

# COURTYARD REVIEW

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CABINET

17TH FEBRUARY, 2005

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To consider the recommendations of the review of the Courtyard undertaken by the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendation

- THAT (a) the considerations in relation to the funding agreement and the position in relation to the original Capital Bid in 2004/05 be noted; and**
- (b) Cabinet directs how it wishes to deal with the Recommendations of the Review.**

### Reasons

This report needs to be considered by Cabinet because Councillor Stockton, as the Cabinet Member for Community and Social Development is a Council-appointed board member of the Courtyard Centre for the Arts.

At the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee on 24th September 2004, the Committee agreed to undertake a review and also agreed the Scoping Statement and the membership of the Review Group

The Group conducted a review of The Courtyard with the objective of establishing the historic background of the establishment; reviewing the contribution Herefordshire Council makes and to consider how best to strike a balance between sustaining a key arts facility and the benefits to the wider community. The aim of the review was to advise the Cabinet Member (Community and Social Development) on the best framework to put into place in respect of the future involvement of Herefordshire Council with The Courtyard.

The Review Group's report was considered by the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 31st January, 2005. It endorsed the recommendations. The report is attached.

The review was overwhelmingly supportive of the Courtyard and recognised its role as a centre for the Arts for the whole of Herefordshire not just a theatre.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Jane Jones, Director of Policy and Community on 01432 260037

## **Considerations**

1. The recommendations endorsed by the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee are attached at Appendix 2. Cabinet is asked to consider the recommendations and advise on a way forward.
2. It is important to separate out the results of the review from the initial reason for the review which was the late bid for Capital funding during the 2004/05 financial year. The Programme of refurbishment and other related activity did not meet the criteria for the Council's Capital Programme. Many of the items detailed in that Capital Bid for example refurbishment of the lift and the bar have been undertaken as partnership activity between the Council and the Courtyard Centre for the Arts. They are not therefore pivotal to the future of the Courtyard.
3. The recommendation to offer the Courtyard a one-year funding agreement from March 2005 needs careful consideration. The Council's commitment to support for the Courtyard is a major determinant in pulling in other sources of funding particularly from the Arts Council, West Midlands. The Arts Council works on a two year funding cycle which ends in March 2006. Early indications are that if the Council were not to agree a longer-term arrangement the Arts Council would wish to reconsider its position in relation to the Courtyard. Written submissions are expected from the Arts Council and Courtyard in relation to these points. They will be presented orally at Cabinet.

## **Alternative Options**

None

## **Risk Management**

none

## **Consultees**

A list of consultees is attached as page 17 of Appendix 1.

## **Background Papers**

None identified.