Background information for Royston Picture Palace

**Summary of Operations:** up until 31st December 2023, Saffron Screen put on up to 5 screenings per week from Friday evening to Sunday evening but the current premises licence allows films to be shown 7 days per week. Volunteers manage the ticket collection, refreshment sales and seating set-up. A paid manager oversees the setup and a technical operator comes in before the beginning of screenings to set up the films to be shown. Films have been shown 6 weeks after release. Saffron Screen retained all ticket income and profit from refreshments.

**Equipment:** full sized single cinema screen, Dolby Digital Sound, projection equipment and cinema seating.

**Description of Facilities:** The cinema is situated on the first floor and second, balcony level of Royston Town Hall (the front row of the balcony has a restricted view for small children) with seating for 134. It is fully accessible with provision in the seating plan for up to three wheelchair users and carers. A lift to the first floor is available. Onsite parking is available at Royston’s Civic Centre car park and is free after 3pm every day, and all day on Sundays.

The screen is retractable to allow for use of the stage. When not being used as a cinema, seating can be retracted to allow other functions/activities to take place.

**Description of Procurement:**

We are market testing for an operator for the Royston Picture Palace Cinema. The cinema, which is owned by Royston Town Council, is situated on Melbourn Street, the property comprises a single screen cinema, including a balcony and a fully equipped kitchen for serving refreshments in the hall below. The hall has a premises licence which could be transferred to a new operator.

Royston Town Council would welcome expressions of interest from operators who are willing to run the cinema alone or who might also stage live music and/or theatre productions as well. The council is open to ideas on how to use the facility, but prospective suppliers must be aware that the Town Hall itself is a community asset which is used by other local organisations for meetings, events and social activities.

The use of the halls for community hirers will be continued.



**Financial Information:**

Cinema income and attendance figures available on request.

**The Hardwicke (upper) Hall**

1. Dimensions/capacity of hall:

* 50’3” x 30’0” (15.3m x 9.1m)
* Maximum capacity for fire regulations = 180 people
* Maximum capacity for dancing = 100
* Maximum capacity theatre style with central isle (including balcony) = 134 people

2. Facilities available:

* stage
* balcony
* dance floor
* dressing rooms with 1 toilet in each (on mezzanine floor accessed by stairs)
* seating – 83 tiered seating + 51 fixed seats in balcony = 134 Total
* lift from ground floor
* no catering facilities unless Heritage Hall hired at the same time

3. Disabled access is via the lift from the ground floor to the Hardwicke Hall only (there is no wheelchair access to the balcony).

**The Heritage (lower) Hall**

1. Dimensions/capacity of hall:

* 49’9” x 26’ 6” (15.2m x 8.1m)
* Maximum capacity for fire regulations = 180
* Maximum capacity for sit-down = 120
* Maximum capacity for dancing = 150

2. Facilities available:

* kitchen/bar (unlicensed), with: urn, refrigerator, oven, crockery, approx. 80 mugs, cutlery
* (extra charge applies when used as a licensed bar – hirer must apply to North Herts District Council for an Occasional Licence)
* toilets
* baby changing facilities (in the disabled toilet)
* seating – 120 chairs
* no on-site caterer.

3. Facilities for the Disabled:

* ramps for entry to hall via main doors and side entrances
* disabled toilet
* wheelchair lift to Hardwicke Hall (no access to balcony).

**Both Halls**

Capacity for a dinner/dance using the Hardwicke Hall for dancing and the Heritage Hall for licensed bar and/or buffet or sit-down meal = 160.

Equipment shared by both halls:

Folding tables: 26 x 6’ long, 4 x 5’ long, 4 x 4’ long, 2 x 3’ long