

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 18 December 2007

Subject: Leisure and Young People

Portfolio Holder: Councillor M Cohen

Item: 7(h)

Recommending:

That the report of the Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder be noted

Epping Forest District Youth Council

As reported previously to Council, we have been working with our secondary schools, further education college and youth services in the development of a Youth Council for the District. Today the election count took place and we are delighted to be able to announce the results at this evening's meeting of Council. I am sure all members will join me in congratulating those who have been elected and moreover expressing our thanks to all those who have made our Youth Council a reality.

Epping Forest District Museum - "The Longest Journey" – Slavery Exhibition

The extremely successful Slavery exhibition, which was developed by the District Museum Service to mark the centenary of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire, is continuing to gain acclaim across the eastern region.

Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (Renaissance in the Regions initiative), the exhibition explores Essex links with the story of the slave trade

The exhibition was on display at the District Museum from August until October and was seen by 2106 visitors. In addition, audiences of 140 people were involved in site specific performances of 'Hester's Place: stories of slavery', which was based on Harlow's links with the slave trade at Little Parndon. The drama piece produced by E15 Acting School, which was described as extremely powerful by all involved, included a very realistic, interactive experience of what it was like to travel aboard a slave ship.

The exhibition which is now on tour in Norfolk, also includes a powerful DVD film, in which an actor vividly narrates the autobiography of a slave, from his 'capture' in Africa, to his life of poverty in Colchester and Norwich. The film, which was based on the first known slave narrative in the English Language published in 1772, was commissioned by the District Museum and has received significant publicity in its own right. The Museum Service is now currently exploring external funding opportunities to extend the availability of the DVD film to educational venues.

It is also hoped to create a webcast version of the film, to be shown through the district council website.

'Fit As A Fiddle'

Sports Development has been successful in securing £140k funding from the Big Lottery Well Being Fund, for the delivery of a four year physical activity and health improvement programme for people from middle age upwards. The aim of the programme is to encourage people to 'get back into', or, 'take up' regular physical activity and sport, and to educate them on the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through mid - life and beyond.

The funding will pay for a 'Fit As A Fiddle Officer' post to develop and deliver the programme in the Epping Forest District and additionally, to provide training and CPD for Physical Activity Officers based in Harlow and Uttlesford Districts, to enable them to rollout similar programmes.

This is the first initiative of its' kind to be piloted across the West Essex area and will be supported by the WE Primary Care Trust and monitored for its effectiveness in meeting cross border health objectives.