

BWT Review

9 to 5

Witham Amateur Operatic Society

Witham Public Hall

October 23-28

An on-screen Dolly Parton introduces and closes this musical, based on perhaps her best-known song. She wrote all the other songs too, which will live rather less long in the memory.

It gives centre stage to a trio of females, a rarity much to be welcomed. The feisty Doralee (Sarah Miles making her WAOS debut), reserved but tough Judy (Matilda Bourne) and dependable Violet, played with a delightful twinkle in her eye by Diane Easton, not only dominate proceedings, they also live out their – and many others' – fantasy and take their boss hostage. The 'sexist, hypocritical, lying, egotistical bigot' boss (Neils Bradley) – a description given added topicality by recent events - gets his comeuppance after dominating and mistreating his staff for years, but not before Bradley has had a chance to display his strong singing voice. Rhianna Howard, as the sycophantic Roz, also has a chance to shine with a couple of spiky solos while Emma Loring raises the chuckle levels as the office drunk, Margaret.

The show is at its best when the 30-plus cast take over the stage, skilfully marshalled by director and choreographer Nikki Mundell-Poole, in the lively production numbers.