

Briefing Notes

Meetings: **Social & Community O/S plus
Economy & Business Improvement O/S**

Meeting Dates: **11th January plus
25th January 2010**

Subject: Cheltenham Festivals Joint Social & Community / Economy & Business Improvement O/S Working Group

Members will recall that in November last year both of the above Committees agreed to establish a working group to consider how the activities of Cheltenham Festivals and their relevant funding arrangements interacted strategically with the Council's own cultural and wider community aspirations.

A working group was duly convened, which included Councillors Smith (as Chair), Barnes, Hutton and Rawson. The group has met on four occasions with one of these meetings arranged solely to discuss the Festivals' future strategic directions with its Chief Executive Donna Renney.

The working group agreed the following terms of reference at the commencement of the review process and have largely concentrated on these topic areas:

- Review of future funding arrangements in the light of no further LABGI monies being available.
- How are the strategic plans of the Council and the Festivals Board to be aligned in the future?
- What impact does this have on our MTFS?
- Review the processes surrounding the purchase of a new book office system.
- What are the future business plan priorities for the Festivals Board, and how are they to be funded?
- How can both organisations ensure that a balanced cultural offering is developed which supports both?
- How do other plans, such as redevelopment aspirations and future use of Imperial Gardens fit into the work of Civic Pride?

One issue however which is currently of great interest and importance to both organisations is the procurement of a new box office ticketing system. The tendering process for this new system has only just closed and officers are currently involved in a complex process of assessment.

The working group have therefore concluded that it would be significantly more meaningful if they were to report their full conclusions and recommendations to both parent Overview & Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet during the next meeting cycle which will be in March 2010.

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