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|  | Meeting (No) | Community & Environment (4) |
| | Date | 8 October 2024 |
| | Document | Ref No |
| | Neston Theatre Festival 2025 | CE4/38b |

Background

In 2024 Little Actors produced the Neston Theatre Arts Festival at Neston Town Hall. As the festival aligned with the C&C Committee's objective to "provide increased access to cultural and arts activities within Town Council premises and assets", the C&E Committee made a financial contribution of £450 in support of the project.

Little Actors is hoping to produce a second festival in 2025 and has launched a Spacehive bid. The Spacehive project outline is copied below, along with a breakdown of costs, and further details can be found on the Spacehive website: [Neston Theatre Arts Festival 2025](#).

EXTRACT FROM THE LITTLE ACTORS SPACEHIVE BID FOR NESTON THEATRE FESTIVAL 2025

Following on from the success of the inaugural Neston Theatre Festival, Little Actors Theatre will create a further festival for the summer of 2025. To include performances from local youth, children's and community theatre groups. If possible other art forms could be included in the festival - singing, dance and visual arts. In addition to the adult acting Masterclass included in 2024 there would be an additional Masterclass for children and young people led by industry professionals. Keeping it local in the market town of Neston will ensure that there is access to theatre activities in an area where transport links to bigger cities and town are severely restricted. This will result in ease of access for residents who do not drive. The festival will celebrate the creativity and talent in the Neston and the wider Cheshire West area. The festival will provide an opportunity for the community to improve health and wellbeing through participation in the arts and build social pride.

What we'll deliver:

- Create a theatre festival in Neston in 2025 for participants and audience
- Community involvement
- Professional mentor directors
- Create a theatre festival for a community audience

Why it's a great idea:

1. Promoting creativity and talent in Neston and the wider county 2. Improved social cohesion and pride 3. Participation in the arts improves health and well being 4. The participants of all ages will have the opportunity to perform their material to a public audience. This gives a sense of value to their efforts and build social pride. 5. As a small rural community, access to the arts can be difficult to achieve so having a participatory theatre festival delivered in that community provides more creative opportunities for engagement. 6. Little Actors' technical and staging equipment will enhance the production values of the space available. The community will benefit from intergenerational interaction 7. Local coffee shops and other businesses would benefit from increase footfall as external groups come to the town to perform and bring their own audience with them. 8. Visiting groups will be facilitated to stage their work in the town by Little Actors experienced staff.

Steps to get it done:

- Administrative organisation of the festival
- Liaising with other community arts groups about inclusion in the festival

- Rehearsing performance material with our children's and youth theatre companies
- Publicity of the festival
- Working with partners to deliver the project e.g. Neston Town Council
- Delivery of the festival over a weekend in summer 2025

Little Actors has a commitment to developing and enhancing theatre arts provision in Neston. In particular by cultivating and growing a positive relationship with Neston Town Council which manages the Town Hall venue, so as to develop theatre access in the town. This festival will bring a much needed collaborative and participatory theatre event to the town. It will aim to involve as many people as possible as performers, volunteers and audience. The 2024 festival was a great success and Little Actors would like to offer a similar opportunity for creative sharing in 2025









How will the money be spent?

Target (inc. fees) **£5,530**





Costs Breakdown

This shows how money raised for the project will be spent. These costs have been confirmed by the project's Delivery Manager and verified.

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|  Producer time £1,400 |  Technical operators x 2 £900 |
|  Venue hire - Hall and side room for dressing room £700 |  Producer 3 festival days £600 |
|  Assistant producer 3 festival days £450 |  Guest Mentor Director - 2 days £400 |
|  Chaperone £240 |  Publicity materials £200 |

Overfunding

This project is enabled for overfunding. If the project hits its funding goal before the end of the campaign period, any extra funds raised will be spent (in order of priority) on:

-  Contingency for the project to protect against price fluctuation
-  Contingency for change in time scale resulting in increased costs

Target (inc. fees) **£5,530**

For Consideration

The Committee will wish to consider whether to make a Spacehive pledge in support of the Neston Theatre Arts Festival 2025 and, if so, to agree an amount and confirm the budget.

Audrey Duncan

Community & Environment Manager