

**Deputation for 19 July**

GOOD AFTERNOON LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I AM IAN PRATT, THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE KINGS THEATRE TRUST, AND I AM HERE TODAY TO SUPPORT THE APPLICATION FOR THE RELEASE OF THE TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND POUND CAPITAL GRANT AWARDED AT THE COUNCIL MEETING IN FEBRUARY.

MY LATE, MUCH MISSED COLLEAGUE SEAN BOWMAN SPOKE VERY ELOQUENTLY AT THAT MEETING AND OUTLINED WHY THE GRANT IS SO IMPORTANT TO THE KINGS THEATRE. I DO NOT INTEND TO REPEAT ALL OF THAT, AS MAINLY, THERE IS NO WAY I COULD IT AS WELL AS SEAN, BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT'S ALREADY BEEN SAID, AND THE KEY POINTS ARE IN THE DOCUMENTATION WE HAVE PROVIDED FOR YOU.

WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO DO IS TO REINFORCE THREE THINGS:

FIRSTLY, THIS GRANT IS AN ESSENTIAL "NEXT STEP" FOR THE KINGS TO DEVELOP OUR "BIG PROJECT". THIS WILL EQUIP THE THEATRE FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY, BOTH WITH BETTER FACILITIES FOR THE AUDIENCES, SO THEY CAN PROPERLY ENJOY ALL THAT THE KINGS CAN OFFER, AND ALLOW US TO EARN A BETTER INCOME TO SUSTAIN THE THEATRE IN THE LONG TERM, BUT ALSO TO PROVIDE BETTER TECHNICAL FACILITIES, SO THE SHOWS CAN BE EFFICIENTLY AND ECONOMICALLY STAGED.

SECONDLY, THESE NEW FACILITIES CAN BE USED TO RADICALLY IMPROVE THE EDUCATION AND HERITAGE WORK WE NOW DO AT THE KINGS – A PROPER MULTI PURPOSE EDUCATION AND HERITAGE SPACE – SO WE CAN BOTH TELL THE STORY OF THE THEATRE, AND HOLD WORKSHOPS, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, SUMMER SCHOOLS AND GIVE THE THRIVING 70 STRONG KINGS YOUTH THEATRE A HOME. IT WILL ALSO HELP US FURTHER DEVELOP OUR GROWING APPRENTICE AND WORK PLACEMENT SCHEMES, WHICH HAVE HELPED DOZENS OF YOUNG PEOPLE INTO EMPLOYMENT OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS.

AND THIRDLY, THIS PROJECT WILL HELP REGENERATE PORTSMOUTH, BOTH SUSTAINING THE EXISTING EMPLOYMENT AT THE KINGS, AND PROVIDING EXTRA POSTS TOO, ON TOP OF ALL THE ECONOMIC

BENEFITS THAT A THRIVING CULTURAL ASSET LIKE THE KINGS CAN GENERATE – CURRENTLY ESTIMATED AS £1M A YEAR ECONOMIC BENEFIT INTO THE CITY EACH YEAR, THIS IS ANTICIPATED TO RISE TO OVER £3M A YEAR – EVERY YEAR – ONCE THE BIG PROJECT IS COMPLETE.

WE BELIEVE IT'S A COMPELLING CASE, WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO THE COUNCIL FOR BACKING THE PROJECT BY PUTTING THE GRANT INTO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME, AND NOW WE REQUEST THE GRANT IS RELEASED, SO WE CAN USE IT TO DEVELOP THE WHOLE PROJECT.

I COMMEND OUR REQUEST TO YOU. THE TRUSTEES, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS AT THE KINGS THEATRE HAVE COME A LONG WAY SINCE THE DARK DAYS OF A SEMI DERELICT OLD BUILDING, STRUGGLING ALONG WITH ONLY A FEW SHOWS. THE BUILDING IS NOW IN BETTER SHAPE THAN FOR 50 YEARS, WITH A PROGRAMME OF SHOWS TO ATTRACT THE CITY AND THE SURROUNDING REGION, AND THERE'S A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES, EVENTS AND TOURS TO RIVAL THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY. I DO URGE YOU TO SUPPORT US FURTHER WITH THE RELEASE OF THIS GRANT.

THANK YOU