

Appendix 2

B. Core Funding: Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds

- 1.1 While not an application for Community Chest and has therefore not been considered by the Grant Working Party, the Cabinet is asked to consider the following core funding grant for the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds.
- 1.2 It is proposed that the grant to the Theatre Royal should be held at **£61,000** for 2022 to 2023 ahead of a wider review of funding in time for the 2023 to 2024 award.
- 1.3 As agreed last year, West Suffolk Council has been liaising with the Theatre during the 2021 to 2022 financial year, over its recovery plans from COVID-19 and the Council's long-term plan to implement a phased reduction to their grant over a three to five year period from 2022 onwards (in line with the wider Council's budget). The Theatre has been advised that this remains the Council's objective and is keen also to align its grant to the Council's corporate priorities.
- 1.4 However, given the continued pressure from the pandemic, and the Council's intention to look more holistically at the impact of its cultural spending across the whole of West Suffolk before the 2023 to 2024 budget is agreed, it is suggested that no substantial change is made to the Theatre's grant in 2022 to 2023. If agreed this would see the grant remain at £61,000 compared to £61,250 in 2021 to 2022 (the £250 being the mathematical result of a previous percentage reduction and representing a 0.4 percent reduction).
- 1.5 The effect of this proposed pause in the agreed plan would be to allow the Council and Theatre to work together on a grant reduction plan which takes into account the opportunities for other funding and partnership opportunities.
- 1.6 This approach would also align with Suffolk County Council, which also has no current plans to reduce the Theatre's funding in 2022 to 2023. The Theatre is also actively seeking other sources of external core funding, and expanding its community outreach activities across the whole of West Suffolk supported by ring-fenced grants. Good examples of such projects can be seen in these two short videos produced by the Theatre (accessible via the electronic version of this report):

[Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds: YouTube video - Tiny Plays, Big Ideas](#)

[Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds: YouTube video - Non Verbal Youth Theatre](#)

- 1.7 As set out on the first page of the covering report:

It is recommended that a grant of £61,000 core funding be approved for the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds for 2022 to 2023, ahead of a wider review of funding in time for the 2023 to 2024 award, as set out in Appendix B to Report number: CAB/WS/22/009.