

# Community Asset Transfer Evaluation Report

Cannock Chase District Council

July 2025



## Document control

### Amendment History

Version	Date	File Reference	Author	Remarks/changes
2.0	31.07.25	CAT Evaluation Report	DWA/ WCD	Final Report

### Sign Off List

Name	Position	Date	Remarks/changes
Duncan Wood-Allum	Managing Director	31.07.25	Approved

### Distribution List

Name	Position	Date
Anna Nevin	Head of Wellbeing	31.07.25

# 1. Executive Summary

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## 1.1 Introduction

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- 1.1.1 This Executive Summary sets out the findings of an independent evaluation conducted by The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC) on behalf of Cannock Chase District Council (CCDC).
- 1.1.2 The evaluation reviewed the revised proposal submitted by the Cannock Chase Theatre Trust (CCTT) for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the Prince of Wales Theatre. SLC provided detailed verbal and written feedback to CCTT on areas within their proposal that required further consideration prior to them submitting their final proposal.
- 1.1.3 The aim of the independent evaluation was to determine whether the revised proposal met the Council's minimum requirements for financial sustainability, operational readiness, and strategic fit to enable the proposal to progress to Stage Three – Preferred Partner status for a Community Asset Transfer.
- 1.1.4 This proposal would also form the basis of further evidence to support the release of c£6m Levelling Up Capital funding.
- 1.1.5 **Due to the commercial sensitivity of this exercise all bidders were informed in writing that they were not to share any aspects of this process with third parties whilst the evaluation process was in operation.** This is standard practice. Failure to comply with this request would result in formal exclusion from the process.

## 1.2 Evaluation Summary

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- 1.2.1 **Following detailed assessment from SLC, the final submission from CCTT did not meet the required thresholds in both the financial and quality (method statement) components.**
- 1.2.2 Additionally, CCTT contacted elected Members of Cannock Chase District Council in writing on 7 July 2025 criticising the evaluation process and seeking to influence the decisions under consideration by the Council during the evaluation process.
- 1.2.3 Following the Council's evaluation process, CCTT have failed to achieve minimum thresholds in both evaluated components (financial and quality) and have also contravened the process through lobbying activity, thus invalidating their bid.
- 1.2.4 **CCTT's proposal fell considerably short of the minimum threshold set by the Council for a credible robust and sustainable Community Asset Transfer.** CCTT scored **21.6%** against the minimum threshold of **59%** to progress to Stage 3.
- 1.2.5 **SLC recommends that the proposal is not taken forward to the next stage of the CAT process.**
- 1.2.6 The three key reasons are as follows:
- 1.2.7 The application's financial submission was not underwritten, wildly over optimistic and commercially naive. **The financial risk was exceptionally high.**
- 1.2.8 The application's method statements demonstrated a complete lack of understanding of the reality of commercial theatre operations in a challenging market. **The operational risks are exceptionally high.**
- 1.2.9 The applicant's lobbying activities have resulted in it invalidating its own bid.

### 1.3 Financial Submission

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- 1.3.1 **The financial model presented is highly reliant on unsecured and untested income assumptions.** While mobilisation costs for Year 0 are estimated at £109,000, only £12,380 of this has been confirmed. It is recognised that there will be a period of time between now and when the theatre could reopen, however significant investment decisions on the theatre need to be made by the Council now. Proposed income streams—including a Friends scheme, seat sponsorship and corporate donations—remain speculative, with no pledges or supporting evidence.
- 1.3.2 **No working capital reserve or contingency fund is identified.** A bridging loan is mentioned but not substantiated. Overall, the plan offers no resilience if early targets are not met.
- 1.3.3 **The Trust's financial submission received a score of 1,** which results in automatic failure under the Council's published evaluation criteria, scoring methodology and guidelines.

### 1.4 Method Statement Submission

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- 1.4.1 **The Trust's method statement responses achieved a total score of 21.2%,** significantly below the minimum threshold of 60% required. Five method statement responses received the lowest possible score of 1 (poor):
- ▶ **1a – Vision:** No critical path, delivery phasing, or alignment of ambition with resources. Vision presented more as advocacy than a structured plan.
  - ▶ **3a – Catering:** Income projections are overstated and unsupported by trading evidence. No delivery model, capital fit-out costs, or operational staffing plans are included.
  - ▶ **4a - Facilities and Building Management** - The capital plan exceeds the affordability cap, depends on unfunded works by CCDC, and lacks a credible implementation route.
  - ▶ **5a – Reopening Strategy:** Staff posts introduced too late; mobilisation year is underfunded; no details of handover or compliance plan provided.
  - ▶ **7b – Risk Management:** No risk register, mitigation plan, or sensitivity analysis provided. Key delivery risks (e.g. volunteer shortfall, income gaps) are unaddressed.
- 1.4.2 The submission was also weakened by the absence of several key components:
- ▶ **Lack of clarity on how capital costs for the redevelopment of the theatre would stay within affordable limits.**
  - ▶ **No demand analysis or competitor mapping was provided** to support audience projections, programming choices, or pricing assumptions.
  - ▶ **Audience development planning was underdeveloped,** with no defined target segments, key performance indicators, strategies to support re-engagement, loyalty building, or growth.
  - ▶ **Partnerships remained informal and unconfirmed,** with no delivery responsibilities, financial contributions, or formal agreements in place.
  - ▶ **Implementation sequencing was not costed or phased,** particularly in relation to early programming, marketing, and compliance mobilisation.
  - ▶ **Governance and statutory compliance** responses were incomplete, with key policies still in development (although recognising there is some time to complete these) and no assurance of operational readiness on transfer.
  - ▶ **No risk register was provided** highlighting the lack of a professional approach to this proposal.

## 1.5 Organisational Readiness – Governance and Delivery Capacity

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- 1.5.1 The proposal sets out a multi-faceted operating model involving theatre management, café/bar operations, cultural programming, and community outreach. **However, the submission does not demonstrate that the necessary structures, personnel or plans are in place to deliver this breadth of activity.**
- 1.5.2 **Core operational functions—compliance, programming, technical oversight, audience engagement—are either unfunded or delayed.** Many functions are expected to be delivered by volunteers without evidence of recruitment pipelines, training, or management processes.
- 1.5.3 Governance arrangements are described in principle, but lack clear delegation frameworks, decision-making protocols, or onboarding and succession planning.
- 1.5.4 The financial model is further constrained by reliance on a £6.32 million capital programme, which it assumes will be delivered by the Council prior to handover. **This figure is above the Council's affordability ceiling of £6 million that had been suggested. No phasing, revised scope, or third-party funding options are provided.**
- 1.5.5 The risks associated with such a proposed approach are exceptionally high.

## 1.6 Conclusion

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- 1.6.1 CCTT's proposal reflects commendable community ambition and intent. However, **the submission does not provide the level of financial assurance, operational planning, or delivery capability required for a responsible capital investment of public funds or sustainable Community Asset Transfer.** The evaluation identifies both critical shortcomings and evidence gaps that would need to be addressed before any future consideration.
- 1.6.2 **On this basis, SLC strongly advises that the Council does not proceed any further with CCTT's application.**

## 2. Introduction

### An independent evaluation

#### 2.1 The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy

2.1.1 The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy Ltd (SLC) has independently evaluated the proposal submitted by the Cannock Chase Theatre Trust for the Community Asset Transfer of the Prince of Wales Theatre on behalf of Cannock Chase District Council.

2.1.2 **SLC is regarded as a leading advisor to the public sector in services including leisure, active wellbeing and culture.**

2.1.3 SLC has a proud track record of supporting cultural service transformation. They bring a rigorous approach working with subject matter experts to deliver inspiring places and sustainable services.

2.1.4 **SLC has enabled over £600 million of delivered and committed investment in public assets since 2010.** This includes investments in cultural assets.

2.1.5 SLC also has a strong track record over the last 16 years of supporting significant cultural service transformations, facility developments and sustainable service models.

2.1.6 Most of this work has been working closely with **William Culver Dodds**, Associate. William is the lead evaluator supported by **Duncan Wood-Allum**, Managing Director.

2.1.7 Their profiles are below.

#### 2.2 Lead evaluator: William Culver-Dodds

2.2.1 William is a strategic leader in Arts, Culture & Place-Making.

2.2.2 With over 35 years' experience in the arts and cultural sector, William has combined hands-on leadership of major cultural organisations with high-level consultancy to councils, development agencies, and venues across the UK and internationally. His core expertise lies in transforming underperforming cultural venues and initiatives into sustainable, accessible, and financially robust community assets.

2.2.3 **As Associate Consultant with SLC, William has led major cultural service transformations nationwide:**

- ▶ In North Kesteven, he reimagined the National Centre for Craft and Design, securing a £1.5m council investment and increasing engagement through a refreshed offer and financial model.
- ▶ In Gloucester, he developed a long-term, costed roadmap for the city's entire cultural portfolio, including The Guildhall.
- ▶ In South Kesteven, he shaped a sustainable operating model for Stamford Arts Centre and Grantham Town Hall, rooted in community use and realistic programming.



2.2.4 **Other project highlights include:**

- ▶ **Mole Valley District Council: Strategic review and operational advice for Dorking Halls.**
- ▶ **Ebbsfleet Development Corporation: Cultural input into Castle Hill's placemaking plans,** testing financial viability and delivery.
- ▶ **Derby's Silk Mill: Developed a business plan** balancing industrial heritage with commercial viability.

- ▶ **Sandwell Council** (via JLL): Advised on civic building rationalisation including West Bromwich Town Hall and The Public, leading to the site's closure and reuse for education.
- ▶ **Gateshead Old Town Hall Quarter** (via Cushman & Wakefield): Shaped the cultural vision within a regeneration strategy, using market demand forecasting and commercial modelling.
- ▶ **Scarborough Borough Council - Business cases for Scarborough Spa complex and the redevelopment of Scarborough's 7,000 seat Open Air Theatre**
- ▶ **Tour de France Development Consultant** for the Grand Depart Cultural Festival for Welcome to Yorkshire.

2.2.5 For Barnsley MBC, William's review of The Civic arts centre led to a revised business model and more efficient use of space. He also delivered business plans for the expansion of Kendal Brewery Arts Centre and helped unlock the tourism and commercial potential of Oxford Town Hall.

2.2.6 He has supported rural initiatives such as Spilsby Sessions House, The Grand Clitheroe, and Ilkley's Manor House Art Gallery, enabling successful asset transfers and sustainable, community-led operations.

2.2.7 William has also advised on festival and event strategies for:

- ▶ Glasgow Life
- ▶ Aberdeen City Council
- ▶ North of Tyne Combined Authority
- ▶ Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council (Northern Ireland)
- ▶ Brighton & Hove City Council
- ▶ Birmingham and Derby City Councils
- ▶ Fáilte Ireland

## 2.3 Cultural Management

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2.3.1 William served for 15 years as Chief Executive of Harrogate International Festivals, transforming the organisation from a seasonal classical music event into a year-round cultural force. Under his leadership, turnover grew to over £1 million, and annual audiences exceeded 100,000.

2.3.2 He founded the internationally acclaimed Theakston Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival, now the world's leading celebration of crime fiction, and curated a bold programme of outdoor spectacles, international arts, and new commissions that broadened the Festival's reach and relevance.

2.3.3 Alongside this, William oversaw the North Yorkshire Youth Music Action Zone, leading a county-wide youth music agency that delivered inclusive and high-impact programmes for children and young people across urban and rural communities.

## 2.4 Academic and Sector Engagement

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2.4.1 William served as Vice-Chair of the International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA) Europe, building interdisciplinary networks across the global cultural sector—relationships that continue to inform his international outlook and practice.

2.4.2 He was appointed:

- ▶ Visiting Research Associate, Centre for Tourism and Cultural Change, University of Birmingham (Ironbridge Institute)
- ▶ Visiting Research Fellow, National Taipei University of Education, Taiwan
- ▶ Visiting Lecturer, University of Sheffield – where he taught on the Creative and Cultural Industries MA programme for over five years, bridging academic theory and professional practice in cultural strategy and sector development.



## 2.5 Duncan Wood-Allum - evaluator

- 2.5.1 Duncan Wood-Allum founded SLC in 2009 and is regarded as one of the leading strategic advisors to the public sector and local government.
- 2.5.2 His 35-year career spans working in inner city sports facilities, schools, 10 years in local government, central government, specialist and FTSE 100 blue chip consultancies.
- 2.5.3 With an MBA from Henley Management College, he has unrivalled reputation for supporting over 300 organisations in transforming services, facilities and partnerships. He understands deeply and advocates for how the role leisure and culture can play in supporting wider strategic outcomes.
- 2.5.4 Duncan has developed SLC into a highly respected and influential B Corp™ and ISO 9001:2015 certified business and team.
- 2.5.5 Duncan has led a number of cultural transformation projects including;
- 2.5.6 **Cannock Chase District Council** – Strategic Advice on leisure and cultural services.
- 2.5.7 **North Kesteven** - the National Centre for Craft and Design, securing a £1.5m council investment and increasing engagement through a refreshed offer and financial model.
- 2.5.8 **Gloucester City Council** - a long-term, costed roadmap for the city's entire cultural portfolio, including The Guildhall.
- 2.5.9 **South Kesteven** - a sustainable operating model for Stamford Arts Centre and Grantham Town Hall, rooted in community use and realistic programming.
- 2.5.10 **Mole Valley District Council**: Strategic review and operational advice for Dorking Halls.
- 2.5.11 **Ebbfleet Development Corporation**: Cultural input into Castle Hill's placemaking plans, testing financial viability and delivery.
- 2.5.12 **Derby's Silk Mill**: Developed a business plan balancing industrial heritage with commercial viability supporting the development of the Silk Mill as a leading national cultural asset.
- 2.5.13 **Redcar and Cleveland** – supported development of a Cultural Hub in Redcar as part of the Towns Fund.
- 2.5.14 **Sheffield City Council** – supported transformation of Sheffield's cultural and leisure portfolio.



## 2.6 Structure of this report

- ▶ **Section 3** sets out assessment criteria for scored questions.
- ▶ **Section 4** sets out the financial submission evaluation
- ▶ **Section 5** sets out the quality submission method statement evaluation
- ▶ **Section 6** sets out the summary outcome of the evaluation.

## 2.7 Bidder evaluation process and background

- 2.7.1 Cannock Chase District Council working with SLC developed a rigorous and fair evaluation process. The Prince of Wales Theatre – Community Asset Transfer Applicant Invitation was

provided to two bidders on 16 April 2025.

- 2.7.2 On 14 May 2025 SLC provided additional information to CCTT on the evaluation period which was 24 – 30 May 2025. **(See Appendix 1).**
- 2.7.3 On 16 May 2025 CCTT were provided with additional information from the Council’s Economic and Regeneration team to support their proposals.
- ▶ PoW Extension Budget costs
  - ▶ PoW Concept Design Report
  - ▶ Further information on budget costs and the requirement for CCTT to set out its proposals for staying within available capital expenditure including fit out
  - ▶ Utilities: Electricity, gas, water and BT utilities assumptions
- 2.7.4 SLC also confirmed **“the documents attached are not to be discussed or shared with any third parties at this stage.”**
- 2.7.5 Timeframes for the final submission were extended from 23 May 2025 to 5 June by CCDC following correspondence from CCTT.
- 2.7.6** This bidder evaluation report sets out the independent evaluation and feedback from the SLC evaluation team. Scores have been weighted and calculated as set out in the Community Asset Transfer Applicant Invitation document.
- 2.7.7 The Cannock Chase Theatre Trust submitted an initial response on 23 May 2025 to Cannock Chase District Council which was reviewed by SLC.
- 2.7.8 Feedback was provided by SLC to the Cannock Chase Theatre Trust in a Teams meeting on 2 June to support them with their final submission. **The written feedback provided to CCTT can be seen in Appendix 2.**
- 2.7.9 Following that meeting an additional written response was provided to Cannock Chase Theatre Trust by SLC in relation to planned preventative maintenance (PPM) allocations linked to the ability to append detailed PPM schedules outside of page limits.
- 2.7.10 Additionally, further details on capital investment and associated assumptions to support the Trust’s response.
- 2.7.11 To support Cannock Chase Theatre Trust in its updated submission, Cannock Chase District Council extended the final submission deadline to 16 June 5pm.
- 2.7.1 The evaluation sets out SLC’s evidence of the bidder’s failure to meet criteria and evidence gaps that could be addressed prior to any transfer.**



## 3. Assessment Criteria

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### 3.1 Assessment criteria for scored questions

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- 3.1.1 Table 1 overleaf provides the scoring criteria used to score the financial submission and method statements.

**Table 1 Scoring Criteria – Financial submission and method statements**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description of information received</b>	<b>% Equivalent for Method Statement</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Poor submission</b> – limited comments given and rejection of some fundamental principles. Significant omissions from the bid. Little or no understanding of the Council’s Priority Outcome.	<b>0%</b> <b>Will result in the application being rejected</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Adequate submission</b> – comments or information submitted is acceptable with an adequate understanding of the method statement requirement and the Council’s Priority Outcome.	<b>40%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Good submission</b> – comments made demonstrate a sound and complete approach which have the potential to fully accord with the Council’s values and expectations; good understanding of the method statement requirement and the Council’s Priority Outcome; any method statement comments cause no appreciable concerns. Some innovative solutions are included.	<b>70%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Excellent submission</b> – exceeds expectations, thorough understanding of the method statement requirement and the Council’s Priority Outcome. Several innovative solutions are included.	<b>100%</b>

## 4. Financial submission evaluation

4.1.1 Table 1 provides the scores and feedback on the financial submission.

**Table 1: Financial submission evaluation**

FINANCIAL SUBMISSION MARKING SHEET				
No.	Method Statement	Weighting	Mark (1-4)	Comments / rationale
<b>0</b>	<b>Financially robust from day 1</b>			
<b>0a</b>	Statement and evidence on how the organisation will be financially robust from day 1 of the handover of the asset. Any unidentified/unsecured revenue must be provided with supporting information.	N/A	1	<p><b>Summary: Financial viability claims are optimistic but underpinned by speculative income and no credible contingency. Unsecured income is expected to fund £109k of mobilisation costs, without pledges of grant agreements. The proposal includes just £12,380 in confirmed funding—insufficient against the required working capital. It is recognised there is time for fundraising prior to a reopening of the theatre. However, this funding gap poses a material risk to mobilisation and long-term financial stability.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p><b>Failure to meet criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk Assessment and Mitigation offers limited assurance. Key assumptions—covering shortfalls through forecast income, capital upgrades, or bridging loans—are unproven and speculative. The approach lacks depth and a credible plan for managing serious financial risk.</li> <li>Key income streams (seat sponsorships £5,500; Friends scheme £47,000; corporate sponsorship £42,000) are currently unsecured and speculative.</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Friends scheme targets over 700 donors in Year 1—an untested, extremely ambitious goal with no existing donor base, no confirmed commitments, and no evidence of market appetite at that scale.</li> <li>Year 0 mobilisation costs of £109k have no contingency fund or identified funders; proposed bridging loans risk unsustainable debt</li> <li>£12,380 in grant/community fundraising is noted—but it barely touches the required working capital. This poses a significant threat to day-one operations and long-term financial stability.</li> <li>Year 1 trading income reliance of £105k is high and unsupported by concrete pledges or agreements.</li> <li>CCTT proposes a hybrid model: professional theatre, community hub, café, and volunteer-driven operation. But there’s little evidence the trustee team has the expertise to manage this complexity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence gaps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparisons to the fundraising performance of established benchmark theatres are misleading and irrelevant—CCTT operates in a start-up context with none of the brand equity, audience loyalty, or affluence found in those examples.</li> </ul>
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4.1.2 **Failure to achieve minimum financial submission requirement.**

4.1.3 The bidder’s financial submission scored 1 which results in the submission failing.

## 5. Method statement evaluation

5.1.1 Table 2 provides the scores and feedback on each of the method statements submitted.

**Table 2: Method statement evaluation**

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
<b>1</b>	<b>Vision and Relevance to Place</b>				
<b>1a</b>	Set out your vision for the operation and transformation of the Prince of Wales Theatre. How will it reflect the specific demographics and cultural identity of Cannock?	10%	1	0.00%	<p><b>Summary: The vision is broadly aspirational but critically lacks operational detail, audience focus, and financial realism, presenting narrative ambition without viable delivery mechanisms.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The submission is more advocacy than delivery plan; emotive phrases like 'cultural heartbeat' lack operational or resource backing.</li> <li>No critical path, milestones, or task ownership is identified to guide the transformation. There is no implementation sequencing or phasing.</li> <li>The ambition to cater for “toddlers to pensioners” is unprioritised. No primary audience segment is defined</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<p>to underpin programming, pricing, or marketing strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation is referenced but not analysed. No demand segmentation, data on unmet need, or insight into competing provision is provided.</li> <li>• The “all-day civic living room” concept is presented without occupancy modelling, footfall forecasts, or any integration with ancillary income lines (e.g. café, vending).</li> <li>• Volunteer management, safeguarding, technical oversight, event coordination—all are high-risk areas. CCTT significantly overestimates what can be achieved with light staffing and voluntary input.</li> <li>• Proposed capital works (FOH, staging, café, accessibility upgrades) are entirely dependent on unconfirmed investment from CCDC.</li> <li>• The stated transition to a CIO model is framed as a strength, yet the proposed governance structure includes multiple tiers (trustees, advisory bodies, delivery team) with no clarity on accountability or decision-making speed.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flagship initiatives (e.g. digital ticketing, day-time programming, skills development) are not costed in the financial plan and do not appear in the forecasted expenditure lines.</li> <li>A proposed partnership with The Grand Theatre Wolverhampton is referenced without any evidence of engagement, legal basis, or delivery scope.</li> </ul>
1b	Please outline how your organisation will develop audiences and residents' participation by stimulating local appetite and demand for quality arts, cultural and entertainment experiences?	10%	2	4.00%	<p><b>Summary: The ambition is clear and inclusive, but the proposal lacks a structured delivery plan or costed infrastructure to achieve it. No target audience segments, measurement framework, or prioritisation of effort is shown, and resource assumptions are unrealistic. Without this, the strategy risks are aspirational but undeliverable.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A wide demographic is targeted, but no core audience is defined, and there is no prioritisation or sequencing to build loyalty or sustainable footfall.</li> <li>The proposal ignores competitive pressures from larger regional venues and does not assess risks of cultural leakage from Cannock's catchment.</li> </ul>



QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite asserting “a range of confirmed partners,” no delivery partners are named, and no formal agreements or delivery roles are outlined.</li> <li>The financial model includes no provision for outreach or engagement staffing, programme costs, or any associated expenditure linked to the audience development programme.</li> <li>The proposal implies that work with low-income and youth audiences will be self-sustaining, but offers no evidence or logic to support this, nor any provision for subsidy or grant support.</li> <li>There are no KPIs, monitoring tools, or evaluation frameworks referenced. There is no plan for measuring progress or adjusting strategy in response to outcomes.</li> </ul>
1c	How have you used local demand analysis and competitor mapping to shape your approach? How will your offer remain relevant to local priorities?	5%	2	2.00%	<p><b>Summary: The submission presents a generalised narrative of community interest but lacks quantified demand evidence, behavioural insight, or market analysis. Assumptions around recovery and future growth are not supported by data, and no competitor assessment or audience re-engagement strategy is offered.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cites anecdotal support (e.g. petition numbers, consultation responses, MP) but presents no quantified evidence of ticket purchasing patterns, pricing sensitivity, or benchmarked data from comparator startups.</li> <li>• Assumes community interest equates to financial viability and sustained engagement—without behavioural or transactional data to support this claim.</li> <li>• The financial model projects immediate full recovery to pre-closure audience levels in Year 1, with no ramp-up period, marketing investment, or re-engagement activity accounted for.</li> <li>• No provision is made for audience drift during the two-year closure or changes in consumption habits.</li> <li>• Proposal includes plans for social cinema and film screenings, yet Cannock Chase already has a two-screen cinema. No analysis is provided of local demand, replication, or market positioning.</li> <li>• No competitor mapping or benchmarking is included. Nearby cultural venues (e.g. in Wolverhampton,</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					Stafford, Birmingham) are not referenced, and no insight is offered into pricing strategies, programme profiles, or audience crossover.
<b>2</b>	<b>Partnership Working</b>				
<b>2a</b>	Describe how you will work in partnership with local authorities, communities, education providers, and cultural organisations. How will you maximise opportunities for co-production, shared outcomes, and civic impact?	5%	2	2.00%	<p><b>Summary: The statement outlines the intention to develop a partnership-led operating model, but this remains speculative. No identified formal commitments, timelines, implementation mechanism or costed model. The model relies on external collaborators for core functions without securing agreements or evidencing delivery capacity.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The operating model assumes delivery of core programme and outreach functions via partners, yet none are confirmed. Without secured agreements, this creates major delivery risk.</li> <li>The referenced collaboration with <b>Grand Theatre Wolverhampton</b> is <b>unsubstantiated</b>—no operational detail, cost-sharing arrangements, or delivery responsibilities are defined.</li> <li>The submission implies <b>significant service dependencies</b> (e.g. programming, training, staffing), yet includes <b>no risk register or fallback plan</b> should partner support fail to materialise.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes a <b>mixed programming model</b> (in-house, bought-in, hired), but <b>no split of activity</b> is outlined and <b>no sample programme</b> is included to demonstrate deliverability.</li> <li><b>No programme calendar, lead-in time assumptions, or availability analysis</b> are included to support claims of high occupancy and varied output.</li> <li><b>Statements around curating “quality” and “local relevance”</b> are aspirational but <b>not linked to any evaluation, or artistic assessment processes</b>.</li> <li>The <b>Artistic Director is described as central</b>, but no information is provided on <b>recruitment, budget control, or role specification</b>.</li> <li>No evidence of current or planned engagement with <b>Arts Council England, NLHF, or major cultural funders</b>—strategic alignment is asserted but <b>not evidenced</b>.</li> <li>Programming forecasts in the financial model are <b>not underpinned by delivery plans</b>, contractual timelines, or contingency planning.</li> </ul>
2b	Provide examples of your approach to partnership development, including any secured or intended partnerships that will enhance	5%	2	2.00%	The submission sets out a wide-ranging and imaginative partnership concept, but lacks formal agreements, defined responsibilities, and contingency planning. The model is underdeveloped, relying on untested assumptions around

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
	programming, engagement, and/or operations.				<p><b>cost-sharing and operational capacity. Key relationships remain informal, with no mechanisms in place to manage risk, coordinate activity, or ensure follow-through.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple proposed partners are listed (e.g. Grand Theatre Wolverhampton, Cannock College, Prince's Trust), but <b>no letters of intent, MOUs, or written confirmations</b> are included.</li> <li>Descriptions of partnerships are aspirational; most are noted as "in discussion" with no evidence of finalised responsibilities, governance, or working frameworks.</li> <li>Two partnership models with the Grand Theatre (syndicated programming and co-productions) are referenced, but no feasibility analysis or financial modelling is provided. There is no indication the Grand has formally agreed to participate.</li> <li>Partner contributions are described in broad terms (e.g. outreach, training) without role clarity, staff resource, or budget implications.</li> <li>No structure is proposed for partner coordination, reporting lines, or joint accountability, resulting in a loosely defined operating model.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No fallback or contingency planning is included should key partnerships fail to materialise.</li> <li>Concepts like the Cultural Exchange Bank and annual co-productions are creative but remain speculative— unsupported by costings, technical specifications, or planning detail.</li> <li>Projected savings from shared services (e.g. outsourced back office) are <b>speculative. No baseline costs, scenarios, or alternatives</b> are tested or evidenced.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Catering</b>				
<b>3a</b>	What is your plan for food and beverage provision? How will it support visitor experience, drive income, and integrate with your wider business and audience development strategy?	5%	1	0.00%	<p><b>Summary: The strategic role of café/bars ancillary income projections contain material omissions, conflicting assumptions, and unclear delivery model —resulting in overstated surpluses. Despite no trading track record, no ground floor concept, and uncertainty of operator model.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 1 ancillary income totals £201,645, comprising café (£73,665) and vending (£127,980).</li> <li>No vending expenditure is included in the financial model—capital, stock, staffing, or maintenance— leading to an implausible 100% gross margin.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Café direct costs are shown as £42,264, producing a margin far below the claimed 65%. The cost base omits staffing, utilities, licensing, consumables, insurance, and cleaning.</li> <li>• Assumes in-house café operation, yet the delivery model is deferred to future planning with CCDCF's Economic Development Team. No indication of decision-making criteria, timeline, or contractual implications.</li> <li>• Capital investment for café fit-out is not itemised, despite being critical to operation. No scenario planning if capital works are delayed or unfunded.</li> <li>• Spend per head (SPH) assumptions rise from £3 to £4.20 over 10 years, with patrons per event growing from 75 to 130. No evidence or benchmarking is provided to support these projections or link them to programming outputs.</li> <li>• No operating plan is included for hours of service, rota patterns, licensing, or staffing model (volunteers vs paid roles).</li> <li>• No breakeven analysis or mitigation strategy if ancillary income underperforms. Surpluses are treated as guaranteed.</li> <li>• The statement does not address key operational risks typically encountered in comparable cultural venues—</li> </ul>



QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<p>most notably, limited daytime footfall and high fixed costs associated with café operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no evidence that the CCTT trustee team possesses relevant hospitality experience, which raises significant concerns given the scale and ambition of the proposed café offer.</li> <li>• Strategic uncertainty around vending and café undermines confidence in the revenue plan. Core delivery decisions are unresolved at submission stage.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>Facilities and Building Management</b>				
<b>4a</b>	Please provide Planned and Preventative Maintenance and Lifecycle replacement plans for the Prince of Wales Theatre	15%	1	0.00%	<p><b>Summary: The capital plan exceeds the affordability cap, depends on unfunded works by CCDC, and lacks a credible implementation route.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCTT has assumed that circa £6.32 million is spent on a full upgrade of the Theatre building and equipment.</li> <li>• The Council have provided high level budget costs for proposed works based on a theatre upgrade scheme produced by architects Page Park. The work done by Page Park is a feasibility study and is subject to detailed design. Intrusive surveys are yet to be undertaken (Site Investigation, Geotechnical Investigation). The finalising</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<p>of a price for the proposed works is dependent on a detailed design process through to RIBA stage 3 as a minimum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget cost has the potential to rise considerably.</li> <li>• Following detailed survey works there may be the requirement for structural improvement (underpinning).</li> <li>• There is also the challenge of upgrading/redirecting all services to and around the building.</li> <li>• CCDC will only be in a position to confirm the required capital spend when all technical work is complete.</li> <li>• Should the cost be greater than the high-level budget the upgrade would be at risk.</li> <li>• The delivery of the upgrade by CCDC is an assumption that underpins the financial model but is not supported by any agreement.</li> <li>• No alternative phasing, adjusted timelines, or soft-launch contingencies are explored.</li> <li>• Optional works are presented as essential, cost estimates remain unverified, and there is no procurement or lifecycle strategy. The £12k/year reserve is disconnected from the CBRE schedule and sector benchmarks and appears significantly under-provisioned.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The total projected capital (high level) budget of £6.32m requires substantial work to become an actual project cost. CCTT provide no alternative phasing, scope reduction, or revised costings in the event cost exceeds budget.</li> <li>The stated intention to “revisit scope with EDT” post-submission suggests deferral rather than planning flexibility. It further weakens confidence in delivery readiness and alignment with Council expectations.</li> <li>Post-transfer, CCTT commits to setting aside £12k annually into a Capital Reserve Fund to support lifecycle renewals. There is no sinking fund model, indexation, or costed renewal cycle. The Theatre building is 40 years old. Even after upgrade there will be works required on an annual basis to maintain the building and keep it operational</li> <li>The proposal assumes prior completion of the Market Hall conversion and café/box office fit-out, yet provides no capital allocation, delivery timeline, or accountable lead— this exposes a critical risk to operational readiness at the point of transfer.</li> <li>The Trust expects CCDC to deliver all PPM works (Immediate to Year 2), including major systems</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					replacement, without confirmation from funders—transferring all pre-handover risk back to the Council.
4b	How will you ensure compliance with legal and operational requirements including health and safety, GDPR, licensing, and safeguarding?	5%	2	2.00%	<p><b>Summary: The Trust acknowledges its statutory responsibilities and intends to comply with relevant frameworks and CCDC expectations. Despite a stated policy commitment, there's little evidence of operational readiness, although it is recognised there is time for this to be developed prior to any reopening. The submission lacks the rigor needed to demonstrate day-one compliance.</b></p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCTT accepts full legal responsibility post-transfer for safeguarding, data protection, health &amp; safety, and licensing – positive baseline statement.</li> <li>• CCTT reference sector standards (e.g. Charity Commission, safer recruitment), indicating policy alignment in principle.</li> <li>• States intent to align with CCDC licensing protocols and to co-develop policies with CCDC support. However, all policies are “in development” with no assurance of readiness before reopening.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No named compliance leads or accountable roles are provided.</li> <li>• The lack of finalised H&amp;S, safeguarding, GDPR and licensing policies presents a significant risk to day-one operational readiness.</li> <li>• Equality and diversity ambitions are mentioned but not supported by actions, KPIs or training plans.</li> <li>• Sustainability references (e.g. low carbon, PAS 2035, BREEAM) are general and not integrated into the capital or operational plan.</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<b>Business Transformation and Reopening Strategy</b>				
<b>5a</b>	Set out your plan for reopening the venue and transforming its operations over an initial four-year period, including the mobilisation/preparatory year.	7%	1	0.00%	<p><b>Summary: The operational restart strategy is ambitious but underdeveloped. Key staff posts are introduced too late to support programming and mobilisation, and critical handover, compliance, and resourcing plans are missing. Financial assumptions are optimistic, relying on unsecured fundraising and overestimated trading income. The gap between stated ambition and practical delivery planning poses material risk to early-stage operations and financial viability.</b></p> <p>Notes</p>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 0 staff costs (£45k) are unfunded, relying on unsecured advance subscriptions and sponsorship. Key roles aren't in place until Q3—too late to support programming, systems, or soft launch—undermining confidence.</li> <li>• No structured handover plan exists with CCDC.</li> <li>• Statutory compliance tasks (e.g. fire, H&amp;S, asbestos) are assumed complete but not evidenced.</li> <li>• Marketing begins just 3 months prior to opening — this is insufficient to rebuild brand awareness, drive pre-sales, or secure community engagement.</li> <li>• Volunteer recruitment is central to the operating model, yet no pipeline, rota, induction, or training plan is described. Assumes high take-up without evidence.</li> <li>• A proposed trading subsidiary is referenced but no structure, governance model, or business case is provided.</li> <li>• KPI targets (e.g. 77,000 attendance, £1m+ turnover, 265 performance days by Year 4) are unrealistic and not linked to programming volume or pricing data.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>References to funding from Arts Council England (ACE) are made without evidence of engagement or eligibility.</li> <li>Civic and regional “flagship” claims are unsubstantiated and overstated when compared to well established regional competitors.</li> <li>Some early risk thinking is mentioned (variance tracking, phased contracting), but there is no formal risk register, cashflow strategy, or fallback plan.</li> <li>Financial reliance on fundraising, surplus generation, and volunteer contribution lacks contingency if targets are not met.</li> <li>Existing customer data has not been confirmed as being able to be transferred as yet by the Council; audience rebuilding must take this into account. There is no Customer Relationship Management model proposed, consent, or acquisition plan outlined.</li> </ul>
5b	How will you rebuild confidence among past users and audiences while establishing a new, progressive identity that attracts new users and grows income?	5%	2	2.00%	<p><b>Summary: The statement outlines plans to rebuild audiences through a marketing campaign, loyalty incentives, and a mixed programming approach, underpinned by a £15,000 Year 0 mobilisation budget. However, it lacks strategic depth and fails to show how trust will be rebuilt or how a new, progressive identity will be meaningfully communicated. Re-</b></p>



QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<p>engagement activity is generic, underdeveloped, and under-resourced. Audience development is treated as peripheral rather than central to re-opening. There is no defined target audience, delivery framework, or evidence of an insight-led Audience Development Strategy.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assumes past hirers and audiences will return without testing demand, confirming intent, or addressing reputational recovery.</li> <li>No workaround is proposed for any GDPR restrictions on legacy box office data.</li> <li>The “70/30” programming blend appears arbitrary, with no rationale, audience insight, or phased plan.</li> <li>£15,000 Year 0 mobilisation budget is noted but spread across web, box office, print, and PR with no targeting or cost breakdown.</li> <li>No strategy is offered to articulate or launch a new identity; rebranding is uncoded and undeveloped.</li> <li>Loyalty incentives (e.g. priority booking) lack delivery detail, targeting criteria, or integration with CRM systems.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A three-month marketing window is too narrow to rebuild audience confidence following prolonged closure.</li> <li>No staff capacity is allocated for audience development; delivery is wholly reliant on volunteers.</li> <li>No plans for partnership marketing, co-commissioning, or data-sharing to extend reach or reduce risk.</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<b>Quality Assurance</b>				
<b>6a</b>	How will you ensure high-quality delivery across all aspects of the operation – including programming, customer service, and visitor experience?	5%	2	2.00%	<p><b>Summary: The statement shows a positive intent to embed quality, citing KPIs, governance, and audience feedback. However, these are vague and lack implementation detail. No baselines, service-specific metrics, or audit mechanisms are provided. There is no clear structure to ensure ambitious standards are maintained across programming, operations, and customer service. Commitments are broadly aspirational, not yet operational.</b></p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KPIs are listed but not linked to specific services or baseline targets.</li> <li>Feedback methods (surveys, comments, reviews) are proposed but lack timing, ownership, or escalation processes.</li> </ul>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No internal audit, performance review, or quality assurance framework is outlined.</li> <li>No service-specific quality metrics are proposed for bar operations, customer care, or technical delivery.</li> <li>No structured training or induction plan is provided for paid staff or volunteers, despite FOH and bar services being central to audience experience.</li> <li>The Artistic Advisory Panel is referenced in MS 2A as a future ambition, intended to advise on artistic quality and audience needs. However, no structure, terms of reference, or integration with governance or quality assurance processes is provided.</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<b>Performance Management</b>				
<b>7a</b>	What management structures and reporting processes will you put in place to monitor performance against key performance indicators and ensure effective management of the PoW Theatre?	5%	2	2.00%	<p><b>Summary: The performance management framework is comprehensive and well-written, structured with strategic tiers and a balanced scorecard. However, it's descriptive, lacking baselines, measurement tools, or role-based accountability for data analysis and reporting. Many mechanisms are aspirational or untested, with no evidence of operational readiness to implement the proposed structure.</b></p> <p><b>Notes</b></p>

QUALITY/TECHNICAL QUESTIONS MARKING SHEET					
No.	Method statement	Weighting	Mark (0-4)	Weighted Score %	Comments / rational
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong narrative of governance and structured reporting, but no KPIs, baseline indicators, or performance targets are defined.</li> <li>• No individual roles are tasked with collecting, analysing, or responding to data.</li> <li>• Reporting frequency is described, but escalation, intervention triggers, and response actions are not.</li> <li>• No methodology or system is provided for how survey, CRM, or social sentiment data will inform decisions.</li> <li>• Advisory Panels referenced again but remain undefined and without terms of reference.</li> <li>• While CRM and dashboard tools are mentioned, there is no evidence these systems have been procured or budgeted for, nor who will manage or act on the data.</li> <li>• No public reporting or transparency mechanism is defined.</li> <li>• Compliance and benchmarking are mentioned generically with no documented process or funder-aligned Monitoring and Evaluation framework.</li> </ul>

7b	How will you identify, manage, and mitigate risks including financial underperformance, audience shortfall, and operational failure?	10	1	0.00%	<p><b>Summary:</b> The statement broadly outlines risk management and resilience intentions but lacks operational substance. There's no draft risk register, minimal stress testing, and key risks (e.g., volunteer shortfall, delayed handover) are uncoded and unmitigated. Governance mechanisms are asserted but unsubstantiated by tools or board oversight.</p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No draft risk register or RAG matrix is presented; mitigation is described narratively, not operationally.</li> <li>• There's abstract talk of individual funding, ACE &amp; NLHF grants, and business sponsorship support—but no defined fundraising strategy, no pipeline, and no track record. This strips away any resilience in the financial model and increases pressure on earned income.</li> <li>• Risk thresholds, escalation procedures, and board committee oversight mechanisms are not evidenced.</li> <li>• Reserves policy is vague; Year 0 and 1 are tight and lack formal fallback if fundraising fails or income lags.</li> <li>• Audience risk mitigation relies on assumed loyalty and “agile marketing” but lacks funded plans or triggers.</li> <li>• Claims stress testing against 5–10% income drop, but only on Y1/Y3, with no multi-variable sensitivity analysis.</li> <li>• Programming failure, reputation damage, and partner withdrawal risks are omitted.</li> <li>• Governance responses (reporting lines, board risk review cycle) are described but not structured or scheduled.</li> <li>• Risk coverage is broad but lacks quantified severity ratings, likelihood scoring, or linked financial exposure.</li> </ul>
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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External risks (e.g., delayed capital works, systems failure, legislative change) are noted but not modelled.</li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	<b>Governance and Accountability</b>				
<b>8a</b>	Please provide a clear governance structure, including details of your Board, its subcommittees, and how financial and operational accountability will be maintained.	5%	2	2.00%	<p><b>Summary: The governance approach is described in broad terms, with positive intentions around independence and trustee contribution. However, decision-making structures are underdeveloped. Delegated authority, conflict resolution, and board-to-exec accountability mechanisms are not clearly defined. There is no formal plan for onboarding trustees or staff, and trustee recruitment lacks a targeted skills strategy. Governance risks during the transition period are unaddressed.</b></p> <p><b>Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The governance approach, while broadly described with positive intentions for independence and trustee contribution, has underdeveloped decision-making structures. It is recognised this can be developed further prior to any reopening of the theatre.</li> <li>Delegated authority, conflict resolution, and board-to-executive accountability mechanisms are not clearly defined.</li> <li>There is no formal plan for onboarding trustees or staff.</li> <li>Trustee recruitment lacks a targeted skills strategy.</li> <li>Governance risks during the transition period are unaddressed.</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational decision authorisation and the resolution of conflicting priorities between Trustees, staff, and advisors are not detailed.</li> <li>No training or onboarding plan is described for good governance, charity regulation, or policy compliance for trustees, staff, or volunteers.</li> </ul>
8b	Has the organisation been formally registered with the Charity Commission? If not, what is the timeline for registration?	3%	2	1.20%	<p><b>Summary: CCTT has applied for Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). However, the process remains incomplete. Legal standing and eligibility for charitable funding, tax exemptions, and contract delivery are all contingent on formal registration, which introduces material risk. Interim governance and financial controls are in place, but the organisation currently lacks legal corporate status.</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CIO application submitted March 2025: still pending as of June 2025.</li> <li>No written guidance from funders or CCDC is referenced to confirm acceptability of operating as an unincorporated body beyond July 2025.</li> <li>Interim operation under unincorporated structure using Foundation Constitution.</li> <li>Trustees carry personal liability until registration completes.</li> <li>Gift Aid, VAT cultural exemption, and long-term contracts all delayed until status secured.</li> <li>£7k Theatres Trust grant accepted conditionally on pending registration.</li> </ul>



					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance policies referenced but legal standing and funding access not guaranteed until CIO status granted.</li> </ul>
	<b>Total Maximum Quality Points</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>21.20</b>	

#### 5.1.2 Failure to achieve minimum quality scores

5.1.3 The bidder's submission in method statements 1a, 3a, 4a, 5a and 7b scored 1 which results in the application being rejected.

## 6. Summary outcome of the evaluation

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### 6.1 Introduction

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- 6.1.1 The evaluation is designed to enable SLC to either pass or fail a submission based on evaluation of a detailed financial proposal and method statements.
- 6.1.2 Each statement will receive a score of 1-4, 1 being poor, 4 being excellent. If any elements of the method statement scores a 1 after feedback and resubmission from the Applicant, the submission will fail.

### 6.2 Financial submission element

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- 6.2.1 To pass the financial element, Applicants are required to provide a submission that requires no subsidy from the Council and demonstrates sustainability. If the business plan does not demonstrate this, then the submission will fail.

### 6.3 SLC's summary evaluation was as follows:

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- 6.3.1 Financial viability claims are optimistic but underpinned by speculative income and no credible contingency. Unsecured income is expected to fund £109k of mobilisation costs, without pledges of grant agreements.
- 6.3.2 The proposal includes just £12,380 in confirmed funding—insufficient against the required working capital. This funding gap poses a material risk to mobilisation and long-term financial stability.
- 6.3.3 **The Cannock Chase Theatre Trust scored 1 which results in the application being rejected and the submission failing.**

### 6.4 Method statement element

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- 6.4.1 To pass the method statement element, Applicants are required to score 60% minimum. Any score of 59% or less will fail.
- 6.4.2 **Method statements 1a, 3a, 4a, 5a and 7b scored 1 which results in the application being rejected.**
- 6.4.3 **The Cannock Chase Theatre Trust scored 21.2% in total which fails to meet the minimum requirement of 60%.**

### 6.5 Conclusion

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- 6.5.1 SLC's independent evaluation has clearly demonstrated that the proposal by Cannock Chase Theatre Trust does not provide the robust evidence, business case and confidence for the Council to invest further in the Prince of Wales Theatre and progress to Stage Three – Preferred Partner – Asset Transfer Exploration. **Their submission fails and is rejected.**

# Appendix 1 Prince of Wales Theatre – Community Asset Transfer Applicant Invitation

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## 1. Introduction

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### Background

- 1.1.1 Cannock Chase District Council is considering a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the Prince of Wales Theatre (PoW). **This is subject to finding a suitably qualified partner with a robust business plan and approach.**
- 1.1.2 A CAT will allow genuine community control and enable a community-based organisation to make decisions on the assets for community benefit.
- 1.1.3 Further details of the CAT are still to be developed but the Council will require:
- 1.1.4 The successful Community Group to deliver in line with their method statements and business plan
- 1.1.5 Reinstatement of the property to the condition at date of transfer if, for whatever reason the group are no longer able to sustain the theatre
- 1.1.6 An "asset lock" clause to prevent private profit
- 1.1.7 The asset transfer is dependent on the Community Group (the Applicant) demonstrating their proposals are robust, financially sustainable in the long term and do not require any Council revenue or capital subsidy.
- 1.1.8 The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy Ltd (SLC) will evaluate the proposals submitted by the applicants and provide these to the Council who will use them to form recommendations on whether a CAT is likely to be successful and who the recommended provider would be. The Council will consider the viability of capital proposals that are being developed alongside this evaluation.
- 1.1.9 The submission requirements are outlined in this document.

### 1.2 Priority outcome

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- 1.2.1 The Council's priority outcome is a sustainable theatre requiring no subsidy from the Council which is used for the benefit of the local community, promoting social, economic, and environmental well-being.

## 2. Asset Transfer Application Process

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- 2.1.1 To support Applicants and their initial submissions, the three stage application and evaluation process is set out below.

**Stage One** – Invitation to meet with evaluation team

**Stage Two** – Application process

**Stage Three** – Preferred partner – Community Asset Transfer exploration

- 2.1.2 These stages are described below.

### 2.2 Stage One – Invitation to meet with the team

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- 2.2.1 Potential Applicants are invited to meet with the specialist advisors at SLC who will be evaluating the proposals, and Council representatives.

- 2.2.2 Potential Applicants will be provided an overview of the process, the evaluation approach and scoring methodology.

- 2.2.3 The following information is being made available to Applicants to support development of their proposals:

- a. Condition surveys of the Prince of Wales Theatre
- b. Site plans

### 2.3 Stage Two – Application Process

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- 2.3.1 Applicants should submit their response in accordance with the requirements in this document. The response must include:

- a. Financial submission
- b. Method statement responses;
- c. Statement and evidence on how the organisation will be financially robust from day 1 of the handover of the asset. Under usual circumstances we would ask for (your point c and d) however, we recognise the position the groups are currently in and don't want to exclude either on lack of financial history.

- 2.3.2 The Council will complete financial and economic standing checks in accordance with internal processes recognising the applicants are newly formed charitable organisations.

- 2.3.3 The weighting of the method statements reflects the Council's priorities and the scoring of the method statements is set out in Appendix 1.

- 2.3.4 To ensure fairness, applicants have been given page limits for each method statement. This is based on A4 pages with font size not smaller than 11pt. If infographics and tables are used, these need to be contained in the page count limits. Links to websites, YouTube, etc will not be reviewed.

**Table 1: Method Statements**

	Method Statement	% Points Weighting	A4 Page Limit
<b>1</b>	<b>Vision and Relevance to Place</b>		
<b>1a</b>	Set out your vision for the operation and transformation of the Prince of Wales Theatre. How will it reflect the specific demographics and cultural identity of Cannock?	10%	4
<b>1b</b>	Please outline how your organisation will develop audiences and residents' participation by stimulating local appetite and demand for quality arts, cultural and entertainment experiences?	10%	3
<b>1c</b>	How have you used local demand analysis and competitor mapping to shape your approach? How will your offer remain relevant to local priorities?	5%	2
<b>2</b>	<b>Partnership Working</b>		
<b>2a</b>	Describe how you will work in partnership with local authorities, communities, education providers, and cultural organisations. How will you maximise opportunities for co-production, shared outcomes, and civic impact?	5%	2
<b>2b</b>	Provide examples of your approach to partnership development, including any secured or intended partnerships that will enhance programming, engagement, and/or operations.	5%	2
<b>3</b>	<b>Catering</b>		
<b>3a</b>	What is your plan for food and beverage provision? How will it support visitor experience, drive income, and integrate with your wider business and audience development strategy?	5%	2
<b>4</b>	<b>Facilities and Building Management</b>		
<b>4a</b>	Please provide Planned and Preventative Maintenance and Lifecycle replacement plans for the Prince of Wales Theatre	15%	4
<b>4b</b>	How will you ensure compliance with legal and operational requirements including health and safety, GDPR, licensing, and safeguarding?	5%	2
<b>5</b>	<b>Business Transformation and Reopening Strategy</b>		
<b>5a</b>	Set out your plan for reopening the venue and transforming its operations over an initial four-year period, including the mobilisation/preparatory year.	7%	3
<b>5b</b>	How will you rebuild confidence among past users and audiences while establishing a new, progressive identity that attracts new users and grows income?	5%	2
<b>6</b>	<b>Quality Assurance</b>		
<b>6a</b>	How will you ensure high-quality delivery across all aspects of the operation – including programming, customer service, and visitor experience?	5%	2
<b>7</b>	<b>Performance Management</b>		
<b>7a</b>	What management structures and reporting processes will you put in place to monitor performance against key performance indicators and ensure effective management of the PoW Theatre?	5%	2

	Method Statement	% Points Weighting	A4 Page Limit
7b	How will you identify, manage, and mitigate risks including financial underperformance, audience shortfall, and operational failure?	10	2
8	<b>Governance and Accountability</b>		
8a	Please provide a clear governance structure, including details of your Board, its subcommittees, and how financial and operational accountability will be maintained.	5%	2
8b	Has the organisation been formally registered with the Charity Commission? If not, what is the timeline for registration?	3%	1
	<b>Total Maximum Quality Points</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## 2.4 Financial submissions

- 2.4.1 Applicants must provide the financial element (i.e., the financial model) of their submission using the template provided only.
- 2.4.2 The financial model must include the items below:
- ▶ Annual profit and loss account throughout the life of the operation based on a financial year April – March. The profit and loss account must separate out the individual items of income and expenditure including:
  - ▶ Detailed costs on an annual basis over the life of the operation for the service to be provided;
  - ▶ Detailed statements of maintenance costs for the PoW and any assumptions these are based on; and
  - ▶ All relevant assumptions in respect of VAT, including the liability of supplies and information on any irrecoverable VAT included in the model.
  - ▶ Any unidentified/unsecured revenue (pledges / fund raising) cannot be included with the actual profit and loss account, but must be provided separately with supporting information. (no more than 4 sides of A4 font size 11 or larger)
- 2.4.3 The Council will need to see robust evidence that the PoW can operate without the need for external Council subsidy.
- 2.4.4 Applicants must prepare financial statements based on the prices at year 1 of the operation and exclude inflation in their projections.
- 2.4.5 All outputs from the financial model used must be capable of sensitivity analysis to reflect variations in activity levels, demand for services and external sources of income.

## 2.5 Evaluation

- 2.5.1 The evaluation is designed to enable SLC to either **pass or fail** a submission based on evaluation of a detailed financial proposal and method statements.
- 2.5.2 Scoring for the method statements is based on the approach set out in Appendix 1. **Each statement will receive a score of 1-4, 1 being poor, 4 being excellent. If any elements of the method statement scores a 1 after feedback and resubmission from the Applicant, the submission will fail.**
- 2.5.3 **To pass the method statement element, Applicants are required to score 60% minimum. Any score of 59% or less will fail.**

**2.5.4 To pass the financial element, Applicants are required to provide a submission that requires no subsidy from the Council and demonstrates sustainability. If the business plan does not demonstrate this, then the submission will fail.**

2.5.5 Feedback will be provided to all organisations throughout the process.

2.5.6 Following this process the results will be provided to the Council who will consider these alongside the capital development elements of the proposals.

2.5.7 Feedback on the evaluation will be provided, the timing of this will be determined by the Council.

2.5.8 Please note the evaluation is being carried out independently and there is no appeal process.

## 2.6 Timescales of application process

2.6.1 Table 2 sets out the core stages to be used in this process.

**Table 2**

Stage	Proposed timeline
Invitation to meeting with evaluation team	22 April 2025
Start of application process	April 2025
Period for clarification questions	9am, 22 April – 5pm, 9 May 2025
Submission of applications	5pm 23 May 2025
Evaluation period by SLC on behalf of CCDC	24 - 30 May 2025
Clarification meetings	W/C 2 June 2025
Recommendations from SLC to the Council	W/C 16 June 2025

## 2.7 Supporting information

2.7.1 As set out above, some supporting information will be provided. The information is provided in good faith but does not purport to be comprehensive or to have been independently verified. Applicants should not rely on the information provided and should carry out their own due diligence checks and verify the accuracy of such information.

## 2.8 Clarifications and communications

2.8.1 All clarification questions must be submitted via email only to [info@slc.uk.com](mailto:info@slc.uk.com). All such questions should be received by the dates stated in the Table 2. For the avoidance of doubt, clarification questions received after the deadline will not be answered.

## 2.9 Stage Three – Preferred Partner - Asset Transfer Exploration

2.9.1 Subject to an Applicant passing the evaluation stage their application will be explored further with the Council.

- 2.9.2 The Council reserves the right at any point in Stage 3 to withdraw from the process, subject to further scrutiny of applications.



## Appendix 2 –Community Asset Transfer Clarification Questions - 30 June 2025

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### 1. Introduction

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- 1.1.1 Following your submission, SLC has set out the following clarification questions which we would like to explore in more detail with CCTT in the clarification meeting.

### 2. Financial Submission

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- 2.1.1 The proposal states that the Booking Fees (Restoration Levy) will be ringfenced to fund future capital works, supported by the following commitments:
1. An annual contribution of £10,000–£20,000 to a Capital Reserve Fund.
  2. Plans to use this reserve (and grant funding) for 2028–2030 works.
- 2.1.2 To better understand this element of the model:
- a. Can you confirm whether the Booking Fee income is fully allocated to this reserve in your financial forecast?
  - b. Is the Capital Reserve Fund shown as a separate line or identifiable balance within the financial schedule?
- 2.1.3 Please can you provide a detailed justification for the projected significant uplift of café revenue and increase in spend per head in year 2? Supporting this please reference any market research, benchmarks from similar venues, or detailed operational plans, given the lack of prior operating history?
- 2.1.4 Room hires, retail, and rental income all follow a steady upward trend. Have you tested any downside scenarios (e.g. under-utilisation or slower take-up), and if so, what adjustments would be made to manage income shortfalls?
- 2.1.5 Please can you clarify which income lines (if any) are dependent on assumed new services or capital works (e.g., café fit-out, space upgrades) that have not yet been secured or funded.
- 2.1.6 Do any income assumptions rely on significant increases in footfall or community engagement beyond historical levels? If so, how will this be driven and measured?
- 2.1.7 Please provide the basis for the forecast rapid rebound and 2.5% annual growth in ticket income, referencing local market data, pre-closure audience behaviour, comparable venue benchmarks, or specific marketing/programming initiatives.
- 2.1.8 Staffing costs increase year-on-year with new roles introduced in later years (e.g. marketing, technical). Could you confirm whether these new roles are fully costed in your financial model — and whether their recruitment is dependent on achieving specific income milestones?

### 3. Method Statement 0a – Financial Viability from Day One

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- 3.1.1 Could you provide a detailed breakdown of Year 0 costs and a corresponding funding plan including secured funds?
- 3.1.2 Are there any specific approaches you can share (e.g., audience targets, pricing models, cost control measures) and underlying assumptions that will enable the revenue-neutral goal for Year 1?
- 3.1.3 Is there a financial profile for Year 0 setting out operational costs and revenue?
- 3.1.4 Could you clarify how Year 0 activities will be funded, and whether a contingency plan is in place should expected fundraising or sponsorship income not be realised?

### 4. Method Statement 1a - Vision and relevance to place

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- 4.1.1 Your audience development plan in Method Statement 2 draws on strong data sources and community insights. Could you clarify whether similar consultation or engagement activities informed the broader vision and transformation strategy set out in 1a — for example, on governance, daytime use, or Cannock’s civic and economic needs?
- 4.1.2 Could you summarise the key outcomes you aim to achieve by the end of Year 3, and the headline indicators you will use to track progress across audience, financial, and community impact areas?
- 4.1.3 Could you outline a phased delivery plan, clearly prioritising core activities in the first 12-24 months.
- 4.1.4 Could you explain how aspirational activities will be integrated as capacity grows?
- 4.1.5 Method Statement 1b – Audience Development and Participation
- 4.1.6 Can you provide a list of confirmed delivery partners for community programmes, clearly outlining their specific roles and contributions?

### 5. Method Statement 1c – Using Local Demand analysis

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- 5.1.1 How have your projected attendance figures for Years 1–3 been modelled based on the demand evidence?
- 5.1.2 What assumptions underpin growth in attendance beyond historic levels (e.g. 70,000 visits)?
- 5.1.3 Can you share a summary of how local competitor pricing and programme mix informed your offer design?
- 5.1.4 Can you provide projected audience growth figures, ideally benchmarked against similar venues or historic performance?

### 6. Method Statement 2a – Working in Partnership

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- 6.1.1 Could you outline your programming strategy in more detail — including the proposed balance between venue hires, bought-in shows, and in-house productions — and how this will differ from the existing IHL programme?
- 6.1.2 Can you define the criteria for artistic quality and the practical mechanisms for monitoring it?

- 6.1.3 Can you clarify the Artistic Director's authority and scope in shaping the programme in the early years.?
- 6.1.4 Can you confirm whether any discussions or expressions of interest have taken place with Arts Council England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, or Theatres Trust — and state whether any funding commitments or indicative support has been received?
- 6.1.5 Can you set out the underlying production schedule supporting your Year 1 occupancy assumptions, and how has this been stress-tested against staffing, rehearsal, and marketing capacity?

## 7. Method Statement 2b – Secured or Intended Partnerships

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- 7.1.1 Can you provide a list detailing each intended partnership, its current status (secured, in discussion, aspirational), and any formal agreements or MOUs in place?
- 7.1.2 Can you provide an update on the discussions with Grand Theatre Wolverhampton, including any assessment of operational and financial implications of the two proposed models?
- 7.1.3 For each key partner referenced, what role will they play in delivery (e.g. programming, outreach, fundraising, training), and what resources or capacity will they bring?
- 7.1.4 What are the implications if a key partnership does not materialise — and are contingency plans in place to maintain programme delivery?

## 8. Method Statement 3a – Catering

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- 8.1.1 Could you provide a detailed timeline and plan for getting the café operational in Year 0, including how it will be resourced (staffing, setup costs)
- 8.1.2 Could you confirm the gross profit margin (as stated in your financial submission) is taking account of any upfront investment in Year 0?
- 8.1.3 Can you confirm if capital for the café fit-out is secured, its source, and any restrictions or conditions?
- 8.1.4 Have you explored alternative delivery models — such as running the café in-house versus partnering with a concession? If there's been an options appraisal, it would be useful to see how you weighed up cost, control, and risk.
- 8.1.5 What catering or hospitality experience exists within your team at this stage?
- 8.1.6 Can you provide a clear justification for the projected 56% rise in café income between Year 1 and Year 2, specifying the underlying factors (pricing, opening hours, visitor volumes, service levels).
- 8.1.7 Can you explain how the 58% gross profit margin was calculated and if this takes account of all costs?

## 9. Method Statement 4a – Planned and Preventative Maintenance

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- 9.1.1 Replacement and upgrade of performance lighting and sounds systems is assumed to be budgeted for, whereas this has been flagged that there is a risk there will be insufficient funding. What plans do you have in place in event there is a funding gap as projected?

- 9.1.2 In your assumptions, you refer to a comprehensive Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) schedule and state that a full cost analysis is available upon request. To properly assess the realism of your £52k annual allocation and lifecycle assumptions, please can you provide the PPM cost analysis you refer to and link this to the CBRE Condition Survey figures.
- 9.1.3 Please state what years of lifecycle investment from CCDC have you assumed will be covered within the CBRE report? (E.g. years 1-2, years 1-3 etc)
- 9.1.4 Please confirm how your cleaning budget will be sufficient for this venue and usage levels and how has this been calculated?
- 9.1.5 In the event surpluses are not generated as projected, how will lifecycle investment be met?

## 10. Method Statement 4b – Legal Compliance

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- 10.1.1 Please explain how you plan to operationalise EDI in recruitment, programming, outreach, and volunteer management?
- 10.1.2 Please confirm if Equality Impact Assessments be conducted as part of your compliance processes? If so, who will lead them and how frequently will they be reviewed?

## 11. Method Statement 5a – Reopening the Building

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- 11.1.1 Can you expand on how financial risk will be actively managed during Years 0-2 before significant reserves are in place, including early warning indicators and mitigation strategies?
- 11.1.2 You mention a prudent cashflow plan — has a detailed monthly cashflow forecast been prepared for Years 0–3? If so, how does it account for lean trading periods or delays to capital works?
- 11.1.3 The Trust anticipates fundraising will support pre-opening activities. What is the fallback plan if this income is delayed or not secured at the expected level?

## 12. Method Statement 5b – Rebuilding Confidence Amongst Past and Future Users

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- 12.1.1 Could you provide practical, actionable steps for reconnecting with lapsed users and community groups (e.g., personal outreach, open days, loyalty incentives, strategies for new audiences). Will there be any pilot activities or tested approaches and if so, please expand on your approach.
- 12.1.2 Can you detail how this confidence-building work will be resourced in Year 0 and beyond, including specific team members, volunteers, partners, allocated budget, and staff time for community liaison and audience development.

## 13. Method Statement 6a – Quality Assurance

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- 13.1.1 Regarding your commitment to quality through KPIs and a continuous improvement cycle, please expand on who will lead on this day-to-day once operations begin. For example, will there be a staff role or trustee responsible for managing feedback, the Quality Register, and performance tracking?
- 13.1.2 You mention tools like dashboards, feedback and quality registers. Have you been able to factor in any time, staffing or budget to support these systems in the early years? We're keen to understand how this important work will be delivered practically once you're up and running.

## 14. Method Statement 7a – Governance & Reporting

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- 14.1.1 You've described a broad and ambitious structure involving trustees, staff, working groups, volunteers, and external partners — which shows a strong commitment to shared responsibility.
- 14.1.2 Please explain how the broad governance structure will remain clear, streamlined, and effective, particularly in the early years.
- 14.1.3 Please define roles and reporting lines and describe mechanisms for ensuring working groups are focused and accountable.

## 15. Method Statement 7b – Risk Management

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- 15.1.1 You highlight three key risks: financial underperformance, audience shortfall, and operational failure. Could you expand on how these risks will be actively managed in practice? For example, what early warning indicators or mitigation steps will you have in place?
- 15.1.2 Please could you share any financial scenarios or sensitivity testing you've done that show how income shortfalls in key areas (e.g. ticket sales, café, or room hire) would impact on your ability to operate sustainably — and what actions you would take in response?

## 16. Method Statement 8a – Governance Structure and Accountability

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- 16.1.1 Please can you clearly define how decision-making authority will be delegated across the Board, executive team, and advisory groups, with specific focus on day-to-day operational decisions and accountability.
- 16.1.2 Can you describe what training or onboarding is planned for trustees, staff, and volunteers to ensure good governance and regulatory compliance during the transition and post-handover?
- 16.1.3 How will you ensure clear accountability between Trustees, advisory committees, and the delivery team — particularly in the case of disagreements or conflicting priorities?
- 16.1.4 Please describe the approach to trustee recruitment, ensuring a strong mix of skills, experience, and independence.

## 17. Method Statement 8b – Registered Charity

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- 17.1.1 Please confirm the Trust's current legal structure and clarify whether it allows for entering into contracts or receiving funding before CIO status is confirmed.
- 17.1.2 Please expand on the contingency plan to maintain charitable best practice during any delay in CIO status, including how decisions will be legally authorised, what activities are dependent on CIO status, and any guidance received from funders/Council.
- 17.1.3 Has any written guidance been received from funders or the Council about acceptable interim arrangements if CIO confirmation is delayed beyond July 2025?