

G Live Annual Report Presentation Meeting Minutes

Friday 16 December 2021 at 17:00

(Microsoft Teams Meeting)

Present:

From GBC:

Cllr James Steel (JS) (Lead Councillor)
Cllr Ramsey Nagaty (RN) representing O&S
Cllr Colin Cross (CC) representing O&S
Cllr Tom Hunt (TH) (Executive - Guest)
Jonathan Sewell (JBS)

From HQ Theatres:

Derek Aldridge (DA) – HQT Venue Director

Apologies:

Cllr Pauline Searle (PS) representing O&S
Cllr Graham Eyre (GE) representing O&S
Cllr Jan Harwood (JH) representing O&S
Ian Doyle (ID)
Kara Anderson (KA)
Alvin Hargreaves (AH) – HQT

Ref:	ITEM	Action
1.0	Introduction	
1.1	DA introduced the presentation for the contract year (Oct 2020 to Sep 2021) and explained that the venue was closed for normal operation for all but the final 5 weeks of the contract year.	
1.2	DA thanked the Council for its support during the COVID closure, its help with setting up the vaccination centre and support during the Willmott Dixon building works.	
1.3	DA mentioned the contribution the venue had made to the local vaccination programme with 175,000 vaccinations administered during the period of its operation.	
2.0	Presentation of the G Live Annual Report by Derek Aldridge	
2.1	DA indicated there were 177 performances rescheduled accounting for 60,000 tickets. Unfortunately, 81 performances had to be cancelled during this period due to various reasons such as the performer no longer wished to be on tour	
2.2	DA explained the performance table for the short period of opening, during the 5 weeks almost 17,000 people attended events at the venue.	
2.3	The venue had also welcomed back the Hillsong Church and other community events.	
2.4	DA said he was very pleased with how the programme for 2022 looks, obviously subject to any further pandemic disruptions.	
2.5	The venue's smaller halls customers were a little slower to return but there were still 23 events in the 5-week period.	
2.6	The creative learning programme was suspended throughout the closure although contact was maintained with key partners in this area. This activity did not really return until October 2021.	
2.7	The kitchen hospitality activity returned following strict protocols. Customers have welcomed the pre-order and delivery to seat	

Ref:	ITEM	Action
	opportunities and have also returned to the Mezzanine Restaurant. HQT are looking to expand the number of tables and undertake some further investment proposals to enhance the catering offer including a request from the venue sinking fund. DA highlighted the move to a cashless operation and indicated that this had been well received by the customers as part of the See It Safely programme.	
2.8	Events have returned to G Live although this aspect will take time to recover fully. Various large events have rebooked, and signs are good going forward.	
2.9	The measurement of the perception of Customer Service has recently recommenced but there would not be any figures for this contract year.	
2.10	Da explained that due to the COVID closures it was necessary to look at Year 8 of the contract for a full year of "normal" activity. The figures demonstrate a stark comparison between the operation in the period and normal activity.	
2.11	DA set out the impact of COVID on the venue and industry and once again thanked GBC for their support. He also mentioned the new management arrangement as part of Trafalgar Entertainment Group which HQT joined mid-way through the year. DA was excited by the opportunities presented by this new relationship.	
2.12	DA explained the new arrangements with E-Tickets reducing contact and helping with the management of the venue. He also explained the new arrangements with the call centre and the reduced day time hours of operation. There was little or no passing footfall now however, these arrangements would be kept under review and would be led by demand. The reduced hours have been very positive in helping the facilities return to normal operation through releasing staff for training etc.	
2.13	G Live continues to take a very pragmatic approach to dealing with COVID refunds etc. prioritising customer care.	
2.14	There have been 3 occasions where Track and Trace have notified a need to notify all customers that someone at the venue at the same time as them may have been infectious at the time following an event where 2 customers had subsequently tested positive. Obviously, this does not automatically mean that these individuals contracted the virus during their visit.	
2.15	G Live are following all reasonable steps to encourage customer compliance with COVID regulations and various facilities are in place to assist with this. The venue is taking all necessary measures to facilitate a safe visit by customers and visiting production companies including ventilation and touch point cleaning for example.	
2.16	The building has continued to be maintained throughout the period. The turnaround to prepare the building for use as a vaccination centre was very quick.	
2.17	HQT have worked very closely with Willmott Dixon and GBC to minimise any disruption for the remedial building works.	
2.18	DA quickly explained some of the proposed schemes for future service development, these include improvements to the restaurant and a full signage review internally and externally.	

Ref:	ITEM	Action
2.19	DA explained the financial position as a result of the limited trading opportunity this year. There was a £196,518 loss during contract year 10, which is to be expected given the circumstances.	
3.0	Questions	
3.1	<p>DA welcomed further questions / comments. CC commended HQT on their management during this challenging contract year. DA thanked CC for his comments. CC suggested using the exterior opportunities of the venue more and sell the outside space. DA indicated this was something being looked at for the better weather period.</p> <p>TH thanked DA for his presentation. TH asked about the remedial works being undertaken by Willmott Dixon. DA confirmed these works are just in the process of concluding. TH inquired about the mezzanine kitchen plans mentioned in the previous annual presentation. DA confirmed these were a part of the investment plans for the hospitality offer.</p> <p>JS & TH had to leave the meeting at this point.</p> <p>RN asked about the refund voucher usage and whether DA was concerned about the financial cash flow implications of customers using those. DA explained the funds paid by customers were placed in holding accounts till the event took place and therefore there was no detrimental impact on cash flow.</p> <p>RN asked about cleaning arrangements and DA explained they used both external and internal cleaning. DA indicated the different types of cleaning equipment used to clean the venue.</p> <p>DA expressed a feeling uncertainty over what the future holds at the moment, particularly for January.</p> <p>CC expressed his appreciation at the provision of drinks to the seats and DA explained how the restricted offer “magic” happens. DA believes many of the customers would not of visited the bar had this service had not been available. He also pointed out that this service improves the service at the bar by reducing the queues.</p>	
3.	There were no further questions and the meeting closed with everyone being thanked for their attendance.	