



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

Expressions of Interest for Management of the Blakehay Theatre, Weston-super-Mare

Weston-super-Mare Town Council is seeking Expressions of Interest from suitably experienced and qualified organisations to undertake the management of the Blakehay Theatre, Wadham Street, Weston-super-Mare. The organisation will need to have proven and demonstrated experience in similar projects and the wide-ranging skill bases to achieve the various elements required to ensure the running of the theatre is successful which includes but is not limited to: programming of performances in line with community desires, income generation, site management, performance facilitation, marketing to include social media and managing bookings, working with existing staff teams and stakeholders.

Building Information

The Blakehay Theatre, a converted church, was first opened in 1986. The main house seats 207 patrons, the studio can seat up to 100, and the theatre bar 45.

The accessibility of the theatre has been maximised following capital improvements in 2021 which included the installation of a second ramp, and additional level access dressing rooms on the ground floor. The main house is accessible for a small number of wheelchair users, and the bar is fully wheelchair accessible. The studio remains inaccessible by wheelchair users as a result of the inaccessible nature of the building, and lack of ability to put a lift into the building. more information can be found on the Blakehay Theatre website, and will be available at the tender stage.

Benefits of Partnership working

'On the Stage' recognises the benefits of partnerships and collaborations with individuals and businesses in the community as follows:

- More buzz, brand awareness, and community recognition of your theatre with advanced exposure at local businesses
- Greater opportunities for business sponsorships and expanded networking opportunities, thus padding your bottom line
- Higher quality productions, costumes, props, and tech thanks to in-kind and financial donations
- Greater opportunities for ad sales in your show program via partners and their clients

- A more cohesive and connected community, with a greater understanding and appreciation of those around us
- A greater likelihood of attracting new patrons thanks to the built-in customer base of your business partner
- Expanded geographical reach as it pertains to top-of-mind awareness of your theatre
- A stronger sense of credibility within your community; if this well-known business trusts your theatre, their patrons and others in the community will, too
- Access to a wealth of new expertise, products, and services¹

Aims

The aspiration of a partnership model, would be to drive financial performance and increased use, ideally resulting in a reducing subsidy over a 5-year period. As such, the organisation who is chosen must provide a business model that is ambitious and based on proven experience of past income generation and audience development.

Eligibility

Organisations from whom Weston-super-Mare Town Council procure goods and services must demonstrate that all practicable steps are being taken to allow equal access and equal treatment in employment and service delivery, as appropriate to the nature of the contract. Following a decision made by Weston-super-Mare Town Council in July 2020, the Council is committed to working with organisations who pay the Real Living Wage to their employees.

Weston-super-Mare Town Council will evaluate the Expression of Interest submissions received, and shortlist qualifying organisations to invite submit a proposal. Registration of interest does not imply inclusion on the tender list. Tender information will be issued mid February 2025.

EVALUATION & ASSESSMENT OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The evaluation will be in accordance with the following criteria. An aggregate of 4 or more fails will automatically result in exclusion from the tender list.

Evaluation Criteria	Pass / Fail
Proven experience in type and scale of work within an operational public building	Pass / Fail
Proven experience in a creative sector organisation, with demonstratable ability to reach income targets	Pass / Fail
Financial capability (adequately resourced to undertake the contract works)	Pass / Fail
Evidence of an excellent Health & Safety Record	Pass / Fail
Confirmation that employees are paid Real Living Wage.	Pass / Fail

¹ On The Stage, 'Community Collaboration: Engaging Local Businesses in Theatre Productions', <https://onthestage.com/blog/community-collaboration-engaging-local-businesses-in-theatre-productions/>

Resources and availability to tender and commence the contract during the financial year 2025/2026, date of commencement to be mutually agreed.	Pass / Fail
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Initially a meeting should be made with the CEO/Town Clerk to discuss the opportunity.

Interested parties are asked to submit Expressions of Interest to include their:

- Organisation name, status, address, contact name and if applicable registration number
- Company bankers name and account number
- Details of experience with similar management project, including reference to key individuals and their role in delivering
- Confirmation that the organisation will be able to submit a tender and should they be successful, commence the contract during the financial year 2025/2026, date of commencement to be mutually agreed.

Expression of Interest should be sent no later than **12 noon on Friday 14th February 2025** **FAO:**

Sarah Pearse
Town Clerk
Weston-super-Mare Town Council
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