

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 16 December 2008

Subject: Leisure and Young People Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Heather Harding

Item: 6(i)

Recommendation

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

Ongar Leisure Centre Development

Formal confirmation has been received from Essex County Council that it will be providing £200,000 funding towards the planned development of Ongar Leisure Centre Playing Fields.

The funding is part of the 2012 facilities legacy strategy for Essex, The Ongar project was recommended by the Essex Football Foundation as it presents a good opportunity to provide a high quality multi-sport facility, for Ongar and the surrounding areas.

This excellent contribution from Essex will assist the Council in securing match funding for the project, from the Football Foundation.

Officers are currently in the process of completing paperwork to be submitted to the Football Foundation for funding up to 60% of the total project cost at some £1.4m. It is hoped that we will have a decision by Spring to enable work to commence in Summer 2009.

Epping Forest Youth Council - Big Youth Debate

The most successful local consultation event ever staged, was held on Wednesday 19th November, when the Youth Council supported by staff from Community & Culture, Research and Democratic Services and Public Relations, supported 150 local young people to voice their views to a panel of high profile local stakeholders.

The event commenced with a presentation from two of the Youth Councillors on the results of the Youth Council's on-line questionnaire (which received more than 900 responses) and was then followed by a question and answer session.

The Leader of Council & Deputy Chief Executive sat on a panel, with local MP's; Chief Executive of West Essex PCT, the District Police Commander and other high profile officers from County, to answer questions from the young people on topics ranging from potential 2012 legacy for the District, to bad behaviour in schools and Police response to drunken youths.

Hosted by David Monk from BBC Essex Radio, the event was extremely successful and demonstrated the commitment of young people to advocate positive changes to the localities they live in.

All partners involved in the event were very impressed with the organization of the event. Officers will now be concentrating their efforts on pursuing possible changes to local services in the District, through the Local Strategic Partnership and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

Epping Forest Youth Council - Future Funding

The Youth Council have asked the Cabinet to support a CSB growth bid of 12k per annum as part of the budget process 2009/10 to provide revenue funding for ongoing provision of the Youth Council.

Representatives from the Youth Council have been asked to support their application for further funding and will make a presentation in due course to Members.

Leisure Centres

The Epping Contract Leisure Centres have gained Gold Standard internal company fitness facility awards for all four centres SLM have also been working with the Amateur swimming association (ASA) A Gold standard achievement award. Waltham Abbey pool is the first one to pass this and SLM have won the ASA operator of the year award.

Limes Farm Hall

Limes Farm Hall is a community facility that is located in the centre of Limes Farm Estate, Chigwell. The facility caters for a range of local groups and organisations and local residents in general. The District Council owns the building and land that it is situated on.

In April, Chigwell Parish Council notified the Council of its intention to cease management of Limes Farm Hall as from 1st June 2008, this was extended to 31st March 2009. This has been noted by the Cabinet.

The recommendation is for the Council to adopt short-term responsibility for the management of the hall up until 31st March 2010, to ensure that community use is retained whilst the longer term future of the facility is determined. A DDF Bid of £45,000 is to be submitted to facilitate this.

A multi agency approach is recommended including West Essex PCT and the Police. Essex County Council supports the potential opportunity and has the ability to contribute a Capital sum for the provision of a Children's Centre. It is also our hope that Chigwell Parish Council will add to the mix in a positive way. Local residents will be consulted.

Limes Farm Play Equipment

I attended the launch of the new play equipment on the Limes Farm Estate, which was funded by the Big Lottery Children's Play Programme following the development of the

District's Play Strategy. It is much used and appreciated by the children and parents who gathered in the rain to celebrate its official opening. Many thanks to the officers and everyone at Limes Farm who worked together to make this happen.

Limes Farm Social Inclusion Project

The Council's Sports Development Team has been working with Tottenham Hotspur Community Foundation at Limes Farm Estate over the last year, to encourage young people to take part in positive activity including football and multi-sports. This work has been extremely well received and has been further enhanced, by one of the 16 year old participants undertaking a UEFA football coaching qualification with Tottenham, who is now regularly coaching a group of 20+ youngsters on the estate, in a voluntary capacity.

The coaching course required a significant commitment by the teenager who was originally identified as one of the 'hard to reach', and he is now planning to undertake the next level coaching qualification award with Tottenham.

Tottenham and Sports Development are hoping that the teenager will be an excellent role model, to encourage other young people to adopt positive roles in their community.