



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ARTS STEERING GROUP**

**13TH JULY 2023**

#### **REPORT ON RCT THEATRES CARBON REDUCTION PLANS**

#### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & COMMUNITIES, COUNCILLOR BOB HARRIS**

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#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update members of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group of the RCT Theatres' Carbon Reduction Measures.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group:

- 2.1 Consider the contents of the report and comment on the information provided.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 This report provides an opportunity for the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group to consider the proposed Carbon Reduction Measures within the RCT Theatres.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Wales has declared both Climate and Nature emergencies and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is committed to playing its part in tackling those emergencies.
- 4.2 The Council's [Think Climate Strategy 2022-2025](#) was agreed by Cabinet on 22 June 2022 and sets out the ways in which the Council aims to tackle climate change and meet its commitments to reducing carbon emissions across the Council and the County Borough.
- 4.3 The Council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint across all of its activities, with particular emphasis on procured goods and services and

built assets, which comprises the largest proportion of the Council's carbon footprint.

- 4.4 The Arts Service Business Plan 2024-2027 outlines a commitment to respond to the climate and nature emergencies using creativity and the arts to support the Council, county borough and the arts sector to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 4.5 In May 2022, Point One and Indigo Ltd partnered to deliver Act Green, a piece of research into the attitudes of UK cultural attendees towards the climate crisis. Its aim was to understand more about what audiences expected from cultural organisations in this area, and what part they were willing to play. The key findings of the research were:
  - 77% of audience members agree with the statement: “Cultural organisations have a responsibility to influence society to make radical change to address the climate emergency”;
  - 88% of cultural audience members are worried by the climate emergency;
  - Only 17% think cultural organisations currently place great importance on it;
  - 90% or more expect theatres to already be making sustainable productions, running sustainable buildings, and operating sustainably;
  - High proportions of audience members are open to sustainable travel, food and other choices.
- 4.6 This research by Indigo and Point One shows a strong expectation by audiences that theatres should do more to respond to the climate emergency.
- 4.7 In 2021, the first edition of the [Theatre Green Book](#) was released. The Theatre Green Book is an initiative by theatre-makers – guided by sustainability experts Buro Happold – to move theatre towards sustainability. In three volumes, it sets standards for making productions sustainably, for making theatre buildings sustainable, and for improving operations like catering and front of house.
- 4.8 The volume of the Theatre Green Book focused on theatre buildings recognises the challenges faced by those managing historic buildings and uses the energy hierarchy as its key principle.
- 4.9 The energy hierarchy suggests:

- a) First making your building 'Lean' by improving its building fabric so it wastes less energy. That means insulating roofs and walls and improving windows and doors.
- b) Second, make it 'Clean' by replacing inefficient services systems, so as to minimise the energy they use and deliver the energy demand in the most efficient way possible.
- c) Thirdly, go 'Green' by switching that energy to renewable sources by generating energy on site wherever possible, with photovoltaic cells, heat pumps etc

4.10 The Theatre Green Book also recognises the importance of training: "Theatre's shift towards sustainable working needs everyone to understand the principles on which green guidance is based. More widespread Climate Literacy training can help the whole sector move forwards."

## **5. Carbon Reduction Measures within the RCT Theatres**

5.1 As part of the Arts Council Wales and Council funded development of Stiwdio Un at the Park and Dare Theatre, LED alternatives to theatre lighting were included in the lighting specification and subsequently purchased.

5.2 The Strategic Arts and Culture Manager attended a Theatre Green Book event at the Bristol Old Vic in December 2021 and has encouraged the team to adopt its key principles as well as publicising the Theatre Green Book to other officers across the Council.

5.3 The Arts Service hold regular meetings with Corporate Estates colleagues to discuss and develop Carbon Reduction Measures within the two RCT theatres using the energy hierarchy to prioritise schemes.

5.4 The Council has recently approved the following schemes at the Park and Dare Theatre, designed to save 23.2 tonnes of Co2 per year, as part of its Corporate Carbon Reduction Programme:

- Replacement of boilers, pumps and boiler management system;
- Installation of LED lighting within toilets, circulation areas and back stage areas

5.5 At the Coliseum Theatre, the following schemes, designed to save 5.9 tonnes of Co2 per year, have been approved:

- Upgrading of boiler management system;
- Installation of LED lighting within toilets, circulation areas, back stage areas and external areas

- 5.6 As well as saving an estimated 29.1 tonnes of Co2 per year, these schemes, which represent a total investment of £150k, are also estimated to save the Council around £16k per year in energy costs.
- 5.7 The Coliseum Theatre is also subject to structural and feasibility studies in respect of the installation of roof-top solar array with the results expected later this year.
- 5.8 There is an ambition to install electric vehicle charging points in the Coliseum car park as part of the Council's publicly accessible EV roll out. Charging points have already been installed at the public car park near to the Park and Dare Theatre
- 5.9 The Arts Service continues to implement the recommendations within the Theatre Green Book in relation to its productions and co-productions and is striving to:
- Make sure 50% of all materials come from reused or recycled sources;
  - Make sure 65% of them go on to future live productions, through storage or re-use;
  - Avoid harmful and unsustainable materials;
  - Run technical systems sustainably;
  - Reduce journeys and deliveries.
- 5.10 The service also continues to encourage hirers to adopt these principles when presenting their productions and to use eco-friendly materials where these exist.

## **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

## **7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

- 7.1 No consultation exercise has been required.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to the recommendations in this report.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 There are no legal implications aligned to the recommendations in this report.

## **10. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

10.1 With financial contributions from the Arts Council Wales and the Council, we contribute to the delivery of Welsh Government priorities and the Council's corporate priorities, 'Economy', 'People' and 'Place'.

10.2 The Arts Service contributes to the seven national wellbeing goals, particularly:

- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language;
- A prosperous Wales;
- A healthier Wales;
- A resilient Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities;
- A globally responsible Wales.

11.3 The programme and our involvement is consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

- Long-term – enabling us to co-create work, engage with our communities and build partnerships that seek to achieve a more resilient and sustainable arts and creative industries provision within the County Borough;
- Prevention – by understanding our community's needs, concerns, opportunities and aspiration, we can provide engagement, participation and performance opportunities that address the early intervention and prevention agenda;
- Integrated – through community engagement work with key partners and contributing more effectively to a range of local, regional and national strategic priorities in an integrated and coherent way;
- Collaboration – through creating and working with our communities in collaboration with key artists and arts organisations whose values align with ours and with whom we can work in partnership to achieve our goals;
- Involvement – developing our creativity and community engagement through consultation, feedback, advisory groups and professional networks.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

12.1 This report informs members of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group of the carbon reduction plans within RCT Theatres and how the service is supporting the Council in the delivery of its Think Climate Strategy 2022-2025.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

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**Officer to contact:** Mr Adrian Williams, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager