

Report Title: **Fireworks 2009 Update**

Report of: **Andrew Gill, Interim General Manager**

1. Purpose

1.1 For information: To make the Board aware of the options considered for the annual fireworks display.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Board notes the report, and notes the decision to deliver the fireworks display event as usual (option 1).

Report Authorised by: **Andrew Gill, Interim General Manager**.....

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3. Executive Summary

3.1 The fireworks event has been reviewed to consider its overall impact on the organisation and benefits to the local community.

3.2 The event will take place on Saturday 7th November 2009.

3.3 An number of areas have been identified to reduce costs and increase income.

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 No specific background papers other than those appended were used in compiling this report.

Description

- 5.2 Alexandra Palace has held a public fireworks display in November for a number of years. This display is well known to local people and those further afield. Up to 70,000 people attend the event which takes place on a Saturday night.
- 5.3 Due to the large numbers of people attending this event a huge safety and security operation takes place. Following concerns of the responsible authorities (e.g. Metropolitan Police and the Licensing Authority) a new safety and security system was implemented in 2006. This significantly increased the cost of the delivering the event.
- 5.4 The staff of Alexandra Palace Trading Limited (APTL) plan, organise and deliver the event on behalf of the Trust as their staff are suitably qualified and experienced.
- 5.5 The Trust has £100,000 in its budget for the fireworks display on 7th November 2009. The actual cost of the event in 2009 was approximately £130,000.
- 5.6 The metropolitan police do not charge for the time of approximately 160 officers who attend the event and operate the local road closures.
- 5.7 Four options have been reviewed jointly by Trust and Trading Company staff:

Option 1: Deliver the event as usual

This event is one way the Trust delivers its charitable objectives, it is well known and appreciated by local people.

Fireworks prevents any other business opportunities on that weekend.

There is a huge clear-up operation in the building and park following fireworks.

The predicted figures show a £30,000 overspend based on 2008 costs, however, some cost saving measures have been recommended.

Option 2: Cancel the event:

In previous years when the fireworks display has had no publicity, press coverage or advertising, approximately 35,000 people attended due to the continuity of this event.

If 35,000 visitors attend expecting a firework display there will be public order issues to manage. The security and safety operation will still be required.

Option 3: Limit the size of the event

Provide a limited number of tickets for free or at nominal cost to control the size of the event (for example 20,000). However as with option 2 above, one risk is that 35,000 people would still attend. An area would need to be secured and the operation to manage the ticket holders and non-ticket holders would be as large as when holding the event as normal. Printing and distributing the tickets would be a costly operation. This option would deliver a minimal saving overall, with the risk that the segregation would cause a reduction of foot traffic into the building and an associated loss of income.

Option 4: Deliver an alternative event

If an alternative event was delivered for example, at Christmas, option 2 would still apply. If an alternative event took place over the fireworks weekend, option 2 would apply, plus the negative press coverage for not holding the fireworks display.

- 5.8 Due to the chance that 35,000 visitors will attend regardless, the alternative options are not going to save a great deal of money.
- 5.9 The outcome of the review is to proceed with Option 1 and hold the event as usual.
- 5.10 To prevent the event going overspent, a number of areas have been identified to make savings and increase income:
- Minimise marketing costs – as people know it will happen; use press stories - save up to £5,000
 - The quotations for the fireworks display are approximately £5,000 under budget
 - Panorama Room hospitality will not take place and the room will be used for alternative activities.
 - Improve collections of cash donated by the visiting public. Save the cost of cash-collection staff by mobilising the community groups and interested parties who sit on the Alexandra Palace Advisory and Consultative Committees.
 - Reduce costs of DJ by finding alternative provision.
 - Review income from concessions internal and external and funfair
 - The Beer festival improved income by £25k in 2009. There is room for growth and this activity will be located in the Great Hall.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The review of the event was undertaken together with Alexandra Palace Trading Ltd, and key partners such as London Borough of Haringey, Metropolitan Police and local stakeholders.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Board notes the report, and the decision to deliver the fireworks display event as usual (option 1).

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Trust's solicitor and LBH Head of Legal Services have been sent a copy of this report.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 The cost of the 2008 event was £30,000 more than the 2009 budget.
- 9.2 Implementing the savings identified and with the improved income that has been forecast will result in a break-even position.
- 9.3 The LBH Chief Financial Officer has been sent a copy of this report and his comments are shown at Appendix A.

10. Use of Appendices/Tables/Photographs

- 10.1 Appendix A: Comments of the LBH Chief Financial Officer.

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Appendix A

Gerald Almeroth, LBH Chief Financial Officer has been supplied a copy of this report and provided the following comment:

“The option identified with additional cost saving measures to stay within budget is welcomed.”