should be forwarded to the Health & Safety Committee.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The Broadway Theatre is a valued historical Lewisham asset that plays a key role in the local cultural life. It presents a programme of arts and entertainment in its two Grade II listed auditoria.
- 3.2 Within the context of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Corporate Priorities, the Theatre plays a specific role in relation to the following:

Sustainable Community Strategy

- Ambitious and achieving – where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.
- Empowered and responsible – where people are actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities.
- Dynamic and prosperous – where people are part of vibrant communities and town centres, well connected

Corporate Priorities

- Community Leadership and Empowerment: developing opportunities for the active participation and engagement of people in the life of the community.

- Young people's achievement and involvement: raising educational attainment and improving facilities for young people through partnership working.
- Active, healthy citizens: leisure, sporting, learning and creative activities for everyone
- Inspiring efficiency, effectiveness and equity: ensuring efficiency and equity in the delivery of excellent services to meet the needs of the community.

4. Background

- 4.1 A Health & Safety Audit conducted by the Council's H&S Safety Officer in 2012 looked at all areas of the Theatre with the exception of the backstage and technical areas. The report found the Theatre's H&S procedures to be good, with some minor recommendations, all of which were carried out by November 2012.
- 4.2 More recently, following an accident to an employee in January 2014, a review of H&S procedures relating to the backstage revealed some inadequacies, particularly in relation to risk assessments. This prompted the commissioning of an externally produced Health & Safety Audit, which was conducted in August 2014 by RS Consultants who have expertise in theatre health and safety.
- 4.3 The Corporate Asset Services team have been carrying out a comprehensive review of all corporate assets and associated structures, systems and processes during the last 18 months. As a function of this work CAS have been reviewing how it supports the Theatre as a technically complex building to:
 - i. Ensure statutory compliance of the building fabric;
 - ii. Assist with the ensuring that the building and its offer is operationally sustainable, and can support the Catford Regeneration objectives more specifically, along with the wider corporate objectives.
- 4.4 The building is considered technically complex, not just because it is a listed theatre, but also because it shares infrastructure with the Town Hall Chambers and The Civic Suite (including fire alarm apparatus).
- 4.5 Specific building fabric compliance concerns were identified by CAS in mid-October 2014 when failures relating to regular fixed-wiring tests were surfaced by CAS Compliance officers who are now taking a more pro-active role in ensuring compliance across the whole corporate estate. A schedule of remedial works are underway, but have yet to be concluded (or certificated).
- 4.6 There is also the outstanding matter of whether the theatre ceiling is sound or not. A specialist survey is awaited although this is considered urgent given the age and nature of the building (this is related to the events at the Apollo Theatre in the West End last year and the ensuing guidance).

- 4.7 On 6 October 2014, the Health and Safety Committee discussed health and safety issues raised following the independent audit that had been carried out at the Broadway Theatre.
- 4.8 The Committee also agreed that members should receive an urgent briefing paper and that the Mayor and Cabinet be alerted to members' concerns about the issues raised.
- 4.9 The Committee also resolved that the situation at the Theatre should continue to be monitored by Health and Safety Officers.
- 5. Response to the Health & Safety Committee** In particular, the Committee highlighted the following specific concerns.
- 5.1 Concern 1: Whether there was a timeframe for the completion of the works recommended by the 2014 Audit.

Response

Officers from corporate H&S, the theatre and Corporate Asset Services have drawn up a schedule of planned work to enact all of the recommendations of the Audit (see Appendix 1). Actions have been prioritised and resources allocated to address high priority items. The business case for some lower priority items is still being considered such as the auditoria seating. All the high priority actions have either been completed or are in progress with completion dates agreed. Where it has not been possible to complete actions immediately due to availability of specialist services, interim arrangements have been put in place i.e. training for using harnesses is subject to the availability of the specialist trainers. However the council's directly employed technical staff who require the training are supplemented by agency staff for productions and the interim arrangement will be to ensure that the agency staff that are bought in have the training and can undertake any work requiring the use of a harness until the training for in-house staff can be completed.

- 5.2 **Concern 2:** Events are being held while some fire safety and evacuation works have not been carried out. In particular, pensioners' forum events may attract patrons with physical disability, while it is felt that the Theatre is not up to health and safety standard and cannot accommodate a large number of people in wheelchair.

Response

Officers are aware of the needs of disabled audiences as opposed to those specifically relating to wheelchair users. Indeed, events are being planned to take into account the limitations that derive from the limited number of evac chairs available.

Staff have now received training on the safe operation of evac chairs and will continue to limit access to the wheelchair users on the basis of the Theatre's capacity to evacuate this group.

In relation to larger scale evacuation, the recent Audit recommended a full audience evacuation. While this is a very important drill, officers are aware of the disruption that this may cause to the enjoyment of the audiences. However, officers are planning a full-scale evacuation at the end of an upcoming event.

5.3 **Concern 3:** Fire safety

Response

Urgent fire safety works that were identified by the audit have been carried out e.g. improvements to fire doors, review of evacuation plan and improvements to fire exit signage.

5.4 **Concern 4:** Equipment in the Theatre is not being used because staff had not been trained. A briefing for members should be produced by community services outlining the health and safety works that had been completed and the works that were planned for the Broadway Theatre.

Response

This specifically relates to the use of tallscopes and harnesses to access lighting positions. Training will be provided as soon as possible subject to the availability of the specialist training provider. In the meantime, agency staff with the necessary training and qualifications are employed when necessary to undertake work that involves this equipment.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The work described in paragraph 5 above will be funded from the 2014/15 Community Services revenue budget.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this update.

8 Crime and Disorder Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this update.

9 Equalities Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this update.

10 Environmental Implications

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this update.

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 A great deal of work has already taken place to address issues identified by the Health and Safety Audit for the Broadway Theatre. Staff from the theatre, corporate Health and Safety and Corporate Asset Services will continue to meet to ensure that all outstanding actions are concluded. This work is being completed alongside a review of the longer term operation of the theatre.

Background papers

Health and safety committee – Corporate health and safety team update
6/10/2014

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s31430/Health%20and%20Safety%20update.pdf>

Referral to Mayor and Cabinet Committee 22/10/2014

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s31829/Health%20and%20Safety%20referral.pdf>

For further information, please contact Liz Dart, Head of Cultural and Community Development on 020 8314 8637

Appendix 1

Audit recommendations Action Plan Status Report

No.	Description	Urgency	Comments
1	Review doors which need to remain propped open and install Dorguards.	HIGH	Installation complete
2	Installation of Evac Chairs and Trainer Training	HIGH	Evac chairs installed - training completed.
3	Signing-in for contractors/visitors with induction in evacuation procedures	HIGH	Introduced September 2014.
4	Harness Training	HIGH	Funding approved – training being scheduled
5	Working at heights training	HIGH	Funding approved – training being scheduled
6	Risk assessment training	HIGH	Set of risk assessments to be produced by RS Consulting and generic risk assessment training to be provided in-house for staff to be able to annually review and update risk assessments and produce any new ones as required including for individual productions.
7	Tallescope works/training	HIGH	Funding approved – training being scheduled
8	First Aid Training	MEDIUM	Training arranged for January 2015 and February 2015 for 4 F/T staff members.
9	COSHH Training	MEDIUM	To be reviewed once other training completed
10	Manual handling	MEDIUM	To be provided through corporate training programme
11	Sort Magnilock controlled doors from Broadway Bar and Main entrance plus software	HIGH	Completed
12	Gantry works	HIGH	In progress

No.	Description	Urgency	Comments
13	New chairs for follow spots	HIGH	On order
14	Asbestos labelling	MEDIUM	In progress, asbestos plan for the building is made available for all contractors working on site. Further advice being sought on whether it is appropriate to label asbestos in public areas of the building.
15	Test smoke vent in dimmer room		In progress
16	Reroute cable and review requirement for doors on bridge.	MEDIUM	Completed
17	Repair and secure door to cage.	LOW	Completed
18	Under office. Use chains to secure free standing cylinders in store. Change Fire Exit signs so that they give correct information.	HIGH	Completed
19	Provide hand hold to improve access into studio theatre control room.	MEDIUM	Funding approved and work scheduled
20	Stage Blacks – repair.	MEDIUM	Funding approved
21	Freezer temperature checks should be made and recorded.	MEDIUM	Completed
22	ABTT membership	HIGH	Funding approved, membership agreed to ensure staff are able to keep up to date with H&S good practice
23	Duty Manager at rehearsals involving large nos	HIGH	Completed: - implemented Sep 2014
24	Health & Safety law poster	HIGH	Installed Completed
25	Review Evacuation Plan	MEDIUM	Completed
26	Prepare a Theatre Specific H&S policy	MEDIUM	Will be prepared following completion of Risk Assessments
27	Dedicated safe site for pyros	HIGH	In progress; pyros are very rarely used. Dedicated safe site will be in

No.	Description	Urgency	Comments
			place before next intended usage.
28	PPE assessment for staff/crew/stewards	MEDIUM	In progress
29	Review lighting sub stage	MEDIUM	Inspected and reported.
30	First aid kits - stocked and in place		Completed
31	Props to doors at side of stage		In progress
32	Mend leading edge of trap doors		Access restricted as interim measure. Work being quoted.