

## DRAFT

## AGENDA ITEM 4 (2)

### MINUTES OF THE ALEXANDRA PALACE AND PARK CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

31 JANUARY 2006

Councillors: \*Manheim (Chair), Dillon, \*Haley, \*Hare, \*Hoban, \*Krokou, Reynolds, Robertson

Nominated Members:

Alexandra Palace Action Group		(To be advised)
Alexandra Palace Amateur Ice Skating Club	*	Mr. M. Tarpey
Alexandra Palace Angling Association		Mr K. Pestell
Alexandra Palace Indoor Bowls Club		(To be advised)
Alexandra Palace Organ Appeal	*	Mr.J. Apperley
Alexandra Palace Television Society		Mr S. Vaughan
Alexandra Residents' Association	*	Ms. C. Hayter
Bounds Green and District Residents' Association	*	Mr K. Ranson
Friends of the Alexandra Palace Theatre	*	Mr. N. Willmott
Hornsey Historical Society	*	Mr.J.O'Callaghan
Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association	*	Ms D. Feeney
Muswell Hill Friends of the Earth		(To be advised)
Muswell Hill Metro Group	*	Mr J. Boshier
New River Action Group	*	Mr F. Clark
Palace Skatepark Association		Mr. P. Lumsden
Palace View Residents' Association	*	Ms V. Paley
U.C.A.T.T.		Mr J. McCue
Warner Estate Residents' Association	*	Prof. R. Hudson

\*Members present.

#### Also In Attendance:

Mr C. Richelle – Friends of the Theatre

Mr K. Holder - The General Manager, Alexandra Palace

Mr D. Loudfoot - The Facilities Manager, Alexandra Palace

Mr C. Hart – Principal Support Manager, Member Services – LB Haringey

#### APC29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Pestell due to a hospital confinement, Councillor Dillon due to returning from a family bereavement in Ireland and for lateness from Councillor Haley.

The Chair asked that the Committee's sentiments be passed to Mr Pestell for a speedy recovery.

**NOTED**

**APC30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

**APC31 URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

**APC32 MINUTES**

The Chair asked if there were any points of accuracy.

Ms Feeney referred to the minutes of the Alexandra Palace and Park Consultative Committee held of 22 November 2005 discussions in relation to the signage in the Park which the General Manager had agreed to have removed, but this had not been recorded.

The Clerk advised that he would need to check his notes of the meeting to clarify this point.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Alexandra Palace and Park Consultative Committee held on 22 November 2005 be confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to clarification of discussions in relation to the signage in the Park which the General Manager had agreed to have removed; and
2. That the minutes of the meetings of the Alexandra Palace and Park Board held on 29 November 2005, and the special Board meeting of 10 January 2006 be noted.

**MATTERS ARISING:**

None

**APC33 FUTURE USE OF THE ASSET – UPDATE (Verbal Report of the General Manager) (Agenda Item 5)**

The Chair asked the General Manager - Mr Holder to give a brief introduction of the current state of play and recent history. Mr Holder advised the meeting that as those present may be aware the Board, at its

meeting the previous evening, selected Firoka (Heythrop Park) Ltd as its preferred bidder for developing the future of the asset.

Mr Holder informed the meeting of the background to the proceedings by outlining that following the meeting of the Board of 29 November 2005 the 3 preferred bidders - The Business Design Centre Group Ltd, Earls and Olympia Group Ltd, and Firoka (Heythrop Park) Ltd. had been required to submit their detailed proposals ("Proposals") by 6<sup>th</sup> January 2006. In the development brief the Bidders had been asked to provide significant amounts of information in their Proposals, as detailed in section 4. He advised that as Members of the Committee were aware The Business Design Centre Group Ltd had withdrawn from the process on 21st December 2005.

At the Board meeting on 29 November 2005 it had been agreed that each of the bidders had been asked to make a presentation of their proposals to the Board and of the two remaining bidders - Earls and Olympia Group Ltd, and Firoka (Heythrop Park) Ltd, Firoka (Heythrop Park) Ltd – Firoka had given a presentation to the Board on 10 January 2006, but Earls Court and Olympia Group Ltd. had declined to either give a presentation or submit presentation boards for public display.

Mr Holder then gave a succinct outline of the Firoka bid which covered:

- to introduce additional uses to supplement the existing activities within the Palace, in a manner that reflected the original vision of the Palace, as a place of public entertainment on a grand scale.
- three distinct areas of use and related phases (as illustrated by an axonometric). Phase 1 (central areas) related to Exhibition use, Phase 2 (west end) to Hospitality and Phase 3 (east end) Community uses. The phases could be sequential or concurrent depending on the level and complexity of the existing business use at any one time. The existing Exhibition Halls would be refurbished and additional means of escape provided to increase both the capacity and flexibility of the Halls.
- Firoka's intention to work with Mr Smith & the Alexandra Palace Organ Society to ensure The Willis Organ could be retained with the goal being, an increase in the range of concerts and attractions at the Palace.
- In respect of Hospitality - this included the existing Palm Court from which the Hotel, Bar, Restaurant and relocated 1000 seat replacement Panorama Room were accessed. The 150 bedroom Alexandra Palace Hotel would be located in the restored south wing relating to the arcaded façade and the historical Glazed Corridor with lounges and suites located in the south west tower.
- the Community facilities, arranged around the three centrally stacked uses of Studio Cinemas, Bowling and a new rooftop Ice Rink. The historical Theatre would be incorporated within the Studio Cinemas to restore both its historical use as a Cinema whilst also providing a historical setting for theatre groups;

- other Community facilities including a Fitness Centre, Children's Indoor Play and Crèche, Cafes, Bars, Retail and a rooftop Restaurant. A Museum celebrating the history of the Palace and its broadcasting history with the BBC would be created, including a reconstructed working Recording Studio that could be used by the BBC for training.

Mr Holder then gave a brief outline of the Earls Court and Olympia Group Limited 's bid and reiterated his earlier comments that Earls Court and Olympia Group Ltd (ECO). had declined to either give a presentation or submit presentation boards for public display. Mr Holder further advised that both remaining bidders had been given exactly the same notice for giving presentations.

Mr Holder then outlined the proposed submission and draft Heads of Terms submitted by Earls Court and Olympia Group Ltd by advising that it was proposed to carry out a comprehensive refurbishment and development of the whole of the Palace. In consultation with English Heritage and LB Haringey the aim was to provide a high quality mixed use exhibition, leisure, retail, office and recreational development of the whole of the Development Footprint. To achieve this it would be a requirement that on completion of the purchase the primary activities of the Palace would cease to allow the building works to be carried out. The tenant would not be liable for taking on any staff or undelivered contracts.

Mr Holder outlined the main points of community interest within the bid as follows:

- In terms of the organ funding would be provided for its relocation to a more appropriate setting where it would be used on a more regular basis;
- A media / heritage / educational facility located at the studios. In the short term funding would be provided to enhance the visitor experience of the 2 studios, and guided tours for the public would be provided on a weekly basis. Discussions were on going with interested parties for the long term use of the area;
- The theatre would be put into a safe shell condition and used for rehearsal space for local drama students and professional companies. Discussions were being held with local theatre groups;
- ice skating was a growing minority interest sport and funding would be provided for minor decorations and improvements and increased marketing of the facilities. In view of the condition of the equipment it was viewed unlikely that the ice rink would continue in use beyond 2009. At that

stage the area would be integrated into the main exhibition/leisure use;

- All exhibition, event and Head Office staff are not required by the purchasers. The vendors to/ be responsible for all redundancies by completion;
- Exchange of contracts within 12 working weeks (period of exclusivity) followed by completion 12 months thereafter. Upon completion full vacant possession would be required with the exception of any ongoing commercial leases/licenses [but excluding the exhibition and events contracts]

Mr Holder commented that the Board had given its lengthy consideration to each bid, based on the results of the evaluation criteria it had agreed in November 2005. The decision of the Board the previous evening, in choosing Firoka as its development partner, had been taken based on the recommendations of the appointed project team who carried out the evaluation process on 18 & 19 January 2006. The Chair of the Board had participated fully in the evaluation process.

Members of the Committee sought and received clarification as to both bids from Mr Holder, together with the timetable for the preferred developer.

(Councillor Haley arrived at 20:00HRS)

The Chair then asked, and Members gave their views as to the development proposals – as summarised below in consensus form N.B the comments represent similar views expressed on a range of issues for each bid:

- That in respect of the ECO bid - surprise, disappointment and concern that ECO had disregarded and/or failed to address or take into account in their vision of the future of the Asset the importance of the continued availability of certain facilities for community use
- ECO appeared to have disregarded or failed to appreciate that they were required to restrict their proposals to the “footprint” of the Palace, viz. its proposals with regard to existing car park facilities outside the “footprint
- in the light of the fact that the ECO’s bid had failed to present its proposals in any detailed or meaningful fashion, including the lack of any public display board, the whether ECO fully understood what was required in making its bid by the deadline of 6 January 2006
- whether the Board ought to have given ECO an extension of time to allow any further more detailed submission by ECO;
- the Firoka’s vision of 3 phases and/ or “zones” namely for hotel and hospitality, exhibition and community/leisure usages in principle, provided a good balance in terms of the continued mixed use of the Asset for community and commercial purposes, with the

- proposal to retain and upgrade the existing ice rink facility, and restore and maintain the Willis Organ for future use in the Palace
- concern at the possible encroachment of the Firoka proposals into the Park area and whether there would be health and safety problems arising from the required density of use to make these proposals commercially viable
  - concerns at the lack of drawings or plans to illustrate the Firoka vision of the intended development and appearance of the north side of the building and some uncertainty and concerns as to the proposed use of this area
  - criticism of the lack of a proper public consultation process in respect of the proposal(s) and bid(s) , namely a lack of a reasonable period of time, insofar as the period of consultation from the date on which the “bids” were made public lasted only 6 days
  - concerns that the Firoka bid included a proposed casino provision within the hotel proposals and assurances from the General Manager that this would only be for those persons staying at the hotel, and that within the lease there would be clauses to ensure that there was not an opportunity for the casino to be developed further
  - positive views as to the retention of the BBC broadcasting concept within the Firoka bid as part of heritage and museum proposals, together with the proposed improvements to the Theatre
  - concerns that the Firoka proposals had not given detailed plans in terms of how traffic increases would be countered, and the General Manager’s comment that at the point of submission a detailed traffic survey was not required but this would now be carried out during and as part of the on-going process
  - the positioning of the ice rink and local rumour of its closure, and the assurance of the General Manager that this facility would remain, though its location would be determined as part of the development discussions, and its upgrade to possible international standard from the existing Olympic size, and its possible relocation within the Palace
  - that the detailed AO plans be reproduced in a smaller for in order for local associations to have some better idea of the Firoka development proposals
  - some concerns that the original objects of the Charity were not upheld in respect of the likely charges for the public entrance, and whether the public would still be able to access the south terrace and that no charges would apply there. The General Manager stated that charges would not apply to the south terrace but if the public were using facilities within the building the normal charges would apply.
  - Concerns as to the safeguarding of jobs of Palace staff and the assurances of the General Manager that staff would be transferred under TUPE arrangements on existing terms and conditions though after transfer those conditions may be subsequently varied / altered by the Firoka Group

- Whether the name of the Palace was enshrined and whether this could be altered

Following the expression of views of the Committee the Chair then summarised and it was:

**RESOLVED:**

That the verbal update and comments of the Committee be noted.

**APC34**

**PANORAMA ROOM, ALEXANDRA PALACE – PLANNING APPLICATION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT** (Report of the Facilities Manager, Alexandra Palace) (Agenda Item 6)

Following a brief introduction of the report by the Facilities Manager – Mr Loudfoot, and clarification of the proposals from Members the Chair summarised and it was:

**RESOLVED**

That the planning application and associated listed building consent for the Panorama Room at Alexandra Palace be noted.

**APC35**

**Theatre Stage, Alexandra Palace – Listed Building Consent – Report of the Facilities Manager – Alexandra Palace (Agenda Item 7)**

Following a brief introduction of the report by the Facilities Manager – Mr Loudfoot, the Chair summarised and it was:

**RESOLVED**

That the listed building consent for the Theatre Stage at Alexandra Palace be endorsed and the Board be advised accordingly.

**APC36**

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS (Report of the General Manager, Alexandra Palace) (Agenda Item 8)**

Following a brief introduction by the General Manager the Committee briefly discussed the report and the implications of a number of events scheduled. In response to comments as to obtaining information regarding planned events Mr Holder advised that information could be obtained from the website under 'What's on' . Clarification was also given as to the 'Spiders and Snakes' event, and also the practice of not refunding cancellation fees.

There being no points of clarification and comments it was:

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**APC37 ITEMS REQUESTED BY NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES  
(Agenda Item 9)**

None requested

**APC38 URGENT ITEMS (Agenda Item 10)**

(i) Parks Work Programme

In response to comments as to an update, the General manger advised that he would ensure the comprehensive parks work programme, being considered by the Board on 7 February 2006, would be circulated to Members of the Committee. The Clerk undertook to circulate this information.

(ii) Theatre Machinery

Mr O'Callaghan welcomed the progress made in the renovation works and passed his congratulations on in this respect.

In response to points of clarification from Mr O'Callaghan with regard to restoration Mr Willmott advised of the progress works thus far and the idea of further summer events.

(iii) Palace Tours

In response to questions from Councillor Hare, Mr Holder responded that these would resume in early Mid March 2006.

**APC39 TO NOTE THE DATES OF MEETINGS OF THE CONSULTATIVE  
COMMITTEE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE MUNICIPAL YEAR  
2005/2006**

**RESOLVED**

That the following remaining date be noted as the meeting of the Consultative Committee for the Municipal Year 2005/06:

4 April 2006

**Meeting terminated at 21.15HRS**

**Cllr Vivienne Manheim**  
**CHAIR**