

Dereham Town Council

Full Council

10th July 2018.

9. To consider First World War Centenary Grant for theatre production of Not for Heroes for the Friends of the Memorial Hall.

Initially FoDMH requested a grant of £750 to cover the cost of the performance. Since the grant was agreed the show has increased from a single act to a multi-act show, with an increased in cost to £1,500.

The FoDMH are requesting that the grant be increased from £750 to £1,200 to cover this additional cost. (correspondence are enclosed)

The budget for the event is currently :

Costs

Act -	£1,500
Hall hire -	£401.32
PRS -	£37.42
Expenses -	£100
Banners and posters -	£295
Incidentals -	£166.26

Total Costs £2,350

Revenue.

Grant DTC	£750
Ticket sales (£12 per ticket x 100)	£1,200

Total Income £1,950

This leaves a deficit of £400, an additional 34 ticket sales would enable the event to breakeven (total sales 134), if all tickets were sold then there would be a surplus of £2,352.

The Council was encouraging organisations to come forward with ideas for events to commemorate the end of the 1st World War and when this event was originally considered, the Council was very supportive.

The purpose of any grant is to remove the element of risk for voluntary organisations to enable something to happen that otherwise would not happen because of the risk. Initially the grant from the Town Council would have enabled a greater level of income to come back to the FoDMH and would have eliminated some of the risk. The more tickets that need to be sold to breakeven the greater the risk to the FoDMH.

To put on this event as things currently stand, the breakeven point is 134 tickets, which the FoDMH feel is a much greater risk that the previous breakeven point of 71 tickets sold.

The Council has 3 options.

	Option	Risk
1	Leave the grant as it is	FoDMH may consider this to be too greater risk and not promote the show.
2	Offer to cover the additional risk, i.e. make sure they do not make a loss by covering any shortfall in ticket sales.	
3	Agree additional grant of £450	

10. To consider Planting trees to commemorate the end of World War One.

The matter was raised at the June Council meeting where the proposal was to utilise any unallocated funds in the WW1 grant pot to plant some trees. A suggestion was made to plant variety of trees with leaves that would turn red in autumn, so that from above it would appear as a poppy when the trees are mature. There are varieties of trees such as the Red Oak and the Pin Oak which have leaves that turn red in the autumn.

The best time to plant the trees would be either in the late autumn or late winter, given the events around the 11th November it would probably be appropriate to carry out the planting in November.

If the Council wished that planting should take place in November, then rather than use any unallocated funds, funds should be allocated directly. Of the £20,000 allocated for WW1 commemorative grants just over £4,000 has been allocated to date. It is therefore unlikely that the grants will exceed £10,000.

A final scheme would need to be put together in consultation with the tree suppliers, but as a guide, if the poppy idea was something the Council wanted to pursue, it would need between 10 and 20 trees and cost between £2,000 - £4,000.

The Council would need to:

1. Consider whether to plant trees to commemorate the end of WW1
2. Consider when these trees should be planted, if planting in November then funds would need to be allocated from the grant budget.
3. Consider the design of the scheme.
4. Agree a budget so that a scheme can be developed.

Antony Needham

From: Antony Needham
Sent: 31 May 2018 15:14
To:
Cc: 'H BUSHELL'; 'lhmonument@aol.com'
Subject: FW: First World War Centenary Grant - 'Not About Heroes'

Hi Tim,

For some reason this didn't come through to me. It is too late to be on the committee for next week but there is no reason why (if councillors wish it) that it could go to full council, we have done this in the past.

If you are saying that the total cost is £2,350 – less our initial grant of £750 leaves £1,600 shortfall. If you then charged say £9 per ticket then your breakeven point is 178 tickets, do you want to have a cheaper ticket price or don't you think you will be able to sell 178 tickets?

Could you also expand on the £100 expenses, what expenses are there?

I will see if Councillors wish to put this on full Council.

All the best

Tony

From:
Sent: 29 May 2018 09:23
To: whiterabbitonline@btinternet.com; Antony Needham; Linda Monument; Brigitte Morton
Subject: First World War Centenary Grant - 'Not About Heroes'

Dear Mrs Bushell

The Town Council made a grant last autumn to Friends of Dereham Memorial Hall to support our proposal to bring this acclaimed production by Seabright Productions as a major part of the commemoration of the centenary of the cessation of hostilities in 1918. At that time there was a deadline to the grant-making process, and I did not have all the costings from the company.

I had seen the play at Edinburgh as a one act show, and had based my figures on the assumption that this is what would be going on tour, and had also assumed that the performance fee would be in the region of £750, which is an average for that size of show.

The Town Council heard the application on the basis that the figures were incomplete, and asked me to return if they increased. I now know that the cost of the promotion to FDMH will be in the region of £2350, not £1520 as I had suggested.

This is because the show we are receiving is now a full length play, and the fee to us will be £1500. The additional costs are the standard ones of hall hire (+/- £300), technician fee (£101.32), PRS (£37.42), expenses (£100), and publicity (banners - £165, fliers and posters - £130).

Our other source of revenue will be ticket sales, which I have cautiously put at £1300.

We had seriously considered offering a matinee performance in addition to the evening show, but whilst teachers were keen, the event falls during the half term holiday, and they cannot guarantee attendance by children.

Please increase the grant to £1200.

Best wishes

Tim Cara

FDMH.

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Dear Tony

Re: First World War Centenary Grant - Not About Heroes.

Thank you for the very helpful emails of 31st May and 6th June from yourself and Jillian.

The item relating to expenses breaks down in part to a contribution of £50 towards catering for the visiting company of 4. We are not expecting to be asked to provide accommodation this time, but we find it good hospitality to provide a cooked meal to the visitors before the show. This item is for ingredients: our members will cook the meal. The additional £50 is a general administrative sum, meeting a notional share of the overheads we carry and will go against stationery, public liability insurance premium, and Creative Arts East and other membership fees.

As I wrote before, the overall outlay for the show is budgeted at £2350, which taking account of the current grant of £750, leaves £1600 to recover at the box office. How many tickets we can sell is a judgement call, and there is evidence to suggest that the show will sell well, and evidence against that prediction.

On the positive side, we have been growing our audiences for drama. In March 2016, 'The Marie Lloyd Story' played to 40 people, but by December 2017 and March 2018, audiences exceeded 100 on three occasions. Also, the publicity for 'Not About Heroes' will demonstrate that it is a piece of high quality, and its place as part of the Town Council's Commemorative programme may well bring in additional revenue from people who do not ordinarily go to the theatre. Its use of original text from the correspondence between Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, and quotes from their poetry may well bring in parties of school children studying drama and the war poets.

Against that, 'Not About Heroes' is a serious piece, and these are definitely harder to sell to the general public, who seem to prefer to be entertained, rather than enlightened. Our best recent promotion was of the Pantaloons, which exceeded 170 seats, but is rather a special case: It was a seasonal show (Christmas Carol), the company has been building a local following (and this was their third visit to Dereham), whereas Seabright Productions are coming for their first visit. The production has won awards, but whilst their reputation is strong in Wales and elsewhere, they have no local following. Dereham audiences are agreed to be conservative in selecting what they want to pay to see.

We are trying gently to encourage our customers to pay a more realistic price for their tickets and are edging towards £12 or £14 for an adult, £10 for a teen. Dereham Theatre Company charged £12 each for 'A Passionate Woman' in March and played to audiences averaging below 100 tickets over 3 nights. This also was an unknown play with serious content, but an excellent local amateur production.

I think our core audience for drama is just over 100, but this is a 'guesstimate'. There is no reliable formula. 100 tickets at £12 each would yield £1200, still leaving us a shortfall of £400. My earlier email suggested a return of £1300 at the box office.

I'm really asking to recover as much of the production costs from the grants as possible, and to minimize the risk to Friends of DMH. I'm sure that whatever size of audience materialises, 'Not About Heroes' will have a powerful impact on those who watch it, wholly appropriate to the spirit of the Commemorations. Whatever the audience size, the benefit of an increased grant would help Friends progress with our work, and would show Dereham's civic support for the Arts. If as a consequence of selling more tickets than predicted, the promotion turns a surplus, such money will enable Friends to improve its profitability and extend its overall offer to the town.

I hope this answers your questions adequately, but please contact me if I can help further.

Yours Sincerely

Tim Cara Chair, FDMH