

## ***Report to the Council***

**Subject: Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio**

**Date: 31 July 2012**

**Portfolio Holder: Councillor Liz Webster**

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### **Recommending:**

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

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### **Olympic Games**

The Olympic Flame came to Waltham Abbey on the 7<sup>th</sup> without incident apart from being approximately 20 minutes late due to an earlier delay on the A414. There were approximately 20,000 people along the route which was well up on our estimate of 12,000 based on previous local events. The crowd were in good humour and there was a general sense of excitement as convoy passed through. Our stewards and the Police did an excellent job with crowd control. The streets were clean and dressed in advance of convoy and the overall impression was that the event went very well and was an excellent example of the District and Town Council working together.

Working with Broxbourne Borough Council we were able to get the Olympic commemorative shield installed on the Highbridge Street roundabout ahead of the Torch Relay and in good time for the events at the White Water Centre. I would urge Members who haven't seen the shield to take the time to do so. It is a splendid commemoration of the Games and the history of Waltham Abbey and will prove a lasting legacy of the Games for generations to come.

As this report is published, it is just a few days from the opening of the Games and the commencement of the canoe and kayak events at the White Water Centre. Despite some difficult weather leading up to the start, everything has broadly gone according to plan. Residents and business in the controlled parking areas have received their parking permits and associated information from LOCOG. The venue will be handed back to the Lee Valley Park Authority by LOCOG on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September and will re-open to the public on 8 of September.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

The consultation exercise being undertaken by the shadow Health and Wellbeing Board ends on 31 of July. I hope that Members found the time to visit the consultation website, set out in the Members Bulletin on 13 of July. This is an important piece of work since the Board will soon need to determine its priorities for the years ahead as the responsibility and budgets for 'public health' move from central government to the County Council. The LSP Health Partnership Group was also involved in the consultation exercise undertaking a priority setting exercise at its meeting at the end of July.

### **Community Services**

**Torch Relay Community Event:** A special community event was staged to celebrate the passing of the Olympic Torch through the district and this commenced as the Torch left Highbridge Street, with Epping Forest Pipe Band who led VIPs and

crowds down Sun Street to the Meridian Line where they were met by Chinese lion dancers. This 'East meets West' theme continued with a performance by Chinese dancers and the launch of a 'China in the East' exhibition at the district Museum. In the Abbey Gardens, a whole host of family activities were provided including performances by choirs, musicians and 'Make a Move' dancers and displays of Tai Chi by 50+ people.

People of all ages could also join in a range of sports, games and arts and craft activities and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority provided opportunities to try canoeing on their special canoe machine and small animal encounters with their mini- beasts display. Out of the 20,000 spectators that attended the Torch Relay it is estimated that around 5,000 people took part in the community events throughout the morning.

**Epping Forest District Museum (EFDM):** The China in the East Exhibition is on display at the district museum until 25 September, following which it will be on tour to Ipswich and Hertford Museums.

The very successful Sporting Heroes exhibition that was created and displayed at EFDM in 2011 has also been touring across the east region and was at Saffron Walden until 1 July and is now in Braintree.

Following the success in EFDM securing first stage approval of a Heritage Lottery Grant of £1,165,000.00, work is currently being undertaken on a development proposal which will see the refurbishment of much of the current museum display, purchase of part of the adjacent building for display storage of the museum's reserve collection and development of a volunteering and research programme for the service. This very detailed second phase proposal will be submitted in November.

**Summer Holiday Programme:** Community Services will be providing a spectacular variety of activities events for ages 2 – 19 years of age during the school holidays this summer, ranging from play schemes , mountain biking and dance jams to dragon puppets and DJ workshops. Children and teenagers with additional needs are welcome at many of the activities available which are spread out over the whole six weeks break.

Any members who wish to see the activities in action are welcome to visit and this can be arranged by contacting Community Services on 01992 564561