

REPORT TITLE: RGF: Land to the front of Apollo Cinema

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1. Purpose of the Report

This report provides information regarding the current position with the above land and outlines an option we are pursuing for the future.

2. Background

Apollo Cinema was subject to considerable improvements which were completed in August 2011. The improvements were jointly funded by WG, DCC and Apollo Cinemas in the sum of £2.4million. Apollo Cinemas a company were very keen not only to develop the cinema building itself, but also the surrounding area to make the location more of a destination to enhance the footfall to the cinema and to provide Rhyl promenade with a catalyst for further investment and development.

With this intention the land to the front of the cinema was advertised for leasing with the sole purpose of developing an outdoor arena with large screen. Apollo Cinemas were the only respondent.

This facility would have created an outdoor cinema, broadcasting digitally live events such as sporting occasions, opera and ballet during the spring/summer months. This area would have easily converted to accommodate an ice skating rink in the winter. This facility would have also provided an attraction Rhyl promenade does not currently offer and would have encouraged surrounding leisure operators to invest. Apollo's funding was to be used for the construction of this facility in order to avoid potential "State Aid Rules". As such there was a delay in commencing the construction of this facility due to Apollo's budget availability.

In April 2012, very unexpectedly Vue Cinemas bought out the whole Apollo portfolio country wide. After a period of consolidation Vue Cinemas were contacted by RGF Officers through an agent to establish what their intention was for this space as the lease for this land had not been completed and was still under the control of Denbighshire County Council. Their response was that they focus entirely on the cinema business and are not interested in proceeding with the development of the Entertainment Plaza.

The cinema continues to trade well and there are no risks regarding the funding WG have contributed to the improvements to the cinema

3. Current Option

There is currently one option under consideration:

3.1 Siting a giant ferris wheel

An advert was placed in the local press for expressions of interest to procure a giant ferris wheel in this location for the 2012 season. Unfortunately there was no response to this advert and after making subsequent enquiries it would appear that they were in short supply due to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the Olympics. Despite a second advert the response was the same

It is our intention to place the advert once again in September in order to ensure the best chance of securing such an attraction 2012 for the 2013 season

PROS:

- An attraction such as this would further enhance the promenade, increasing visitors to the town thereby enhancing the economic situation for surrounding businesses
- Income from the lease would benefit the Council

CONS:

- The attraction would only be seasonal as the exposure to inclement weather in this location would more than likely deter ride operators in the winter period and the demand for such attractions in city centres at Christmas time will be great

4. Recommendation

The proceed with efforts to secure such an attraction for the 2013 season

Rhyl Member Area Group are requested to support this option