

MINUTES OF MEETING Alexandra Palace and Park Board HELD ON Wednesday, 27th March, 2024, 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Sean O'Donovan (Vice-Chair), Emine Ibrahim (Chair), Nick da Costa and Anne Stennett

Co-optees/Non Voting Members: Jason Beazley (Three Avenues Residents Association (TARA)) (Co-Optee) and Nigel Willmott (Friends of the Alexandra Palace Theatre) (Co-Optee) and John Chilton (Friends of Alexandra Park)

58. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair drew attention to the information included on the agenda front sheet and noted that the meeting was being recorded and webcast live.

The Chair notified the committee that this special meeting was convened before the Easter break due to an anticipated significant deficit in February prior to the Board's approval of the 2024 Budget. Efforts had been made to reduce the deficit to an acceptable level, pending factors such as energy prices, efficiency, and funding applications.

59. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Mahbub and Cllr Elliott.

60. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair informed members of the board that there was a supplementary pack sent out which included reports for items 7, 8 and 11.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

62. QUESTIONS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS

There were no deputations/petitions/presentations or questions received.

63. 2024/25 BUDGET

The Board received the 2024/25 Budget report introduced by the Richard Paterson, the Director of Finance & Resources.

Members of the Board were reminded that in the Board meeting on 26 February 2024, the Trustees were presented with a draft, outline Budget position of an in-year deficit of £1,012,000, £579,000 worse than is expected in 2023/24. It was noted that efforts had been made to reduce the £1 million deficit since the last presentation, as detailed in the report. Additional efforts were required to reduce the deficit, and we have successfully undertaken those efforts. The resulting changes were outlined in the report. Key changes outlined included adjustments to utility costs, aiming to rectify discrepancies in cost allocation caused by pandemic-related lockdowns, and proposals to enhance car parking income for the benefit of the charity. While these measures aimed to improve the financial situation, it was acknowledged that further work was needed to bring the deficit to a more manageable level.

The following points were noted in the discussion:

- Richard reassured the Board that thorough consideration had been given to the Revenue side. Additionally, he highlighted a review of online donation generation methods, identifying potential to elevate the targets.
- The Board was assured that APTL was in a favourable position, and in fact, slightly improved.

AGREED:

The Board resolved to:

To approve the budget position for 2024/25.

64. CAR PARKING CHARGES REVIEW

The Board received the Car Parking Charges Review report introduced by the Richard Paterson, the Director of Finance & Resources.

In April 2019, Integrated Transport Planning Ltd (ITP), an independent expert consultancy firm, were asked to provide support to APPCT to inform a review of existing car parking arrangements at APP. Following this review, ITP helped APP develop proposals for the introduction of parking charges across the site. There was a stakeholder survey on the charges conducted from 11th November 2019 to 10th January 2020, which gained the views from stakeholders, beneficiaries, visitors and residents. The implementation of car parking charges in July 2023 achieved its intended objectives, but income levels have not met initial expectations. Pricing was reviewed to enhance transparency and fairness. The recommendation for approval at this meeting is to raise the hourly rate from £1.50 to £1.75, while retaining the first hour free for customers.

The following points were noted in the discussion:

- Members inquired about the frequency of car parking at Alexandra Park and Palace. The response indicated a lack of specific data but noted a significant number of repeat parkers. Only 17% of total parkers stay beyond 4 hours, while 22% stay less than two hours.
- Another query pertained to the calculation of reducing free parking from 30 to 15 minutes. However, this has not been calculated due to logistical considerations, particularly for events, which is why the half-hour cutoff was introduced.
- Cllr O'Donovan raised a concern about the potential increase in people leaving their cars overnight, particularly if they are inebriated and hesitant to pay the increased fee of £21 instead of the previous £8, which might lead to an inclination towards drink driving. The Board was informed that there had been no incidents to date.
- The presence of two stewards in the car park at all times was primarily to cover comfort or lunch breaks and occasionally to assist in other areas of the car park. Their role included providing assistance and guidance to visitors regarding parking regulations, contributing to a welcoming atmosphere at Alexandra Park. Recently, their working pattern had been adjusted to start later, allowing them to monitor parking behaviours more effectively.
- In comparison with other London boroughs, it was noted during the Car Parking Charges review that our proposal is cheaper than parking in Haringey car parks. Despite several suggestions for further increases, our focus was on simplifying the process while raising charges.
- The Chair noted that while many London venues rely on public transport, Alexandra Park and Palace's provision of car parking is both an asset and a necessity. It offers convenience for visitors and essential accessibility for those with disabilities.
- The Board was briefed on exemptions from car parking charges for registered disabled individuals, as well as for other groups such as ice rink users.

ACTION:

- To provide the Board with an update on the observed effects of implementing the car parking charges in six months' time.

AGREED:

The Board resolved to:

- With the exception of the first 30 minutes which will remain free, to approve the increase in car parking charges to a flat rate of £1.75 per hour.

65. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of urgent business.

66. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as item 11 contains exempt information as defined under paragraphs 3 and 5, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

67. EXEMPT 2024/25 BUDGET INFORMATION

The Board noted the exempt information and resolved to:

To note the APTL budget position for 2024/25.

68. ANY OTHER EXEMPT BUSINESS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

None.

CHAIR: Councillor Emine Ibrahim

Signed by Chair

Date