



Annual Pantomime Commissioning Criteria

Document date:	02/03/2025
Author(s):	Out in the Valley Governance Committee
Planned date(s) for the performance:	December 2025
Number of performances:	3 (Plus, a dress rehearsal and technical)

Background

Out in the Valley (OITV) is an LGBT+ social group for the Upper Calder Valley, based in Hebden Bridge. The OITV Theatre Group have staged a pre-Christmas pantomime for the last two years (2024 and 2025). Both productions have been successful, with sell-out audiences. However, cast and audience members feedback has shown strong support for the Pantomime aligning closely with the values of OITV, and respecting the diversity within our community. For this reason, scripts for the proposed production must meet the following criteria.

Criteria and evaluation process.

Submitted scripts will be assessed by a working sub-group of no fewer than three of the OITV Governance Committee.

The criteria are *not* designed to stifle creativity or exclude terms which some people may find offensive. The author(s) should be able to justify the script as challenging discrimination of all kinds, avoiding internalised homophobia and promoting LGBT+ people as valid and important members of the wider community.

Out in the Valley Pantomime Script Evaluation

OITV Committee Member:	
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#	Criteria	Criteria met? YES / NO	Comments
1.	Duration: The script is sufficient length (approximately 90 minutes).		
2.	Diversity of characters: The script includes a balance of characters representing all genders (cis-male, cis-female and trans and gender diverse identities). Parts could potentially be cast across traditional gender stereotyping. Note: Parts may need to be adapted depending on the identity of the cast (see <i>Authenticity</i>).		
3.	Range of characters: The script includes a sufficient number of roles of varying length.		
4.	Inclusive language, or satire The script uses inclusive language. Terms relating to dis/ability, sexuality, gender identity, ethnicity etc. are inclusive or contentious terms and situations are used effectively to lampoon/critique homo-/bi-/lesbo-/trans-phobia or other discrimination.		
5.	Entertainment: The script is entertaining and funny.		
6.	Adult humour: The pantomime is aimed at an adult audience (14+)		
7.	Songs and music: The script includes lists of songs and music to be included in the performance. These should NOT include changes in lyrics (as this requires a special performance licence).		

Out in the Valley Pantomime Script Evaluation

#	Criteria	Criteria met? YES / NO	Comments
8.	<p>Originality: The script should not plagiarise, although satirising is acceptable. Traditional stories should be adapted to LGBT+ themes.</p>		
9.	<p>Authenticity: Characters are reflective of the cast demographic. For example, it would be inappropriate for a cast member to play an ethnicity they do not have, or a character with a disability (physical, psychological or hidden, such as a stammer) if they themselves do not identify this way and are comfortable to portray the character. Including such characters should be sensitive and essential to the narrative. This may mean alteration / adaptations will need to be made following casting.</p>		
10.	<p>Achievable: The script is deliverable and does not require prohibitively expensive or complex costumes, sets, props or technical effects.</p>		
11.	<p>Challenging: The script should challenge stereotypes of LGBT+ people and/or people from other oppressed communities, using humour and/or satire.</p>		

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#	Criteria	Criteria met? YES / NO	Comments
12.	<p>Recognisable Pantomime Narrative: The story should include essential, recognisable pantomime elements, <i>or subverted versions</i> of these. Elements could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A story of good against evil • Larger than life (any gender) characters such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dame, ○ Baddie, ○ Principle girl / boy / non-binary person, ○ Comedy characters ○ Magical characters (fairies, witches, warlocks etc.) • Audience participation (They're behind you!) • Slapstick (Oh no it doesn't!) • Dance and/or musical numbers 		
13.	<p>Technical direction: Include sufficient direction to ensure that the pantomime can be envisaged and evaluated.</p>		

- **Aims of the show:**
The focus of the production is on having *fun, making and renewing friendships, and enjoying the process of putting on a community theatre production.*
Any other considerations should be secondary to these aims.
- **Community-first changes to the script, characterisation etc.**
Please note that is an expectation that the script and final performance will be discussed with the cast. This will be in the form of workshop activities, feedback during rehearsals and discussion in a safe space environment.
- **Fun over fidelity to the original script:** If cast members are uncomfortable with any line, characterisation, costume, or stage direction due to concerns about equality and diversity, then they will not be compelled to follow the script and may suggest a suitable alternative or compromise.