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**Joint Report of the Directors of Learning & Leisure and Legal & Democratic Services**

**Executive Board**

**Date: 17 May 2006**

**Subject: GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS OF THE LEEDS GRAND THEATRE AND  
OPERA HOUSE LTD**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In  
(Details contained in the report)

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report focuses on the governance arrangements of the Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera North Ltd and recommends that:

a fundamental review of the governance arrangements which are in place currently is carried out to ensure they are fit for purpose.

**1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

1.1 This report considers a number of matters with respect to the governance arrangements of the Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd.

**2.0 Background Information – Governance Arrangements**

2.0 Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd was established in 1970 as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

2.1 The company operates three venues : the Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House, the City Varieties Music Hall and the Hyde Park Picture House. The company receives an annual grant from the City Council. The grant is not earmarked to support a particular activity or venue and any unspent grant is added to the company's reserves. The company leases the Grand Theatre and the Assembly Rooms from the City Council but owns the City Varieties Music Hall and the Hyde Park Picture House.

- 2.2 The Grand Theatre was closed in May 2005 for a major refurbishment. Opera North, the Grand Theatre and the Council are working closely to deliver Transformation, an ambitious £31.5m project to restore the theatre and assembly rooms.

#### The Council Nominations to the Board of Management

- 2.3 The Grand Theatre and Opera House is a controlled company as defined in the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act with the Member Management Committee<sup>1</sup> annually nominating Councillors to the Board of Directors. Councillors Feldman (Chair), Atha, Townsley, W Hyde, Taylor and D Blackburn currently constitute the Board of Directors during 2005/6. Such nominations are governed by specific procedure rules contained in the Council's constitution.
- 2.5 In January 2005 Executive Board agreed to the current Board make up with the number of Elected Members being reduced from 9 to 6 and the remaining three places to be filled by independent nominations to the Board

### **3.0 Review of Governance**

- 3.0 The Council's Code of Corporate Governance requires that assessments are regularly undertaken to provide the Council with assurance that governance arrangements are fit for their purpose.
- 3.1 In light of the very substantial investment of public money in the Leeds Grand Theatre project and the requirement to consider significant future investment in the City Varieties Theatre, it is felt that it is highly appropriate to conduct this review at this time so that any changes to existing arrangements are in place for the re-opening of the Leeds Grand Theatre in October 2006.

### **4.0 Legal And Resource Implications**

- 4.0 Whilst this report contains no specific legal or financial implications such matters are fundamental to the governance arrangements operating at the Grand Theatre.

### **5.0 Conclusions**

- 5.0 The terms of reference for reviewing the governance arrangements and the composition of the review team are laid out in Appendix 1 to this report.

### **6.0 Recommendations**

- 6.0 That Executive Board approves the terms of reference for reviewing the governance arrangements of the Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House.
- 6.1 That a report be brought back to Executive Board to enable any changes to existing arrangements to be in place by the re-opening of the Leeds Grand Theatre in October 2006.

<sup>1</sup> The Member Management Committee is a politically balanced Committee that is chaired alternately by the Party Whips of the two largest parties of the ruling administration. Appointments to the Grand Theatre have been categorised as 'Key and Strategic' appointments and as such are determined by the Member Management Committee and not Full Council.

- 6.2 That the Member Management Committee be recommended, in the interim, to reserve appointments to the Leeds Grand Theatre board to Members of the Executive Board.

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