

MINUTES OF MEETING JOINT MEETING OF THE ALEXANDRA PARK & PALACE STATUTORY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE ALEXANDRA PALACE AND PARK CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER, 2020, 7.30 PM

PRESENT:

Statutory Advisory Committee Members

Councillors Josh Dixon, Scott Emery, Elin Weston, Khaled Moyeed, Yvonne Say and James Chiriyankandath.

David Frith (The Rookfield Association), Jason Beazley (Three Avenues Residents Association), Jim Jenks (Warner Estate Residents Association).

Consultative Committee Members

Councillors Dana Carlin, Nick da Costa, Bob Hare and Anne Stennett.

Gordon Hutchinson (Friends of Alexandra Park), John Wilkinson (Alexandra Palace Allotments Association), Jacob O'Callaghan (Alexandra Park & Palace Conservation Area Advisory Committee), Nigel Willmott (Friends of the Alexandra Palace Theatre), Richard Hudson (Warner Estate Residents Association).

166. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

Jason Beazley was nominated as Chair.

167. FILMING AT MEETINGS

Noted.

168. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Jane Hutchinson (SAC), Cllr Das Neves (SAC) & John Boshier (CC).

169. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

170. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

171. MINUTES

The meeting raised concerns that the previous APPCT Board minutes had not been included in the SAC agenda pack. Clerk to include in future agendas **(Action)**.

The joint meeting sought clarification on when public access would be allowed to the West Yard. In response, the CEO advised that the building was not yet in a position for the public to be allowed access, however once work was completed a tour could be arranged for SAC/CC members. In response to a follow up question around whether the BBC tower could be included in the tour, the joint committee was advised that this area was not habitable at present.

The joint committee also requested a tour of the railway bridge. In response, the CEO set out that the bridge was owned by the Crown Estate and that the Palace were unable to comment on the state of the structure as it did not belong to them and had no input into its maintenance.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the 10th December 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

172. CEO'S UPDATE REPORT

The joint SAC/CC received a report which provided an update on Alexandra Park and Palace; including the impact of COVID-19, reopening and recovery, wellbeing survey, park management, Creative Learning and Dukes Avenue. The report was introduced by Louise Stewart, Chief Executive (CE) of APPCT as set out in the agenda pack at pages 9-27. The following was noted in discussion of this item:

- a. Clarification was sought around whether any conversations had taken place around the likelihood of further road closures and when these might occur. In response, the CE commented that the last few weeks had seen an increase in incidents of dangerous driving and dangerous parking and that APPCT were in conversation with the Police about how best to tackle this.
- b. Clarification was also sought around parking donations and whether there was an indication of how much this brought in. In response, it was noted that the donations were contributing to the costs of managing the car parks and that this could be £5k on a good week but less when the weather was bad. Having CSP on-site provided APPCT with a safe way of managing the car parks.
- c. Concerns were raised with the closure of Grove car park, given the possible impact on those with mobility issues. In response, Louise commented that this was very small car park and it was less economically viable to open than some of the larger car parks. There were also problems with ASB around this location and it was tricky to manage when the overall site is not busy. APPCT were looking at how they could open it more consistently.
- d. Further information was requested around the application for a Culture Recovery Fund. In response, the CE advised that an application had been submitted but they had not been informed of the decision yet, it was anticipated this would take at least four weeks. In regards to other funding, APPCT had received £250k from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Corporate Trustee have given an additional grant of £500k.

- e. In relation to Dukes Avenue bridge members of the joint meeting expressed concern at the DfT's seeming desire to demolish the bridge and there was a long historical connection between the bridge and the Palace.
- f. In relation to the litter in the park, an audit was being undertaken of where improvements needed to be made and where signage should be increased. However, the CE emphasised that signage did not necessarily deter litter and that there was always a minority who ignored instructions.
- g. In regards to litter, the joint meetings and the management team at APPCT acknowledged the phenomenal work done by local volunteers in litter picking and those present wished to record their thanks for all of the work done by the volunteers to keep the park clean.
- h. Concerns were noted with the fact that there had not been a litter communications campaign rolled out over lockdown, like Haringey and Keep Britain Tidy had done. It was suggested that the Royal Parks had erected large signs around fencing and that this could be something for APPCT to consider in future. The CEO pointed out that the campaign had been on social media and that litter prevention signs were in place in the Park having been put in place the previous year.
- i. Cllr Hare requested that the veteran trees that were part of the old Tottenham wood farm be included into the tree survey and a possible tree walk, going forwards. The CE advised that she would raise this with the Parks Manager at APPCT, but cautioned that this would likely cost money. Cllr Hare requested some further information as to how much it might cost as there may be some scope to secure some voluntary funding for it. **(Action: Louise Stewart)**.
- j. The CEO updated the Committee on water leaks in the park in the Grove and lower road. Thames Water were on site for approximately three months to repair the significant leak in the Lower Road. Thames Water installed new drainage gullies and resurfaced a large area of the lower road, which had resolved some pre-existing problems.
- k. The CE highlighted Council's consultation on the Bedford Road traffic improvement measures and advised that the Trust would feed into the consultation.
- l. A number of exhibitions were still scheduled to go ahead, including Knit & Stich. The theatre had also been in use during the lockdown. Further discussions were continuing to take place with the Licensing Authority about the fireworks. In response to a follow-up question, APPCT advised that they were still some weeks off before having to make a decision on whether to go ahead with the fireworks or not. The event is delivered by APPCT itself with a regular partner so could be brought together quickly. The SAC/CC commented that having a very large space should be an advantage in respect of being able to hold a fireworks event.
- m. In response to a question around holding silent fireworks events, the CE advised that the issue was more about maintaining social distancing rather than noise.
- n. A question was raised around whether there was provision for those without a car to attend drive-in events. In response, the CE advised that the opera were making provision for this. The CE agreed to circulate a note to the SAC/CC on the access arrangements for drive-in events. **(Action: Louise Stewart)**.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted.

173. CAR PARK CHARGING PROPOSALS

The joint SAC/CC received a report which set out findings of the parking charges survey, the proposed discounts and exemptions for certain user groups, and the next steps in the process. The report was introduced by Louise Stewart, Chief Executive (CE) of APPCT as set out in the agenda pack at pages 27-34. The following was noted in discussion of this item:

- a. In response to a question around the proposed prices for parking, the CE advised that tariffs were included as part of the consultation and this information was available on the website. The proposal consulted upon was for the first half an hour to be free and then an increasing scale dependent upon the length of time required, from £1.50 up to £8 for 4 hours plus hours.
- b. The joint meeting sought clarification as to whether APPCT had heard from the Charity Commission in relation to the proposed introduction of car parking charges the SAC/CC was advised that the Charity Commission had come back with some clarification questions but no formal response had yet been received. The CE advised that if the Board agreed to proceed, it would be anticipated that car parking charges would be in place for the beginning of the new financial year.
- c. Concerns were raised on behalf of local residents of Springfield Road and Dukes Avenue, who had been petitioning against implementing without having a CPZ in place in the surrounding roads, due to an expected adverse impact on the wider parking network. In response, APPCT acknowledged these concerns and commented that this was set out as part of the consultation. It was noted that the Palace had not seen people refusing to donate to the current donate to park scheme and/or this having an impact to date on surrounding roads.
- d. The Chair asked whether there was data available of where visitors come from. In response, the CE advised that this was collated as part of the survey but in relation to the 4m plus visits a year to the palace there was incomplete data as it was not a paid attraction and could not use data from tickets sales.
- e. The joint meeting sought clarification around whether, following the APPCT proposals to make parking less costly for certain user groups whether it was expected that this would satisfy most user groups. In response, the CE advised that she believed the consultation would reassure user groups that they were listened to. The CE suggested that it was unlikely that everyone would be satisfied, but that was confident that user group who may have been disproportionately disadvantaged would be supported with some form of reduced tariff.
- f. The SAC/CC commented that they hoped regular users and people with mobility issues would not be unduly penalised. The CE reminded members that the consultation had set out that Blue Badge holders would not be charged and that the blue badge criteria had been broadened considerably in recent years. It was also pointed out that disability and ability to pay for parking were not the same thing.
- g. A member of SAC/CC set out that they remained opposed to any parking along Alexandra Palace Way. In response, the CE acknowledged these concerns and set out that one of the Board's considerations, if approved, would be how best to

manage that area – including possible removal of parking bays on Alexandra Palace Way, as per the information provided in the consultation information.

- h. It was suggested that one of the main points that came through from the consultation was that parking charges needed to be as low as possible and that the Trust should not disadvantage any vulnerable groups. In response, APPCT advised that whilst over 2000 responses were received, they were heavily weighted by local residents. It was important to take into account that the responses did not necessarily reflect the views of the wider group of making up the 4m visits that the Park and Palace received in a year.

The following feedback was put forward for the Board's consideration on the introduction of car parking charges:

- a. The joint SAC/CC were broadly supportive of the proposals but raised some concerns around groups on low income and those who have mobility issues. It was suggested that parking charges should be kept as low as possible not to discourage particular user groups and perhaps there could be some free parking such as on Bank Holidays for lower income families who might wish to have a free day out.
- b. It was suggested that there needed to be a balanced response to this issue. There was a strong financial argument for introducing charges but there also needed to be some recognition that a significant proportion of people responding to the consultation expressed concerns with charging. It was suggested that local ward councillors needed to be engaging with the local community on this to ensure that those living in the vicinity of the park were aware of possible knock-on effects to parking in the surrounding area.
- c. It was commented that most people were used to paying for parking and that this was an unfortunate reality of the financial situation faced by APPCT and the need to protect the future of the charity.
- d. The SAC/CC were clear that any parking charges should not disadvantage vulnerable people and that some mitigation was required to protect them.

RESOLVED

That the SAC/CC noted and discussed the information in the report and provided advice and feedback to the Trustee Board on the public feedback to the car park charging proposals.

174. END OF YEAR REPORT

The joint SAC/CC received a report which provided an annual summary report on outdoor events monitoring, complaints and theatre activity. The report was introduced by Louise Stewart, Chief Executive (CE) of APPCT as set out in the agenda pack at pages 35-42. The following was noted in discussion of this item:

- a. In relation to complaints it was suggested that although it looked like there was a lot, the numbers were quite low for an attraction of its size. It was acknowledged that this was more than the Palace would like but there was a system in place of recording every complaint, but that every complaint did not necessarily end up being progressed down the formal route.

- b. The SAC/CC welcomed the fact that they were able to see how much had taken place in the Theatre. It was one of the only parts of the building generating some revenue at present and the team had worked hard to make a success of reopening the theatre in 2018, only to have to close it again. The CE acknowledged this and advised that the team continued to be creative on how to use the space and that she was confident that it would be a success, once restrictions were lifted.
- c. In response to a question, the CE advised that the theatre was financially contributing as expected and that it had attracted events and also increased collaboration between the different teams at AP particularly between events and Creative Learning. There was more creative learning involvement in other areas of the business as a result.
- d. The SAC/CC commented that the Creative Learning Team had been doing a fantastic job and that they deserved a lot of credit.

RESOLVED

That the joint SAC/CC noted the report.

175. NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS FEEDBACK

Nigel Willmott, advised the joint SAC/CC that the informal Board meeting in April was focused around the board being provided with the car parking consultation results and the COVID-19 lockdown. Since then, the Board had received regular updates on COVID-19 and had also held joint informal meetings with the Trading Company subsidiary to discuss the road closure and ASB. It was noted that the Board had been very supportive of the team and what they had been able to achieve during lock down, including; food distribution, keeping the park going in response to huge demand, reopening the Terrace and the opening of the outdoor cinema.

176. ITEMS RAISED BY INTERESTED GROUPS

It was commented that the owner of Tottenham Wood Farm was Thomas Rhodes and that, aside from being related to Thomas, there was no connection between Cecil Rhodes and Alexandra Palace.

The Friends of the Alexandra Park advised that they had just published a book entitled 'The History of Alexandra Park', which was available on the website.

177. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

N/A.

178. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

5th November

15th March

CHAIR: Jason Beazley

Signed by Chair

Date

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