



Morley Town Hall

Artistic Planning, Commercial Programming and
Community Use





Introduction to Arts, Events & Venues

- Over 70FTE staff & 280 casuals/volunteers deliver a huge range of cultural activity and community engagement through programming and managing many of the city's key venues and festivals
- Key venues informing this vision - **Leeds Town Hall** and **The Carriageworks Theatre** – in close proximity but complement each other in terms of differing capacities – bookings can be shared across spaces – Morley capacity sits in between the two.
- Venues and events are run holistically with teams working across the following areas:
 - **Operations**
 - **Technical**
 - **Programming**
 - **Comms**
 - **Ticketing (£2.8m income generated in 2022/23)**
- This differs from the way Morley Town Hall is currently run as the Lettings Team receive bookings and then hand over to Facilities Management. Currently no event support.
- Operating Model – hybrid of community and professional work, with commercial activity to offset subsidised activity.
- Similarly to the Carriageworks, a working group like LeedsCAN could be set up to represent local community groups and bring them together to receive subsidised rates and guaranteed use of the building



Community Consultation

- Morley Town Hall is viewed by many as the **heart of Morley** with value placed particularly upon its built heritage and history
- There is a widespread perception that the building is **underused** with and presents **access issues** for many
- Support for investment into the building, particularly **preserving the heritage elements**, but critically ensuring that this dovetails with increasing the variety and volume of use
- Prioritising increasing use by **community** organisations, for **arts and cultural activities**, as well as for private hire - the term “**community hub**” being used by some
- A desire for **subsidised** use for community organisations or for activities which create broader **community impact**
- General support for the creation of a **café/ bar** space, but some concern about the impact on other Morley businesses, and the level of competition which could impact upon its success



Key Issues

- Relationship with the **local community** is key.
- Events to be **cost effective** and suit the budget and needs/wants of locals – further consultation needed
- Building must be **viable financially** - need for commercial programme of activity to offset subsidised activity
- Building should be proactively programmed as well as hired and deliver a **mixed economy programme**
- Building needs **professionally trained venue staff** to support events from client get-in to audience departure.
- Lack of on-site licensed **café bar** and catering. Bar should be key income source for the venue generating secondary spend income. Potential to create a welcoming café bar which could be open every day for shoppers and local workers

Staffing Resource



Staffing requirements:

- **Technical** - currently there are no trained technical staff to operate lights and sound.
- **Duty Management** – someone to take responsibility for the running of events in a professional manner and take responsibility for customer care and health and safety
- **Security** - SIA accredited staff during the evening events
- **Marketing** – there is currently no website or social media presence for MTH. Opportunities are being missed to gather customer data and develop audiences. Likewise **Ticketing**
- In order to save money multi-skilled staff be recruited – e.g. a Duty Manager with basic IT skills could provide tech support for business events

Creative Programming

Alexandra Hall

- Comedy nights – featuring well-known touring comedians
- Comedy club – regular (eg monthly) comedy evenings presenting 3 or 4 lesser known comedians with a compere. These types of events would work well in a cabaret style layout.
- Family events - including theatre shows and Saturday morning film screenings
- Music – tribute acts, local talent nights, open mic nights
- Spoken word – including author talks and ‘An Evening with’ events featuring well known personalities from TV/sport etc
- Amateur hires for local theatre groups to perform
- Dance school hires – for end of year and seasonal performances

Small Rooms

- Family events – including smaller scale theatre shows, storytelling, interactive events such as craft and music workshops
- Dance school hires – for classes and workshops
- Rehearsal space for local amateur dramatic societies



Commercial Opportunities

Due to the location commercial opportunities will be more limited than Leeds Town Hall/Carriageworks Theatre. However, the excellent transport links will make this an attractive space to hire if promoted correctly at the correct price-point. Focus on local businesses and organisations and promote activity in available small meeting rooms. Competitive hire fees will encourage long term hires and repeat business.

Alexandra Hall

- Fairs – books/records/antiques/food and drink etc
- Fairs and events based around local interest – arts and craft/photography etc.
- Wedding fairs
- Martial arts and other indoor sporting activity
- Private hire for wedding receptions / children's parties / birthdays etc
- Playgroup / preschool – with updated facilities – create an immersive space with sensory activity
- Church groups (Sunday mornings)

Small Rooms

- Small business meetings / local enterprise
- Charity organisations
- Local public sector meetings – NHS/Education
- Hot desking for local businesses
- Local clubs such as chess / gaming etc

