

P-03-317 Hijinx Funding for Arts – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Clerk, 30.05.2013

Hi Naomi,

I am responding to the letter from William Powell to our Chair Mike Clark, dated 27th February. Apologies for the time it has taken to get this to you and many thank for both your patience with me and the generosity of committee members in giving me more time.

Additional funding streams

Here is a table of income from 2010/11 (the year before the cut in revenue grant)

year	Total of all ACW grants – revenue & project	Total of non ACW income including earned	Total all income	% of non ACW income
2010/11 (actual)	£287,438	£124,518	£411,956	30.23%
2011/12 (actual)	£223,500	£89,258	£312,758	28.54%
2012/13 (est @ year end)	£276,500	£131,478	£404,978	32.47%
2013/14 (budget estimate)	£260,000	£145,454	£405,454	35.87%

What is clear from the table is that ACW income is 2012/13 and 2013/14 is almost back up to the level of 2010/11 – the last year before the cut. While this is hugely welcome, much of it relates to project grants. As we have discussed with members in person, while project grants are wonderful, they don't give time for meaningful, strategic forward planning. In terms of the Unity International Inclusive Arts Festival, a massive project that takes place in June each year, we hear the result of the application in mid December, 6 months before the Festival takes place. This makes planning very hard, particularly generating the 25% matching income difficult.

Ironically in 2010/11 – the last year before our revenue grant reduction – we achieved high income generation both from fees for performances and other activity and from Trusts, Foundations, Sponsorship and donations.

Unsurprisingly there was a dip in 2011/12 while the company concentrated on restructuring both activity and staff responsibilities.

During 2012/13 as the new programme of activity has bedded down, and we have delivered more training activity for adults with learning disabilities (3 days a week), daily payments for students come via Local Authority Social Services departments. In spite of this the actual net income from the one-day per week social service funded training courses is £30 per week.

The more focused drama / performance training (The Hijinx Academy) runs for two days each week is virtually cost neutral or running at a slight loss depending on how many external tutors we employ.

So while the bald figures seem to tell a healthy tale, they hide the real picture. The huge increase of work required to generate the additional funding to support the work is growing monthly. This includes shaking buckets in Sainsburys on a Saturday, as well as the hours spent filling in forms both to get the funding, and reporting back on grants and awards. The truth is that there is an expectation that we should deliver more activity with radically reduced resources, and my overwhelming concern is for the health of the four staff who are trying to hold it all together.

Between January 2012 and February 2013 we have submitted applications amounting to £330,714 to Trusts, Foundations and potential sponsors – with a 9.5% success rate. We have been diligent and rigorous in attempts to generate additional income.

The affect on our work

Performances of professional touring productions have fallen massively as you would expect.

	2009/10			2010/11			2011/12			2012/13		
	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd & Scotl and	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd	Wh ole tour	Wal es	Engla nd
Number of performances	59	35	24	72	38	34	23	14	9	27	19	8
Weeks of touring	17			19			6½			6½		
Total audience	3,390	1,976	1,408	5,426	2,975	1,209	1,751	1,131	620	1,794	1,228	566

Our participatory work has increased with the change of programme. We now deliver 3 days of performance training workshops for adults with learning disabilities each week throughout the year. This equates to 500 sessions for 21 people during the year. While this is a new opportunity for the students, they are all based in or very close to Cardiff. Our Wales-wide work (which was our professional touring) has reduced massively.

Similarly the **Unity Festival**, while attracting people from all over Wales and further afield, takes place in Cardiff. The majority of the people who attended events or took part in workshops during the 2012 Festival were based in south Wales. There were 28 workshop sessions, with

285 participants, 105 with disabilities. Performances at Unity Festival generated an audience of 7,259.

Forgive the length of this reply. As you can see there is not a straightforward answer to the committee's very straightforward question. We have radically changed what we do, who we do it for and where we do it. Small communities throughout Wales now have far less access to professional theatre performances by Hijinx Theatre, but people in Cardiff and the surrounding locality have far more opportunities to be involved in inclusive arts activity.

We continue to struggle, we continue to strive to achieve quality in everything we do and remain grateful for the support we do receive. In this very difficult financial climate, we continue to believe passionately that people all over Wales of all abilities have the right to experience quality arts activities close to their home. We continue to explore new and innovate ways to make this happen.

Thank you to all members for the time and trouble you have taken considering our petition, and the interest you have taken in our situation.

With best wishes,

Val

Val Hill
Executive Director
Hijinx Theatre
Wales Millennium Centre
Bute Place
Cardiff Bay, CF10 5AL