

**Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee
9 December 2010**

**Transcript of Item 5: London Organising Committee of the Olympic and
Paralympic Games (LOCOG) Ticketing Strategy**

Len Duvall (Chair): Welcome to this session, welcome to you both. Before we begin I will just outline some of the issues that are important to us in terms of this session. It is about ticketing, about reputational issues and about perceptions. From our point of view, we are very interested to hear about the allocations, the fairness, the transparency and provision of information. We are going to be asking you a range of questions that will cover some of those details. If we get opportunities there will be some more additional questions over and above that. Can I ask Dee Doocey to begin the questioning?

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I would like to perhaps preface my remarks by saying that I think we all recognise that LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games) has done a fantastic job in raising the amount of money that they have raised so far in, probably, the most difficult climate ever. I would like to put it on record that I really do think that that is absolutely superb.

My concern is what it has been all along. It is about making sure that there are sufficient, cheaper-end tickets so that families - particularly in London because that is our remit - can benefit from going to the Olympics. Alongside that is making sure that the promise that was made in Singapore, particularly about disabled people getting a fair deal and that it would be the most open and accessible Games ever are realised. So perhaps we could just start with the disability issue.

One of the things that slightly bothers me, but I am hoping you can reassure me, is that when we on the Assembly - and certainly talking to LOCOG in all the various discussions we have had - were talking about making sure that anybody who needed to be accompanied by a carer, that carer would be admitted free of charge. My concern is that from the documentation that I have read, it now says that anyone with a wheelchair can have a carer free of charge and they are two very different things. I just wondered if you could just clarify which of those is the case.

Is it just somebody in a wheelchair that will get a carer free or would it be somebody else? For example, some friends of mine are blind runners and have been involved in Commonwealth Games and everything else but they cannot go anywhere without a carer.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Thank you, good morning. Thank you very much for the opportunity to come here today. Congratulations on your peerage.

Dee Doocey (Chair): Thank you.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Before I answer, firstly very pleased to be here. I was very interested when this came out earlier in the year. I thought it was an excellent document. I have worked in ticketing for many years and it is very rare

to see a third party document that actually nails some of the key issues, looks at the way we are going to be ticketing the Games and asks relevant questions. I was very pleased to read it and very pleased to come today to follow up on it, so thank you.

In terms of disabled people, yes, your second point is the accurate one. People coming with wheelchairs, when they buy a ticket that will include the price of the ticket for their carer, for other people with disabilities that is not the case, no. We have made good provision for them but there will be a separate ticket for them.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): So anybody who needs a carer to accompany them as opposed to wants a carer to accompany them, i.e. they cannot get to the Games without the carer, that carer is going to have to pay for a separate ticket?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): If that person is not in a wheelchair, yes. That has come out of a lot of discussions we have had with disability groups, looking at the current sports provision in the UK and what the norms are across the rest of sport. We have tried to go beyond those. When they go on public sale next year, we have got specific provision for people who are blind or partially sighted, people who have hearing difficulties, people who have difficulties accessing stairs or need additional room in the venue. We have tried to cater for all of those within our application process. People will to buy a ticket, yes.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I find that very disturbing because I cannot see how that possibly can live up to the promise that was made that it was going to be the most accessible Games. I would actually like specifically for you to tell me which disability groups have advised you that just giving a ticket for people in wheelchairs was actually going to tick all the boxes for making it a disabled-access Games.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have done that through our disability consultants internally. I will get the specific names to you.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Right, because I am going to write to all of them just so that you know. I think that should be in the public domain. If what you say is correct, I have no reason to believe that it is not, I would find that absolutely appalling. Anyone who is dealing with disability as a group and is giving advice like that; that the only disabled people that needs to have a carer with them free of charge are people in a wheelchair, I just find the whole thing absolutely extraordinary. Let me move on to ticketing prices.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Just on the disability issue. We have made careful provision in other areas as well so that where we are building new venues and where we are working with current venues, we try to make sure that people in wheelchairs and disabled people are not put all in one place. We have got wheelchair spaces at different price points, in different areas of the venue so people have a choice. We have integrated that application process within the regular application process. It is not the case that if you have got a disability you have to ring a special line. You can apply through the straightforward process with everyone else which was a key, important issue which people raised with us. We are addressing these issues.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I understand that but I would have thought that that would be the very least that you should do. I do not have the figures to hand, but I have a feeling that the vast majority of disabled people are not in wheelchairs. There

any many, many disabilities. I am just concerned about people not being able to go to the Games because not alone will they have to pay for an expensive ticket, because there will not be very many cheaper tickets, but that they are also going to have to pay for a carer. Now, that to me suggests that it is discrimination against disabled people. We will leave it there and I will wait for your written list. I will be writing to all of those people who have given you that information because I find it extraordinary.

Let us move onto cheaper tickets. I understand that there are 2.5 million tickets of £20 or less available of the Olympic Games; we are not talking about the Paralympics at the moment because I know you have not sorted that out yet. Of those 2.5 million you have allocated 1.3 million to a very, very good scheme for children, which is excellent. You have then allocated a further one million tickets for football matches. That actually leaves just 200,000 tickets at £20 or less for people in the UK to buy.

Does that really fulfil the commitment by both Sebastian Coe [Chair, LOCOG] and the Mayor that this would be a Games that people could go to and that Londoners could enjoy, particularly since Londoners are paying twice; once through general taxation and secondly through their Council Tax?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Thank you. Let us look at those numbers. Before we do, London 2012 will be the first summer Games in certainly living memory where there are special prices for young people and for elderly people. It has not been done certainly in the last 30 years. We followed that through directly from the Singapore promise. We want to engage with young people, we want to make sure they can get to the Games. The Pay Your Age scheme that we have devised, 1.3 million tickets as you said, so that a 12-year-old pays £12, a 5-year-old pays £5 and if you are 60 or over you pay £16, will extend to 220 sessions out of the 650 at the Games.

It is a major part of our ticketing provision and certainly our leading way to engage with young people. Those 2.5 million tickets which cost £20 or less, about one million of those are in football and about 1.5 million of those are not in the football, they are in the wide range of Olympic sports.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Including the 1.3 million?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): The 1.3 million are split across the football and the across the other 25 sports. So about 600,000 to 700,000 of those are in football and about 600,000 of those are in other sports. That leaves us with --

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Sorry, you are totally confusing me now. If there are 1 million tickets for football, where does the 600,000 come from?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): 600,000 of the Pay Your Age tickets are in football.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): The children tickets?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes. They are in football. The rest of those Pay Your Age tickets are in non-football in the 1.5 million, OK? So you have got 2.5 million tickets which split into football and into non-football. Within those tickets --

Victoria Borwick (AM): Children or not children because I think this is really confusing. Well I thought I understood and now I am confused.

Len Duvall (AM): OK, let us try again.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): We have got 2.5 million less 1.3 million.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No, we have got 2.5 million which splits into 1 million football and 1.5 million non-football.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Of all ages?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Of all ages. Within the 1 million football, two-thirds of those are for children. Within the 1.5 million non-football, 600,000 of those are children. That leaves us nearly 900,000 tickets in non-football, which are adult £20 tickets, and a further 300,000 in football which are adult £20 tickets. We are just over 1.1 million adult £20 tickets across the Pay Your Age which gets us up to the 2.5 million.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Right. Well that is better than the 200,000; much better than 200,000. It is still nothing like enough, absolutely nothing like enough. When you consider that Londoners and particularly the people around the Park who have been living on a building site for the last five years are not getting any concessions at all, it is just simply not enough. It is going to cost an absolute fortune for families to get to the Games.

I am quite concerned that the definition of going to the Olympics is being assumed to be football. I think if you stop 20 people at random outside here now and said to them, "Would you like a ticket for the Olympics?" they would not be thinking football as the Olympics. They would be thinking of maybe athletics. So I am concerned that not enough has been done for the people in the surrounding area who have been living in a building site for five years, and not enough is being done to give Londoners a real opportunity to go and enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime Games.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We think we are absolutely addressing those issues. We have to balance our three keys issues in ticketing which are: we want accessibility and affordability for a wide range of people, particularly in London; we need to raise the revenues to put on the Games because if we do not raise the revenues we cannot put on the Games and LOCOG has to raise all its monies through, as you said earlier, its commercial programme of which ticketing is a major part; and we want full stadia. We need to try to square those three issues as best we can which is why we have a wide range of ticket prices. In addition to the 2.5 million tickets at £20 and less, we have got a further one million tickets at £30 and less.

Those are, we think, pretty affordable for the world's greatest sports event. Two-thirds of our tickets cost £50 and less, 90% of tickets cost £100 and less, so we have driven as many tickets as we can towards the lower end. We have not announced the Paralympic ticket prices yet, we will come onto that next year and they will be very affordable.

I think it is also worth pointing out that within that £20 ticket and £30 ticket, the spectator gets a one day Travelcard to travel in all zones in London at a value of £6 or £7 included within that ticket price. That offers further value. We think that 2.5 million tickets at £20 or less is a really good opportunity for people to come to the Games for a cheap ticket price.

Certainly in terms of football, football is the biggest sport in the Olympics by a long way; over 2 million tickets are for football. With our sign-up data that we have been gathering over the year we have got over 700,000 people who have expressed an interest in wanting to come to football. It is our national sport and I think that football will be very popular at the Games.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I am sure that football is always very popular, of course it is our national sport, but it is not seen as a key Olympic sport. If you speak to anyone and talk about getting a ticket to the Olympics, they will not be looking for a ticket for football.

I am going to leave it there, Chair, but I just would like to put on record that I am very, very disturbed at the lack of accessibility, at the lip service that is being played to disabled people and particularly in view of all the promises made about being the most accessible. I just think frankly it is disgraceful but I will leave it there, Chair.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We fully disagree with that.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Well obviously. We would not expect to agree now would we?

Len Duvall (Chair): Can you just give us very briefly a real insight about some of the modelling you take on and other options. Clearly you would have discounted other options in terms of getting the balance right. What is the process that you go through and --

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have done a lot of financial modelling and a lot of analysis. We have looked at each of the 26 sports that are in the Olympic Games in real detail. We like to get under the skin of them, what is the normal price, what sort of crowds are we expecting in handball, in fencing, in hockey so that we can understand those. What is our volume of tickets in every sport? That ranges widely between over one million for athletics, two million for football down to hundreds of thousands and even tens of thousands for some of the smaller sports. So we have got a range of demand and supply there. We have done a lot of consultation particularly across London on ticket pricing and we have tried very hard to step away from some of the previous practice in Olympic Games and to have a wider range of prices, not just across the Games but within each session.

So that in a session of hockey or of basketball will have £20 tickets and we will have tickets rising through to £50, £60, £70 in the same session. Having those higher priced tickets enables us to have the lower priced tickets. We have got a wider spread of prices across the Games to absolutely make sure that we have got accessibility at a cheaper price point.

Len Duvall (Chair): Just before I bring in Andrew Boff, I would just like to pose a question Neale Coleman. To what extent does this ticketing strategy reflect Mayoral priorities in terms of access and affordability?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Obviously LOCOG have discussed the development of a strategy with the Mayor as it has gone along, as indeed they have with Government. Clearly the issue here is that LOCOG have to strike a balance, as has been said, between on the one hand trying to ensure accessibility and affordability in line with commitments that have been made, but also they do need to raise a very significant amount of revenue from tickets. One of the things that I think they have done very successfully is to increase the number of tickets that are available through the way they have programmed across sessions.

That has had a big impact on enabling, I think, a more affordable package to be put together with a larger number of tickets. Equally, but with a broad approach of ensuring the thing that Paul just referred to, trying to differentiate more between price bands within sessions, so that you can have a larger number of cheaper tickets funded essentially by having more expensive tickets.

I think, given the balance, the Mayor's view is that LOCOG have done well to strike a reasonable balance here. You obviously have to look to an extent at what comparable events, sporting and other big public events charge and issues around access to those. The discounted tickets for young people and for older people are very much welcomed by the Mayor. I think Paul has rightly said that is something that has not been done in any recent Games.

When you talk about the £20 tickets, I think it is right to say that everybody who goes gets a free Travelcard, zones 1 to 6, it also takes you out to the venues immediately around London, that are outside London like Hadley, Broxbourne and so on. So in effect, arguably, people are getting those tickets, it could said, compared with a normal event for around £13 and similarly the £30 tickets for around £23.

I think these are pretty affordable prices. When you look at the total number of tickets in these price ranges I think the Mayor thinks, having regard to the need to make sure that LOCOG pays for itself and it does not call on public funds for the staging of the Games, they have got the balance about right.

Andrew Boff (AM): Just still on the ticket pricing. In 2004 you pledged that the events would start at £15 and they are now starting at £20. Why the difference from the original undertaking to what you have now got? What has changed?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I think the original pricing was part of the bid and was part of the aims. Since then we have done a lot of analysis, the world has moved on a bit. We have lost two sports; baseball and softball were removed from the Games. We would have had 700,000 cheaper tickets there. They are no longer in the Games, for example. We are talking 2012 prices now rather than 2004. We took the decision --

Tony Arbour (AM): Forgive me if I can interrupt. You are not talking 2012 prices because I see on your chit here it says, "Note, Olympic Games tickets prices are correct as at 15 October 2010 and are subject to change". Are you now saying that the prices that you have given today are going to be the figures they will be for 2012?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes.

Tony Arbour (AM): So this is wrong?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No. If VAT (value added tax) changes we may have to react.

Tony Arbour (AM): It does not actually say that, does it?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have incorporated the increase to 20% VAT within those prices. Our absolute intention is that those prices are the ticket prices for the Games; those are the prices we will be going on sale with in 2011, and that is our intention right through to Games time. I think if VAT doubled again we would clearly need to look at them but we are not expecting that to happen.

We took the decision that £20 was a sensible entry point right across the Games in every single sport. That we would have child prices and senior prices below that. We have changed the shape of it rather than changed the direction of it. In addition we have not announced our Paralympic ticket prices yet and there will be some very good prices there.

Andrew Boff (AM): You also in 2004 promised 4.3 million tickets at £20 or less but that is now only 2.5 million. What have been the pressures that have meant that you have had to revise that down?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have got the budget pressures and we have got the revenue pressures. We have not announced our Paralympic ticket prices yet. We have got about two million Paralympic tickets yet to announce. We will be quite close to that when we get to those prices next year.

Andrew Boff (AM): If we can move on. What assumptions have you made about the likely proportion of tickets which will be --

Len Duvall (Chair): Andrew, can we just finish off this business with John Biggs and then we will move onto that.

John Biggs (AM): I apologise for being late and if my question has already been asked then please shoot me down. I was delayed from another meeting. The briefing that we have says that the overall LOCOG budgets are roughly £2 billion and that roughly £1.5 billion is raised through sponsorship and other forms of revenue - TV broadcast fees and so on - which leaves you £500 million or thereabouts to receive from ticketing.

I think that is confirmed in a letter that you wrote on 3 December 2010. This is a very simple-minded question. Obviously if you have been able to raise more than £1.5 billion from other sources then you would have a smaller sum to raise from ticketing. Is it then the case, given that you have previously predicted lower ticket prices that you have underachieved on your other sources of revenue? Is that the challenge that you have? You were hoping to get £1.7 billion, £1.8 billion when in fact you are only down to £1.5 billion now so that the ordinary public have to pay more?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No. I think our commercial programme has, as Dee said at the start, been extremely successful in a pretty tough climate.

John Biggs (AM): If it has been very successful then surely it could have been a bit more successful to keep the ticket prices down?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have tried hard to keep prices down. We have got to raise about £500 million plus VAT, which is about a quarter of the LOCOG budget of just over £2 billion. That proportion has not really changed. The commercial revenues have done very well. We have been working with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on the wider revenues around broadcast and the like. I do not think the overall picture of how that budget fits together has really changed much over the last year.

John Biggs (AM): Thank you. As I said, it is a very simple question but you might want to explore some of the sensitivities outside the meeting, Chair.

Andrew Boff (AM): What assumptions have you made about the likely proportion of tickets which will be purchased from overseas and from those visiting London from within the UK?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): When we started announcements on our ticketing plans last March we were very clear that about 75% of tickets would go on sale to the public. The further 25% are the split across the tickets which sponsors can purchase and the international sports fans from around the world who buy them through their Olympic committees in Brazil, Australia or America. So we are expecting directly through that route over a million tickets to be sold to international sports fans coming to London through the Olympic network across the world. In addition, we expect a number of people in London to bring friends and relatives in on the tickets they have purchased. We will never get to the bottom of that data because we will not know all of those people.

If we look at the database we have built of people who have signed up and said they want to buy a ticket, which has been very successful this year, about 60% of people live in London or the South East. So we would expect that sort of proportion, all things being equal, to buy tickets for the Games. The remaining people live round the rest of the UK so somewhere between 50% and two-thirds we expect to come from London and the South East. We expect about one million tickets to come directly from abroad from sports fans. Some more may come through international federations and the like. That is the rough shape.

Andrew Boff (AM): Does that match up with the previous Olympics experience?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): The problem is that they are all unique. Beijing, a difficult country to get into, difficult country to travel to; Athens was a relatively small Games before that in 2004 and had different ambitions; and Sydney had a lot of international travellers but everyone had to travel an awful long way to get to Sydney. London's position as a world city: easy access with the widest range in the world of different ethnic groups here means, I think, we will get a lot of visitors from abroad but also from around the UK. We still think that that core ticket sale will be to people in London and the South East and that is normal for a big event.

For most big sports events the core of people who are travelling an hour to an hour and a half are the most likely ticket purchasers.

Andrew Boff (AM): Just to summarise. You have increased the allocation or likely allocation to overseas as a result of London's connectivity, is that right?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Actually we have not, no. We have held the UK portion at 75%, which is high, much higher than most sports events. What we have worked to do is increase the number of tickets available. When we set out 18 months to two years ago on this project we were at seven million and a bit tickets. We are now at 8.8 million tickets by maximising the number of sessions, by maximising the seats available that gives us more tickets which gives us more flexibility.

Andrew Boff (AM): To what extent will you be marketing the tickets overseas or do Olympics tickets just sell themselves?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We will not be marketing at all overseas.

Andrew Boff (AM): You will not be?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No. We will be marketing in the UK and particularly in London.

Andrew Boff (AM): You are presumably, therefore, leaving it for the associated clubs and all the rest of it to do that marketing for you?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes.

Len Duvall (Chair): How does that work in football then? I think in terms of international football, in as much as there will be some international stars there. If I am a follower of a particular club overseas, how do I register then? Do I go through the football associations, how does it work on the allocation of tickets?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): If you are Spanish and you live in Madrid, and Spain wins everything at the moment in football, so you want to follow them to London 2012 you would probably get in touch with or see the adverts for the Spanish travel agent appointed by the Spanish Olympic Committee. That Spanish travel agent would get allocated tickets from us and a Spanish football fan would be able to buy a Follow My Team Spain ticket to the group rounds in the UK.

Andrew Boff (AM): You will not actually be selling directly internationally?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): If you live in Europe you can buy from LOCOG. We are expecting that to be a small proportion. We are not marketing directly overseas, no.

Andrew Boff (AM): So none of our guests here today should part with some money today to get a ticket off you?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Tickets are not on sale yet.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I just wanted to follow up on the accredited workforce. You say there are no free tickets and I understand that. Just let us look at IOC officials, so Jacques Rogge and the rest of the family. I understand, particularly from members of the press who have attended all of the Games in the past, that it is quite usual not just for IOC officials to be at the Games but for their families, friends, children, grandchildren all to get seats.

I just wanted to be absolutely certain that they would not under any circumstances become part of your accredited workforce even though you would not be giving free tickets away. So when the Games are shown on the television that there actually will not be any friends and relatives of IOC with accreditation or with seats in the main stadia?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I do not deal with accreditations and I cannot really speak for accreditation. I do not deal with the details of that. Accreditations are very difficult to come by as I think you know from discussions you have had around the accreditation plans.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I have not had discussions around accreditation plans at all.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I thought people at City Hall had and apologies if it was not yourself. Certainly accreditations are difficult to come by. In an Olympic sports event, inside that session there are only three types of people. There are athletes who are competing, there are people who are working and there are people who have bought a ticket. The people who are working could be members of the press or broadcast or TV cameramen, they could be volunteers who are showing you to your seats or selling you a hot dog. There are people working there. Everyone else is buying a ticket.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): The IOC will be buying tickets?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): The IOC buy tickets, the IOC have a small allocation tickets that they buy and I suspect some of those will be used and sold to member's friend and families; that would be normal. They get the chance to buy tickets and we are in discussions with them at the moment about that.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Could I ask how you and, indeed, how the Mayor can justify allowing the IOC to have tickets that they can buy for their families, grandchildren, friends when Londoners are going to have to ballot for the very few tickets that are available? They will have a guaranteed pot will they not that they can buy from. If you say they are going to have an allocation.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): They have got a very small allocation. 75% of tickets will go on sale to the public which is a very, very large proportion: 6.6 million.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Let us just deal with the IOC. What I am keen to see is when Londoners are looking at these Games they are also paying for, I was hoping they were not going to see Mr Rogge and his friends and family, and indeed his committee with all of their friends with them, in prime seats at prime events when Londoners are

having to ballot for the very, very small percentage of getting to the same events. I do not think you are able to give me that reassurance.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I disagree with your analysis. Londoners will be able to apply for 6.6 million tickets, 75%.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): They have not got a guaranteed pot that Mr Rogge and the IOC have got.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): They have got a guaranteed pot of 75% of 6.6 million of the 8.8 million tickets.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Yes, but there are many more Londoners trying to get to the 75% than there are members of the IOC trying to get to a smaller percentage.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): The IOC have a very small allocation, yes, which they can purchase. How they use those tickets is their decision. They are the people that own the Games.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): When the press told me this, that at every single Olympics that there are the IOC family and their family, their friends, their grandchildren, wives, girlfriends, whatever, I said, "That will not happen in London, there is no way. LOCOG will not allow that to happen." I am quite disappointed that it appears that that is exactly what is going to happen.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): With respect it is not. You talked about accreditations firstly and I do not know on accreditations how specific you have -

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I think it is not just me that is going to be watching this. I think you are going to have every single newspaper in the whole of the UK taking photographs of everyone who is in those seats so it might well come back to haunt you.

Len Duvall (Chair): I think we will follow up on the accreditations. Just to finally end this part of the conversation, Neale, can you tell us just what discussions have been held on the accreditations because I presume it is with your team or the Mayor.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Actually, no, we have not had any detailed discussion about accreditation yet. I think LOCOG is still at a relatively early stage of developing those plans. We will be talking to them about their accreditation arrangements. I have no reason for believing that those are going to be significantly different from other Games. We will talk to them in due course about the detail of that.

Len Duvall (Chair): Just to put a marker down we will be very interested about the accreditation of GLA employees. It has already been raised outside in terms of the Games and passes. We will come back to you I think in terms of this whole area of accreditation.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Very happy to do that. I would be surprised if many people secured accreditation working for the GLA.

Len Duvall (Chair): Thank you.

Dee Doocey (Chair): Get that down.

Len Duvall (Chair): We will write that down.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Can I just clarify something else about the tickets? Are all the tickets for a game? Because initially we were told that you could get into the Olympic Park area and enjoy, picnic and watch the big screens and things. In other words that, if you were not able to get a ticket you could still come and enjoy the fun and, therefore, presumably you would be available for any of the ticket returns schemes you had.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Buy a ticket to get into the Park?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Yes, sorry Dee, did I not say that? I think I said “get” meaning buy.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): You are right. There will be an Olympic Park ticket. We have not announced the details, we have not finalised it. It will be a ticket for safety and security reasons because we need to manage the licensed number of people in the Park. We are intending to put Park tickets on sale later in 2011 and 2012 because the sports tickets go on sale first.

People who have got a Park ticket to come and enjoy the big screens, the ambience, the excitement of the Olympic Games, to see the flame and all the rest of it, will get the opportunity to benefit from the standby scheme we have got; our ticket re-use. Some of you may have been to Wimbledon over the years, I do not know. If you go to Wimbledon and have a Centre Court or Number One Court ticket, that ticket is valid from 12 noon right through to the end of play at 8 o'clock in the evening. Many people leave early and when they leave early the barcode on their ticket can be zapped. That cancels that ticket and that same ticket can be sold somewhere to a queue of people inside the ground who can then go into Centre Court and enjoy the last two hours of play.

We are going to be doing a similar model in Olympic Park. If you are at the hockey and you leave early, we will zap your ticket and someone else who has got an Olympic Park ticket can get that hockey ticket and go in and enjoy an hour's sport. They have got an upgrade, they have got the chance to see some live sport and it keeps the seats full. It makes it a better audience, athletes get a better crowd and we think it is the right thing to do.

Victoria Borwick (AM): I think right at the very beginning we did commend that sort of scheme to you so I think we are very pleased to see that. I just wanted to be reassured because there was not reference to a Park ticket in the briefing we have had so far. I just wanted to make sure that actually was happening.

Were you envisaging that people would then pay another £5 or something or does it depend on the time or how would it work?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have not finalised that yet.

Victoria Borwick (AM): If you have got an Olympic Park ticket, will that also be your travel ticket like the other tickets or not really?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Again, we are looking into that in detail and we have not finalised that. It should include a tube ticket as well.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Just so we are briefed. Thank you.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I just had a query. Did I understand correctly that you said you had to sell tickets for security reasons in order to manage the number of people? Surely you do not have to sell tickets for security reasons. Of course you have got to manage the number of people who go into the Park but I just wanted to clarify that. You are absolutely at liberty to say to Londoners, "Those of you who cannot get a ticket, you can come into the Park and watch it for free". You are taking a conscious decision to sell those tickets so it is not a security requirement.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): It is a security requirement about the capacity of the Park. Yes, we make the decision on what price that ticket will be, how we charge for it just as we do on every other ticket for the Games and we are still making.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): That's fine. When you said, "We have got to sell them for security reasons" that was not correct. You have got to sell them because you want to make money or you need to make money but you do not have to sell them for security reasons. What you have to do for security reasons is to control the number of people who go into the Park obviously.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We need to control the number of people in the Park and we need to raise our revenues. We are still looking at the revenues we need to raise in terms Park tickets and we have not finalised that yet.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): You do not have to sell tickets for security reasons.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have to sell tickets and we have to have security reasons on Olympic Park tickets.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): You do not have to sell tickets for security reasons.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): That is absolutely correct. One of things that was very evident in Beijing, particularly in the first week of the Games was how empty the Olympic Park was. There were very people there and the place was barren. We are determined in London to have a lively, dynamic, thriving park with crowds of people, be they going to a sports event or be they on a Olympic Park ticket enjoying --

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Would it not be better if you gave them free entry?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We are still looking at that.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): OK. Good.

John Biggs (AM): I suppose it depends on supply and demand, does it not? Just to clarify one other point and maybe you are certain about this, you will not be able to turn up, you will not be able to get out of bed on a Saturday morning, take the tube up to Stratford and buy a ticket on the gate, you would have to apply buy it in advance, is that right?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No. We will have tickets on sale on the day for many events. Really because this is an enormously complicated project and we are still finalising in some of the sessions right on the day before or on the day where the precise TV cameras will be, where extra commentary positions may be and things like that. We hold back some tickets and we release those in the days before and the day of for people to buy in box offices. Many of those box offices will be in the five boroughs, will be at the venues and we expect to have many thousands of tickets on sale at Games time. That is part of the excitement of the Olympics. Getting up in the morning and hoping to come to the Games.

John Biggs (AM): Clearly the way you manage that is quite important in order to manage crowd, spectators and expectations as well.

The other question I had is that you can buy a ticket to go into the Park, you can mill around the Park and look at the screens. There is a difference between going in there with an expectation that you have got a 70% chance of getting into a venue to watch an event and an expectation that you have got a 5% chance of getting into a venue to watch an event. Where would you say that you are going to pitch yourself? From the TV point of view it would be nice to have a Park that is full of people, very few of whom get into the events but you have a reservoir of people who can fill all the seats when you need to.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I am not sure I can win on that one.

John Biggs (AM): From the punters point of view they would like it the other way round. Where do you pitch yourself on that?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We are still modelling that. One of the things we have done is to try to reduce the length of sessions so that we have got shorter, sharper sessions so that spectators are more likely to come and stay for the whole session.

John Biggs (AM): What is a session? A whole day, four hours?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No, a session is usually three or four hours long. In the past some of those –

John Biggs (AM): You have to evict people after three or four do you?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No, they leave when their ticket is finished. In athletics we have a morning session and an evening session. In hockey we have got three sessions a day and each of those sessions contains two hockey matches; two hockey matches is a good value ticket.

John Biggs (AM): More than enough hockey for me!

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): If Team GB is in the first match some people leave after the first match which then frees up the ticket for someone else to come in.

We are expecting 5%, 10% or 15% of people to be doing that; not 50% of the people. We have got the added complication in the Olympic Park that in week one we want to maximise the number of people coming in to fill the Park, to make it vibrant. In week two though, we have got two athletics sessions on many of the days. So we have got another 60,000 to 70,000 people times two in the Park. So there is a lot less room for additional Park tickets on top of that. We will have some every day but that number is going to fluctuate on different days depending upon how much sport is going on in the Park.

John Biggs (AM): Say, taking hockey, if you are a person of Indian origin or Canadian origin - I think they are strong hockey nations - then you might be far more interested in getting a ticket in advance for that. This is similar to the football argument, or if you are a Georgian wrestler or something and you are going to market yourself for those particular niches.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): As Andrew Boff asked earlier in terms of sales from around the world, when we sell tickets to different countries, they are very targeted at different sports. We are not a big handball nation but France is the Olympic gold medalist in men's handball so they will buy a lot of handball tickets which will fill those seats.

Andrew Boff (AM): Which moves nicely onto the question I was going to ask. What is your strategy for filling the venues for less popular events? How are you going to do that?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have got a range of plans. The first thing is back last March we launched our Sign Up for London 2012 ticketing campaign and we have built our fan club. We have now got 1.9 million people who have come online or phoned up and told us who they are and told us which sports they want to go. We have now got a real detailed plan of how many people want to go to wrestling and how many people want to go the hockey. We can target those people and encourage them to buy a wrestling or hockey ticket.

We can target specific sports overseas and we will do the same in the UK because if you take a sport like weightlifting, that is very, very popular with the Greek community and Turkish community. We have got a lot of Greeks in London so we will target some of those for weightlifting tickets because that is where they are likely to get gold medals. We have got some specific targeting nation by nation.

In addition, we have got a strong marketing budget to drive sales and to encourage people to apply for tickets.

Andrew Boff (AM): Are we at a ticket advantage in London with people from so many different countries resident in London; a bigger advantage than, say, Sydney or certainly Beijing?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes, I see that as a real advantage.

Andrew Boff (AM): Are there going to be standby tickets just in case? I think we have talked before about the prospect that at the end of or midway through a session a whole chunk of the audience see the popular bit and leave, leaving space for other people to come in. Will there be a standby arrangement?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): That is what we will use the Olympic Park ticket for to offer those standby tickets. The Olympic Park is the best place to do that.

Len Duvall (Chair): Let us move on to Access to Tickets for Priority Groups.

John Biggs (AM): There has been quite a lot of publicity in London about free tickets for schoolchildren (I think it is primarily for London schoolchildren). Can you tell us how you are going to distribute those tickets and what factors have been taken into account in making a decision about that?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): We have decided that the scheme is intended to be distributed through schools. We have talked to, obviously, the people who are involved in LOCOG's educational programme. We have also talked to head teachers in London and had a number of sessions with them about the best way to distribute these tickets.

The Mayor has decided that we will use the LOCOG educational programme, 'Get Set' as the means for distributing the programme. So, any school that is registered with LOCOG's 'Get Set' programme will be eligible to receive a quota of tickets. We have also agreed that we will distribute tickets to the top two years in primary schools and all years in secondary schools. Essentially, the way we will do this will be based simply on a per capita basis. So --

John Biggs (AM): In addition to being part of 'Get Set' because 'Get Set' is only eligible for people in the top two years?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): No, 'Get Set' is your gateway to get tickets. So if you are a school and you are registered with LOCOG's 'Get Set' programme and participating in it you are entitled to receive the free tickets.

John Biggs (AM): So Year 5 or Year 6 pupils or ...?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Or the secondary age range. As I say, we will adjust according to the size of schools in terms of their pupil numbers.

John Biggs (AM): So, if I am a Year 4 pupil I will have to wait another 100 years before it comes around again.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): I am afraid so, although you would be eligible obviously for the Pay Your Age scheme. There is a judgement to be made about that but we thought that was the right one to make on the basis of talking to school head teachers primarily.

John Biggs (AM): So are you happy with schools making their own judgements? Should the bad kids come, the good kids come; is that for them to decide?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): That is for them to decide and I think that is what we regard as part of the virtue and value of the scheme. That allows schools to plan curricula, sporting, volunteering and other activity which they can use according to the criteria they want to use as a school to determine which of their pupils will get the tickets.

Len Duvall (Chair): Are we talking about both allocations, because LOCOG have allocated some to London schoolchildren and you and the Mayor have purchased 75 or are trying to.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): We have had further discussions with LOCOG on this over the last month in terms of developing all aspects of the scheme, in particular the funding of the scheme. I am pleased that we have now been able to agree with LOCOG that all the tickets we need for the scheme, in other words a total of 125,000, we are estimating will be funded by their hospitality programme. That now means that the scheme as a whole is funded through that way without any call on the council tax payer.

John Biggs (AM): So there was a risk of requiring about £1.8 million of council tax payers' money and that has now gone.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): That has now gone.

John Biggs (AM): Irrevocably gone?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Irrevocably gone.

John Biggs (AM): That is pretty good news. You are settled that 125,000 is the ceiling of the numbers?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): That is our current best estimate. Obviously, there are some variables here. There are two key variables, frankly, one of which is the number of schools that sign up for 'Get Set'. We are assuming that with this incentive the vast majority of schools will be eligible and will sign up. The other is something that schools are going to have to manage, which is that we assume in our workings here - and again this is based on discussions with schools - that people are going to have to arrange for children to go in groups. We have assumed an average group size of five or six and that is something which schools are going to have to manage. They have said they think they can do that relatively easily.

That is an essential element in the scheme, otherwise we would have had to, since most children will need to be accompanied, have a much larger number of tickets not going to children but to adults.

John Biggs (AM): Are you offering a particular customised form of hospitality for children or other special groups?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Not at the moment.

John Biggs (AM): I am thinking in terms of, quite often, school visits to the zoo; they will go into a classroom at the zoo and they learn a bit about the animals in the same way.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): That is a good point. We have got some more time to work on this. We are envisaging that we will not confirm the ticket allocations to schools until October next year. We will want to work with LOCOG's educational team and with schools to really get the best we possibly can out of this. That is certainly something that we should pursue.

John Biggs (AM): So we can find out a bit more about that. There is another special group which is servicemen and women. Does that include ex-servicemen and women or just serving servicemen and women?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes. Through a charity, Tickets for Troops, we are allocating tickets there and that is both ex-servicemen and women and currently serving officers, particularly those who have got disabilities. We are allocating a series of tickets there through the wider part of the ticket share scheme.

John Biggs (AM): OK. Is that a token or do you think that relates to the anticipated demand from those groups?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): 10,000 tickets is a lot more than token. They are delighted and we think that is a very major contribution.

John Biggs (AM): How will they decide how to allocate that?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): That will be done through the Tickets for Troops programme. They already work with a range of sports events and music events week in, week out. They get an allocation of 20 tickets or 30 tickets from a premier league football club or from Twickenham. So they have already got those mechanisms, we do not want to duplicate that so we are going to use them and build a plan with them next year as to how they will do it for the Olympics and Paralympics.

John Biggs (AM): Have you considered another other priority groups?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): In the ticket share scheme there are three other small allocations. One is to the British Olympic Association and going into some of their schemes. One is with the British Paralympic Association and the third area goes into Sport England and their coaching schemes around the country.

John Biggs (AM): I have to declare an interest as a local member I guess although I am not particularly keen on sports myself. Did you consider the interests of local residents because there was a lot said about this as being a special group in any shape or form?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We feel we have done that through the schools programme, through the children programme for ticket share and we have focused on the young people.

John Biggs (AM): OK.

Tony Arbour (AM): I am very interested in the 'Get Set' programme where you anticipate that every school will sign up and they would be foolish not to from what you are saying. Will the tickets which are allocated to schools include travel?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes they will.

Tony Arbour (AM): Good. I think the cost from my part of London could be quite a thing. You have told us about your ideas about dealing with returned tickets from people who are already there at the Games who leave early or they watch their team or their man has lost or whatever. What about tickets where you have noticed that they are no longer required? How are you going to deal with that; somebody falls ill or something of that sort? They are unable to sell them on eBay I am right in thinking, am I not?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): That is right. We have legislation which outlaws ticket touting for Olympic tickets just as with football in this country. We are introducing a ticket exchange scheme so that if you have got two tickets for athletics and you are ill or you decided that you do not want to go, you can re-sell them to someone else through an endorsed LOCOG scheme at face value to someone else. So they can buy those tickets, you can get your money back, the seats get filled and someone enjoys the Games.

Tony Arbour (AM): Have you any sort of statistics as to the kind of numbers there might be doing that? It seems to me that these tickets, particularly for popular events, are going to be so much in demand that you would pretty nearly need to be half dead not to turn up. So what the sort of figures for tickets which are returned?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): You have asked one of the great unanswerable questions I think. On the one hand we are putting tickets on sale a year in advance, so lots of peoples' plans could change or could develop across that year and cause them difficulties. Equally, it is genuinely a once in a lifetime event so we think people will drag themselves to the Olympic games no matter what.

We are determined to make sure we offer this scheme and encourage people who cannot use their tickets to make use of it. We are not really sure what the take up is going to be yet, whether it is 1% of 8 million tickets or whether it is more than that, we just do not know because of the unique attractions of the Olympic Games. We absolutely want to make sure that it is there as an option.

Tony Arbour (AM): Thank you, Chair.

Len Duvall (Chair): Shall we move onto the next part which is about the alternative ways of watching the Games?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Absolutely. So this really goes back to what we were talking about, about increasing people having the opportunity of looking at the Games.

We have talked about people coming to the Olympic Park. Will they be able to watch the events on the screen in the Park and then separately go to the ArcelorMittal Orbit? Is that going to be a separate thing?

The other point I wanted to make in terms of people being able to participate in the Games across London and the other venues. I think, if I get it right, there are approximately 50 sports but only about 13 of those actually take place at the Olympic Park.

So, although we are focussed about people being able to participate by coming to the Olympic Park and watching the screens, I also want to know about what is going to happen across London. Are the ticketing arrangements you have talked about going to be available in the Olympic Park for people who are around? How are you going to facilitate that at some of the other venues? Again, you do not want to have empty seats at any of the venues. That is the area that I would like to cover so perhaps we could start off with that.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We are still working on the ArcelorMittal Orbit plans. It is at an early stage and we are still working through how that is going to be ticketed and managed at Games' time and we have not finalised that yet. So please bear with us on the Orbit.

Victoria Borwick (AM): I am sorry, but I do not know the geography. It is within the Olympic Park?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): It is within the Olympic Park. To get to the Orbit at Games' time you will need to have a sport ticket or a Park ticket. We have not finalised how the Orbit itself will operate.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Another £5 or whatever to go up on the Orbit?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We are not there yet. Secondly, across in London, I am sure Neale [Coleman] can answer that in one second. Thirdly, in terms of the re-use of tickets if people leave early. We will, of course, be doing it at Wimbledon for the tennis as well as in the Olympic Park. We are looking at other venues but it is much more difficult at other venues because you have not got that resident core of people who are ready to go into that event at a moment's notice.

Victoria Borwick (AM): I am concerned because if you look at the proportion out of approximately 50 sports 13 or 14 of them are actually only taking place at an Olympic venue; you have got the majority of sports that are not taking place at what people here would think as the Olympic venue. So, therefore, you have actually got an awful lot of venues where you are going to be selling tickets.

We have all talked about the best laid plans this morning about what is going to happen at the venues which I think we all concur with and wish you to get on with. I am just concerned because there will be quite a significant proportion if we cannot find some way of operating at least some of those other venues some sort of schemes as you have indicated this morning.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We are looking at that in great detail. Some of those sports have much shorter sessions than others so that alleviates part of the problem. There are sports where we need to tackle that, we are investigating it at the moment and it is still a work in progress.

All those venues will have a box office where we will sell late tickets on the day of so that if we have got unsold tickets we have absolutely got a means to sell them and we will publicise that widely so that people.

Victoria Borwick (AM): You need flag that up. I think you need to give people notice.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We need a rolling programme at Games' time of what is available tomorrow or the day after.

Victoria Borwick (AM): What is available tomorrow, where? Weymouth is possibly a bit far for people, but otherwise for Londoners, obviously, they have got a broad range of options to go to. I am just thinking it is obviously a logistics issue. I just want to make sure that we are kept informed here as your plans for that develop.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): In terms of city wide?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): In terms of city wide obviously one of the main opportunities for people to see and participate in the Games will be the road events for the Games. There are 11 of those: marathons, triathlons, cycling and walks.

The current planning is as far as possible to focus and concentrate those events of a weekend which makes sense from a number of points of view: from transport planning and security planning but also from the point of view of giving people the maximum opportunity come and see those events. I imagine we could well see almost as many people participating in the Games from those events as through the venues themselves.

We are also engaged in seeking to make arrangements for some substantial live sites along the models that have been at previous Games. We are hoping to have live sites at Hyde Park, Victoria Park and a range of activity along the Southbank, including a small live site in Potters Field. Those will be significant opportunities for the public to get involved.

I think we will inevitably see, in addition to those, a huge array of other private sector organisations engaged in offering people Olympic opportunities ranging from simply the local pubs and restaurants up to other entertainment venues that will host Olympic related events indoors. There are quite a lot of examples of this on a smaller scale during the South Africa World Cup.

So, I think right across the city there will be those opportunities and in addition to that, of course, there is the Cultural Olympiad. I think we had quite a significant announcement yesterday of the scale of the cultural festival which people are trying to put on in the period running up to the Games and during the Games. So there will be a huge range of other activity besides for tickets just to get into the sporting venues for Londoners and other visitors to participate in.

Victoria Borwick (AM): In the live sites the large TV screens. Those would sponsored? Obviously they have got to be funded in some way.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): They have indeed got to be funded. We are currently seeking to procure an Events Manager to run those

live sites for us. We will be looking to that Events Manager to enter into sponsorship arrangements. We will also be working with the authorities who own Hyde Park and Victoria Park, currently the Royal Parks and in Tower Hamlets, around putting on a range of pre-Games in particular, but possibly during the Games themselves, commercial events which would probably be music events.

Our intention hopefully is that we will secure a commercial model that enables those events to cross-subsidise the other costs of the live site. As far as possible, we are seeking to put these on with no cost falling upon the taxpayer and we hope that we will secure that through our current procurement.

Victoria Borwick (AM): We did talk about the numbers and wanting them to be busy. How many people could watch the live screens in the Olympic Park on the basis that they would not necessarily get a seat? Could you give me a feeling of the sort of numbers?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Tens of thousands a day.

Victoria Borwick (AM): So 10,000 you are saying? Of course, they would not all necessarily be there all day. I am just trying to get a feeling of the size.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Hopefully, tens of thousands, certainly in the first week of the Games when we have not got anything on in the stadium. In the second week of the Games, that is a much more difficult number and I have not got a number yet; our venues team are still working on that licensing. Tens of thousands in week one per day.

Victoria Borwick (AM): In week one then you said they would be in the Park but there would not be the sports events.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): There is no athletics in the stadium but there is swimming and water polo.

Victoria Borwick (AM): Exactly, I was just clarifying. We will wait to hear then as your plans develop then about what you are going to do about the other venues. Thank you, Chair.

John Biggs (AM): Two quick questions on this bit hopefully. One is in terms of outdoor screens or, indeed, indoor screens; are you going to be permissive or is there a complicated or expensive licensing process? Obviously, people like Canary Wharf, even it was expensive, could probably manage it and they have quite a record of having outdoor displays for football games and other things. If it is your local sports club and they wanted to put something on, is there a licensing issue?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): I do not think there is. My understanding is that provided you are not trying to get a special feed from the BBC and you are just showing the BBC, provided you are not charging people for entrance to that, then there is no issue in terms of doing that. The only other issue would be the same sort of licensing provisions that would apply to any event but the basic local authority licensing issues there would be no special Olympic licensing arrangements over and above that.

John Biggs (AM): Obviously, we are London politicians so we are interested in London, but there are one or two other cities around the country. I think there are 15 or 16 sites elsewhere. If my local council in Liverpool, Hartlepool or somewhere else wanted to put on a screen, they would be able to do that without any great difficulty?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): I think they would. Again it would depend a bit on the scale that they wanted to do it and it would depend a little bit on whether they wanted to take a special feed from the BBC or whether they just wanted to show the BBC's coverage.

John Biggs (AM): Jumping back to the previous one about sales and late availability of tickets, I think the majority of people nowadays, certainly people younger than me, from my age downwards are very, sort of, telephone and e-literate; they will press a button on their telephone to find out if something is available.

Are you up to speed on making that information online available? So you get up in the morning, you press three buttons, "Can I watch the tennis?" "No tickets available" go back to bed, "Tickets available", rush down the Tube station. Is that sort of information going to be to hand?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes.

John Biggs (AM): Very easily, accessibly?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We have got a really strong new media digital team who have been doing great work on our website. They have been developing further aspects of that, thinner applications for mobile phones and the like. We have got a whole strategy and a plan of how we get key information out at Games' time. Ticketing will be a major part of that.

John Biggs (AM): In principle with all this clever technology, you can then press another button and buy the ticket and that will be possible as well or maybe not?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I think it will be a bit more complicated than that.

John Biggs (AM): It would be good for you in business terms and it would be quite good for people.

Len Duvall (Chair): Someone will pick up that idea now. Let us move into the final phase which is, as John [Biggs] has lead us into, purchasing a ticket.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I am interested in what Ticketmaster are going to get out of this. How much, for example, is it going to cost over and above the face value of the ticket for people to buy tickets via the online or box office? Let us take a £30 ticket. How much is a £30 ticket going to cost, what is the extra that you are going to have to pay to the Ticketmaster people?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): There will be no extra on £30 ticket. £30 ticket will cost £30.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Right. So all of the tickets will be face value regardless of where you buy them?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Correct.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): So a £50 ticket is £50.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We will charge postage. If you buy a ticket from box office you will not get that charge; if you buy it a year in advance you will. We have got no booking fees on the tickets; that is a deliberate policy.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Excellent. Good. So what are Ticketmaster getting out of it? Are they getting the database?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No. Ticketmaster have a specific contract with us, really, to provide the technology. We do not want to reinvent the wheel. They are providing the technology for the ticket sales at the Games' time operations in a contract which we agreed with them last year. That contract concludes with the end of the Paralympic Games.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): So they are basically doing it out of the goodness their heart, I am not being sarcastic, and they are not getting access to the database at any stage, they are not getting paid and they are not getting any money on top of every ticket they sell?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): They are certainly getting paid, but equally they are one of our sponsors so they are paying money back to us as well.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): So LOCOG are paying them to provide this service are they?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes. They are paying us a sponsorship fee as well.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): So you are giving them money and they are giving you money back?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Yes. So we have got a very good deal as we have with many of our sponsors. We provide rights and they provide services.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Are they getting free tickets?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): There are no free tickets? Are they getting an access to be able to buy tickets?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Only as one of tier 3 sponsors. They get the same opportunity as other tier 3 sponsors get.

Len Duvall (Chair): They are not going to be allowed to sell them on?

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Particularly to the IOC or friends.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Just to finish off on the database, can you tell me exactly who is going to have access to this database? Can you give us an assurance it will never be sold or given to anybody, particularly people who take up residence in the Olympic Park; for example, somebody who would move into one of the stadiums?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): We are not going to sell the database on, no. We have not got any plans to give it either; legacy has not been fully finalised yet. What we do want to use the database for is to help drive forward British sport.

So as part of the ticketing plan, if you buy a table-tennis ticket, we will connect you and send you newsletters about table-tennis and British table-tennis in advance of the Games. We will link you into British table-tennis and hope that you will join them post-Games to carry through your interest in that sport.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): You will not give them my details?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): No, but we will encourage you sign up with them.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): That I do not have a problem with. That is fine. So absolute categorical assurance that you will not give this database to anyone, you will not sell the database and nobody will have access to it except LOCOG?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): It is a LOCOG database. We are not going to sell it to anyone. All the legacy arrangements have not been finalised yet.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): So you might give it to the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC)?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I do not know that.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Right. Well, I do think we need, Chair, to come back to this because this is a very, very important issue. My concern would be if the Legacy Company are successful, and we all hope they are, and they do manage to get tenants into all of these places, I would hate to think that one of the sweeteners for the tenants coming in is we have got probably one of the best databases of people interested in sport which I would have thought must be worth an absolute fortune. I would hate to think that is being used as a sweetener.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): That is certainly not the intention. We do want to try to drive some legacy into British sport on a sport-by-sport basis.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I do not have a problem with you suggesting to people that they might want to join their local tennis club or their local sports club. I do think this is a very important point. Just finally, could I just ask you; I know that Visa is obviously going to be the preferred method of payment in the venues and throughout the Park, if people have not got Visa how they are going to be able to pay for things? Are there arrangements being made for them to pay cheques, cash?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Cash.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Cash. So if you have not got a Visa card you pay cash, is that right? That will be anywhere, there will not be a problem?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Correct.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): OK. Thank you.

Victoria Borwick (AM): There is no other card accepted at all?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): That is correct, yes.

John Biggs (AM): In American terms with their American Express it is used everywhere except the Olympic Park.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Are you going to have cash machines inside the Park?

Victoria Borwick (AM): Paying ones?

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Well, free ones presumably.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): I do not know the details.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): I think if you are saying to people that you can only pay with Visa or cash I think you have got to provide them with a means to get the cash. I accept that Visa is a major sponsor.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Noted. I would expect that but I do not know. I am sorry.

Len Duvall (Chair): Is that your area or is that someone else's area? I think we need to follow up on that.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): It is someone else's area in terms of those arrangements. In terms of ticketing you will be able to clearly use a Visa card to buy tickets. You will be able to use cash, cheques, postal orders at various times. When we go on sale next spring we have got a major campaign with paper application forms as well as online where you can use cheques and postal orders. Then when we get to Games time and we open box offices, absolutely you will be able to pay by cash as well.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Just cash, no postal orders and cheques during Games time?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Not postal orders, no. Cheques probably.

Len Duvall (Chair): OK. We can go back to the touting issue. I am a regular follower of football and, as you said, there are laws on touting but it still exists. What are the special arrangements that are going to be put in place around the touting issue? Are you saying that there is not going to be any?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): There are very definitely special arrangements. I think we have got several different issues there. We are working very closely with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Operation Podium is their special plan for London 2012 around ticket touting and around fake memorabilia and the like.

On ticket touting we have already worked with them on closing down websites that are purporting to sell London 2012 tickets, even though they are not available yet. We will be working with them on known touts and people who may want to buy tickets and at Games' time on trying to limit them and to prevent them and to take action against them.

We face some real challenges online and across the world because this is not just about ticket touts and a bloke standing on the corner. This is about international crime as well and fraud. It is about people setting up a website in the Bahamas with a bank account in Hungary, a registered address in Peru and a credit card that is charged in Arizona and purporting to be London 2012, selling people stuff, having no intention of delivering it, taking people's money and disappearing. That is the sort of fraud which we are working with them on as well to try to limit that.

As part of that, we have already gone out and purchased a lot of the web addresses which are relevant, lots of combinations of tickets; London 2012 Olympics. We have gone out and bought them to prevent other people using them. We have got a series of strategies but we expect it is going to be a challenge.

Len Duvall (Chair): Is the Cultural Olympiad ticketing something the Mayor is interested in, in terms of having a view on, or is that something that is under LOCOG? What is the ticketing plan for that or is that separate?

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): It is separate. Major announcements were made this week. A lot of those events are actually put on by individual venues elsewhere. We are looking to co-ordinate that and bring that under an umbrella so that you can go to one place and look and see what else is on and find your way to buy those tickets even if it is only wayfinding – in some ways. We will certainly encourage people who are buying sport tickets to look at cultural events right across London; be that music or art or whatever, to fill out their stay in London.

Len Duvall (Chair): OK. The Mayor is obviously watching in the Mayor's Office because he has issued about the third press release announcing securing the funding of 125,000 tickets. No doubt there will be a fourth or fifth press release at some time. Is the Mayor interested in the Cultural Olympiad being on the same principles about accessibility for special and priority groups including children and young people in terms of access to some of these cultural activities?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): I think that is right. I think we will be looking at what opportunities there are to do that. I think it is a much more sort of diverse range of events within the Olympiad, as Paul [Williamson] said. A significant number of the events within the programme are effectively events that are being put on by the Southbank Centre, the opera house, the museum or smaller venues. We would obviously want to work with them to encourage that sort of access.

There will be some bigger specific Olympic events. There is a big music festival, for example, around the Thames in the run up to the Games. I suspect that my understanding of that is that is going to be largely a free access festival. I imagine demand will exceed supply and that sort of event obviously provides a real opportunity to provide that sort of access to a wide range of people, who one might think would not normally be able to go to events like that.

I think we will be looking to do that together with the Cultural Olympiad organisers but it is not something where we can, if you like, have a blanket policy because the events are different in scale and nature.

Len Duvall (Chair): It is in your ambit?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): It is very much on our agenda.

Len Duvall (Chair): You are looking at it?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Yes.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): These are both beneath our radar but neither of us are responsible for it and we want to make sure it works really well.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): It is primarily a responsibility for the Cultural Olympiad team and the organisers. They are well aware that the Mayor wants to see those principles in the arrangements or people to go to those events.

Len Duvall (Chair): In terms of, not command and control but influence, the Mayor has a great deal of influence on that Cultural Olympiad, particularly on the London events.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Absolutely. The Mayor personally meets Tony Hall and Ruth McKenzie who are perhaps in the key organisational positions. Tony Hall chairs the board that is responsible for the Olympiad and Ruth McKenzie is the Director of the Cultural Olympiad. The Mayor meets with them on a regular basis to discuss this and other issues to do with the Olympiad.

Len Duvall (Chair): Presumably, because you do not need the sponsorship for the children's tickets that you have purchased, that could be an avenue that you would explore for intervening and making the Cultural Olympiad accessible to young people; including going into the reserves then as an option.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): Leaving aside the issue about the reserves, it is clearly not something ideally we wanted to do.

Len Duvall (Chair): You were not prepared to do it before.

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): We were prepared to do it if it was necessary because of the value which was attached to the scheme. Quite a few of the events that will be run at the time of the Cultural Olympiad will have very significant support from Olympic sponsors. Some of the sponsors, BP,

British Telecom and others, have a particular focus on supporting cultural events at all times and are very much signed up to doing some big stuff around the Olympiad. Certainly, we would want to work with them on this.

I think there are other opportunities which we will want to encourage sponsors. I am sure LOCOG will do the same and they will have their own interests in doing this, for example, to use their ticket allocations for the Games in innovative ways to provide access to people who otherwise would not be able to get see them. I do think that does apply to Cultural Olympiad events. It is a great opportunity, obviously, and it is going to be a very successful festival.

Len Duvall (Chair): Certainly, I am not speaking for the Committee, but the Cultural Olympiad and the numbers attending is that not everyone is into sport, including some members of the Committee. It gives us a great opportunity to increase this figure of 125,000 children in London getting access to a slice of the Olympics albeit the Olympic fringe. It is not a small issue is it?

Neale Coleman (Director of London 2012 Co-ordination, GLA): I agree. We will, and in part encouraged by your emphasis, talk further to the Cultural Olympiad organisers about ways in which we can help to ensure that. If there are issues around resourcing, obviously we can look at that as well.

Len Duvall (Chair): I think we would be very supportive if you could move in that direction and we have got the Cultural Olympiad people coming back in the New Year. I think certainly we will be writing to you to ask about what your plans are very shortly.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): Originally, when we heard the details of the database there was a suggestion that if somebody was going to buy four tickets, rather than just giving their name address they would have to give the name and address of all of the people; I think that was dropped. I just wanted to clearly have that put on record that it will only be the person purchasing the tickets whose details will be required.

Paul Williamson (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): Our plan is capture the name and address of the person buying the ticket and they are responsible for those tickets. Yes.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): So if I am buying four tickets, perish the thought, you will only want my name and address; not the names of Len [Duvall], John [Biggs] and whoever is coming with me?

Paul Williams (Head of Ticketing, LOCOG): That is correct and we look forward to your application.

Len Duvall (Chair): I would like to say these are important issues and you can imagine why in terms of the thrust of our questioning. I would like to thank you in the way that you have answered the questions. There is probably some work that we need to follow up and we will be writing to you both about some follow up questions in terms of what Members have raised.

Dee Doocey (Deputy Chair): We will want the information on disability groups.

Len Duvall (Chair): Certainly if you can supply us with that information we would be grateful. OK. That is the end of that hearing session. So thank you very much.

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