

Report Title: **Chief Executive's report**

Report of: **Duncan Wilson, CE, Alexandra Palace Charitable Trust**

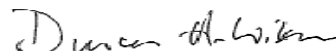
**1. Purpose**

1.1 To inform the Board of progress in a number of areas at AP and request approval of detailed policies on use of the theatre and confirm our position on charging community groups and other charities and for guided tours

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the Board approve the use of the theatre for occasional commercial and charitable events and confirms our policy on charging policies

Report Authorised by: **Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive**.....



Contact Officer: **Name, Title, Alexandra Palace & Park,  
Alexandra Palace Way, Wood Green N22 7AY Tel No. 020 8365 .....**

**3. Executive Summary**

3.1 .....

**4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)**

4.1 N/A

**5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

5.1 N/A

## **6.0 Theatre events run by the Trading Company**

- 6.1 Currently the Trading Company operates under a formal licence from the Trust to run events at the Palace in return for an annual licence fee payable to the Trust. This licence does not cover the theatre. However rather than amend the licence now it is suggested that the Trust approves individual commercial and private hire event proposals from the Trading company in the theatre on their merits for the next year or so. There is any case an upper limit of ten public events in a year which can obtain a statutory event licence from the Borough under the Temporary Event Notice procedure. All profits from events would continue to flow to the Trust.

The theatre auditorium has now been certified as safe for public events by an independent engineer following the consolidation and strengthening of the ceiling carried out last year.

We have been following the procedure of licensing the Trading Company to operate public events in the Park on their individual merits case by case for the last two years, and this has worked well.

- 6.2 **Trustees are asked to confirm this working arrangement pending whole scale review of the Trading Company license from the Trust which we will need to undertake before completion of the HLF project.**

## **7.0 Theatre profile-raising event**

- 7.1 The purpose of this event is to start engaging with external stakeholders and raise their awareness of the HLF funded regeneration programme - specifically what will be happening in the Theatre. The event will bring together a diverse group of stakeholders including people from the: press, cultural sector, public sector, heritage sector, friend groups and local celebrities (mainly those that were linked to the project in the past). The estimated 100 attendees will be invited to listen to a number of speeches including a keynote speech from a sector leader who will discuss the history of the theatre at Alexandra Palace. Guests will also be given the opportunity to use the new theatre App which will also be launched at the event.

The proposed date for the event is 2 April 2014. Subject to Trustee agreement save the date invitations will be designed and distributed in the next month.

## **8.0 Charging policy for charities and community groups**

- 8.1 We have been operating a policy of allowing discounted use of AP facilities to charities and community groups, to encourage wider use and ownership. As a general rule we do not allow free use to anyone except the specific Friends groups set up to support the use of Alexandra Palace (Friends of the Theatre, Park, APTV Groups and Societies, Organ Appeal). We have been trying to encourage use of the Transmitter Hall by such groups rather than the more commercial spaces at the west end of the Palace, where the opportunity cost would be higher. The fully discounted rate comprises cost recovery on security and cleaning of the Transmitter Hall only, although we assess the possibility of charging a small per capita hire fee in addition on a case by case basis.
- 8.2 We have developed a special menu for coffees teas and food again on a low budget basis but which ensures cost recovery by the Trust/Trading Company. We

do not as a rule allow self-catering due to the risks attached to preparation and service of food and hot drinks.

- 8.3 The special rate for the Transmitter Hall is offered to groups that have a registered charity number, are local to Haringey and/or work with groups we have identified from our target audience, ie:

Low income families, including single parents;  
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic families and adults;  
- Low income adults with an additional focus on 55+ years;  
- Young people  
- NEETS (Not in employment, education or training); and  
- ESOL (English speakers of other languages).

- 8.4 We have also set up a scale of charges for guided tours, for which there has been heavy demand, at £5/person, and for education workshops led by our Learning Officer, at £30/session for Haringey primary schools and £40 for primary schools outside the Borough. This matches the charges levied by other LBH institutions such as Bruce Castle.

**Trustees are asked to confirm that they consider this policy to be appropriate, on a cost-recovery basis, and that use of the Transmitter Hall by relevant charities and community groups should be priced this way**

## 9.0 Learning and Community Update

### 9.1 **History Tours (24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> January)**

Following from a successful Open House in September we are offering guided tours of the Palace on Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January. The group size has been reduced to 20 per tour with 480 tickets available over the two days. An email was sent to people on the September waiting list followed by an e-shot to all those on our general database. As of the 9th January all tickets have been sold, a new waiting list has been created and we currently have 173 people on the waiting list.

The level of interest in the tours of the Palace demonstrates a business case to run regular tours of the Palace. We are looking at the feasibility of running tours of the Palace for the general public four times a year (including Open House in September) at £7 per person (£5 concession).

### 9.2 **Alexandra Palace: War on the Home Front**

Listed building consent to remove the cage around the entrance to the Transmitter Hall and extend the ramp was granted on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014. To comply with HLF funding requirements 3 independent quotes were received for the work, the most cost effective contractor has now been appointed and work is scheduled to start on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February. The work is expected to take between 4-6 weeks; all meetings in the Transmitter Hall have been moved to other rooms in the Palace until the end of March to ensure the work is completed.

Informal meetings were held during the first two weeks of January with the shortlisted candidates for the volunteer researcher position. Initially the Trust were looking to recruit a team of 3 volunteers however this grew to 6 due to the high level of experience of many of the candidates and their interest in assisting with the delivery of the temporary exhibition in September. An initial meeting and briefing for the volunteer team has been organised for Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> January and the exhibition research will commence the first week of February.

### 9.3 **Volunteers**

Our Volunteer database currently includes 113 volunteers. It is anticipated that there will be roles for 15 volunteers in all at this stage of the project. The proposed volunteer roles include assisting with the learning programme, leading guided tours, cataloguing the 1980's plans, and administration and coordination support.

### 9.4 **Learning Programme**

From the start of the academic year in September 2013 we have welcomed:-

Alexandra Primary School – 28 year 4 pupils

Tiverton Primary School – 60 year 6 pupils

Highgate Wood School – 11 key stage 4 pupils with special educational needs

To promote our three learning programmes we held an afternoon tea event on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> December for local primary schools. The e-invite was sent out to all 63 primary schools by the Haringey Schools Advisor. Teachers from 13 primary schools attended the event and a number of bookings have been taken for workshops in 2014. To engage with schools who did not attend the event the Learning Officer will be arranging meetings with Heads at 19 target schools (those close to the Palace and from around the Borough) to promote learning opportunities at Alexandra Palace.

### 10.0 **APPCT/LBH debt write off update**

10.1 Trustees will recall, that the Trust submitted in May 2013 a formal proposal for the debt owed to LBH in respect of past revenue deficits (stretching back to 1988) to be written off as practically irrecoverable, allowing the Trust to write it out of our accounts restoring the strength to our balance sheet. Currently the debt stands at £47.6m million which gives us a net liability of about the same amount.

10.2 LBH officers carried out some due diligence work on the feasibility of this proposal, for which there was a degree of "in principle" support, towards the end of 2013. Related options are being evaluated, without ruling out the possibility that a proposal may still be put to the full Council to write off all the debt. These options include redefining financial support for the Trust as grant rather than debt, against an annual Service Agreement. This would constitute a more transparent and easier to understand relationship. Other possibilities include writing off part of the debt as an initial step, and /or clarifying in writing the terms under which repayment would be made.

10.3 It would clearly be advantageous that steps to deal with the issue were taken before the market testing programme begins in earnest in July 2014. This would help reassure the Heritage Lottery Fund too, although the timing is less tight, and we trust they will be encouraged by news of the match funding provisionally allocated by LBH.

**Trustees are invited to note the position.**

### 11.0 **Car park study**

11.1 Trustees are invited to note that the work on evaluation and analysis of demand for car parking at APP has now begun, but that a report is not expected until May/June to allow for seasonal variations to be measured and taken into account.

## **11 Legal Implications**

- 11.1 The Council's Assistant Director, Corporate Governance, has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and has no comments.

## **12 Financial Implications**

- 12.1 The Council's Chief Financial Officer confirms that at the present time no further decisions have been made by the Council concerning the historic debt with the Trust. The recently commissioned report sets out some options and follow up actions. It is likely that formal decisions will be made during summer 2014.

- 12.2 There are no further comments to add..

## **13 Use of Appendices**

- 13.1 History Tours Demographic

### 13.1 History Tours Demographic

