

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure and Arts Services Committee – 17 February 2003

REPORT ON: Whitehall Theatre

REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Arts

REPORT NO: 168 - 2003

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To submit to the Committee details of the Quality of Life Fund allocation to the Whitehall Theatre.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the allocation of £30,000 as agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee on 20 January 2003.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The cost of renewing seats at the Whitehall Theatre is £75,000. The Whitehall Theatre aim to raise capital from a variety of sources including trusts and foundations. The Leisure and Arts contribution is proposed at £30,000 from the Council's Quality of Life Fund.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Whitehall Theatre and Whitehall Theatre Trust encourages access to services which are not achieved at the expense of the environment and which are accessible to all.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The organisation's principal activities are in the provision of theatre for a broad spectrum of performers and audiences. The external funding from the Quality of Life Fund will improve the quality of access and comfort to patrons of the theatre.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

- 6.1 Whitehall Theatre and the Whitehall Theatre Trust were established in 1982. Since that time they have run a successful theatre that caters for a wide variety of productions with a particular emphasis on musical theatre. The involvement of the many local societies in the Dundee area including operatic and dramatic societies contributes to the cultural activity in the city.
- 6.2 The Whitehall Theatre is owned by a charitable trust and fulfills an important role in providing facilities for the amateur societies including rehearsal space. The organisation is greatly assisted by an active group of volunteers who fulfill a variety of duties both front of house and behind the scenes for both amateur and professional productions.
- 6.3 There are in excess of one hundred and forty productions per annum with audiences exceeding fifty thousand per annum. Audiences are attracted mainly from Dundee and significant number of patrons are from Angus, Fife and Perth and Kinross. The programme

at Whitehall Theatre has a wide appeal catering for children, young people and adults across all sectors of the community who have a strong interest in the theatre in general and musicals in particular.

6.4 The success of the Whitehall Theatre in attracting good audiences over the last twenty years has led to a marked deterioration in the quality of the auditorium seating. As a consequence they are now past their best despite the ongoing maintenance regime. The Whitehall Theatre Trust has embarked on an ambitious fundraising scheme to raise the necessary seventy five thousand pounds with approaches being made to foundations, trusts, the public sector, individuals and organisations and hope to achieve their target within the next twelve months. The Quality of Life contribution of £30,000 will go a long way to help meet that target and maintaining and improving the facilities at the Whitehall Theatre.

6.5 It is a condition of the grant that Dundee City Council's contribution is acknowledged in all publicity material relating to the award and in the foyer of the theatre.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Support Services, Director of Corporate Planning, Director of Finance have all been consulted on the contents of this report and are in agreement.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Quality of Life Report
Article II of Policy and Resources Committee 20 January 2003, Report No 67-2003

STEVE GRIMMOND
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE and ARTS
3 FEBRUARY 2003