
Report of the Chief Libraries, Arts and Heritage Officer

To: Member Management Committee

Date: 29 June 2010

Subject: Appointment of Members to West Yorkshire Playhouse Board

Electoral Wards Affected:
City and Hunslet

Specific Implications For:

- Ethnic minorities
- Women
- Disabled people
- Narrowing the Gap

1 Purpose

1.1 To finalise the appointment of elected members to West Yorkshire Playhouse Board..

2 Background

2.1 West Yorkshire Playhouse has recently reviewed its governance arrangements following concerns expressed by its main funders The Arts Council. A new, much smaller, focused Board of 12 plus the Chair has been created working to current best practice guidelines.

2.2 Arts Council have approved these changes and the skills matrix, which has been developed to ensure that Board members are appointed who can make a significant difference in areas that the Company need support. The differing roles and remits of the Board and management have been defined as has the decision making process

2.3 West Yorkshire Playhouse offered the Council two seats on the new Board in recognition of the grant funding and to fill the skill gap of representing the company in the city and providing city profile.

2.4 Member Management Committee considered appointment to these two seats in April and one appointment was made immediately in recognition of the Company's desire to train and brief the new Board collectively. Unfortunately the initial briefing was missed due to the timings of the appointment however West Yorkshire Playhouse plan to repeat this for the Council members

2.5 Member Management Committee requested that an enquiry be made if a third seat could be made available for a Leeds City Council member.

3 Appointments

- 3.1 One appointment has been made and Cllr Gruen has taken up his seat. The second seat has yet to be allocated and Member Management Committee is requested to fill this position as soon as possible:
- 3.2 A discussion has taken place with West Yorkshire Playhouse as to a third seat on the Board. The Playhouse are concerned about this as it increases the Board when they have struggled hard to reduce the size, it would also mean that there are an even number of seats which is not good practice. The two seats reflect the Council grant and the valuable role that two Councillors can play in representing and positioning the theatre in the city. It was also noted that no other performing arts company in receipt of a grant had offered the Council seats on their Board.

4 Background Reports used

Member Management Committee 20 April 2010; West Yorkshire Playhouse Change to Board Arrangements

5 Recommendation

- 5.1 That Member Management Committee appoint the second elected member to West Yorkshire Playhouse and instead of seeking a third seat on this Board request the Chief Libraries, Arts and Heritage Officer investigate the potential of making a seat on the Board a requirement of future Council grant support.