

Report to the Council

Subject: Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio

Date: 22 April 2014

Portfolio Holder: Councillor E Webster

Recommending:

That the report of the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder be noted.

Leisure Services - Facilities

I am pleased to report that the contract with SLM continues to work well. Gym and fitness class usage has increased at all sites year on year since the start of the contract. These along with swimming lessons are the main source of income for SLM.

In recent years the number of patients referred by GPs to the centres has fallen and SLM have been engaging with surgeries to increase the number of referrals. This has seen an increase from 111 patients last financial year to 160 patients this year. SLM have recently been awarded the 'Inspired by 2012' mark from the Cabinet Office for their Legacy Games project which was delivered jointly by SLM and Fit for Sport. The Legacy Games is driven by a joint pledge to build a sustainable activity and health legacy in communities around the country. The aim is to have 500,000 under 16s 'engaged and active' and the key objective is to inspire and motivate youngsters to become active for their health.

Community Services - General

Disability Inclusion Project : Due to the success and impact of the Disability Inclusion Project, Essex County Council has provided further funding to continue the project until 31st March 2015. To date, over 350 disabled children and young people have participated in the project. Each week the project delivers 8 x sessions for disabled children and young people, these include; dodgeball, trampolining, yoga, boccia, swimming and horse riding. The project also delivers an extensive programme during the school holidays and this Easter's programme is already fully booked.

StreetBoxing Project: Community Services has received £8,897 from the Police & Crime Commissioner Fund, to develop and deliver a 12 week boxing project for young people aged 13 – 25 years. The project is a partnership between Epping Forest District Council, Essex County Council and Eastside Boxing Club. The project will commence on 12th May and be delivered in three locations; Buckhurst Hill (at Eastside Boxing Club), the Limes Centre, Chigwell and Ninefields Community Hall, Waltham Abbey.

Epping Forest Youth Council: The recent EF Youth Council elections saw over 2,500 young people from across the district vote for their preferred candidate. Local secondary schools have reported how impressed they have been with the way the elections have been run, particularly as they have given young people a real flavour of an authentic voting experience. On 15th April, our 21 newly elected Youth Councillors commenced their two year term in office.

Holiday Playschemes: Numbers continue to be high for the Council's Holiday Playscheme service. During Easter, a Playscheme was delivered for the first time at The Limes Centre in Chigwell and 'Play in the Park' and 'Play in the Forest' sessions are recording record numbers.

Limes Centre Activity: Apart from the weekly programme of activities, the Community Café based at The Limes Centre continues to thrive and plans are underway to develop extra after school provision for local children living on Limes Farm.

Creativity Awards: There were seven Creativity Award winners this year including singers, dancers, two theatre groups and young people who wanted to develop their talent in media. The overall winners were a theatre group from E15 Acting School. Their award went to support their show to go to Edinburgh Fringe Festival this August. The show highlights the too often stigmatised issue of mental health. The group were delighted to receive their award at the Civic Awards in March.

Motiv8 Dance Showcase: The annual Motiv8 event was held at Epping Forest College on 31 March and 1 April. Over 200 young people from across the district aged between 5 – 18 years took part and performed to an audience of over 500 people in two, 'sold out' shows. This year Epping Forest College students were even more involved in the event and those from the media, performance, dance, as well as hair and make-up courses all contributed to the production of the event which was a huge success.

Transitions Extension: £8000 has recently been secured from Essex County Council to develop a further project to engage older people in the arts. This commission builds on the success of the Transitions project. This time the focus will be on 're-enablement', with a view to getting people back into their own homes after an illness or operation.

Museum News

Education Outreach Work: Even though the Museum building is currently closed, this year has been the busiest year for school workshops since 2010, with numbers of pupils reached through outreach workshops going over 5000 again. Loan boxes to local schools also continue to be popular and despite the closure, school visits across both museums have stood up well with 242 pupils visiting a museum.

With the new prehistory element of the National Curriculum, the Education Officer is working with the Museum of London and UCL archaeology students to develop resources for this and will be offering INSET sessions to teachers from June.

Lowewood Museum: The Council's management of Lowewood Museum in Hoddesdon (on behalf of Broxbourne Borough), has helped the Museum Service to maintain a very high profile for the Epping Forest District since our own Museum closure in November, with the opportunity for many of our residents to take part in activities, events and exhibitions staged at Lowewood. The venue has also enabled the school visits programme to continue with a lot of new schools in Broxbourne being brought into the fold, as well as the steady audience of regular users.

Tour De France Activity and Events

Cycling For Health: Following the success of the Cycling 4 Health Programme in 2013, a 2014 scheme is being launched in April, with new routes and family rides at weekends, to enable whole families to take advantage of the health benefits. The rides are open to everyone and to join in, people don't even need a bike and helmet, as these can be hired in advance.

Family Rides: To celebrate this great year of cycling Community Services will also be staging two family, 'day long' rides, which will be over longer distances, therefore any children and young people attending must be competent riders.

- **Sunday 27th July** - We will be celebrating the two year anniversary of the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games by cycling down the Lee Valley to the Olympic Park in Stratford.
- **Sunday 17th August** – Will be the ‘Tour de Epping Forest’. This guided ride and talk will take people to some of the historical sites in Epping Forest that they may never have known existed.

High Beach Youth Cycling Club: The High Beach Youth Cycling Club is a competitive mountain biking club for young people age 8 – 14. The club is for participants of all levels and helps young people develop the skills needed to be able to enter local and regional competitions. Every Saturday 10am – 12noon meet at King’s Oak Pub, Car Park, High Beach.

Future Provision and Management of the Council’s Sports and Leisure Centres

The Portfolio Holder Advisory Group on the Development of a Leisure and Cultural Strategy for the District, met on the 26 March. The main item of business was consideration of a report on the Future Provision and Management of the Council’s Sports and Leisure Centres.

Prior to the meeting, Members had the opportunity to visit the Leisure Centres, not only to see the range of opportunities on offer, but to be briefed on some of the maintenance issues presented by what are now largely an ageing stock of facilities.

A number of key issues were explored by the Working Group to include the background to the original decision to seek an alternative management operator, the structure and conditions of the current contract, the current contractor’s performance, the costs and subsidy of the current facilities and finally future procurement options.

The Working Group reached a number of conclusions that will be formally reported to Cabinet. However, in summary, the Group will be recommending that the Key Objectives in relation to future Leisure Management Options should be to reduce the management fee, maximise capital investment, improve the range of services offered, increase usage and participation and complement what is provided by other leisure providers. In addition, the Working Group felt that the Council should consider seeking to invite other private sector operators or established leisure trusts, on a competitive basis, to manage the centres in future, and to pursue a competitive dialogue approach to contract procurement.

Grant Aid Scheme 2013/14 – Statement of Expenditure at 31 March 2014

I am pleased to advise Members that the following community groups received ‘long term’ grants through the grant aid scheme during the past financial year 2013/14:

Name of group	Amount £
Alzheimer’s Society	1,772
Crossroads	4,529
Epping Forest District Swimming Club	3,764
Home-Start, Epping Forest	4,529
Lambourne End Centre	2,765
Loughton Voluntary Care Association	2,990
North Weald Airfield Museum	2,265
Ongar & Villages Voluntary Care	1,772
Rural Community Council for Essex	1,272
Samaritans	2,765
Zinc Arts	4,529
VAEF Gardening (formally Mow & Grow)	1,772

VAEF Home Safety (formally Safe & Sound)	4,529
Victim Support	3,982
Waltham Abbey Youth 2000	4,529

Epping Forest District Citizen's Advice Bureau and Voluntary Action Epping Forest (including provision for the Volunteer Bureau) received the following funding during 2013/14 financial year:

Epping Forest District Citizen's Advice Bureau	113,840
Voluntary Action Epping Forest	39,120

And the following community and leisure groups received major 'one off' grants through the grant aid scheme during the past financial year 2013/14:

British Red Cross	5,000
Epping Cricket Club	1,600
Epping Forest District CAB (for new premises)	800
Epping Forest District CAB (additional funding)	4,000
Epping Forest Re-Use	1,800
High Beach Festival Organising Group	1,750
Home-Start Epping Forest	3,884
Lambourne End Centre (wool spinning)	900
Loughton Memorial Garden Project	2,125
1 st Nazeing Scout & Guide Group	2,500
North Weald Cricket Club	5,000
North Weald Methodist Church	4,920
North Weald Mums	5,000
My Giftbox Community Project	1,250
Red Squirrels Explorer Scout Unit	2,020
St Peter's Church, Roydon	2,500
VAEF Fair Project	1,700
Valentine Singers	1,500
Waltham Abbey Community Association	500
West Essex Alcohol & Drug Service (ADAS)	2,050