

REPORT TO: ARTS & HERITAGE COMMITTEE – 17 APRIL 2000

REPORT ON: DUNDEE REPERTORY THEATRE COMPANY – REVENUE GRANT 2000/2001

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ARTS AND HERITAGE

REPORT NO: 252/2000

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To submit to the Committee a request for renewal of revenue funding to Dundee Repertory Theatre Company (Main House) for the year 2000/2001.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the level of grant assistance set out in the Report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The funding requested, as outlined at Appendix 1, is £245,243. Last year's equivalent funding was £240,042, an increase of £5,201, which is 2.17%.

3.2 This expenditure will be met from Arts and Heritage 2000/2001 Revenue Budget.

3.3 The grant requested will be contained within a Funding Agreement 2000/2001 between Dundee City Council and Dundee Repertory Theatre Company.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The renewal of revenue funding to Dundee Repertory Theatre will ensure the continued operation of a popular cultural facility, that local needs are met locally, and that opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation are readily available to all.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The mission statement of Dundee Repertory Theatre is "to provide the highest possible performing arts service to Dundee and to be central to the cultural life of Dundee by investing in opportunities for those communities who may not normally benefit from mainstream arts provision". New building works in 1999 created full disabled access to public areas. The theatre encourages access by operating a range of discount and concessionary ticket offers.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 In 1998 Dundee Repertory Theatre succeeded in an unprecedented double Lottery grant totaling £2.7 million for its "New Ways of Working" project which will create a state of the art theatre. Works commenced in 1999. The Lottery project has two elements: the three year project to establish Scotland's only Ensemble Company; and the capital project to refurbish and upgrade the building. The combined cost of the project is £4.4 million with £4.1 million so far secured with the assistance of local and national trusts, ERDF, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and Dundee City Council.

- 6.2 To enable “New Ways of Working” capital alterations to take place, the theatre closed from 1 June 1999 to 6 September 1999 while the refurbishment and upgrading of the public areas of the building were completed. The theatre re-opened on schedule and works continue on time and on budget. The first phase has resulted in refurbished and upgraded public areas ie foyers, box office, restaurant, auditorium, toilets, improved ventilation and heating, air-conditioning in the auditorium, new seating, new carpeting, new electrics, new roofing, full disabled access to public areas, lift, infra-red system, audio description facilities, handrails in the auditorium, state of the art lighting, sound and flying facilities, formation of extended wing space and flexible forestage (which enable bigger shows and shows presented in different ways) new curtains and on-site storage.
- 6.3 The “New Ways of Working” revenue element commenced in August 1999 with the Ensemble Company’s first production “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”. The media interest generated by the re-opening of the theatre, the launch of the Ensemble Company and the winning of Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman’s support for the theatre was considerable, with over 4,000 column cms in Scottish, English and International media. Between October 1999 and March 2000 the Ensemble Company has produced five main stage shows, revived one to tour to The Citizen’s Theatre, Glasgow, and presented three Platform Productions.
- 6.4 Platform Productions are one-act plays performed by the Ensemble on minimal sets after the main evening show. They make more drama available to audiences at £3 per ticket.
- 6.5 The Theatre will commission several of the country’s top writers to write new plays for the Company, among them Liz Lochhead with Ricky Ross, Stuart Paterson and Marcella Evaristi. Local musician, Gordon Macpherson, and local writer and poet, Donald Paterson, will create “A Dundee Melodrama”. John Byrne’s “Colquhoun and MacBryde” is the first of these productions.
- 6.6 The new marketing post of Tourism and Groups Officer was filled in Dundee 1999 and work is underway on designing links with Dundee’s other tourist and visitor attractions, packages with local hotels, promoting the Summer Rep nationwide and commissioning a website to facilitate information to, and bookings from, the overseas market.
- 6.7 Audience figures for 1999/2000 are 51,000 which is a decrease on 71,000 who attended in 1998/99, because of the 3 months closure of the building for capital Lottery works. Earned income and catering income are likewise down. Earned income and catering income are projected to return to normal levels at £548,103 in 2000/2001 (see Appendix 1).
- 6.8 The employment impact of “New Ways of Working” has been estimated by independent economic consultants commissioned by Scottish Enterprise Tayside as follows:
- New jobs in Dundee - 33.6 FTE
 - New jobs in Tayside - 33 FTE
 - Jobs retained in Dundee - 27.5 FTE
 - Jobs retained in Tayside - 25.2 FTE

6.9 Major forthcoming plans include:

- The first Summer Rep Season comprising six large-scale productions (19 June to 29 July)
- Six new large-scale productions joining the Company's repertoire together with Platform Productions
- Presentation of new work commissioned from top Scottish playwrights
- The revival and presentation of existing productions in major Scottish theatres (Aberdeen, Glasgow, Inverness, Edinburgh)
- On-going skills workshops in voice, movement, music and language
- The completion of the first apprenticeship scheme and commencement of the second
- The development of the new tourist/visitor audience base and further packages with local tourist facilities and attractions
- The completion of the Capital Project including the provision of training rooms, offices and extended wing space.

7.0 CONSULTATION

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

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

Director of Arts and Heritage _____ Date _____

APPENDIX I

DUNDEE REPERTORY THEATRE BUDGET 2000/2001

Expenditure	Projected 1999/2000	Budget 2000/2001
Staff Costs, Production Costs, General Overheads	£1,084,938	1,368,578
Income		
Box Office, Catering, Ancillary Income, Sponsorship	£340,536	£550,103
Grants		
Dundee City Council	£240,042	£245,243
SAC Revenue	£274,276	£278,116
SAC Special	£38,228	-
Millennium Project	-	£15,000
New Writing Reserve	£9,851	-
Confirmed Trusts	£85,340	£90,000
Target Trusts/Sponsorship	-	£43,500
Fund Raising	£25,547	£25,000
ERDF	£28,663	£8,361
Lottery	£42,704	£114,006
Total Income	£1,085,187	£1,369,329
Surplus	£249	£751