1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**1.1 Context**

This business plan is set within the broader context of:

1. Our evolving demographic
2. The recognition of the impact of culture on regeneration across Greater Manchester and within Oldham
3. Changing partnerships

**1.2 Vision, Mission, Values and Delivering the Vision**

**Vision:**

Oldham Coliseum Theatre will be recognised as a countrywide benchmark for inspiring social and cultural regeneration through producing theatre and related artistic activity. Its audience base will be representative of the Oldham community and beyond. The Coliseum will be a driver for community cohesion and will foster a culture of aspiration across Oldham’s communities.

**Mission:**

Oldham Coliseum Theatre’s mission is to provide a wide variety of distinctive and high quality theatre performance and participatory activities for people from Oldham, Greater Manchester and nationally.

**Values:**

The work of the company is informed by a clear set of values that shape the way it operates. We will:

* Ensure that our work is of the highest quality.
* Promote creativity and innovation amongst our staff, freelance artists, participants and audiences.
* Promote a culture of inclusion and diversity in our staff teams, freelance pool, participants and audiences.
* Ensure that our work is always community-centred.
* Promote an inclusive, outward facing collaborative approach to all of our work.

We take a leading role in the social agenda of Oldham, driving the cultural offer and providing unique opportunities for professionals, audiences and different communities to come together and engage with the arts.

With each contact with the company, whether it’s at the Coliseum or out in the community; be it for a show, a workshop, a talk or a class, we want to delight surprise and inspire people with an excellent experience in an environment of creativity, welcome and excitement.

**Delivering the Vision:**

The next four years offer an opportunity for the Coliseum to make a step-change in its interaction with audiences and participants, providing a centre of excellence for professional theatre production and a forum for communities to come together. In response to Oldham’s rapidly changing environment and demographic, the Coliseum will develop its business model and relationships with communities to provide a dynamic approach to theatre in the twenty first century.

Diversity will be integral to the development of the business model and it will be a central ingredient in artistic and audience development. The Company is committed to promoting and embedding diversity throughout its working practices and aims to truly reflect our wider community in all activity. This will provide a dynamic catalyst for change, increase creative opportunities and provide innovative opportunities for development.

During the course of the plan we will focus on the following priorities:

* Projecting a confident artistic voice and creative identity for Oldham and the wider North;
* Offering an excellent and diverse artistic programme which speaks to the lives and interests of Oldham’s changing population;
* Being a Centre of Excellence for vocational training;
* Acting as a powerful driving force Oldham’s regeneration through culture and the arts;
* Building cohesion and inter-cultural dialogue across the borough.

From 2018 to 2020 the Company will be based in its Fairbottom Street site. During this period we will release capacity through producing six productions (instead of eight). This will provide both the physical and human resources to experiment and test ideas that we propose to develop in the new Coliseum. We will also make contact with new communities of interest to further test our assumptions for growing audiences, participants and the business. Through this development we will:

* Expand our participatory programme to pilot new activity that will test assumptions before occupying the new Coliseum.
* Develop our support for emerging artists, practitioners and companies.
* Pilot activity to grow audiences.
* Release staff to focus on the Capital Project and work on our Transition programme.

From 2020/21 the Company will occupy the new Coliseum Theatre which will provide a step-change in our ability to deliver a diverse and innovative programme of work. The new theatre offers a state of the art studio theatre and main auditorium, three participatory spaces/meeting rooms, a better location (greater footfall in the town’s cultural centre, proximity to Metrolink), a welcoming environment throughout the day, and improved facilities, making the Coliseum’s offer more visible, more attractive and more flexible.

The new Coliseum will be a place to learn and be inspired, it will be home to a rich and varied artistic and cultural programme. The Coliseum will be a major driver for the further social and economic regeneration of Oldham. It will provide public spaces that are accessible to all, for social and educational activities, providing the impetus for increased social cohesion. Opportunities will be offered to both established and new practitioners from diverse backgrounds to develop their work and to extend the artistic horizons of the Coliseum.

The vision will be delivered by creating a melting pot where professional artists, curators, educators, participants and audiences can interact, generating excitement and vibrancy together with a sense of belonging and place. We will promote the cross-fertilisation of ideas and synergy between disciplines, enabling visitors and practitioners to share skills and practice. Communities will have surprising opportunities to experience and engage in a wide range of activities taking place across the building that will encourage interaction between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other.

A popular and wide-ranging programme of activity will enable commercial sustainability for the Company. Key factors for success will be regularity and diversity of activities and audiences. These will enable the development of new loyalties from new users of the Coliseum, as knowledge develops of new strands of excellent work, as well as offering continuing support to our existing customer base.

The cumulative impact of this expansion will be to transform our financial performance and sustainability. The two performance spaces will significantly increase Box Office income and touring revenues as well as offering a wide range of ancillary sales opportunities. The existing venue is increasingly limiting: artistic possibilities; the capacity to attract new audiences, and the quality of audience experience we are able to offer; and, crucially, on our ability to generate the income needed to secure a sustainable future.