**Group: Starburst**

**Show: Legally Blonde The Musical**

**Venue: The Harlington, Fleet**

**Date: 9 July 2017**

**Director: Pete Woodford**

**Musical Director: Zoe Hardy**

**Choreographer: Liz Woodford**

**LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL** is a feelgood romantic musical comedy – all you could wish for on a sunny July afternoon when I saw this production. There was so much to enjoy as beautiful Elle Woods, a fashion major from California, attempts to win back her boyfriend (Warner) who has decided to move on, by following him to Harvard. We know there’s going to be a happy ending and that there will be a few bumps along the way. But we don’t mind as its packed with enthusiasm, colour, vibrancy and life, fabulous songs and impressively energetic choreography.

**FRONT OF HOUSE:** The Front of House team welcomed patrons and helped them find their seats, promoted the charity and guided them to refreshments.

**THE PROGRAMME:**  The programme was a glossy, colour (with heavy use of red and pink) A4 format and gave clear and interesting information about the production, background and planning with cast photos, rehearsal photos and detailed information about the work of the charity, Starburst . There was reference to NODA membership and a whole page dedicated to NODA’s aims.

**SCENERY/SET/PROPERTIES:**  The scenes (Harvard, lawyer’s rooms, court) were realistically created and changed effortlessly and swiftly. Either side of the main stage represented Elle’s room at Harvard and the hair salon of Elle’s friend, Paulette.

**COSTUMES:**  The costumes were fantastic with great attention to detail. There were a couple of make-over scenes that were done breath-takingly quickly in view of the audience.

**LIGHTING AND SOUND:** The lighting was effective throughout and well controlled. The live band provided great musical accompaniment for the vocal talents of the cast under the Musical Direction of Zoe Hardy. However, at times some clarity was lost due to the high pitched American accents.

**THE PRODUCTION:**  The outstanding artistic aptitude of the cast and backstage and technical support resounded throughout this excellent production. Under the experienced direction of Pete Woodford, the entire cast were fully engaged and the whole show was full of fun and fizzle. The energy level was high throughout but rose in the second half opening with “Whipped Into Shape” led by Charlotte Edmonds, the cast skipping through the whole number without, apparently, losing their breath. Other highlights for me: the powerful vocals and enormous stage presence of Lynne Maine as Paulette, the outrageous “Gay or European” and the “Riverdance” interlude. Another polished production from Starburst that sent the audience away happily humming the tunes. An abridged version of this report will be on the NODA website in due course.

**CHRIS HORTON, DISTRICT 14 REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE**

**SOUTH EAST REGION, NODA (NATIONAL OPERATIC AND DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION)**