

Mayor and Cabinet			
Report Title	Response to Broadway Theatre Working Party Final Report recommendations		
Key Decision	No	Item No.	
Ward	Rushey Green		
Contributors	Executive Director for Community Services, Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration		
Class	Part 1	Date:	11 January 2017

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a response to final report produced by the Broadway Theatre working party that was considered at Full Council on 23 November 2016.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Mayor:

2.1 Approve the responses made by the Executive Director for Community Services to the recommendations made in the Broadway Theatre Working Party Final Report.

2.2 Agree that this report should be forwarded to Full Council.

3. Background

3.1 It was resolved at Full Council on 24th June 2015 to establish the Broadway Theatre Working Party as a time limited group. The Broadway Theatre Working Party met 4 times. It considered the current state of the building and it's limitations, reviewed consultation with residents about their expectations of the venue, looked at comparison studies with other venues, received presentations from the theatre staff, pro-bono architect Ian Chalk and Lewisham Youth Theatre.

3.2 At the final meeting of the Broadway Theatre Working Party on 7th June 2016, a set of final recommendations were agreed. These were included in a final report that was considered by full council on 23 November 2016.

4. Responses to the Final Report Recommendations

4.1 Set out below are the final recommendations made by the Broadway Theatre Working Party with a response to each.

4.2 **Recommendation 1** - Recognise the strategic value of the theatre as more than a cultural and heritage hub, but also as an anchor in Catford's town centre function, and therefore its importance to wider regeneration initiatives in the area.

Response – The Broadway Theatre is seen as central to the redevelopment of Catford. It is a unique asset that provides a focal point for the regeneration. Senior council officers with responsibility for the Broadway Theatre represent its interests on the Catford Regeneration Board. Officers within regeneration recognise the theatre's central importance as an anchor within Catford Town Centre and to the regeneration programme as a whole.

4.3 **Recommendation 2** - Invest in the theatre and ancillary space, so as to its potential as a multi-purpose broad arts, events and conference space, in-line with the expectations of the community from the consultation work we have undertaken.

Response – The recommendation to retain and further develop the Broadway Theatre as a multi-purpose venue is enthusiastically accepted. A programme of work supported by officers from regeneration and community services is being undertaken to address issues raised by the access audit, improve the bar and catering offer and make some minor improvements that will enhance the operation of the venue in the short term.

4.4 **Recommendation 3** - Commission officers to develop a robust business case ahead of submitting a bid to grant makers (National Lottery) that identifies both the capital funding for the project and ongoing commercial viability of the arts/theatre space, by using complimentary tertiary services such as food and drink provision to subsidise art activity.

Response – this work is underway. The condition surveys and access audit already undertaken have provided valuable information as have the comparison studies of other venues. The next step is to commission a conservation plan to ensure that the development plan for the Broadway Theatre is sympathetic to the Grade II listing. This will also assist officers in better understanding the important heritage of the building to inform a potential bid to Heritage Lottery Fund. It is hoped that the conservation plan will be completed in Spring 2017 and a Stage 1 bid to Heritage Lottery be submitted by the end of the calendar year.

4.5 **Recommendation 4** - Recognise both the hard work of staff working on the current Broadway delivery, alongside Ian Chalk Architects for their pro-bono support of the project

Response – the working party's recognition is noted. The Theatre staff have done an excellent job managing the venue through its transition following the reorganisation. They have introduced new areas of programming such as the Catford Upon Avon, Shakespeare Festival that have been very well received

by residents. Officers would like to thank members of the working party for their commitment and support for the Broadway Theatre.

4.6 Recommendation 5 - Ensure that key artistic groups, that support the vibrancy of the arts community across Lewisham, such as Lewisham Youth Theatre, are consulted on any future activity.

Response – officers will continue to work with Lewisham Youth Theatre and other stakeholders as plans develop.

4.7 Recommendation 6 - Bring forward proposals, and identify the capital funding to invest in the theatre, to increase not only revenue receipts, but signal to developers and the community the function of this town centre (entertainment, retail and administration) and crucially our commitment as a local authority to the area being regenerated.

Response – The council has earmarked staff resources within the Catford Regeneration Programme to support the Broadway Theatre Development Project. Consideration is also being given to allocating a small amount of capital funds to undertake minor works in the short term, however it is recognised that the full capital requirements of the theatre are beyond the council's resources and will require external investment. The opportunity that this project has to signal change in Catford is recognised. One example of how officers are responding to this is the recent marketing exercise undertaken to identify a commercial partner to run the café and bars in the theatre. The marketing exercise has been positive so far, and officers hope to have a new café/bar operator in situ in Spring 2017.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Funding has been allocated within the Catford Regeneration Programme Budget for minor works. The full cost of the improvements needed for the Broadway Theatre is likely to be beyond the scope of the council's capital programme and additional external funding sources will be required.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this response, save for noting that the Council's Constitution provides that the Executive may respond to reports and recommendations by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7. Equalities Implications

7.1 It is essential to the success of the Broadway Theatre Development Project that the needs of all its current and potential users are taken into consideration. The Broadway Theatre has a good reputation for attracting audiences from all sections of the community. The recent access audit has highlighted some areas for

improvement some of which are being addressed in the short term and others will be considered as part of the long term development plan.

8. Environmental Implications

8.1 There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report.

Background Papers

Broadway Theatre Working Group Minutes available online on the Lewisham Council website..

Full Council 23 November 2016 Final report of the Broadway Theatre Working Party

For further information contact Liz Dart, Head of Culture and Community Development on 020 8314 6115.