

## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

### **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY 6 SEPTEMBER 2007**

#### **FESTIVALS REVIEW 2007**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To review and report back on the performance of the festivals portfolio, which comprises of the Autumn Festival, Animated Exeter, Vibraphonic and the Summer Festival.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Exeter Festivals 2004 Report to Economy Scrutiny on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2003 reviewed the Council's Festivals programme and proposed creating two new distinctly targeted festivals in addition to a revised and more focused Summer Festival. This led to the development of Vibraphonic, a festival presenting a diverse mix of jazz, soul, funk, world and dance music and other activities in the spring. The Autumn Festival was also developed to showcase local cultural activity and encourage the growth and development of talent through participation and performance. Animated Exeter was not considered as part of this process as it had at that time been the subject of a recent review.
- 2.2 In 2007 the Council's festival portfolio collectively attracted an audience of over 27,000 to 148 ticketed events with a further 35,000 plus attending 130 free events. It has been acknowledged that one festival cannot cover all cultural provision and a more focused portfolio of festival adds to the breadth of cultural activity for residents as well as reinforcing the City's image as a cultural centre. Each of the festivals are reviewed in turn followed by recommendations for the future with supporting information presented on each within the appendices

#### **3.0 AUTUMN FESTIVAL**

##### ***Background***

- 3.1 The key objectives of the Autumn Festival are to:
- programme events delivering complementary activities to the Summer Festival, involving local performers, groups and other producers
  - present fringe type events that were previously delivered during the Summer Festival period in July, providing the voluntary, amateur and semi-professional sector with a platform from which to showcase their work.
  - facilitate the development of locally produced activities and act in an advisory capacity to support amateur and voluntary groups in developing and managing cultural projects

- 3.2 The Autumn Festival was created in order to achieve greater focus and higher profile for participating groups whilst also providing a significant opportunity for wider participation by residents and local artistes in a new event. This also contributes further to the objective of achieving a year round programme of cultural activity in the city.
- 3.3 Following a consultation exercise with community arts organisations in 2004, a common issue that concerned most participants was that the activities of local performers and groups were too often lost or hidden from the public eye because of the high profile received by core professional events during the Summer Festival. Community events clashed with core festival events competing for the same audience.
- 3.4 The Autumn Festival has also contributed to the objective of the promotion of local artistes and organisations, as identified in the Arts and Media Strategy 2004-2006 by:
- investing in a capacity building programme to enable groups to create and manage their own programmes by supporting them with financial assistance and advice where appropriate.
  - reducing barriers to participation by providing events that are accessible to those that are socially excluded such as those on low incomes, young people and those with learning disabilities
  - encouraging the use of City venues and spaces whilst promoting the Exeter night time economy

#### ***Overview***

- 3.5 The number of organisations/groups taking part in the Autumn Festival 2006 increased from 43 in 2005 to 49 in 2006. Approximately 661 artists took part with 285 volunteers and employed staff involved in the organisation of those events. The festival was programmed by outside organisations with the Economy and Tourism Unit acting in an advisory capacity, where required. The City Council collated the festival brochure, hosted the festival website and assisted with a planned promotional campaign.
- 3.6 The Festival attracted 6,304 people to ticketed events and over 15,918 people to free events and exhibitions. This compares with 6,867 people to ticketed events and over 32,000 people to free events and exhibitions in 2005. This high figure for free events was attributed in the main to the wartime exhibition “*Their Past Your Future*” at the Guildhall. Some 5,065 people attended ticketed events and over 17,072 people went to free events and exhibitions in 2004.
- 3.7 A mix of 84 amateur, semi professional and professional events took place in 28 different venues. This consisted of 54-ticketed events and 30 free events compared with 105 events in 2005 made up of 46 ticketed events and 59 free events. In 2004 93 events were delivered made up of 48 ticketed events and 45 free events.

#### ***Programme***

- 3.8 In its third year the festival maintained its wide-ranging and inclusive programme. The number of events in the 2006 festival decreased by 21 to 84 and comprised the following:

Music	40	Education	5	Exhibition	9
Dance	4	Theatre	15	Comedy	2
Literary	5	Film	4		

The number of events in the 2005 festival increased by 13 to 105 from 2004 and comprised the following:

Music	32	Education	43	Exhibition	14
Dance	2	Theatre	12	Comedy	1
Literary	1				

The main difference in the number of educational events is attributed to the large number of individual workshops organised by the Wren Trust to prepare lanterns by school children for the Christmas Lights switch-on event in 2005.

- 3.9 Other Council led events and initiatives benefited from inclusion in the Autumn Festival brochure including the Exeter Continental Market, The Devon Slow Food Market, Exeter Open Studios and the Christmas Lights Switch on. It is estimated that these events combined attracted in excess of 25,000 people.
- 3.10 As recommended in the March 2006 report to Committee it was suggested that consideration be given to the promotion of one or two high profile events to enhance the profile of this festival. Due to working pressures on the festival team, it proved not to be possible to achieve this.

#### ***Awards***

- 3.11 The Exeter Autumn Festival Awards scheme was set up in 2004 to financially assist community groups, youth groups, clubs, organisations and individuals who want to put on an event, exhibition or activity during the festival. The Award Scheme events produced by all award winners fulfilled the required criteria by:
- contributing to the range and quality of events in the festival programme
  - promoting the creative talents and activities of groups or individuals within the City
  - benefiting the local community
- 3.12 In 2006 the number of applications made increased to 20 from 17 in 2005 and 11 in 2004. A total of £4750 was awarded to 12 applicants, 2 less than last year and 4 more than 2004. Grants ranged from £750 for Exeter Forum Theatre to engage a professional comedy writer to work with ex homeless and vulnerably housed people in Exeter, to £250 granted to Magic Carpet whose activity engaged those with learning disabilities.

#### ***Marketing***

- 3.13 To promote the Festival 25,000 full colour programmes were distributed throughout the City and neighbouring areas. The Exeter Citizen carried a full page feature and daily advertisements designed to raise awareness were placed in the Express and Echo. The Express and Echo also carried various features on highlighted events and printed daily listings on all festival events. An extensive press release and listing campaign was conducted targeting key Devon media organisations. A total of more than 16,000 visits were made to the website

**Evaluation Overview**

- 3.14 The Autumn Festival has achieved its key purpose as set out in the recommendations of the 2004 festivals report to Committee by providing further opportunities for wider participation, whilst building on the knowledge and expertise of other key cultural providers in the city and thereby adding strength to the City's cultural position on a local and national basis. This has led to more coverage in local media for individual participants, groups and organisations. Supportive relationships have also been strengthened between amateur, semi- professional, professional and voluntary groups and the City Council.
- 3.15 Questionnaires were sent to the 49 organisations and groups that took part in the Autumn Festival with 76% returned. Participant organisations said that being part of the Autumn Festival was beneficial as the marketing of the festival raised groups/organisations profile and gave them more publicity and wider coverage than would otherwise have been the case. However some organisations found the benefit difficult to quantify. Of those that returned questionnaires, 93% stated that they would participate in the 2007 festival.
- 3.16 It is also clear from engaging with some of the organisations involved that their awareness and experience of regulations and event organisation could be improved by enhancing their knowledge of legal requirements and sources of advice and information. Improvements in this area should enable organisations to avoid unnecessarily running into difficulties over legal requirements and help improve audience and participant experience of the events.

**Financial Overview**

- 3.17 The total costs of delivering the festival, as summarised below amounted to £24,120 leaving a surplus of £880 from an allocated budget of £25,000.

Income and expenditure is summarised as follows:

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Marketing	£17,620	
Awards	£4,800	
Production costs	£1,700	
<b>Total</b>		<b>£24,120</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Exeter City Council	£25,000	
<b>Total</b>		<b>£25,000</b>
<b>Surplus</b>		<b>£880</b>

## 4.0 ANIMATED EXETER

### *Background*

4.1 Animated Exeter has been delivered to meet the following key themes from the Exeter Vision:

- promote Exeter as a learning city – providing access and learning opportunities in new technologies
- develop creative industries – showcasing and supporting the work and training needs of local film and media companies

4.2 The festival achieves this by focusing on the following:

- developing the skills and interests of exhibitors and makers in animation in the area
- developing new cinema audiences and greater public interest and appreciation of animation film particularly amongst children and young people
- providing public access to the creative processes, forging links between those in the industry, professional animation artists, students and those who wish to develop a non-professional interest in animation
- raising the profile of the industry in the South West nationally and internationally.

### *Programme*

4.3 Animated Exeter 2007 as a whole attracted 5,178 participating children, young people and adults to the Schools' Week and public workshops, screenings and ticketed events including the Careers Day and free events such as the Games Day. This is a decrease based on the figures for 2006 (6,442), but an increase from 2005 (4,795) and 2004 (4,654). A further estimated 13,226 visited the 7 free exhibitions over the festival fortnight and wider exhibition periods. The exhibition figures for each venue were comparable with previous years.

4.4 As in previous years particular workshops and residencies were programmed for disadvantaged groups and people with disabilities. In 2007 greater effort was made to provide increased awareness and access to the main programme and the brochure was produced in large print and audiocassette and encouraged people with disabilities to contact the festival office before a specific date if they required assistance at any event.

### *Evaluation*

4.5 The programme for Animated Exeter 2007 included:  
 A Schools' Week with 5 days of schools activity based around the festival, 31 animation film screenings, 65 workshops, residencies and projects, 7 exhibitions and 16 events.  
 (See Appendix II for 2007 programme outline)

The recommendations arising from the evaluation of the 2006 festival were successfully achieved as follows:

- participatory projects for children, young people and adults, targeting the interested hobbyist, potential young animators and professionals working in the industry.
- schools projects in collaboration with Devon Curriculum Services Media Studies and Devon in Schools Initiative (DAISI) developing Exploration Days during Schools Week with guided tours to exhibitions and screenings, plus schools workshops and residencies taking place during Autumn term.
- screening of animation films produced during Animated Exeter 2006 and other recent young peoples films created in Devon.
- children's animation feature films, short animation films from India and Asia
- international programme of the best animation films
- interactive computer generated and traditional 2D and 3D animation based exhibitions
- illustrated talks and special events linked to other parts of the programme
- animation careers day of media skills training and education courses and showcases for local companies

4.6 The evaluation includes attendance figures for all ticketed events and a mix of estimates, observations and head counting for free events and exhibitions.

4.7 The evaluation for this year focused on a postcode analysis of all workshop participants, selected screening audiences and selected exhibition audiences. Over 800 postcodes were collected with the highest percentage of 44% coming from wider Devon excluding Exeter, 39% coming from Exeter postcodes EX1-EX4, 8% coming from the rest of the South West Region and 9% the rest of the UK. Some 0.3% of the festival audience is international.

4.8 Overall the animation film programme was rated as excellent by 89% of attendees. Of those that participated in workshops, residencies and projects 99% stated that they enjoyed taking part and 92% of the schools surveyed that participated in Schools Week stated that they had enjoyed their day.

4.9 In view of the current scale and success of the event, and the necessity to secure external funding to continue its development, a specialist consultant was commissioned to give an independent view on the potential future direction of Animated Exeter. Briefly his findings were that:

- the festival should continue to exploit its February date with the Schools Week immediately preceding half-term holiday and the main public screenings
- an Industry Weekend should follow this week
- interlinked areas of development should be pursued, subject of course to sufficient resources, building on the festival's established strengths by:-
  - increasing content for 14-19 year olds and higher education students

- developing a strong year-round programme of activities for schools in Exeter and, if feasible, the wider area
- developing content suitable for the non formal learning sector in the South West and beyond
- if the festival is to grow any further that the staffing resource and organisational structure would need to be revised and a new fundraising strategy developed.

### ***Financial Overview***

4.10 The financial outturn of Animated Exeter 2007 is within the £37,500 budget. The Grant for the Arts bid for £23,000 to Arts Council England, submitted in May 2005 and the bid to South West Screen for £13,500 were successful. The programme was delivered accordingly and the trading and sponsorship in-kind targets were met.

Income and expenditure is summarised as follows:

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Staffing and Administration	£21,690	
Programme Costs (inc technical and associated costs)	£61,130	
Marketing	£17,540	
<b>Total</b>		<b>£100,360</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Exeter City Council	£37,500	
Arts Council South West	£28,000	
South West Screen	£18,500	
Devon County Council	£7,500	
Sponsorship	£400	
Trading income	£9,250	
<b>Total</b>		<b>£101,150</b>
<b>Surplus</b>		<b>£790</b>

(Total does not include in-kind support from City Screen, Devon Curriculum Services, partner venues, colleges, guest speakers, hoteliers and local businesses.)

## **5. VIBRAPHONIC**

### ***Background***

5.1 The Vibraphonic Festival 2007 was the fourth such event since the approved enhancement of Exeter Festivals in the report to Economy Scrutiny in November 2003.

5.2 The key characteristics of this event were to:

- develop an annual festival attracting both visiting and local audiences, that will be recognised in due course for its unique presentation of Soul, Jazz, R'n'B, Hip Hop, Funk and related music from all over the world
- develop an event which works with a wide variety of venues and spaces to encourage the development of promoters, artists, and new audiences

5.3 The festival programme in 2007 took place over 16 days and focused on 9 venues across the City. This compares with 6 different venues in 2005 and 9 different venues in 2004. The festival was once again programmed and delivered in partnership with venues and music promoters with the support of a steering group. Commitment from all 6 partner/promoters was high, with regular meetings informing both the festival programme and event production.

#### ***Overview***

5.4 The 2007 festival programme consisted of 34 ticketed events and 13 free events compared with the 2006 festival programme which consisted of 22 ticketed events and 11 free events. In 2005 the festival comprised of 26 ticketed and 3 free events and 21 ticketed and 4 free events in 2004. The City Council directly promoted 11-ticketed events up from 8 in 2006. Overall the 2007 Festival attracted 7,261 young people and adults to ticketed events. This compares to 7,488 young people and adults to ticketed events in 2006 compared with 5,459 in 2005 and 5,127 in 2004. A further 784 attended the 13 free events, compared to the 730 that attended the 11 free events in 2006. Of the ticketed events 15 were sold out compared to 10 in 2006 with only 4 in 2005 and 2 in 2004. A breakdown of music genre, audience attendance, venue and capacity is given in Appendix III.

5.5 The last report to Scrutiny recommended that the Festival in 2006 “explore areas that engage younger people through educational programmes”. As a result 4 workshops were programmed, 3 of these were delivered by the City Council with the remaining workshop delivered by Exeter Phoenix. These workshops achieved an average of 61% in terms of participation.

#### ***Programme***

5.6 In line with recommendations made in the report to Scrutiny in 2006 and following the success of the 2006 fringe programme a new strand branded *Jack To Phono* was launched, to give opportunities for local aspiring artists and emerging new artistes to perform within the festival programme. A total of 46 local and unsigned acts participated in the festival compared to 38 in 2006 and 5 in 2005.

#### ***Marketing***

5.7 The main marketing tool was 25,000 Vibraphonic brochures distributed widely complemented by a series of flyer and poster campaigns. A series of Adshels and banners gave prominence to the festival for a total of 4 weeks and key events benefited from advertisements in local media. National adverts were placed in key interest magazines such as Jazz UK and Wire. A freelance public relations professional was also contracted to increase the Festival's profile which resulted in a significant increase in support from local media.



- 5.8 Partner promoters distributed a total of 30,000 flyers and 1200 posters covering 21 events throughout Exeter and its surrounds. Some 7% of those surveyed felt their awareness of the festival was increased by the radio station broadcast and 7% quoted posters and flyers as their information source. The festival brochure was cited by 18% as the main vehicle for event information. Word of mouth was clearly the strongest method accounting for 36%.
- 5.9 An intrinsic part of Vibraphonic's success can be attributed to Vibraphonic FM the community radio station established by the Council to promote the festival. Following an extensive application to Ofcom a full time community radio licence has been granted to a newly formed organisation that has been borne out of the momentum of Vibraphonic FM. This new station will serve to promote all of Exeters cultural provision.
- 5.10 An audience survey was undertaken and resulted in over 305 completed questionnaires. These were equally balanced between genders with 63% of those returning questionnaires aged under 35, 19% aged between 35-45 and 19% over 45. Of those surveyed 98% considered the quality of the brochure good or excellent with 98% rating the website as good or excellent. 97% stated that they found the choice of venue very good or excellent. Also 99% rated the quality of event high, and in terms of value for money, 99% rated the events they attended as very good or excellent..

#### ***Financial Overview***

- 5.11 The total cost of the festival, including production, marketing and artists fees amounts to £36,820. Ticket sales resulted in an income of £15,810 with sponsorship generating £5,380. With an expenditure of £36,820 and the City Council contribution of £16,000, a surplus of £370 has been made.

The budget of £15,630 allocated to Vibraphonic 2006 was used to fund the difference between expenditure and external income.

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Production	£6,810	
Artists Fees	£15,100	
Marketing	£12,640	
Other	£2,270	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>£36,820</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Sales for ECC promoted events	£15,810	
Sponsorship	£5,380	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£21,190</b>
<b>City Council Contribution</b>		<b><u>£16,000</u></b>
<b>Surplus</b>		<b><u>£370</u></b>

## 6.0 SUMMER FESTIVAL

### ***Background***

- 6.1 The reviewed aim of the Summer Festival was agreed as follows:  
*“To produce a programme which enhances the City’s image as the cultural capital and as a vibrant visitor destination, benefiting the local economy.”*

The key characteristics of the Summer Festival were identified as:

- presenting a multi-disciplinary arts festival recognised for its distinctive vision and excellence, promoting contemporary and classical music, theatre, dance and visual arts
- working with and promoting the city’s heritage and cultural venues and organisations.

### ***Overview***

- 6.2 The festival achieved several sell-outs and attracted large audiences in general. The festival opened on 15 June 2007 with the Party on the Quay, which provided excellent local media coverage to launch the 16-day programme of events. However numbers were down on previous years for the opening event attributed to the heavy rainfall with an estimated 3,000 people in attendance.
- 6.3 With the Northcott Theatre out of commission for 2007 due to an extensive refurbishment programme, various options were explored in order to find a suitable principle venue. The creation of a temporary venue such as the famous Spiegel Tent was explored with locations such as Cathedral Green, Northernhay Gardens and Bury Meadows given consideration. In order to meet the increase in cost to facilitate the Spiegel Tent, a title sponsor was required, unfortunately this was not realised and the proposal was dropped.
- 6.4 A decision was taken by the programming group to use the newly re-branded and refurbished Exeter Corn Exchange, Exeter Phoenix and The Riverside Leisure Centre for more events. The Barnfield was also used however availability of the theatre was limited by other bookings.
- 6.5 Counter and telephone sales accounted for 51% of all sales administered by Exeter Tickets with 18% of those dealt with by their temporary office in the Tourist Information Centre. On-line ticket sales for all festival events accounted for 31% of all sales. This compares with 18% in 2006.
- 6.6 The analysis of seats filled at each event is set out in Appendix IV and is compared with the capacity of each venue. The capacities vary according to whether they are standing or seated events, staging requirements and where health and safety issues need to be considered. Care has to be taken when comparing ticket sales with previous years because of variations in venues and the nature and characteristics of the events. Broad comparisons are drawn in the appendix between figures for the period 2005-2007. This year 11,599 seats were filled at 29-ticketed events compared to 10,555 seats at 27-ticketed events in 2006. In 2005 11,392 seats were filled at 32-ticketed events. This

compares with 12,573 seats (35 events) in 2004. In order to compare attendance levels to previous years, figures for outdoor-ticketed concerts from 2004 and 2005 have been excluded.

- 6.7 The reconstitution of the Festival Committee as the Summer Festival Advisory Group has worked well providing broad ranging advice. The group includes Member representation from each political party, and specialists from the different types of performing arts to support the Festival Programming Group. The input, feedback and debate have had a positive effect on this year's festival. However gaps do exist within specialist areas such as theatre and dance. To address this, invitations will be extended to Dance in Devon and key theatrical organisations to join the group.
- 6.8 An application was submitted to Arts Council South West to enhance the street theatre provision and live arts events from local, national and international performers throughout the festival fortnight. This was designed with the aim of creating a more festive atmosphere in the City Centre and to raise the level of festival awareness beyond the particular venues promoting events. The application was unsuccessful, attributed in the main to the budgets of the Arts Council being reduced by the government by 36% and stiff competition for the remaining funds.

#### ***Programme***

- 6.9 The Festival programme featured national and international performers and included 4 classical concerts at the Cathedral, a mix of 10 contemporary and popular events at the Exeter Corn Exchange including spoken word, dance, comedy and music. At the Exeter Phoenix Arts Centre 6 events were delivered covering world music, comedy, contemporary dance and theatre. Also 2 classical events took place at the Barnfield and 3 events at The Riverside covering rock, gospel and comedy. The festival also hosted The Three Choirs concert at the Cathedral.
- 6.10 Taking the broad programming framework outlined in the Executive report on 8 November 2006 the final programme balance for ticketed events, keeping within budgetary constraints, was as follows:-

<b>Type of performance</b>	<b>2006 28 events</b>	<b>2007 29 events</b>
Classical Music (inc. Choral and Opera)	10	8
Jazz	3	1
Rock/Popular Music	4	3
World/Folk	4	7
Comedy	3	4
Dance/Ballet	3	3
Audience with/Spoken Word	0	1
Childrens Events	1	0
Theatre	0	2

### ***Marketing***

- 6.11 A total of 85,000 34-page brochures were produced with 12,500 copies sent to those on the mailing list. The remaining brochures were distributed to around 600 targeted locations throughout Exeter and the sub-region.
- 6.12 In addition to the main brochure campaign the following marketing initiatives were undertaken:-
- in total 1100 posters were distributed around the city and county
  - a generic 2-week bus shelter poster campaign
  - advertisements were placed in local newspapers, lifestyle magazines and regional whats-on publications
  - e-bulletins were sent out to those that subscribed to both the Summer Festival and Northcott Theatre mailing lists.
  - listing and feature in Exeter Citizen (Circ 40,000)
- 6.13 Public relations organisation One Voice Media were contracted to coordinate a focused campaign targeting regional, national and specialist publications, television and radio. A targeted media campaign ran from April to July 2006. It is estimated that over £160,000 worth of public relations was gained as direct result of their engagement at a cost of £3,500. This included media releases and listings sent to local, regional and national media, specialist publications and relevant web sites. In addition there were regular interviews on local radio, local and regional publications involving participating artists and festival representatives.
- 6.14 A 90 page full festival souvenir programme was produced. Sales were lower than the previous year, however the programme was well received by those that attended events and by sponsors. A review of the souvenir programme will need to be made for next year, with the possible introduction of single event flyers.
- 6.17 Securing sponsorship for the festival continues to remain difficult, especially as the city has an even greater number of other major organisations and events seeking significant levels of funding. In 2007 a total of £71,500 was raised. Of this £63,600 was in cash from 16 sponsors and £7,900 was in kind. In 2006 a total of £82,450 was raised. Of this £69,250 was in cash from 26 sponsors and £13,200 was in kind. In 2005 a total of £91,400 was raised. Of this £84,100 was in cash from 31 sponsors and £7,300 was in kind. The level of sponsorship over the last three years has included significant sponsorship from EDF Energy as title sponsor and as the main sponsor for the opening event on the Quayside. The reduction in sponsorship reflects increasing competition from a wide range of events and appeals, as well as a more discriminating approach by sponsors. Fluctuations in sponsorship income have had an adverse effect on the festival's overall financial position and makes budget and program planning difficult.
- 6.18 Results of the audience survey indicate that 40% of this year's purchasers were new to the Festival. 80% considered the events they attended met their expectations 'well' or 'excellently' and 80% considered the quality of the events either 'good' or 'excellent' and in both cases 50% considered them 'excellent'. Similarly 73% considered the events 'good' or 'excellent' value with 43% claiming them to be 'excellent value'. 99%

of all those surveyed said they would consider attending Festival events again in the future.

### ***Financial Overview***

- 6.19 The total cost of the Festival including production, marketing and artist's fees amounts to £291,800. Ticket receipts resulted in an income of £150,700 with sponsorship generating £63,600. Taking into account the City Council's contribution of £80,000 leaves the festival at the time of writing this report with a projected surplus of £2,500.

<b>Expenditure</b>		
Venue Hire	£24,500	
Staging	£44,900	
Publicity/Advertising	£43,000	
Miscellaneous	£9,100	
Performing Rights	£3,700	
Box Office	£17,000	
Security	£5,200	
Artists Fees	£135,700	
Hospitality	£8,700	
Total		£291,800
<b>Income</b>		
Tickets Sales/Income	£150,700	
Sponsorship	£63,600	
City Council Contribution	£80,000	
Total		<b>£294,300</b>
Surplus		<b>£2,500</b>

## **7.0 EVALUATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The above evaluation of the four festivals indicates that they broadly meet the objectives set in the 2004 report with high customer satisfaction and during the last year operating within budget. In particular the drive to have four distinct Festivals each with a specialist focus does appear to be successful. It is strongly recommended that those separate identities are retained. As with any successful programme of activities, it is always possible to identify potential improvements and members are asked to consider the following issues for discussion and possible agreement.

### ***Autumn Festival***

- 7.2 In order to further develop the content and scale of the Autumn Festival, it is recommended that:
- the awards scheme be continued with priority being given to encouraging more applicants that demonstrate or engage with educational content

- consideration be given to the promotion of one or two established acts or high profile events to enhance public awareness of the Autumn Festival and attract more regional press coverage
- all groups be invited along to an awareness raising/training exercise to help understand and explore areas such as the new licensing and fire regulations, risk assessments, fund raising, data protection and the Disability Discrimination Act

### ***Animated Exeter***

7.3 It is proposed that Animated Exeter 2008 will continue to develop against the objectives and themes as outlined in 4.2 and:-

- further develop links with regional, national and international animation centres of training, festivals and touring animation exhibitions;
- develop partnerships with venues, schools, colleges, young people's clubs and media hubs to increase animation production and to showcase animations produced throughout the year at future festivals; and
- review the feasibility of responding to the recommendations of the independent consultant.

### ***Vibraphonic***

7.4 In order to maintain the focus of the City Council's contribution and building on current partnerships, it is proposed that Vibraphonic 2008 develops the following key strands

#### **Education**

- digital audio recording, and mixing workshops linking in with Exeter College and the Phoenixsounds and Cat Studios.
- composition workshops led by participating artistes
- digital image creation and vision mixing for broadcast and performance with Exeter College Phoenix Media
- a programme of urban street dance workshops and performance partnered with Dance In Devon and other key dance companies in the city
- instrument workshops led by participating artistes

#### **Programme**

- create more opportunities for local and unsigned artistes to participate through the Jack To Phono Series
- increase the number of venues providing free entertainment from 4 to 8.
- expand visual arts related to the content of the festival with key arts providers such as Spacex

### ***Summer Festival***

7.5 In light of the year on year increase in costs and the need to further strengthen the breadth and content of the programme it is proposed that a new delivery framework is established. It is proposed that a partnership approach similar to that successfully

followed by Animated Exeter and Vibraphonic festivals be trialed for some events in the Summer Festival. It is proposed that agreements will be sought with arts organisations, venues and promoters to deliver a proportion of the festival events and activities.

- 7.6 The programme content of any partnership events would be subject to approval by the Programming Group. These agreements will set out the responsibilities of both the City Council and the partners to ensure full compliance with the standards and public expectations of council led festival events including customer care and effective branding and publicity. This process has been tried and tested over several years with Animated Exeter and more recently with Vibraphonic where the overall artistic direction and quality of the festivals has not been compromised but enhanced by involving a wider range of expertise and experience from key organisations. The partner organisations will benefit from the reach of the Summer Festival marketing but will also be required to provide their own-targeted marketing
- 7.7 The number of events directly promoted by the City Council would be reduced allowing for increased focused effort on delivering particular strands of the ticketed programme and the new free events. The City Council's core festival budget could be directed more towards activities such as the free events and increased marketing to raise the overall participation and profile of the events.
- 7.8 Subject to further discussions with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Tourism and the Festival Chair, it is recommended that consideration be given to the following options within the broad framework as set out above for 2008: -
- retain the core element of the Barnfield, The Great Hall and Cathedral programmes maintaining the number of classical events at 8 events, including 2-4 free low-cost ticketed lunchtime chamber concerts
  - continue to use the Phoenix , Exeter Corn Exchange and The Northcott Theatre as core venues
  - use the Riverside Leisure Centre as a venue for larger ticketed events
  - increase the amount of street-theatre in the city during the festival fortnight depending on securing additional external funding as current budgets will not support this element alone
  - relocation of the opening party to the city centre for next year utilising new spaces as the buildings around Piazza Terracina would be undergoing regeneration work.
  - seek to re-establish the closing party, which will be subject to securing sufficient funding

7.9 Programme content to be broadly in line with the following

<b>Type of performance</b>	<b>2007 (29 events)</b>	<b>2008 (29 events)</b>
Classical Music (inc. Choral and Opera)	8	8
Jazz	1	2
Rock/Popular Music	3	3
World/Folk	7	6
Comedy	4	4
Dance/Ballet	3	3
Audience with/Spoken Word	1	1
Theatre	2	2

### **Overview**

- 7.10 This breadth of festivals has reached a significantly wider range of audiences than the City's previous sole focus on the Summer Festival. The four arts focused festivals are complemented by other festivals (such as the South West Festival of Food and Drink and the programme of Christmas events), which combine to create a wide choice of activities throughout the year for residents to enjoy and to attract visitors from outside the city. The pressure on the festival team, comprising four full time equivalent staff, is now significantly greater and the resources have increased only by a limited amount. There are two conclusions, which follow from this: first, additional festivals cannot be programmed and delivered because the existing team is at capacity: secondly, we must continue to rely on partners for the delivery of a very significant part of the programme.
- 7.11 Members may well have aspiration to add to the scale and variety of existing festivals. Whilst it may sound like stating the obvious, this can only be done with an increase in core funding. The purpose in underlining this is that current core funding only just covers delivery costs (and for the Summer Festival has not markedly changed in the last 4 years) Moreover, there is only the smallest prospect of increasing sponsorship – the competitive climate has become much tighter (more would be recipients) and the current direction of sponsorship is downwards. Any greater ambitions must therefore be weighed against existing festival commitments or by seeking additional resources against other competing claims for limited funding.
- 7.12 **RECOMMENDATION** - that Scrutiny Committee
- (i) Comment on the performance of the festivals portfolio
  - (ii) Agree the future programme and broad content of events for 2008

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**Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:

See Appendices