



Your Regal Project News

Edition 1



Manager's View



The Regal Theatre is owned and managed by Stowmarket Town Council and for some time now, the Town Council has been seeking to provide a bigger and better theatre for the local community. I am delighted to say that those efforts have been rewarded as Mid Suffolk District Council have shown their faith in the future of the Regal, by offering a grant and loan towards the improvement of the theatre. This is a reflection of the success of the Regal and the support that it has received from the local community.

This project is for the local community. If you have any views about the scope of the project, what you want to see or don't want to see, how it is to be funded or how you can be kept informed of progress then please contact David Marsh, Theatre & Events Manager, Stowmarket Town Council on davidm@stowmarket.org or 01449 612825 or find out more on the Town Council website by visiting www.stowmarket.org; We would be delighted to hear from you.

Project Details

Burrell Foley Fischer LLP (architects), Jackson Coles (quantity surveyors) and Craigmount Consulting (cinema business specialists) have undertaken a site options appraisal on behalf of Stowmarket Town Council. This has examined options for the redevelopment of the theatre, their scope, impact and affordability.

The key objectives within the brief for redeveloping and improving the Regal are:

- To provide a modern entertainment venue that blends the traditional art deco styling and heritage of the theatre with new levels of comfort and technology that meet the expectations of customers.
- To create two additional cinema auditoria.
- To provide a new café area.
- To improve the audience experience for cinema and live performances.
- To improve the facilities for the public, including those with disabilities.
- To improve the facilities for users hiring the Regal for live drama and music performances, and for business and community meetings.
- To extend diversity in programming and user groups of the Regal.
- To improve the viability and sustainability of the Regal.
- To enhance the south-eastern gateway of the town centre and support the daytime and night-time economies.



Funding the Improvements

The financial contributions to the project are planned to be as follows:

Mid Suffolk District Council Grant	£1,560,000
Stowmarket Town Council Loan (from Mid Suffolk District Council)	£1,000,000
Stowmarket Town Council Reserves (contribution to legacy projects and provision of contingencies)	£650,000
Project Budget	£3,210,000

The proposed loan to Stowmarket Town Council will be over a period of thirty years with annual loan repayments in the region of £50,000 per year. A business case has been prepared by Craigmount Consulting (November 2017) which forecasts an annual surplus on the operation of the theatre after it has been redeveloped, which could fund this loan repayment if required or otherwise, it can be funded from elsewhere within the existing budget. The Town Council plans to make a significant contribution from reserves. This would mean that £650,000 could be allocated to the project without adversely affecting the overall financial position of the Town Council. Further information can be found on our website www.stowmarket.org; or by contacting David Blackburn, Town Clerk: davidb@stowmarket.org; or 01449 776393.

Community Feedback

Ark Consultancy were commissioned by Mid Suffolk District Council to evaluate the social impact of the Regal Theatre before deciding to invest in the project. As part of this piece of work, there was a community survey from which 158 responses were received and a community focus group involving 25 people.

The results from this community engagement are available on our website. The most notable response was to the question: How important is the Regal to the local area? This brought a response of 89.97% - Extremely Important, 7.59% -Somewhat Important, 1.27% of Limited Importance and 1.27% of No Importance.

