

Brief for supplying design proposals, and estimated costings for refurbishment, re-modelling and improvement works at Castle Hall

Castle Hall is a seventies built theatre, entertainment and community space with hall and rooms for hire. The facilities and presentation are perhaps best described as tired and the layout is outdated. The venue consists primarily of:

Main auditorium with retractable rake seating 400 capacity (with changing rooms and other ancillaries)

Foyer and bar

River room

Kitchens

There is also a small office and box office

East Herts Council owns the building and has set up a Way Forward Group to review and create improved programmes to meet a greater range of the community's arts and entertainment needs. Integral to this improvement programme is making the best presentation of the facility. A capital sum of approach £600,000 has been identified to improve the attractiveness of the venue and to maximise use of space. However, the WFG's brief is to explore additional improvements that could be the subject of bids for additional funds and future phases. An integral and creative design proposal is sought with itemised estimated costings.

Key elements of the desired improvements have been identified as follows:

1. Improvements to the foyer area (to include new 'cosmetic' treatment of floor, ceiling and lighting) to create a more vibrant attractive space that can be used for functions and as a gallery exhibition space: a space that will draw in passing trade as well as providing an attractive space to meet, enjoy music and other events. Integral to the foyer is the bar.
2. The bar is in need of refurbishment/re-modelling to include a coffee bar.
3. To create a new sprung floor dance studio and multi-purpose space by using the over-provision of space in the kitchen area and combining it with the River room meeting area.

In addition to the key areas, costings and design for the following are sought:

4. Creating a new box office area.
5. Moving the back office to another location away from the front of house.
6. Creating an access to the bar through the auditorium – subject to no compromise to the acoustics.

7. Identify a location within the foyer perhaps attached to the box office that could be used as an outlet for a tourist information centre.
8. Renewal of front entrance.
9. External advertising infrastructure.

Consultants are invited to submit their proposals together with a fee charge quote for project management. The emphasis is on innovative new space and as such design ideas are not restricted to the itemised brief set out above.

Return date for proposals to Will O'Neill, head of community and cultural services, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ is noon 16 March 2009.

Assessment and selection criteria

The assessment and selection criteria will be conducted by the Castle Hall Way Forward Group consisting of councillors and officers. The brief is to encourage creative solutions and the assessment criteria reflects that, as follows:

The overall assessment will be split;

- 50% Quality of design proposal
- 30% value for money – fee pitch
- 20% integrity of estimated works costings

Quality assessment will be broken down as follows:

	Quality
Creative use of space	40%
Integrity of proposal	40%
Quality of presentation	20%