



## Connaught Ventilation Scheme

### Report by the Director for the Economy

#### Executive Summary

##### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 Provide delegated authority for the Director for the Economy to award the contract for the new ventilation system for the Connaught Theatre and Studio to the preferred bidder.
- 1.2 This delegation will enable the contract to be awarded as swiftly as possible, ensuring the contractor starts mobilisation in order to meet the proposed construction dates that are very important for Worthing Theatre and Museum Trust's Covid recovery.

##### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Executive Member is recommended to delegate authority to the Director for the Economy, to award a contract for the new ventilation system for the Connaught Theatre and Studio to the most economically advantageous tender.

##### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Connaught Theatre and Studio both currently have inadequate ventilation systems that result in the auditoriums and stage areas of the two buildings overheating, particularly during the summer months. The air inside these spaces can also quite quickly become stale as there is a general lack of air movement. This reduces the quality of the internal environment for the staff

and customers, at times impacting on the user experience. As the Connaught Theatre and Studio re-open for business in a post pandemic world, these works are deemed crucial for their future success in attracting customers back to these venues.

3.2 Funding to support this scheme was approved at the Joint Strategic Committee in December 2020.

#### **4. Proposals**

4.1 The proposal is to install new fresh air intake and extract ventilation systems within the Theatre and Studio buildings, incorporating energy efficient heat recovery units to align with the Council's 2030 net zero carbon commitment.

4.2 With reference to the recent and ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is widely recognised that as an improved control measure, there is a greater need and expectation of improved building ventilation. The proposed ventilation works are designed to meet the CIBSE guidance in relation to ventilation levels. It is hoped that this will enable less onerous social distancing restrictions to be put in place, thus supporting the economic recovery of The Connaught Theatre and Studio.

4.3 A planning application has been submitted and this will be considered at the Planning Committee meeting on the 26th May 2021.

4.4 The project is currently out to tender, with 6 specialist ventilation companies having been invited. The tenders are due back on the 27th May 2021. The provisional project delivery programme is as follows;

Award Contract - 24.6.21

Contractor lead in for ordering new plant - 3 weeks

Start date on site - 19.7.21

Completion date - 27.8.21

4.5 Worthing Theatre & Museum Trust are very keen that these works progress as soon as possible upon successful receipt of planning approval and suitable tender bids being obtained. This is because these works will help with the social distancing controls that will need to be put in place as the venues re-open. There are also some key events taking place through September, including the release of the latest James Bond film on the 29th September 2021 which is a significant income generator for WTM Trust.

## **5. Issues for consideration**

5.1 The options that have been considered are as follows:

### Option 1 - Do nothing

This option will leave 2 buildings with environments that overheat particularly during the summer months and when there are large numbers of people in the building. This lack of air movement could also put off customers in a post pandemic world affecting the future viability of the Connaught and Studio.

### Option 2 - Air conditioning providing cooling only

This option was considered but discounted as although this would be a cheaper solution, in the absence of heat recovery functionality, this would be less energy efficient. This system would not align to the Council's commitment to be net zero carbon by 2030.

### Option 3 - Cooling and heat recovery ventilation system

#### **Recommended**

This option will provide the removal of the air from inside the building and the introduction of fresh air which can be cooled as required. The heat from the air being removed can also be captured and used to reheat the new air coming into the building as required.

## **6. Engagement and Communication**

6.1 The project proposals and timings have been discussed in detail with WTM Trust.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 The approved budget for the ventilation scheme is £241,280. It is expected that the cost of the scheme can be accommodated within this budget.

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

8.2 s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation

8.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

8.4 s1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the Council to enter into a contract for the provision of making available assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the Council.

8.5 When entering into a public contract, the authority is required to comply with the Councils' Contract Standing Orders found at Part 4 of the Councils' constitution.

8.6 In carrying out the works the Council must have regard to the obligations upon it as Landlord under the terms of the Lease granted to WTM and ensure that the works are carried out in a manner which is compliant with the Lease.

## **Background Papers**

- Previous Reports - particularly where related decisions were made.

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## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

- The proposed works have been designed to incorporate heat recovery technology in order to make the ventilation system as energy efficient as possible. whilst addressing the ventilation issues within the Connaught and Studio which currently have overheating and air change issues.

### **1. Economic**

- These works will improve the user experience by providing a well ventilated and temperature controlled internal environment for customers and staff . Post Covid, the spaces we occupy and the ventilation levels within them, has become very important. This work should attract visitors back to the Connaught Theatre and Studio and in turn supporting their financial recovery.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

- These works will help to enable the Connaught Theatre and Studio to re-open safely and provide cultural venues for the residents of Worthing and those that live outside of the town.

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- Matter considered and no issues identified.

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

- A noise impact assessment is being carried out as part of the planning application and any mitigation recommendations required will be put in place to avoid an adverse impact on neighbouring properties.

### **3. Environmental**

- Matter considered and no issues identified other than that in 2.4 above.

### **4. Governance**

- The proposed works reinforce the Council's commitment to supporting Worthing Theatres and Museum Trust whilst providing a safer community asset.
- The project is subject to obtaining planning consent and any conditions contained therein.