

**MINUTES OF THE ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.  
TUESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2008**

**PRESENT**

**draft 'A'**

**NOMINATED BY LOCAL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS**

\* indicates attendance

\*Ms. C Hayter : Alexandra Residents' Association  
attending on behalf of  
Ms J. Hutchinson  
Mr P. Wastell : Alexandra Residents' Association  
\*Ms. M. Myers : Muswell Hill and Fortis Green  
Association  
\*Ms J. Baker : Palace Gates Residents' Association  
Vacancy : Palace View Residents' Association  
Ms S. Rees (deputy) : Palace View Residents' Association  
\*Mr. D. Frith : The Rookfield Association  
\*Mr. F. Hilton (deputy) : The Rookfield Association  
\*Mr. D. Liebeck : Warner Estate Residents' Association  
\*Mr H. Aspden : Warner Estate Residents' Association

**APPOINTED MEMBERS**

\*Councillor S. Oatway : Alexandra Ward  
\*Councillor A. Demirci : Bounds Green Ward  
\*Councillor S. Beynon : Fortis Green Ward  
\*Councillor M. Whyte : Hornsey Ward  
\*Councillor Engert  
attending on behalf of  
Councillor S. Rainger : Muswell Hill Ward  
Councillor C. Harris : Noel Park Ward  
Councillor M. Newton : Council Wide appointment  
Councillor J. Patel : Council Wide appointment

Also in attendance:

Councillor M. Cooke (for part of the meeting)

Mr David Loudfoot – General Manager – Alexandra Palace

Mr Mark Evison – Park Manager – Alexandra Palace

Mr Clifford Hart – Clerk to the Committee – Cttee Manager – LB Haringey

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**MINUTE  
NO.**

**SUBJECT/DECISION**

**APSC13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Ms J. Hutchinson, for whom Ms C Hayter was substituting. Apologies were also received on behalf of Councillor C.

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	<p>Harris, and Councillor S. Rainger (for whom Cllr Engert was substituting), and Councillor Newton (due to being unwell). The Committee asked that their best wishes be passed to Councillor Newton for a speedy recovery.</p> <p><b>NOTED</b></p>
<b>APSC14.</b>	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interests.</p> <p><b>NOTED</b></p> <p>At this point in the proceedings, the Chair informed the Committee that at his invitation, Councillor Cooke – Chair of the Alexandra Palace and Park Board was in attendance to briefly address the meeting in respect of the future of the asset. The Chair advised that Councillor Cooke had a further meeting to go to and would therefore only be able to stay in attendance until 20.00hrs.</p> <p>Councillor Cooke, in thanking the Chair for his invitation, commented to the Advisory Committee that he felt that it was important for him to come to the meeting as there were obviously a number of questions that the Advisory Committee would wish to ask, and hopefully he would be in a position to respond. He also stressed that he was not speaking on behalf of the Board but in his capacity as Chair of the Board.</p> <p>Councillor Cooke referred to recent events in respect of the future of the Palace and the fact that the preferred bidder and partner – the Firoka Group had, on 18 August 2008, withdrawn its interest in the development of Alexandra Palace.</p> <p>Councillor Cooke further informed the Committee that the Board, on 26 September 2008, had considered an independent review of the licence entered into with the Firoka Group – the Walklate report, which was readily available on the Council's website. The Board had considered the recommendations/findings of the review, as well as endorsing an action plan prepared by the General Manager arising from the review in respect of governance arrangements.</p> <p>With regard to the future of the Palace Councillor Cooke commented on the opportunity now open to the Board, given the history of the Palace over the past 25 years, to look again at the pure potential of the Palace and he felt that there was an exciting prospect for the Board during the next 6 months, in conjunction with the local community, residents, statutory bodies and interested groups, to look at a whole range of issues in respect of the future of the Palace. Councillor Cooke also commented that by having an open and frank dialogue this would not preclude any idea or proposal and he was confident that this process would be a positive and successful one.</p> <p>Councillor Cooke further commented that issues such as existing trusteeship would need to be looked at, and whether there were options for the transfer of trusteeship in the future, recognising what was in the best interest of the Palace. Councillor Cooke concluded that he looked forward to hearing any comments of the Advisory Committee.</p>

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The Chair thanked Councillor Cooke for his succinct comments and asked if there were any questions from the Committee.

Mr Aspden expressed his thanks for Councillor Cooke's attendance, and understanding that, in part, as Chair; he was receiving 'flak' for a whole range of decisions that had been taken prior to his becoming Chair of the Board. In his view, it was evident that Councillor Cooke was clear in what he would like the Board to concentrate on in the near future. Whilst it was the case that on occasions the Advisory Committee would disagree and give comment to the Board to that effect, the fact that the Chair of the Board had attended this meeting was of tremendous benefit, and he hoped that such dialogue would continue in the future.

In terms of the future of the Palace Mr Aspden asked if there was a timescale as regards discussions with interested parties etc and whether there had been a 'Plan B' in the event of the Firoka deal falling through.

In response Councillor Cooke advised that he was happy to attend meetings of the Advisory Committee but he stressed that he was not speaking on behalf of the Board but in a personal capacity. However in that vein he would answer questions accordingly. Concerning whether there was a Plan 'B' there was no such plan and at this stage there was no sense in moving forward in a 'knee jerk' way. Given the history of the Palace in the past 25 years it was an opportunity for lessons to be learnt and there had to be a real understanding of the past events in order for the Board to effectively move forward, and he was confident that this would happen.

Councillor Cooke reiterated his earlier remarks that everything should be brought to the discussions and that the Board should attempt, wherever possible, to put aside any political influences. There also needed to be further involvement with regard to community, resident, and other external influences and possible partnership, and the calling upon specialist expertise to understand and evaluate what was needed in the future. The future process needed to also be uncompromising. The Board had taken its decision to have an Away day for Trustees to hammer out the initial direction of the Board for the next 6 months, then onwards. In response to further points of clarification, the Chair commented that it would be wrong to pre-empt how discussions would proceed.

The Chair sought clarification as regards the current repair state of the Ice Rink and how it would feature in the future plans for the Palace.

Councillor Cooke advised that the plant cooling system was now hugely out of date and now had approx 2 years of life left. It was a fact that the Ice Rink was of huge importance to local people and it had made a considerable contribution to the Palace. In terms of the Palace as a whole Councillor Cooke commented that in terms of the internal detail of the Palace there was no significant element that bound the different parts of the Palace together but it was a fact that the Ice Rink had been a constant feature for many years.

Ms Hayter referred to the CUFOS Building and the question of it being either inside or outside of the development footprint. Ms Hayter commented that the centre was a considerable local community asset and therefore, given that its lease was due to expire in 2011, the provision should continue after then. It was the case that the building was a self contained and separate entity and therefore should not be part

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	<p>of the footprint.</p> <p>Councillor Cooke advised that he had had discussions with the CUFOS organisation the previous year as to the future of the operation, and that it would be taken account of in terms of the future strategy of the Palace.</p> <p>The General Manager – Mr Loudfoot advised that in terms of CUFOS's lease which expired in 2011 it was the case that this could now continue in accordance with a variation of the Landlord and Tenant Act which gave them security of tenure.</p> <p>Mr Aspden commented that he felt that the building should not be included within the development footprint of the Palace. He made the comparison with the roadway which, though shown on the published plan of the site, had not been included in the Firoka deal.</p> <p>In response to further comments Councillor Cooke advised that the current occupants did not wish to have responsibility for the whole building fabric, and that the Palace was responsible.</p> <p>In conclusion, the Chair thanked Councillor Cooke for his attendance and looked forward to him coming to future Advisory Committee meetings.</p> <p><b>NOTED</b></p>
<p><b>APSC15. MINUTES</b></p>	<p>The Chair, in seeking the Committee's approval to the circulated minutes of the Alexandra Park and Palace Advisory Committee meeting of 8 July 2008, and noting of the minutes of the Board of 22 July 2008 and the Consultative Committee of 15 July 2008, asked if there were any points of clarification, or matters arising.</p> <p>Mr Aspden raised the issue of the track betting licence for the world darts championship, and the advice received from the Council's Legal Services in respect of this Committee's remit in considering the licence application. The advice of the Council's Head of Legal Services had been requested at the 5<sup>th</sup> February meeting. However, though an oral summary had been presented to the 8<sup>th</sup> July meeting, the written opinion tabled here for the first time gave the Committee insufficient time to read and digest so as to discuss it meaningfully. The advice received stated that, in the view of the Council's Head of Legal Services officer, the matter of the licence application was not one for consideration by the Advisory Committee and was not within this Committee's remit.</p> <p>The Committee expressed the view that, given that the event was of considerable importance and size, this was a matter that should be considered by the Committee, and after discussion commented that it disagreed with the advice. It was felt that the Council's Head of Legal Services officer should be invited to attend a specially convened meeting of the Advisory Committee in mid November 2008 to give the reasons for the expressed view, and, dependent upon that view, that the Advisory Committee might wish to seek further legal opinion.</p>

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The Chair summarised and it was:

**RESOLVED**

- i. That the minutes of the meeting of the Alexandra Park and Palace Advisory Committee held on 8 July 2008 be agreed as an accurate record of the proceedings;
- ii. That the minutes of the meeting of the Alexandra Palace and Park Board held on 22 July 2008, and the minutes of the Alexandra Palace and Park Consultative Committee held on 15 July 2008 be noted;
- iii. That in respect of the legal clarification of advice given by the LB Haringey re:- the Gaming Licence (Occasional Use Notice) under section 39 of the Gambling Act 2005, and the Advisory Committee's remit
  - a. That the Board be requested to note that the Advisory Committee does not agree with the advice received from the LB Haringey's Legal Service that the matter did not fall within its remit;
  - b. That the Advisory Committee intends to convene either a Special or Urgency Sub-Committee meeting in mid November 2008 to discuss the advice, and that it has requested that the LB Haringey's Legal Service attend that meeting for the purpose of the Committee receiving the advice and having an opportunity to consider the same with the officers/ advisers concerned; and
  - c. That the Advisory Committee intends to consider (following such meeting) obtaining a second opinion as to the legal advice tendered by the LB Haringey's Legal Service.

**APSC16. PARK ACTIVITIES UPDATE**

The Chair then asked for a brief introduction of the report.

In a succinct introduction to the circulated report Mr Evison gave a brief update of recent activities carried out in Alexandra Park and answered points of clarification.

Mr Evison also advised of the success of the event on Sunday 10 August 2008 to celebrate HLF project.

Mr Evison also advised that, following the positive visit from the Green Flag Judges at the end of May 2008, the Park had been awarded Green Flag status and the flag had now been flying since the awarding.

The Committee then briefly raised the following points of concern;

- Concerns with regard to inadequate lighting in and around the Park and poor/gloomy lighting at various entrances. In response the General Manager – Mr Loudfoot advised that the lighting was under review and would be reported on further.

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- Further concerns regarding the security issues previously raised and the recent '345 Club' Incident, and problems at dusk near the footbridge. The General Manager advised that the information had been passed to the Council's Safer Neighbourhood Team and Hornsey Police.

Following clarification from Councillor Engert as regards the current situation concerning the cricket club lease, the General Manager advised that the Board would be considering the matter of lease arrangements at its next meeting on 21 October 2008.

The Committee then discussed in detail the matter of the rent review, and proposed lease arrangements with the Cricket Club and the remit of the Advisory Committee in terms of having knowledge or sight of any sub-leasing proposals and whether any such applications should be considered by the Advisory Committee for their comment, prior to consideration by the Board.

Following a number of views expressed the Chair summarised and it was:

**RESOLVED**

- i. that the update be noted; and
- ii. that in respect of the rent review of the Lease for Alexandra Park Cricket Club,
  - a. That the Board consults the Advisory Committee in respect of the terms of any proposed sub-lease, following the variation of the Cricket Club's existing lease; and
  - b. that consultation with this Committee should occur before any proposed sub-lease is considered by the Board, in order for the Committee to express its views to the Board.

**APSC17. FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

In a brief introduction of the report the General Manager – Mr Loudfoot outlined the confirmed and provisional bookings for the Palace to April 2009. In particular the Fireworks event on 8 November, the Ice Rink panto in December, and the Slammin Vinyl event in April 2009.

The Committee briefly discussed the forthcoming Fireworks event on 8 November and the concerns previously expressed by Advisory and Consultative Committees regarding entrance closures and crowd control, and the need to ensure clear and visual information as to existing closures.

In conclusion, the Chair asked that the General Manager note the concerns regarding crowd control and entrance closure in terms of the finalising of arrangements for the event on 8 November 2008.

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	<p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>that the General Manager be asked to note the concerns regarding crowd control and entrance closure in terms of the finalising of arrangements for the Firework event on 8 November 2008.</p>
<p><b>APSC18.</b></p>	<p><b>FUTURE OF THE ASSET - UPDATE (REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER)</b></p> <p>The General Manager – Mr Loudfoot advised the meeting that, as many were already aware, the Firoka Group gave formal notice of withdrawing its interest as preferred bidder for the future development of the asset on 18 August 2008. The Board, at a special meeting on 26 September 2008, considered a number of matters relating to the future of the asset, including an independent review of the Licence arrangements entered into with the Firoka Group (a copy of that review was available for any Member at this meeting). The resultant recommendations arising from that review regarding the future governance arrangements relating to the Palace had been endorsed by the Board. Mr Loudfoot further advised that the Board had also discussed, and as referred to by Councillor Cooke earlier in the meeting, had agreed that an away day be arranged to discuss the future of the asset, and the way forward in the next 6/12 months.</p> <p>In response to points of clarification from Councillor Whyte in relation to outstanding monies owed in respect of utility bills by the Firoka Group, Mr Loudfoot advised that this matter was still unresolved and was being pursued. The issue of the future of the ice rink had been answered earlier and Mr Loudfoot reiterated his comments concerning the life of the ice rink and the costs attributed thereto. In response to points of clarification from the Chair and Mr Aspden Mr Loudfoot advised that in terms of the costs of bringing the whole building back into use, this had been assessed at circa £35 million for the repair to the shell/core of the building. In terms of general maintenance, the annual figure was in the region of £250k. The reassessment had been carried out recently and was an up to date and realistic assessment figure.</p> <p>In response to points of clarification from Mr Aspden as to the references on page 50, paragraph 53 and page 52, paragraph 58 of the review as to whether the lease had or had not been signed, Mr Loudfoot advised that he was unable to clarify this point but that there was a difference between signing of, and completion/concluding of a lease agreement.</p> <p>Mr Aspden commented that, when the issue had been raised with the former General Manager at the 23 January 2007 meeting, the Committee had been advised by him specifically that the lease had not been signed. In response, Mr Loudfoot advised that the master agreement and project agreement had been signed in November 2006, subject to the granting of an order by the Charity Commission. In response to clarification from Councillor Oatway Mr Loudfoot advised that the completion would have been reliant upon the order being granted by the Charity Commission.</p> <p>The Committee then briefly discussed the findings of the independent review, the main points being:-</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the considerable concern and disquiet at the findings of the independent review into the granting of a Licence to Firoka to carry out the functions of the trading company</li> <li>• the entering into a licence on such terms had been in direct contradiction to the repeated assertion by the Board that it had to ensure that it obtained the best possible return reasonably obtainable from the assets of the Charity;</li> <li>• The need to ensure that before any future such arrangements are entered into by the Board they be brought to the Advisory Committee to ensure that their views are duly taken into account by the Board;</li> </ul> <p>The Chair summarised the discussions and it was then:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. That this Committee notes with considerable concern and disquiet the findings of the independent review into the granting of a Licence to Firoka to carry out the functions of the trading company in its place, and that this Licence seemingly ran counter to the previously expressed requirement that the Board had at all times to ensure that it obtained the best possible return reasonably obtainable from the assets of the Charity;</li> <li>ii. That this Committee repeats its earlier concerns at the lack of consultation by the Board in respect of the proposed terms of the License to the Firoka Group, and requests that they be fully consulted, and that the Board ensures all relevant matters be disclosed to it in advance of any decision in respect of the Board's plans for the future of the asset; and</li> <li>iii. That in respect of the planned consultation about the future of the Palace (the "Away Day") the Board widen the invitations to attend to representatives of both the Advisory and Consultative Committees, in order to obtain input from representatives of the local community.</li> </ol>
<p><b>APSC19.</b></p>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>Nil items</p>
<p><b>APSC20.</b></p>	<p><b>TO NOTE THE DATES OF MEETINGS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09:</b></p> <p>10 February 2009</p>



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David Liebeck

Chair