
Report of the Chief Libraries, Arts and Heritage Officer

To: Member Management Committee

Date: 29 June 2010

Subject: Appointment of Four Councillors to the Board of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd

Electoral Wards Affected:
City and Hunslet

Specific Implications For:

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

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek the appointment of four Councillors to the Board of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd..

2 Background

- 2.1 The Board of The Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd was established when Leeds City Council took ownership of The Grand Theatre. The Board ensures the accountability of The Grand Theatre, City Varieties and Hyde Park Picture House as charities working to the Charities Commission guidelines.
- 2.2 In 2006 a fundamental review of the governance of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd. was commissioned by the Executive Board. The Charities Commission had raised concern and identified that the theatres would benefit from a wider interest base. . The Executive Board recognized that there were a number of challenges that needed to be tackled to ensure a sound and sustainable future for the company, in particular this included a greater separation and clarity of the differing roles of the Grand Theatre Manager and staff team and The Board. This led to the introduction of a new Board manual. The Executive Board also wished to give the company greater autonomy over its running following the major refurbishment of Leeds Grand Theatre and proposed work to City Varieties.
- 2.3 The conclusions of this review were made to Executive Board on the 20 September 2006 in the report - *Future Governance of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd*. Executive Board agreed to establish a new Board made up of four independent members and four Elected Members.. In addition the Chair of the Board would be the relevant Executive Board Member. All would be appointed using a skills matrix

(developed to meet Charity Commission requirements) to ensure the necessary support was given to the staff team. It was also agreed that elected members, while being appointed onto the Board annually, could sit for 3 years with a further 3 years if appropriate.

2.4 The new Board was introduced in 2007 as were other changes agreed by Executive Board. These have had a significant and positive impact on the company. Senior politicians were appointed to the Board from all parties and they have made an important contribution in advising and supporting the Company Director. As a result the Company is in the middle of profound and much needed change. There is much work still to do and the Director has a clear implementation plan to deliver the necessary change.

3 Independent Members

3.1 The company has attracted its independent members through advertisement and they have been appointed following a rigorous process which worked to the Nolan principles of sound governance as approved by Executive Board. There are currently three independent members:

- Paul Iles who brings significant theatre and programme knowledge.
- Roger Wood whose background is HR in a major company.
- Dr. Keith Howard who brings a wide range of business and financial expertise as well as valuable profile to the company.

3.2 The company is currently working to appoint the fourth independent Board Member.

4 Elected Member appointments

4.1 Member Management Committee is requested to determine the four elected members for the Board of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd., who fit the skills gaps identified as priorities. These are, experience of finance, marketing and learning.

5 Background Reports used

- ☐ May 2006 Governance Arrangements of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd
- ☐ September 2006 Future Governance of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd
- ☐ 31st May Member Management Committee; Future Governance of Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd
- ☐ The Grand Theatre and Opera House Board manual

6 Recommendation

6.1 That Member Management Committee appoint 4 Elected Members to Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House Ltd., to support Councillor Ogilvie who will chair the Board.