



Community, Leisure and Emergency Services,  
Merchants Quay,  
Limerick.

14<sup>th</sup> July, 2015.

**TO: The Mayor and Each Member of the Metropolitan District of Limerick**

Dear Councillor,

I attach for your information and attention a report on 69 O'Connell Street (69OCS) dated July 2015.

69OCS represents an iconic city centre arts and community resource that all members of our community identify with. The development of the report is based on the reintroduction of 69 O'Connell Street as a stimulus for providing varied and high quality cultural activity incorporating all facets of the visual and performing arts communities. The venue now owned by Limerick City and County Council is integral to the continued development of Limerick as a strong cultural centre and a City that supports the arts.

The executive summary gives an overview of the findings of the report. I request that you review so we can enact and address the situation.

In defining the future structures for 69OCS, the following represents the key development ambitions based on stakeholder engagement;

- Create a sustainable governance structure that facilitates the provision of visual and performing art of the highest quality.
- Provide clear pathways for open engagement with the artistic and creative communities.
- Realise the potential of 69OCS as a community asset engaging all members of our community.
- Create a national centre for excellence for Youth Arts Development.
- Develop a progressive artistic and creative hub that promotes the site as a stimulus for artistic innovation.
- Develop 69OCS in a business-like manner that consolidates the site for a secure and vibrant future.
- Provide a city based resource for professional, semi-professional and amateur artists that become a central hub for artistic engagement.
- Establish 69OCS as a nationally acclaimed site in performance and visual arts, cultural cinema, community and education practice.

The report conclusions will ensure independent focus and we recommend that we follow this recommendation.

The recommended management and governance model for the operation of 69OCS is based on enhancing the existing interim management model established in the running of the venue by Lime Tree Theatre. In addition to the sectorial experience and knowledge this can provide under a Service Level Agreement (SLA), this will enable the venue to benefit from a range of operational efficiencies in marketing and HR. The recommendation to pursue the suggested Governance model is based on broadening the scope of engagement of the Lime Tree Theatre and maximise the operational efficiencies of an SLA approach while ensuring clear artistic / programming structures are established.

The approval of the Members of Metropolitan District is sought to the above approach.

Mike Fitzpatrick  
Director / Limerick 2020

**69 O'Connell St**

**Developing our Arts & Cultural Resources**

**JULY 2015**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

69 O'Connell Street (69OCS) represents an iconic city centre arts & community resource that all members of our community identify with. The purchase of the building and adjoining Credit Union site by Limerick City & County Council provides an opportunity to develop the site for the arts & creative communities while ensuring it remains an accessible venue to the wider public. The venue must become a key component in the development of the arts across Limerick City and County in tandem with the broader range of arts and cultural facilities under municipal ownership.

The development of this report is based on the reintroduction of 69 O'Connell Street as a stimulus for providing varied and high quality cultural activity incorporating all facets of the visual and performing arts communities. The overriding objective is to stabilise the operating environment of 69OCS and develop a re-invigorated approach to venue programming and user engagement to open it up to new and lapsed audiences.

In defining the future structures for 69OCS, the following represents the key development ambitions based on stakeholder engagement;

- Create a sustainable governance structure that facilitates the provision of visual and performing art of the highest quality.
- Provide clear pathways for open engagement with the artistic and creative communities.
- Realise the potential of 69OCS as a community asset engaging all members of our community.
- Create a national centre for excellence for Youth Arts Development.
- Develop a progressive artistic and creative hub that promotes the site as a stimulus for artistic innovation.
- Develop 69OCS in a business-like manner that consolidates the site for a secure and vibrant future.
- Provide a city based resource for professional, semi professional and amateur artists that becomes a central hub for artistic engagement.
- Establish 69OCS as a nationally acclaimed site in performance and visual arts, cultural cinema, community and education practice.

The 69OCS site is owned by the Limerick City and County Council and will be developed for the city leveraging off the strong artistic heritage that has existed over the past four decades. In 2013-2014 69OCS was allocated €120,000 programming support from the Arts Council through the Limerick Arts Encounter Programme, and was allocated €158,000 in expenditure for 2014 from Limerick City and County Council. Net ticket sales income September 2013 - March 2014 was €21,237.

69OCS requires a re-energised operational model that will harness the potential of the venue and look to the next generation of artists while also re-engaging with the local community. The development of appropriate programming across all stakeholder groups

and audiences will contribute to building organic demand for activity and capitalise on the cultural impact of 2014.

The next progression for 69OCS represents a venue turnaround phase, through stabilisation of management and operations, while developing 69OCS through innovation with distinct programming and development of its own brand of activity that will be recognised nationally. The long term objective is to ensure the site regains its position pioneering artistic and cultural activity through new and innovative approaches while becoming a vibrant and creative space for all stakeholders across the performance and visual arts sectors. The range of users the site can support is identified in the report however future partnerships with the arts community are key to sustained development and the ability to meet the overarching objectives.

This overall approach will require a dedicated creative resource to work with the management and operational structures proposed for the venue. This resource must engage with key stakeholders in developing the scale of programme required to meet the agreed objectives for 69OCS.

The Governance approach to be considered for the ongoing operation of 69OCS is structured around a number of key deliverables to support the sustained operation of the venue on a number of different levels;

- **Artistic Input** - Ensuring the input of the artistic community into future programming and venue development.
- **Dedicated venue focus** - Creation of a dedicated role for a creative resource to manage the daily engagement with the key stakeholders.
- **A Limerick Venue** - Operate the venue with financial prudence with the objective of re-establishing the site as the central arts hub for Limerick.

The recommended management and governance model for the operation of 69OCS is based on enhancing the existing interim management model established in the running of the venue by Lime Tree Theatre. In addition to the sectorial experience and knowledge this can provide under a Service Level Agreement (SLA), this will enable the venue to benefit from a range of operational efficiencies in marketing and HR. The recommendation to pursue the suggested Governance model is based on broadening the scope of engagement of the Lime Tree Theatre and maximise the operational efficiencies of an SLA approach while ensuring clear artistic / programming structures are established.

Furthermore, the governance model is designed to leverage off the strategic and operational experience of an existing Board structure while ensuring independence and accountability in relation to programming and third party financial support. The proposed structure is designed to support independent programming with the input of the arts community supported by the employment of a dedicated Creative Director.

In conclusion, the interim management structure with the Lime Tree Theatre has provided a stability around the continued operation of 69OCS. The enhancement of this operational arrangement under SLA with specific provision for 69OCS programming will ensure an

independent focus with engagement with the visual and performing arts community. The support of the Lime Tree Theatre Board and the management model implemented through the Lime Tree Theatre systems will require a dedicated Creative Director resource. This will ensure day to day operations and engagement with all venue users is managed through an on site point of contact.

The viability of the site as a stand alone entity is not sustainable in the medium to longer term. The ability to benefit from the operational efficiencies of the Lime Tree Theatre will reduce the financial burden while ensuring the future programming for the venue is operated in a transparent manner under standing orders for the special committee, drafted in conjunction with Limerick City & County Council. This will reflect clear and transparent procedures for the efficient operation of 69OCS and Lime Tree Theatre to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

69 O'Connell Street (69OCS) represents an iconic city centre arts & community resource that all members of our community identify with. The purchase of the building and adjoining Credit Union site by Limerick City & County Council provides an opportunity to develop the site for the arts & creative communities while ensuring it remains an accessible venue to the wider public. The venue must become a key component in the development of the arts across Limerick City and County in tandem with the broader range of arts and cultural facilities under municipal ownership.

A city with ambitions of hosting European City of Culture 2020 requires a strong portfolio of working venues and sites that nurture performance and visual arts. In realising the opportunity that exists with 69OCS, the following represents the proposed direction for 69OCS providing strong governance and robust management structures to guide and inform the development of a multi-disciplined environment with resonance for all members of our artistic and local communities.

### 1.1 The Resource

The development of this report is based on the reintroduction of 69 O'Connell Street as a stimulus for providing varied and high quality cultural activity incorporating all facets of the visual and performing arts communities. The overriding objective is to stabilise the operating environment of 69OCS and develop a re-invigorated approach to venue programming and user engagement to open it up to new and lapsed audiences.

Limerick City possesses a unique central artistic and cultural hub. In its current and previous guises, 69OCS has been at the core of the artistic and social fabric of our city responsible for many creative successes and as a 'hothouse' for the arts sector. It is now a venue owned by the City and County Council and is integral to the continued development of Limerick as a strong cultural centre and City that supports the arts. The opportunity for 69OCS under new governance and management structures is to reposition Limerick as one of the leading artistic centres in the country harnessing the wealth of creative talent across the visual and performing arts communities.

National City of Culture 2014 demonstrated the wider community's willingness to engage with sustained artistic and cultural programming. The vision for 69OCS is to leverage off this civic momentum while maximising the potential of the resource to provide continuous engagement opportunities for every resident in Limerick.

In defining the future structures for 69OCS, the following represents the key development ambitions based on stakeholder engagement;

- Create a sustainable governance structure that facilitates the provision of visual and performing art of the highest quality.
- Provide clear pathways for open engagement with the artistic and creative communities.
- Realise the potential of 69OCS as a community asset engaging all members of our community.
- Create a national centre for excellence for Youth Arts Development.

- Develop a progressive artistic and creative hub that promotes the site as a stimulus for artistic innovation.
- Develop 69OCS in a business-like manner that consolidates the site for a secure and vibrant future.
- Provide a city based resource for professional, semi professional and amateur artists that becomes a central hub for artistic engagement.
- Establish 69OCS as a nationally acclaimed site in performance and visual arts, cultural cinema, community and education practice.

## **1.2 The Opportunity**

The Belltable Arts Centre was established as the first regional Arts Centre in Ireland in 1981. 2016 represents the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city centre venue in its various guises. The next phase of 69OCS represents a significant venue turnaround opportunity that will capitalise on the creative heritage of the site, provide an accessible city centre arts amenity for our community and become a creative centre for the broader arts community.

Historically, Limerick has occupied a national role in innovation across many sectors and the city's contribution to the national artistic landscape is significant. The stabilisation of the venue through strong governance and management procedures will underpin the wider strategic ambition for the site. There are many opportunities to consider that can transform 69OCS to become an arts and cultural centre with national significance.

A focus on our next generation through youth arts development, education, schools' engagement and social inclusion represent immediate opportunities for consideration. Furthermore, 69OCS must become a living and working creative environment for professional and amateur artists while developing a role as a 'research and development' catalyst for the artistic community.

## **1.3 Strong Governance**

The purchase of the venue by Limerick City & County Council ensures 69OCS remains a central cultural and artistic hub for our city. The additional purchase of the adjoining Credit Union building provides further capacity for the artistic community expanding the supports the site can provide (See Appendix 1). The recent interim management agreement with The Lime Tree Theatre has provided the level of stability required in addition to the venue benefiting from the economies of scale this relationship presented.

This is a short term operational measure. The future development of 69OCS requires a more structured and cohesive approach with engagement across all stakeholder groups to maximise its artistic and creative potential. This document outlines the preferred structure for the artistic and cultural programming development of 69OCS supported by a robust operational and management structure.

## 2.0 ARTS & CULTURE VENUE PROPOSITION

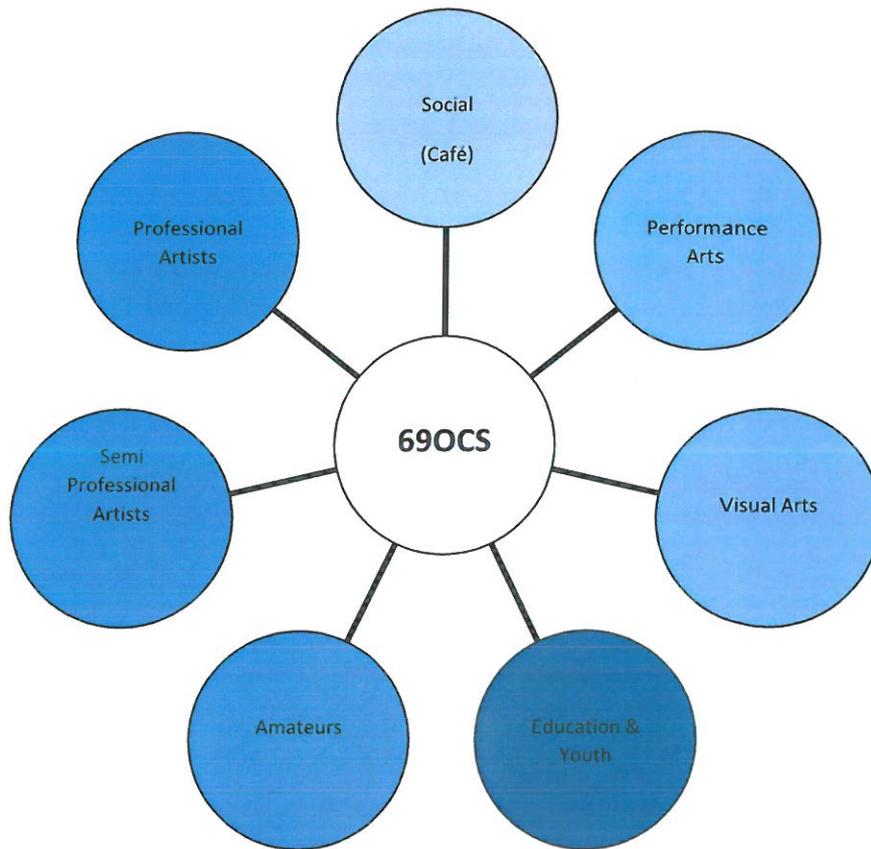
The 69OCS site is owned by the Limerick City and County Council and will be developed for the city leveraging off the strong artistic heritage that has existed over the past four decades. In 2013-2014 69OCS was allocated €120,000 programming support from the Arts Council through the Limerick Arts Encounter Programme, and was allocated €158,000 in expenditure for 2014 from Limerick City and County Council. Net ticket sales income September 2013 - March 2014 was €21,237.

69OCS requires a re-energised operational model that will harness the potential of the venue and look to the next generation of artists while also re-engaging with the local community. The development of appropriate programming across all stakeholder groups and audiences will contribute to building organic demand for activity and capitalise on the cultural impact of 2014.

In proposing a direction for 69OCS following various stages of consultation, there is a recognition of the technical and capacity limitations of the site. Notwithstanding these issues, it can occupy a very important position in local arts and culture provision through adoption of a multi-disciplined approach across the visual and performing arts sector. This can be combined with the exploration of further niche opportunities such as establishing a Performance Innovation site in tandem with other local facilities, niche event development, a visual arts platform and a focus on youth arts development and education. The site is well positioned to develop niche streams of activity that will be developed through programming and consultation with representatives of the professional and amateur artistic community.

The next progression for 69OCS represents a venue turnaround phase, through stabilisation of management and operations, while developing 69OCS through innovation with distinct programming and development of its own brand of activity that will be recognised nationally.

## Vibrant & Multifunctional – A Living Arts and Cultural Hub in the Heart of the City



The overarching objective of the proposed approach for 69OCS is to create a vibrant city centre creative hub that appeals to all stakeholders across the artistic community, local audiences and potential venue users through programme innovation. The site will strive to become a social engagement hub in the heart of the city while providing for the needs of professional, semi professional and amateur artists. The potential of the site will be maximised through the development of niche activity that will evolve through future programming and resource utilisation.

## 2.1 A Catalyst for Creativity & Innovation

The evolution of the site as one of the first regional arts centre in Ireland in 1981 highlights the manner in which Limerick has been to the forefront of artistic innovation and provision. The future operations of 69OCS will embrace the opportunity to evolve into a key artistic development site while devising a programme of activity that will appeal across all audiences.

Supporting	Professional	Semi Professional	Amateur
		Emerging & Established	
Niche Provision	A Creative & Education Space for Youth Arts	Innovative Programming Centre	National Performance R&D for Visual & Performing
Opportunities	Visual	Music	Events & Festivals
	Film Club	Performance	Youth Resource
	Next (re) Generation	Inclusion	Education

The suggested approach for 69OCS in relation to programming is detailed in the Governance and Management section. The above corresponds with feedback received from stakeholders who have identified the future potential of the site and areas that may deliver niche areas of focus for future use and programming. The long term objective is to ensure the site regains its position pioneering artistic and cultural activity through new and innovative approaches while becoming a vibrant and creative space for all stakeholders across the performance and visual arts sectors. The range of users the site can support is identified above however future partnerships with the arts community are key to sustained development and the ability to meet the overarching objectives defined in section one. A common theme to emerge in discussions was the positioning of the venue as a stimulus for youth arts development. A suggested next (re)generation approach will work with schools for development programmes to promote teen engagement, educational outreach, cultural education and Youth arts, Theatre and Workshops.

This overall approach will require a dedicated creative resource to work with the management and operational structures proposed for the venue. This resource must engage with key stakeholders in developing the scale of programme required to meet the agreed objectives for 69OCS.

## 2.2 Creating a Social Cultural Hub for Limerick City

A key dimension to the future planning for 69OCS is the creation of a vibrant social cultural hub and a focal point within Limerick City. Among the priority areas for development in enhancing the venue as a social engagement site include a focus on the following;

**Development of Café** – the creation of a vibrant café site in the centre of Limerick that provides the opportunity to introduce a wider audience to the venue and contribute to the future financial requirements of the site.

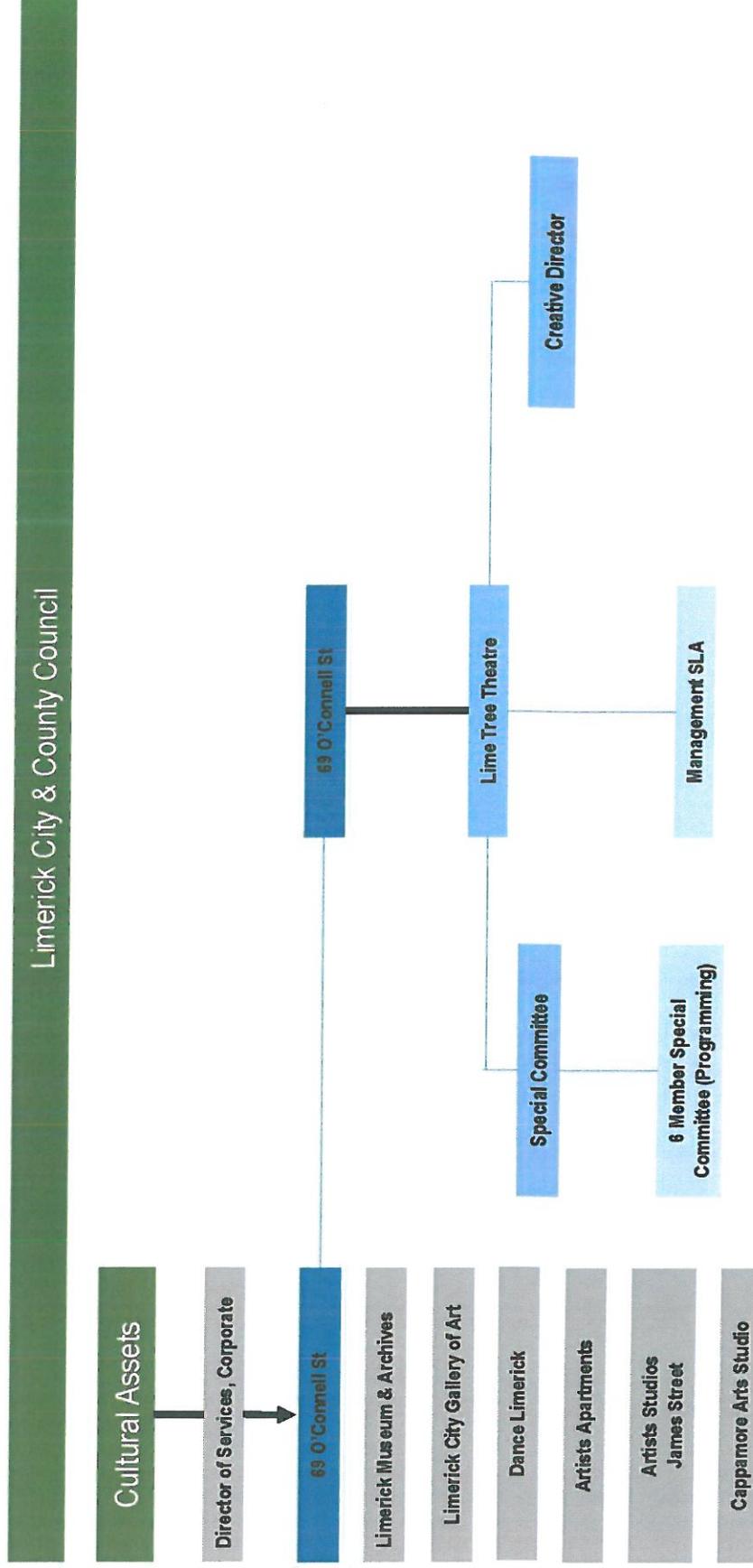
**Development of Visual Arts** – the addition of a strong visual arts programme that supports ongoing activity and the utilisation of the venue to its maximum. This will address the ongoing need for available visual art facilities in the City and create a multi-disciplined approach to arts provision within 69OCS.

**Development of the ‘Credit Union’ Building as Arts Innovation / Development Centre** – the refurbished Credit Union building provides a creative resource for the arts and culture community to rehearse and support creative development. The suggested positioning of the site as an innovation resource would be supported through the additional capacity provided by the ‘Credit Union’ facilities. The use of the amenities through ‘artists in residence’, creative spaces and event / festival planning offices will create a hub feel to the venue that will prevail throughout the year.

**Multi Audience Appeal** – the success of the 2014 City of Culture provided evidence of the willingness of the community to engage in sustained cultural and artistic programming. The creation of a broad base of programming that appeals from young people to more established audiences will be key to restoring the site into the cultural mind-set of the wider community.

### 3.0 MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE

#### Governance Model – 69OCS



The Governance approach to be considered for the ongoing operation of 69OCS is structured around a number of key deliverables to support the sustained operation of the venue on a number of different levels;

- **Artistic Input** - Ensuring the input of the artistic community into future programming and venue development.
- **Dedicated Venue Focus** - Creation of a dedicated role for a creative resource to manage the daily engagement with the key stakeholders.
- **A Limerick Venue** - Operate the venue with financial prudence with the objective of re-establishing the site as the central arts hub for Limerick.

The recommended management and governance model for the operation of 69OCS is based on enhancing the existing interim management model established in the running of the venue by Lime Tree Theatre. In addition to the sectorial experience and knowledge this can provide under a Service Level Agreement (SLA), this will enable the venue benefit from a range of operational efficiencies in marketing and HR. The recommendation to pursue the suggested Governance model is based on broadening the scope of engagement of the Lime Tree Theatre and maximise the operational efficiencies of an SLA approach while ensuring clear artistic / programming structures are established.

Furthermore, the governance model is designed to leverage off the strategic and operational experience of an existing Board structure while ensuring independence and accountability in relation to programming and third party financial support. The proposed structure is designed to support independent programming with the input of the arts community supported by the employment of a dedicated Creative Director.

The Governance framework is as follows;

### **3.1 Ownership**

69OCS is part of a wider portfolio of Cultural assets in the ownership of Limerick City & County Council. It assumes full responsibility for ongoing maintenance of the facility. Limerick City & County Council will nominate their senior point of contact for the purposes of engagement with stakeholder groups.

### **3.2 Management**

It is proposed that a SLA will be entered into between Lime Tree Theatre and Limerick City & County Council for a five year period. Within the five year period, Lime Tree Theatre will be responsible for the operations and financial management for 69OCS with independent oversight structures for programming. An interim review of the arrangement will be conducted after the initial three year period of operations.

The SLA will be devised based on the ability to fulfil a range of key operational and programming tasks, identified as central to developing 69OCS as a city centre arts and culture hub appealing to a wide range of audiences with responsibility for prudent financial management of a multi-disciplined site. The objectives to be established within the SLA will include;

- Responsibility for strategic planning ensuring the visual and performing arts communities are central to all future activity.

- Management of key stakeholder relationships and inspire trust with key stakeholders across the artistic community.
- Demonstrate leadership in local arts provision and supporting arts development.
- Identify opportunities for the future development of 69OCS as a niche site with national significance.
- Reporting & Review – provide transparent and timely reporting and ongoing reviews of the operational and financial performance of 69OCS.
- Manage working relationships with 69OCS, Lime Tree Theatre and Limerick City and County Council and key stakeholders.
- Financial and Budget management.
- Development of an innovative independent programming approach for the venue with consultation with key stakeholders under the direction of an independent programming advisory group.

The defining logic is the venue will benefit from the management experience of the larger Lime Tree venue who have first hand experience of the operation of 69OCS while bringing robust governance through the existing management and board structures of the Lime Tree Theatre.

Additional considerations to maximise the effectiveness of this model include;

- A creative director will be employed to manage the day to day engagement working with Lime Tree management and implementing the vision for 69OCS based on key development objectives.
- Management of the Lime Tree Theatre will report to the Lime Tree Theatre board on Operations, Management, HR and Finance.
- Management of the Lime Tree Theatre will report to the Special Committee with regard to programming in consultation with the Creative Director. The chair of the special committee for programming will report back to the main board of the Lime Tree Theatre.
- Standing orders for the special committee will be drafted in conjunction with Limerick City & County Council and will reflect clear and transparent procedures for the efficient operation of 69OCS and Lime Tree Theatre to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.
- A formal agreement would be signed by the Lime Tree Theatre and Limerick City & County Council which would set out detailed procedures on the practicalities and funding of this model.

### **3.3 Programming**

A special six person committee for programming will be appointed to independently oversee programming activity for 69OCS. The composition of the Board is designed as follows;

- 2 nominations from the Lime Tree board (one of whom is Chair of the Lime Tree Theatre)
- 2 nominations from Limerick City & County Council

- 2 nominations from the performing and visual arts sector in the city

This programming advisory group will have direct responsibility for programming and management of programming grants.

### **3.4 Reporting**

The reporting structures will align with the existing Board reporting for Lime Tree Theatre. This equates to six Board meetings per year.

Monthly performance data will be generated for monthly reporting across all operational areas of 69OCS to communicate with Limerick City & County Council and the Board of Lime Tree Theatre.

It is proposed that an annual reporting meeting will be convened with a representative from key stakeholder groups focused on programming for 69OCS.

### **3.5 Review**

The SLA for 69OCS will be entered into for a five year period. An independent review will be undertaken after a three year period to assess the SLA under all aspects of the signed agreement between Lime Tree Theatre and Limerick City & County Council.

## 4.0 MARKETING & PROMOTION

The marketing and promotion of 69OCS will be conducted under the management arrangement agreed under the SLA. 69OCS will benefit from the cost efficiencies of joint marketing programming and penetration across all markets due to the reach of the existing Lime Tree Theatre marketing activity. Among the key marketing priorities for development include:

- Positioning of the venue aligned with agreed development objectives i.e. developing the site as a centre for performance innovation and youth focus.
- A programme of re-engagement with lapsed customers of 69OCS
- A programme of public relations around the programming and communication of the venue as 'open for business'
- Develop the profile of the venue as a social hub through product enhancement of the café and profiling of it as a City Centre option.
- Create continuous flow of event and programming information through all communications channels.

### 4.1 Marketing Projects for Development

#### **Brand Development**

Re-examine branding options that will leverage off the heritage of the site and the long held recognition of the site as a city centre culture destination. A cohesive brand development programme is required to create the platform for all marketing activity to be delivered in a consistent manner reflecting the quality and positioning of the venue.

#### **Public Relations**

The implementation of a concentrated programme of public relations to reach all audiences and venue users. The public relations campaign will convey the message of the site open for artistic and cultural activity with the social hub an integral element of re-introducing the public to the site.

#### **Social Media**

Social media is defined by the ability of users to generate sustained content. 69OCS can utilise impactful social media platforms for marketing purposes while also creating performance opportunities through social media channels contributing to national and international profiling of the venue. The development of a Youth Arts focus will add further to the sustained social media engagement opportunities that will be explored.

#### **City Alliance Marketing**

69OCS is a city asset and strategic marketing alliances will be formed with businesses that will mutually benefit from increased activity at the venue.

## **Database and Membership**

The development of the membership programme is a key audience generation platform and additional source of revenue. Lapsed members will be targeted through a campaign while the repositioning and enhanced programming will provide an immediate opportunity to develop membership and niche membership e.g. film clubs.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- The development of the Governance structure is based on an ability to leverage off existing sector knowledge, venue experience and a dedicated approach to programming for 69OCS. The implementation of this model is based on utilising the full strategic and operational skill sets of Lime Tree Theatre while ensuring an independent of thought and procedures around the programming for the venue.
- The creation of an independent programming advisory group working with a creative director -provides a mechanism for dedicated programming focused on key strategic objectives to be defined by the new governance structure. The proposed structure of the advisory group is designed to ensure representation from the visual and performing arts through two appointees from the local arts community. The nominees from the Board of Lime Tree Theatre will also have a strong background in the arts and knowledge in effective programming aligned with the broader vision for 69OCS.
- Financial efficiencies and economies of scale are a key consideration for the sustained operation of the venue. The focus on programming and creative direction underpins the arts and culture strategy however, the need to be cognisant of the financial performance of 69OCS is critical. The development of an SLA has the scope to reduce staff costs as a ratio of turnover from 75% in 69OCS to 49% under collaboration with the Lime Tree Theatre. Similarly, Marketing and PR costs in terms of percentage of turnover would reduce from 25% to 13%. Additional cost areas such as building maintenance being met by Limerick City and County Council will enable the venue under management of Lime Tree Theatre to enjoy greater efficiencies and generate returns that can contribute to the employment of a new Creative Director.
- The recruitment of a Creative Director is an important consideration in ensuring a full time focus on the development of 69OCS. This evolves from the current interim management role of Lime Tree Theatre and the recognition of the value of a dedicated creative resource to maximise the opportunity that can exist once appropriate management and governance systems are in place.
- 2016 represents 35 years of the venue's existence under various guises. This will represent an opportunity to restore 69OCS to the prominent position it once held based on the quality and innovation of programming. There are certain site limitations in terms of capacity for larger events or technical requirements, however, there are many R&D opportunities to explore to complement a broader range of future programming from film, music, performance, visual arts to youth arts development. The venue should strive to recover its innovation mantle while ensuring a programme of activity is developed that will ensure Limerick has a city centre arts venue at the heart of its cultural and creative community.
- Collaboration is fundamental to the success of the venue. However, a wider level of collaboration between all cultural venues in the city and county will provide Limerick with a necklace or cluster of facilities that should be harnessed to develop a range of activity that will create the scale that will support the City's candidature for European City of Culture but also normalising the level of creative programming made accessible on an annual basis.

- The venue's heritage is grounded in operating as a multi-disciplined site catering for the visual and performing arts. The development of the Credit Union space provides an immediate opportunity to create a full time presence through the provision of rehearsal space, events and festival planning and artists in residence. The development of this space will be instrumental in maximising the site capacity and sustained engagement with the visual arts and performing arts.
- In conclusion, the interim management structure with the Lime Tree Theatre has provided a stability around the continued operation of 69OCS. The enhancement of this operational arrangement under SLA with specific provision for 69OCS programming will ensure an independent focus with engagement with the visual and performing arts community. The support of the Lime Tree Theatre Board and the management model implemented through the Lime Tree Theatre systems will require a dedicated Creative Director resource. This will ensure day to day operations and engagement with all venue users is managed through an on site point of contact.
- The viability of the site as a stand alone entity is not sustainable in the medium to longer term. The ability to benefit from the operational efficiencies of the Lime Tree Theatre will reduce the financial burden while ensuring the future programming for the venue is operated in a transparent manner under standing orders for the special committee, drafted in conjunction with Limerick City & County Council. This will reflect clear and transparent procedures for the efficient operation of 69OCS and Lime Tree Theatre to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

## APPENDIX 1: The Arts and Culture Hub, Limerick's Creative Resource

The former Sarsfield Credit Union side of 69 O'Connell Street has been refurbished and alongside the theatre side of the building, represents an important asset for the arts in Limerick, regionally and nationally. It brings a new dimension to the arts infrastructure which is a much needed resource for artists and companies working in Limerick and for visiting organisations to use when in the city.



The facilities provided include:

- A modest city centre rehearsal space where artists and arts organisations can undertake projects and create new work.
- A flexible meeting and networking space for the arts sector, cultural groups and practitioners.
- A space for an anchor tenant for an arts organisation.

### Facilities at the former Sarsfield Credit Union side of 69 O'Connell Street

69 O'Connell Street is a Georgian building in a strategic city centre location in the heart of the Georgian Quarter of Limerick. Rooms can be used for audition/casting sessions, meetings, rehearsals, project development sessions, hot desks and research.

Proposed facilities usage:

- Floor 1 - Two rehearsal rooms available on a booking system for **short-term use**.
- Floor 2 - One office is allocated to 69 O'Connell Street administration, one office for **short-term** hot desks and a meeting room for use by arts or cultural organisations.
- Floor 3 – Five offices are licensed to an arts or cultural organisation.

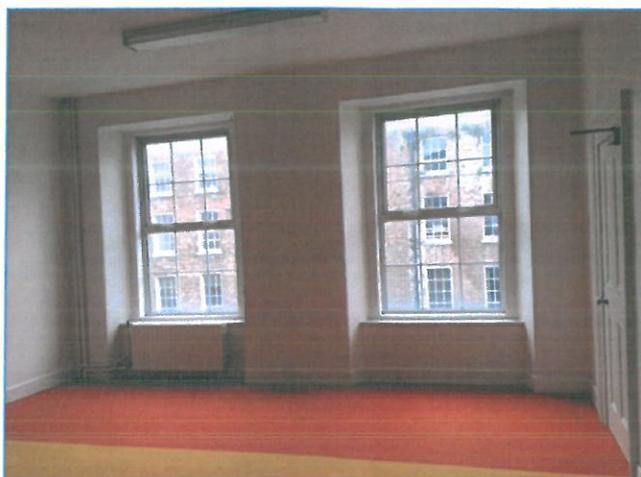
## First Floor

Current maximum capacity 50 people

- Rehearsal Room 1, this large room is suitable for rehearsal.
- Rehearsal Room 2, suitable for rehearsal.

## Second Floor

- Meeting room (R2.02)
- Hot desk/work room (R2.03), with 6 desks
- Office (R2.04), administrative office use for 69 O'Connell Street



## Third Floor

- Five offices (R3.01, R3.02, R3.04, R3.05, R3.06)

Allocated to an arts or cultural organisation by open call.

## Users

The Arts and Culture Hub provides for short term use two rehearsal rooms, an office space with six hot desks and a meeting room for arts and cultural practitioners. Hire rates are on a sliding scale based on the circumstances of the members:

- Individual artists
- Out of town arts organisations
- Subsidised production companies, venues, networks
- Film/TV companies
- Cultural organisations
- Charities