

Maidstone Borough Council

Economic & Commercial Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 25 March 2014

Events Review – The Hazlitt Arts Centre

Report of: Sam Bailey, Research and Performance Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the Economic & Commercial Development Overview & Scrutiny meeting on the 25 February 2014 the Committee agreed to invite a representative from the Hazlitt Arts Centre. This was as a result of evidence given to the Committee by Ken Scott, of Maidstone Area Arts Partnership. The evidence gathered from the representative from the Hazlitt will be used to inform the Committee's ongoing review into events in the borough.
- 1.2 In order to understand how the Council supports event organisers, the Committee agreed that they would interview representatives from organisations that are involved in holding events in the borough.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Members interview Natalie Price, General Manager of the Hazlitt Arts Centre, in relation to the review topic.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Committee has created a work programme for the municipal year. At their previous meeting held on 25 February 2014 Members agreed that it would be helpful to interview a witness from the Hazlitt Arts Centre to find out how they support organisations that hold events in their venue.
- 3.2 The Hazlitt Arts Centre was previously run directly by Maidstone Borough Council. In 2013, the Council invited tenders for organisations to run the Hazlitt Theatre. In May 2013 Parkwood Leisure was chosen as the preferred bidder. Parkwood Leisure have now taken over the running of the Theatre.
- 3.3 The contract to run the theatre will run for 15 years and is expected to save the council £3.2 million over this period.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 4.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priority:

- For Maidstone to have a growing economy.

4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives may therefore include work that the Committee will consider over the next year.