

# Press Releases - Theatre Costs Escalate - 19/02/01

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## Cost over-runs at the Pavilion theatre

The Pavilion Theatre recently opened in the heart of Dun Laoghaire. The theatre project was estimated to cost £2.59 million in August 1997. The latest cost report dated March 2000 estimates a project cost of £3.43 million. Councillor Eoin Costello (FG) queried the continuing rise in the price of the theatre at February's Council Area Committee meeting. According to the Council report the difference of £840,578 is caused by inflation and variations to the contract which reflect decisions taken to improve the facility.

Councillor Costello asked if there would be further cost increases before completion of the project. The Council stated that since March 2000 further variations of approximately £250,000 have been agreed which mainly reflect theatrical technical installations and the provision of extra toilet facilities. According to Councillor Costello it is hard to understand why toilets and essential technical installations were not included in the original costings.

The theatre boasts a stage which is completely de-mountable and a large portion of the seating is retractable thus ensuring a wide range of performance options. Unfortunately, according to Councillor Eoin Costello, this flexibility does not extend to getting props and sets in and out of the new theatre. The design of the Pavilion theatre provided for access to the rear of the building for personnel. During construction it became apparent that the angular nature of the access would not allow trucks carrying sets and props to access the theatre and provision of alternative access has yet to be constructed. In response to a question from Councillor Costello the Council reported that the provision of an improved access to the theatre is the final cost issue which needs to be determined. This work has not yet been costed.

Councillor Eoin Costello stated that given the cost over-runs and design deficiencies the council should seek a claw back of professional fees paid to the company who designed the theatre. The Council stated that council officials do not feel that the cost increases of the project raise issues of reduction of professional fees.

Councillor Costello said that he was delighted that the capital of our county finally had its own theatre but he remains concerned about

the final cost of its construction. Estimates vary from £250,000 to £500,000 for the construction of adequate access. This would bring the total cost of the theatre to almost £4.2 million. Given the Council's desperate financial straits Councillor Costello feels that the council should seek to recover the design costs from the relevant professionals and put the money earmarked for the completion of the theatre into more pressing priorities such as the refurbishment of Council's housing stock or the improvement of Kilbogget Park.