

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet
Date: 28 October 2021
Subject: Community and Regulatory Services Portfolio
Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Patel

Recommending:

That the report of the Community and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder be noted.

Community, Culture & Wellbeing

Community Health and Wellbeing event

The Community, Culture and Wellbeing teams organised a Health and Wellbeing Day at the Civic Offices on Monday 11 October showcasing the wide variety of positive activities, workshops and programmes the service provides for residents. Using the newly configured community space on the ground floor of the building, the interactive day ran from 10am through to 8pm and incorporated the Epping Forest Health & Wellbeing Board's themes of "Start Well", "Stay Well" and "Age Well."

The NHS West Essex CCG contributed £1,700 towards the day which kicked off with a "Stay Well This Winter" morning for older residents with informative talks from pharmacy professionals, community nurses and specialist health advisors; a seated exercise session, information stands, free goodie bags, entertainment and lunch. Health checks and flu vaccinations were available.

Early afternoon saw craft sessions, jumbo party games and activities for children and families drawing inspiration from Epping Forest District Museum's latest exhibition "Game Plan: Board Games Rediscovered." The Museum team installed a wonderful temporary exhibition in the café area the ground floor which was enjoyed by visitors throughout the event.

The evening session included; floral art, crafts and low impact exercise taster classes for adults, all designed to encourage participation in cultural, physical and social activities to highlight how engaging in positive activities can support overall physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Limes Farm Estate Community Initiatives

Funding of £8,966 has been secured from the BBC to spend on community initiatives on the Limes Farm estate in Chigwell following the filming of a documentary in the area during July and August. The CCW team is leading on work with the Limes Farm Residents Association and wider community to implement a number of innovative wellbeing initiatives including; establishing community football training and

associated coaching qualifications for residents, the design and installation of a rainbow pathway, the cultivation of planters outside the shops and a Christmas Craft Camp for families. The funding has already enabled the Limes Farm Youth Club to resume running from The Limes Centre for the estate's young people.

Cycling for Health

CCW are pleased to announce that funding totally £963 has been secured from Lee Valley Regional Park Authority to enable staff to provide further Cycling for Health sessions for beginners on the first Sunday of the month between October 2021 and March 2022 at 10am to 12pm. Full details about these sessions can be found at: <https://eppingforestdc.bookinglive.com/book/add/p/521>

Ongar Puzzle and Games Club

CCW are excited to announce the launch of the Ongar Puzzle & Games Club which started on Thursday 16 September and meets weekly, from 10am to 12noon at St Martin's Church Rooms, Castle Street, Ongar. The club helps to address social isolation bringing the local community together again to form new and lasting friendships. Feedback has been positive, with participants saying "Laughing, talking, and chatting with friends is just lovely", 'This is just what we need' and 'Put a smile on our faces'. For one resident this was the 'first time I have socialised outside the house in months.'

Waltham Abbey Festival of Light

CCW are collaborating with Waltham Abbey Town Council, Town Partnership, churches, local businesses, clubs, societies, residents' associations, schools and the Police and Fire services to a "Festival of Light" to Waltham Abbey. This incorporates the annual Cavalcade of Light and the Museum will open late as part of the event on Friday 26 November.

Ninefields Financial & Mental Health Wellbeing Hub

Headed up by Epping Forest Citizens Advice, CCW are supporting a newly established weekly Ninefields Wellbeing Hub based in Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre on Tuesdays. Advice and guidance will be on offer with partners and resources including CA, the DWP, the DevelopMe upskilling programme and the NHS Mental Health Team all aimed at supporting individuals' long-term pathways to good mental and physical health and routes into employment.

Community Gardening Initiatives

In collaboration with the Council's Land and Estates team and with support from local residents, CCW have installed a variety of planters and new growing areas at sites including; Greenyards and Paradise Road in Waltham Abbey, by the shops in St Peter's Road, Shelley and at Hyde Mead House and Jubilee Court Sheltered Housing Schemes, enabling the growing of a wide variety of food in many instances.

Two new sensory garden spaces have been established at Hillhouse, Ninefields in collaboration with the Residents Associated with 850 lavender plants provided and an associated Grand Lavender community event organised on 19th October. The community allotments at Longfields, Waltham Abbey and Wheelers Farm, North Weald have been keeping volunteers busy, producing a wide variety of fresh organic foods. Community Development Officers engaged with Ongar Primary School to

show 540 children how to make wildflower meadow seed bombs for the Cripsey Brook Community Meadow. These were planted by the children at the site. Meadow clearance sessions were also organised with local Shelley residents with the vision to enhance the area and make it a place of calm and reflection for the community.

Community Champions

Community Engagement Officers have recruited two new Community Champions from Roydon and a further one from Waltham Abbey in conjunction with ward Members. A further two Champions from Chigwell will shortly come on board bringing the total number of Community Champions for the district to 22.

Information Trailer

The Culture & Community Team has mobilised an 'Information Trailer' which can be shared with wider Council directorates, partners and organisations to bring local key messages to the community. The trailer was recently used for a 'Chatterbox Live' event in Shelley to consult with residents about their estate, and also engage positive with residents in respect of their health and wellbeing.

Summer Holiday Activity Programme for Children and Young People

In an unprecedented year, the 2021 Summer Holiday Activity Programme delivered beyond all expectations with a total of 2,339 local children and young people taking part. Over 50% of participants reported that this was their first experience of the programme providing clear evidence that new families engaged with services this year. Over 70% of participants rated their experience as "excellent" and total profit achieved was in excess of £9,000.

Additionally, the Council's first ever Bronze Arts Award programme was developed and delivered as part of the Summer Programme. Arts Award is a nationally recognised qualification for young people age 7 – 25 years and all participants passed with flying colours. Certificates were presented on 16 October by the Chairman of the Council.

Young Citizen of the Year

This annual award recognises young people living in the district who have made an exceptional contribution to their community. This can be in terms of outstanding courage, service to the community, showing extraordinary commitment, energy and effort in towards a particular cause or in achieving a particular goal. Nominations are invited for young people 11-18-year-olds, living in the Epping Forest district. The finalists will be invited to the District Council's Civic Awards in March 2022 where the winner will be announced and will receive £100 and a certificate of achievement

Epping Forest Youth Conference

The theme for 2021 will be Climate Change. The Youth Councillors will be hosting the conference at the civic offices on Friday 19 November.

Epping Forest Youth Councillors celebrate their heritage

As part of the Epping Forest District Museum's 'The Boys' exhibition, six Youth Councillors presented their family history stories to invited guests including Angela Cohen MBE. Youth Councillors talked about their family's origins being from; Greece,

India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Singapore, Romania, Bulgaria, Namibia, Netherlands, England, Germany, Poland.

#consequences and “Stop & Think” Secondary School Roadshow Programme 2021/2022

#consequences is a community safety awareness roadshow aimed at Year 9 pupils. Facilitated by CCW staff, specialist service providers deliver in all the district's secondary schools. Issues such as County Lines, gangs, healthy relationships and online safety are all explored. The #Consequences Project is being delivered in this current school term and in the Spring Term 2022.

“Stop & Think” roadshows are being delivered in schools to Year 7 pupils. The focus for these sessions is Police stop and search and `stop and account` scenarios and aims to raise awareness of this and build positive relationships between young people and the Police.

Museum Movers and Dance Connect

In September Museum Movers returned to full “in person” sessions at the Museum. The team worked extremely hard during lockdown to keep the group, all older people, engaged. Some attended Zoom sessions but many had regular calls to keep in touch.

Dance Connect is part of the Dementia Friendly Communities Programme in Waltham Abbey. A variety of music from the last seven decades is played to stimulate memories and discussion and get toes tapping! The sessions have recently changed to weekly classes and now that Dementia cafes are reopening staff will be visiting these to promote the sessions.

Rainbow Mural in Princess Alexandra Hospital

The CCW rainbow mural has been installed at Princess Alexandra Hospital, in the children's A&E department. The mural brings together numerous rainbow pictures created by young people from across the district during the Covid pandemic in gratitude to our NHS and Key Workers. The artwork will be officially opened by Cllr Aniket Patel later in the year with a presentation at the Civic Offices.

The Boys Project

The Museum exhibition and associated programme on The Boys has engaged with a wide variety of people across the district and beyond. The exhibition itself was visited by over 4,500 people and the associated events programme included a special day for 3 of the Loughton Boys themselves, their families and other survivors which included a private view of the exhibition and an afternoon tea at Holmehurst House where they stayed when they first came to the country. This event received coverage from various media both local and nationwide. The project is due to come to a close in December and the Museum team is currently working on a touring version of the exhibition itself which can be hired by local venues and beyond and alongside the education resources will be the lasting legacy of this project.

External Funding

The team have recently submitted a funding bid for £120,000 to Arts Council England for the ‘Greater in Spirit, Larger in Outlook’ project. The project will look at the

ethnographic collection at the Museum to better understand and interpret the story around its origins, the Buxton family who collected the items and the way these items are displayed at the Museum. If successful the project will include the recruitment of officers from diverse backgrounds to support the project, co-curation projects with source communities, engagement work and activities as well as training and support for museum staff.

Museum Education and Outreach

The Museum Education Service has been in high demand with schools. Although some sessions are still taking place remotely there is a great demand for both in person sessions in schools and in the Museum itself. In total, since April 2021, the service has engaged with 3,954 pupils.

Collections Rationalisation Project

To date, the Rationalisation Project team have reviewed all items at the Museum in Store 1 and the North Weald store. Work is nearly complete on the initial review stage of both Store 2 at the Museum as well as the offsite store at the Cr@te. The next few months will focus on continuing to review items at the Museum's remaining stores as well as the research phase of the items that have already been through this initial phase. So far 10 new volunteers have been recruited for the project with a total of 19 volunteers currently supporting the work. To date, collections volunteers have contributed 556 hours working on this specific project, equating to nearly £5,500 investment into the district.

Exhibitions

The Museum has just opened its next exhibition 'Game Plan', which is on loan from the Victoria and Albert Museum of Childhood, and explores the history of boardgames in a highly interactive display. Following this, the Museum will host the Wellcome Collections exhibition 'Georgie Meadows: Stitched Drawings' which brings together 24 textile artworks exploring personal experiences of ageing and dementia. The exhibition will be accompanied by a full programme of both public engagement as well as professional development and training. The Museum itself has just been recognised by the Epping Forest Dementia Action Alliance as working toward being a Dementia Friendly venue with a clear action plan to support this work. Part of this will include Dementia Friends information session for partners, local businesses and other colleagues in the council as well as ensuring all staff at the Museum are Dementia Friends trained.

Workspace Wellbeing for Staff

The Wellbeing Room at the Civic was kitted out by the team in August to be used as a tech-free space for staff to relax. The room includes yoga mats, a music dock, air-purifying plants, comfortable seating with cushions and blankets.

A new programme of staff activities was launched at the Civic Offices from mid-September. It includes both weekly activities (yoga, stretching, jogging, walking, book club, music appreciation), and workshops (floristry, learn to draw, cushion-cover making, guided walks, make Christmas decorations). The Council's Workspace Health Champions have been engaged in developing the programme and many activities are run by the champions themselves.

Project You

Project You is a six-week programme co-facilitated by CCW and the Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) The pilot at Leverton School in Waltham Abbey saw individuals participate in workshops including advice on how to improve their mental health along with the opportunity to participate in physical activities. Participants reported improvements in their anxiety levels, confidence levels improving and increased awareness and utilisation of self-coping strategies in day to day life. There are plans to roll the project out further and the team have applied for Find Your Active funding from Active Essex to cover the next round of delivery.

West Essex Adult Lifestyle Inclusion Project

CCW have been awarded £100K to lead a project to improve the health and wellbeing of adults with Learning Disabilities across West Essex. The project includes the recruitment of an Occupational Therapist and Support Officer. Working in partnership with Essex County Council to recruit the Occupational Therapist, it is anticipated that both vacancies will be filled in November enabling the project to commence at that time.

COMF for Reconditioning Activities

CCW has been awarded an additional £22,600 of COMF funding from Essex County Council to support the physical and mental reconditioning of the district's Clinically Vulnerable residents. The funding will be used to offer residents one to one support to overcome barriers that stop them accessing community-based physical activities and services.

West Essex Health Inequalities

The Council continues to take a leading role in addressing health inequalities across West Essex with the Service Manager for Community, Culture & Wellbeing chairing the multi-agency WE Health Inequalities Committee, which feeds directly into the One Health & Care Partnership. Four medium-term thematic work strands have been developed and are moving at pace to implement partnership initiatives to address health inequalities. The groups are themed around Healthy Lifestyles, Socio-Economic, Clinical Care and the Built Environment, the latter is headed up by the Council's Health Improvement Officer.

The work of the Epping Forest Health & Wellbeing Board continues to be recognised as a model of best practice across Essex, in particular the place-based approach and the links to the Robert Wood Johnson social determinants of health model.