

APPENDIX DCharles Cryer Centre**Presentation evenings September 2018**

These notes summarise the two presentation evenings held in September 2018. Reported below are the questions and comments from the panels to each bidder, following the presentation, and their responses. After that table is the summary of positive and negative points raised in discussion and further questions to be put to the bidders following the private discussion among the panel. The written responses by bidders to those questions are then summarised.

Session One: 3/9/18 - Citizens and Young CommissionersCarshalton Baptist Church

Q&A session

Questions/comments from panel	Response
Specify links with drug/alcohol rehab?	Quoted sources and links with groups - also Christians against Poverty
Detail in retention of theatre	Yes, plus retention/expansion of upper level, but without fixed seating
Sales of alcohol permitted?	Not spirits but wine could be brought in. Abuse of alcohol not permitted. No licensed bar.
Security issue with alcohol?	Ensure hirers aware of regulations.
Will hire charges be payable	Yes
How many music/theatre productions	Monthly open mic, annual event for schools, Churches Together multi-faith group
Evening opening	Yes - listen to all age groups
Diverse music scene e.g. metal - would this be allowed	As long as not contentious. Try to appeal to maximum number of local people.
How to encourage people to use the space	Meet, talk, accommodate. Promotion. Not necessarily Christian groups.
How will they promote the centre	Using good connections, diverse congregation including lots of foster

	parents.
How will they deal with competition with Wallington Baptists	Church has a different identity. The DNA of the pastor is important.

Post Presentation comments

Good

- Range of uses
- Arts and music
- Community issues
- Not staid or too “Church”
- Flexible
- Good for younger people
 - Nothing else around!
- Youth club +ve
- Better location would help with promotion

Bad

- How to signal presence to neighbours
- Ability to promote
- Not well-known
- More space at Cryer - how to fill it
- Taking on too much?
- Too wide an offer/not enough demand?
- Still exclusive in a sense because faith-based

Question

How would they ensure delivery and make all the ideas happen?

Response (summarised)

Project management, employment of business manager, careful scheduling, promotion and advertising.

Cryer Arts

Q&A Session

Questions/comments from panel	Response
How do they think the last occupier failed	Too avant-garde, wrong demographic, not enough activity at the Cryer, marketing strategy, cancellations
How would it be promoted	Appoint theatre manager, listen to what

	people want, create 10-12 jobs for local people, engage volunteer groups and possibly apprentices
How would they reach out to people	Connections with schools, music/stagecraft, demand, school liaison
How would they accommodate older people	Activities such as film nights, Northern Soul, dancing. Inclusivity is important.
Would it be open during the day	Yes. Intention to open bar from noon - 2300 7 days a week and auditorium/lobby from 0900. Carried out marketing outside the building to establish what people want.
Would they charge for rehearsal space	Yes, depending on timing e.g. Monday would be cheaper than weekend
How about drama for theatre area not comedy/music	In touch with local theatre groups and very keen to accommodate e.g. Panto season. Will have online booking system with no booking fee.
How to use arts to attract special needs schools	Will engage with them in due course as know there is demand.
Are they confident about finances	Yes - in the project and each other. Will run a 106 week advance diary. Community benefits. Also free life saving instruction and defibrillator station.

Post Presentation comments

Good

Competent

Experienced

- Have to adapt

Focus on other spaces

Knowledge of building

Scope for another pub

Realistic about potential

Knowledge of area

Good learning resource

Very strong bid

Learned from failure of STT

Contacts

Understand the market/reflect the area

Bad

Parking impact?

Is it really inclusive e.g. mental health, complex needs, disabilities

Need to reach out to more of the community

Questions

1. How to achieve a fully inclusive approach?
2. How could all elements be fully open to all community, eg. radio station?
3. Will they offer training courses, apprenticeships etc?

Responses (summarised)

1. The restaurant would offer good value and cover many dietary requirements. As wide a spectrum as possible of arts and entertainment would be offered. A team of volunteers is being assembled from many sectors of the community.
2. They anticipate a fully inclusive programme open to all and the radio station would be as diverse as possible with community groups and charities especially encouraged.
3. They hope to offer catering apprenticeships plus less formal training in theatre operations. They would hold monthly training on the public access defibrillator.

Nickel Support

Q&A

Questions/comments from panel	Response
Are they open-minded about small theatre companies and group hiring ,such as teenagers - what would be the approach to cost	Yes and would run workshops through other organisations, take % of ticket sales
Adults bar in the evenings?	Yes, interval drinks at small bar, possibility of cafe opening if demand sufficient
Vision for type of performances?	Family friendly, comedy, drama, live music, open mic, be many things for the community
Will available money cover the refurb	They believe it will and have obtained quotes. Including for cinema system and theatre refit.
Will whole restaurant area be a cafe	Yes - they believe there is demand
Basis of use projections?	They believe these are realistic
How to get people to come back to the Cryer e.g. not traditional groups	Lots of contact with artists and performance groups, festival, live gigs

Classes/internships offered?	Yes, through CIC means money will go back to the Centre
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Post Presentation comments

Good

Child-centred - exclusive?

- Possibly too much so?

Community based - not seeking to be "Cool"

Workshop proposals good

Inclusivity

Environmental implications

Community orientated

Refit of theatre

Internships/people development

Bad

Theatre would take second fiddle?

Imprint own ideas rather than what the community wants

Heavy focus on children uses

Less so for evenings

Appeal to theatre users other than their own?

Structure of CIC with related profit making companies?

Questions

1. How to keep arts scene growing with regard to extent of children-related uses?
2. How do separate components of business feed into CIC?

Responses (summarised)

1. Theatre company has customer base already and the theatre space will also provide music, comedy, Shakespeare, new writing/modern plays and musical theatre. It would be available to community and amateur groups and workshops/classes.
2. There will be a specific company to operate the complex which will sub-let areas to other operating companies such as the theatre/studio and cafe. These will contribute to maintenance of the complex.

Session Two: 4/9/18 - Community Representatives, Arts Network Sutton, Local Councillors and Opposition Spokesman for the Arts

Carshalton Baptist Church

Q&A Session

Questions/comments from panel	Response
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What happens to Strawberry Lodge?	It's been let for 25 years to Eagle House School. The church can use it for worship on Sundays and is looking for space for its other activities.
Would they accommodate people or groups from outside the church	Yes
Would there be any restrictions e.g. against non-religious groups?	All would be welcome as long as harmonious with the principal congregation
How would they deal with outdoor events	Pay to use the park
How to preserve theatre/cultural uses	Would work with a local theatre, also scope for drama uses via church
Who would run the above	It is not happening at present due to parking restrictions at Strawberry Lodge
How would they deal with parking	Space to rear and P&D nearby
How would the theatre space be retained	Keep seating and flexible layout, use for different activities
Would they retain the existing flooring	They hope to do so
How to deal with sound/lighting issues	Employ professional help
What would be the bar offer, e.g. interval drinks	Community cafe to be developed, would allow wine on premises for certain events
Reopen a restaurant?	In future perhaps
Can they provide any firm undertaking to reopen a theatre	Will work with theatre groups, schools, provide music evenings e.g. jazz, don't want Carshalton to lose the theatre
How to contributed to a vibrant local scene e.g. by working with local groups	Will allow local groups to use space for meetings, e.g. Wandle Trust have worked with them before, want the community to know space is available
How to make more visible and deal with religious use in context of community use	Feel not excessively obvious that Strawberry Lodge is a church - maintain balance
Is their deal on Strawberry Lodge contingent on their getting Charles Cryer	No - still have access on Sundays for services and this will continue during the lease they have granted for the school.

Post Presentation comments

Good

Positive nature of proposals

Bad

Reproduce Strawberry Lodge operation

Difficult to envisage effectively working as both church and community/arts venue

Religious connotations may be off-putting to non-religious users or other faith groups

Moving their operation doesn't make it much more accessible

Ability to run as a commercial asset

Not enough reference to theatre potential

Not predominantly an arts use

How far does it address inclusivity, ethnic diversity, the wider community

Questions

1. How would proposals allow e.g. use by pantomime company for two weeks?
2. Does the High Street need another coffee shop - evidence of demand?
3. How inclusive would their use be of the whole community?
4. For how much time would the theatre stand empty?
5. Would they reopen a restaurant?
6. How would they balance the arts/community and spiritual uses, e.g. commit to a number of performances?
7. Can they confirm no structural changes in the building?

Responses (summarised)

1. They would agree requirements with parties including letting between 0900-2300 Monday to Saturday. May be able to move other activities.
2. The Centre would also be established as a conference/training venue and used as gateway to access other services and support
3. Would continue fully inclusive policy maintained for 20 years at Strawberry Lodge, accessible to all and not based on faith or beliefs. Would not accept those seen to be encouraging division or conflict.
4. They would seek to move in four to six months after acceptance of the bid and make the theatre available in the following three months.
5. In the longer term a restaurant would be opened or the cafe used in the evenings once the scheme is established and settled.
6. Apart from restrictions on use and access during church services, activities would be booked on a first-come, first-served basis.
7. They would propose to install a mezzanine on the upper level of the theatre space in due course to expand capacity.

Cryer Arts

Q&A

Questions/comments from panel	Response
Proposals will bring lots of people - how about parking	Use large P&D adjacent and other transport modes of bus and train will be encouraged
Would users use Westcroft car park	They think not - High Street is more convenient and movement of people will help support other traders
Will bar subsidise other parts of the operation	Bar/restaurant should cover the whole costs of the building. However other uses such as hires won't be free. Will encourage drama groups such as those priced out by the previous tenant. Hires will create spin-off trade.
Emphasis for performance seems to be on comedy, music, dance not drama?	There is scope for drama but the other uses will start up quicker - drama will follow. These hires also are more sustained e.g. panto or theatre runs for several weeks so better news for income. Budget includes new rear projection system for scenery.
How to promote/get people out	Ensure enough exposure, use music and drama networks, social media e.g. 1100 people following their bid, online booking system with no fees, possibly touch display at front of building, also run monthly life saving sessions
How to promote access for community groups, promote diversity	Help groups as much as possible, recognise importance of community access e.g. meetings in offices at rear of ground floor. Would work with unsuccessful bidders. Will put 10% of net profits in a fund to subsidise rentals for local groups. Encourage diversity through employment. Consider restarting Rockstock festival. Diverse background of clients.
How would they take community projects further afield	Have not discussed this but it could be considered
Would they help smaller groups e.g. pantomime company, Wallington Operatic	Yes - e.g. Wallington Operatic want to produce Oh What A Lovely War. Believe that Cryer was under-utilised by the last tenant.
Would they be interested in helping children at Royal Marsden Hospital, engage with older people to combat loneliness	Yes - for instance could engage with Age Concern

What would be the restaurant offer	Currently considering “small plates” principle i.e. like tapas but not limited to Spanish. Established/experienced local restaurant adviser appointed.
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Post Presentation comments

Good

Comprehensive
 Community focussed
 Covers all areas needed
 Helpful to community
 Knowledge of building demonstrated
 Local and wider connections
 Good ideas for use
 Making own financial commitment
 Use of external space proposals
 Link demonstrated to architect for 1990s conversion

Bad

Make sure not too music-focussed
 Diversity?
 Centres around bar/restaurant - check sustainability
 Impact on other cafes/restaurants

Questions

1. Model is reactive - how to develop artistic identity/overview and target underrepresented groups?
2. How to reach out and ensure diversity of programme?
3. How to ensure continued focus on the preferred uses?

Response (summarised)

1. According to their research the two most popular types are theatres/plays/shows and live music, together representing 77% of preferences. Other entertainments would also be provided. Artistic identity will reflect users of the Cryer.
2. This would be ensured through an “open to all” policy driving involvement by all sections of local and wider communities.
3. It would be necessary for the whole complex to operate together and they believe they have the experience and the flexibility to build a sustainable arts and entertainment complex.

Nickel Support/Cryer Collective

Questions/comments from panel	Response
What is role of James Trust	Grant funding and supporting
Will JT's other partners be using space in the scheme	Not automatically
What happens when JT capital injection comes to an end	Business should be established and sustainable after that stage Rent being paid at existing premises can transfer
Would proceeds of furniture operation go back into the building	No - will go to employees - will be a separate company. Will contribute towards maintenance - CIC for the studio will help to fund rent - baby & toddler group will pay.
How to encourage diversity with reference to the parent and child demographic	New writing, drama, cinema to come - build on the basics. Cafe could open as a pop-up restaurant in the evening. See also Spontaneous Productions, Sydenham.
How well will the different parts of the collective gel together and sustain maximum use of the complex, e.g. evening use of the children's cafe	Will use bar kiosk area for evening drinks. Possibly also downstairs area in the future.
Is it possible they're trying to be to many things at once	Proud of spread of experience. Nickel Support will take the lead and be the lessee for 25 years.
What if the companies were to fall out	Contingencies are built in, operator of cafe or classes could change
How to maximise evening use of restaurant - schedule suggests 70 closed days	Happy to open restaurant if demand sustains that. Not expecting it to open every night.

Post Presentation comments

Good

Need for children's facilities
Evidence of support for theatre use
Community spirit and "feel" to the proposal
Arts contribution
The most diverse offer
Enthusiasm

Bad

Relocation rather than new business

Not enough detail on theatre operation
Looseness of “collective”
Too child-orientated - evidence of demand?
Not a destination venue proposal
Pop up restaurant not ideal
Some of this offer already available in Carshalton
Difficult to visualise
Focus on daytime activities over evening
Proximity to Westcroft with fitness classes, activities for children

Question

What is the nature of funding and sources in relative terms

Response (summarised)

Due to the nature of this question it is covered in the Exempt appendix but in broad terms the project has significant support from the James Trust and will in due course become self-sustaining.

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