

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 29 September 2009

Subject: Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Brian Rolfe

Item: 7(h)

Recommending:

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

Summer Holiday Programme

Before the next Council meeting, I will be showing you a short DVD of the vast range of holiday activities that the Community Services Sections provided throughout the summer holidays, but for now, will provide a couple of highlights.

I was invited to visit a selection of the extensive summer holiday activities provided by Community Services Sections during the summer, and was very impressed by the range of activities available to children and young people in the district. All of the activities that I saw were well organised and thoroughly enjoyed by the participants.

On most weeks throughout the summer, the programme attracted between 500 - 700 youngsters from 5 – 15 years, across activities ranging from outdoor adventure and hip hop dance, to Playschemes and the new Play in the Park sessions. I understand that in terms of attendances, that it was one of the most successful summers on record.

External Funding Secured

Staff in Community Services have also been working hard to secure external funding to add value to their core programmes, and the following funding has been secured over the last few months:

Museum

- Heritage Lottery Renaissance in the Regions Funding of £30k for the extension of the Museum's Touring Exhibitions Programme 2010/11

Sports Development

- Performance Reward Grant Funding of £21k towards the further development of an existing Youth Activity club on Ninefields Estate, Waltham Abbey
- £27k funding from the same pot for the provision of targeted trampolining sessions for primary age children with additional needs to encourage better attainment at school

- £8.5k funding from Sport Essex for delivery of a range of 'get back into sport' activities for people of all ages and abilities

Community Development

- £50k Big Lottery Playbuilders funding for the replacement of a playground in Westall Road, Loughton

In addition, the Museum has also been awarded with two national quality awards, for its' Education Outreach programme, and for being assessed by the British Tourist Board as a quality visitor attraction

Other Community Services Highlights

Part of the Arts team have been working on a project over the last 6 months called 'Make do and mend', which has involved adults with learning difficulties and disabilities; young people from disadvantaged areas and elderly people - including those in residential care. The project has been developed in conjunction with The London College of Fashion and has helped to break down barriers and fears between these very different groups, through focussing on a project making 'new clothes out of old'. It was based around the wartime shortages and the need to sometimes use utility items for clothing and how recycling of clothes is still used today.

The work produced by the many participants involved will be exhibited at the district Museum in a special display from 10 October.

Sports Development's Active Health Programme has also recently launched a range of resources to help 'older' local people improve their health and well being, including:

- An audio walking guide which is based on the successful Lifewalks routes and enables people to walk at their own convenience
- A seated exercise DVD for people to follow in the comfort of their own homes, and
- A seated exercise leaflet outlining the range of activities to improve mobility, strength and fitness

This programme is fully funded by Age Concern through the Big Lottery Fund, for 2 more years.

Waltham Abbey Sports Centre

Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting of the 3 September 2009, considered a call-in of the Cabinet decision with respect to the future of Sports Facilities in Waltham Abbey, and in particular, concerns around the potential gap in provision between the end of the Dual Use Agreement with King Harold School and any new Sports Hall being constructed at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool. In the event, Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed the Cabinet's decisions. However, I am pleased to be able to report that following a constructive meeting with King Harold School, **the school has expressed a wish that the sports centre should remain available for community use from January next year. Council officers will be working closely with the school to assist them in any way possible.**