

MINUTES OF THE ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022, 7.30-9PM

SAC Appointed Councillors: Ibrahim, Weston, and Ali.

SAC Nominated Members: John Crompton, Kevin Stanfield, Elizabeth Richardson, David Frith, Jason Beazley, and Joyce Rosser.

CC Appointed Councillors: Collett, Stennett, Mahbub, and Da Costa.

CC Nominated Members: John Wilkinson, Hugh Macpherson, Jacob O'Callaghan, Gordon Hutchinson, Nigel Willmott (chair), Rachael Macdonald, and Val Paley.

Also present: Emma Dagnes (CEO), Jack Brooks (Head of Visitor Services), Mark Evison (Head of Park and Environmental Sustainability), Natalie Layton (Charity Secretary), and Jack Booth (Principal Committee Co-ordinator).

Quorum: No business shall be transacted at any meeting of a Committee, Sub-Committee or other body, unless at least one quarter of the whole number of voting members are present.

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

A member commented that these committee meetings should be streamed and recorded to ensure the public could access them virtually.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from:

- Councillor Brennan who was unable to attend as there was a clash with an Adults Scrutiny Panel;
- Adrian Thomas;
- Councillor Wallace;
- Councillor Rossetti;
- Councillor Arkell;
- Councillor Elliot;
- Annette Baker; and
- John Thompson who had elected Rachael Macdonald as a substitute.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED

The committee are asked:

- a. To approve the minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Advisory and Consultative Committees held on 20 June 2022 as a correct record;
- b. To note the draft minutes of the Advisory Committee meeting held on 20 June 2022;
- c. To note the draft minutes of the Consultative Committee meeting held on 20 June 2022; and
- d. To note the minutes of the Alexandra Palace and Park Board meeting held on 19 July 2022.

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO) UPDATE

The CEO gave an update on the information that was due to be presented at the meeting on 8 September, which was cancelled due to the death of the Queen. The report provides information on:

- 2021/22 year-end information on annual complaints, theatre activity and outdoor events monitoring, which, due to the timing of meetings, was not available for publication for the Joint meeting of the Committees in June 2022;
- Creative Learning and Park activity, and updates on external lighting upgrades and some of the planning, advertising and listed building proposals considered by the Committees at the last meeting; and
- An event summary following July 2022.

In response to committee member questions the CEO provided the following answers:

- The rough figure for annual visitors to the park was, as follows:
 - o 3 million pre-pandemic;
 - o 6 million during the pandemic;
 - o 4 million post pandemic; and
 - o Monitoring of visitor numbers had happened over eight years.
- The park had moved to solar lighting where possible, the new solar lights seamlessly blended in with the existing lights;
- The charity looked at creating a variety of partnerships to utilise all areas of the park and palace;
- The Creative Learning Team were entirely funded through lottery funding. The team were doing important work, reaching over 70 community groups and programming a range of events and workshops with a small team;
- The A in STEAM stood for Art;
- The charity was planning a rewilding project through Greater London Authority (GLA) funding;

- There were plans for a wellness camp to counteract pressures around the cost-of-living crisis and improve wellbeing for local residents;
- The charity was excited that the current season of Later with Jools Holland was being held in the theatre;
- A committee member congratulated the CEO on the success of the Kaleidoscope festival. There had been a lot of positive feedback and over a 100 people had attended;
- Finances for the charity were highly challenging particularly the increase in energy costs. The charity remained positive as they were spurred on to carry on achieving despite adversity. It was felt that it was not essential to aim to self-sufficiency as such a large site as Alexandra Park and Palace would always need additional support, particularly as the charity remained ambitious to expand engagement with those in the borough and across London more generally; and
- There was a security team to guard the palace. There were not park rangers at present. People experiencing anti-social behaviour in the park should phone the police in the first instance.

RESOLVED

To note the content of the report.

7. PLANNING REPORT

CEO provided an update on project proposals previously presented to the Committees and to consult on the possibility of extending Planning and Listed Building Consent for the use of the temporary pagoda on The Beach.

In response to questions the CEO gave the following answers:

- The pagoda required planning permission as it was a structure that would be in place for more than 21 days up; and
- The opening hours of the bar were discussed. The CEO said that the opening hours were extended on a case-by-case basis.

RESOLVED

The committee are asked to:

- a. To note the updates, and;
- b. To consider the proposal to apply to the Local Planning Authority for Planning and Listed Building Consent to extend the use of the shaded wooden structure (the pagoda) on The Beach for two additional months a year (from March to November each year).

8. ACCESSIBILITY

Jack Brooks, Head of Visitor Services provided the committee with information on the work undertaken to improve accessibility at Alexandra Palace. He presented on improvements to accessibility at Alexandra Park and Palace highlighting:

- Improvements to accessibility at the palace had been a project conducted over three years. With specific challenges through the fact that the palace was a Grade II listed building and the geography of the site;
- In 2017 Alexandra Park and Palace received a 2/10 for accessibility from the organisation Attitude is Everything. This was an extremely low score;
- Since he had joined as the Head of Visitor Services in 2019 there was now a dedicated accessibility team. This team had made a whole host of improvements such as:
 - o Ensuring a drop-down bar service;
 - o Accessibility information on the charity's website;
 - o Creating a range of accessibility policies and procedures;
 - o Expanding the amount of companion tickets and spaces;
 - o Engendered staff awareness of challenges around accessibility through trainings, which were delivered regularly across the workforce;
 - o Ensured there was braille signage, where before there was none;
 - o Made provision for British Sign Language;
 - o There was now a dedicated accessible entrance for concerts;
 - o Accessibility maps had been created, which were made suitable for visitors who were colour blind;
 - o There was a changing places project planned. To enact to this project, the charity was fundraising. Of the £85,000 needed, £50,000 had been raised; and
 - o The Recruitment and Employment policies had been reviewed and updated to ensure accessibility for staff.
- Due to this work Attitude is Everything had given the charity silver status. At the Disability Smart Awards 2021 the charity was awarded a 9/10. After the charity had secured funding for the changing places facility, they would go for gold status with Attitude is Everything. If they were to get this award, they would be one of 15 organisations nationally to achieve this.

In response to member questions the Head of Visitor Services gave the following answers:

- The pétanque courts had disabled access;
- The accessibility team were either employed on a full time or part time basis;
- There were hearing loops in the theatre but not in the area where gigs were held as the music was incredibly loud;
- There was not a sensory garden at present, his focus currently was to ensure that the palace met exemplary standards for disability access. When this phase was completed, he would look at ensuring accessibility in the park;
- A drop-down service was a lowered bar for people who were not able to order drinks at a standard size bar;
- Access platforms were placed with evacuation, toilet access, and health and safety concerns in mind; and
- Volunteers at the charity had similar training to staff this ensured that accessibility awareness was embedded across the workforce.

RESOLVED

To note the report and presentation provided at the meeting.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Mark Evison, Head of Park and Environmental Sustainability, informed the committee of the progress made establishing an Environmental Sustainability Policy, Strategy and Action Plan for the Park and Palace.

In response to member questions Head of Park and Environmental Sustainability gave the following answers:

- Feasibility studies would need to be done around rainwater capture and solar panel installation. It was hoped that the charity would be able to access funding from the GLA for these studies. Projects that would create energy efficiencies would be prioritised;
- There were 50 toilets around the site. 39% had automatic lighting. It was hoped that more automatic would be introduced in the future;
- It was agreed that it was important to consider the impact of work done on biodiversity in the park. There was a tree and woodland management plan which incorporated elements of biodiversity. The policy was very much a live document and in the next iteration of it there would be a greater focus on biodiversity. Funding to improve biodiversity again would start with a preliminary feasibility study. This would require funding to conduct the study. The charity was looking into heritage funding to conduct this type of work; and
- Food waste data was available. This knowledge had recently been acquired through the increase in sharing of information between teams in the charity. It was important that similar information continued to be shared, with the aim of reporting to the board and committees through a data dashboard.

RESOLVED

To note the report and presentation provided at the meeting.

10. SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING FRAMEWORK (DRAFT)

The CEO relayed that the purpose of the agenda item was to consult with the committee on the proposed framework for the signage and wayfinding.

A committee member gave feedback that it would be good if signs had QR codes to provide visitors with additional information. The CEO thought this was a good idea and would relay it to her team.

The CEO said that the main obstacle to signage at the park was funding. Progress was being made in acquiring funding for this, although yet there was nothing material to speak of.

RESOLVED

To advise the Trustee Board on the proposed framework for signage and wayfinding, attached at Appendix 1.

11. ALEXANDRA PALACE SPORTS CLUB

The Head of Park and Environmental Sustainability consulted the committee on the proposal by the Alexandra Palace Club to install additional cricket nets on the site.

The proposal was from the Alexandra Park Club to install a new three lane cricket batting and bowling net facility at the club on the site of the old tennis courts on the western side of the clubhouse. This, if approved, will sit alongside the existing one lane net that the Club have already and replace the second which is unfit for purpose.

In response to questions the Head of Park and Environmental Sustainability gave the following answers:

- It was flagged by a committee member that the area adjacent to the proposed area was an important place of bird migration in the area. Could the Head of Park and Environmental Sustainability assure the committee that there was no lighting for the nets and that in the construction of the nets, excavated material would not be dumped in this area. The Head of Park and Environmental Sustainability said there was no lighting being installed with the nets. The dumping of excavated material could be put on as a condition when the board considered this item; and
- There was no biodiversity impact as netting would be packed away after use.

RESOLVED

To provide any feedback or advice to the Trustee board in relation to the proposal by the Alexandra Park Club.

12. ITEMS RAISED BY INTERESTED GROUPS

None.

13. NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS FEEDBACK

None.

14. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

15. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday, 9 March 2023 at 7.30pm, unless otherwise stated.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date

