

Report to the Council

Subject: Leisure & Wellbeing

Date: 27 September 2012

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Webster

Item: 6

Recommending:

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

Olympic Games

The Olympic and Paralympic Games have ended and as we all know provided everyone with a spectacular feast of sporting achievement. The events at the White Water Centre were a great success, with of course Team GB achieving gold and silver medals in the men's pairs event. In general terms all the traffic management and parking arrangements worked well and the area around the venue looked splendid with the "Look and Feel" in place. Our concerns around parking pressures in the vicinity of the central line stations were thankfully not realised, although our enforcement officers did maintain a high profile to ensure that the parking controls were adhered to. The Council has received thanks from the Olympic Authorities for its role in hosting the Torch Relay and the support given to Broxbourne Borough Council in respect of the White Water Centre.

The White Water Centre is now open again to the public, so if anyone would like a ride down the Olympic slalom course, now's your chance!

Health & Wellbeing

The Director of Public Health at Essex County Council has now published the Epping Forest District local area profile, undertaken as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. There is a lot of useful information contained in the profile which will form an important part of developing future health commissioning within the district. The key areas identified for consideration in setting local priorities are:

- Agencies should work in collaboration to ensure that people live in decent, affordable houses, ensuring that the policy on housing development supports independent living especially with a growing older population and provide adequate support to reduce fuel poverty in rural and more deprived areas.
- Action to reduce disparities in educational achievement at an early stage can contribute to a reduction in young people who are NEET and can reduce health inequalities, whilst enhancing young people's ability to make informed healthy choices.
- Better engagement with local communities to improve quality of life with effective strategies to promote healthier lifestyles (high smoking and obesity rates), to reduce the health and social care impact of people living with long term conditions and to improving access to information on staying healthy.
- Agencies should ensure integration of work around benefits take-up, unemployment (e.g. improving skills and qualification) and health and wellbeing promotion.

I have asked that the core document be published in the Members' Bulletin, but if Members want to explore the data in more detail they should visit

www.essexinsight.org.uk.

Community Services

Summer Holiday Programme - The Community Services' Sports, Arts, Museum and Community Development teams once again provided a very successful summer holiday activity programme for children and young people aged from 3 to 18 years and their families.

The Museums' "drop in" children's activity sessions were particularly popular with the numbers attending being up on last years' overall and this may have been due to the excellent promotion of the Museum during the Olympic Torch Relay event in Waltham Abbey before the summer. In addition, the brand new summer holiday programme at Lowewood Museum in Hoddesdon was very well received, and attracted a completely new audience to the venue.

Sports Development offered a series of Mountain Biking courses which were all full with waiting lists, attracting 64 young people on led rides in Epping Forest – again this may have been linked to the promotion of the Olympic Mountain Biking events at Hadleigh Farm and many of the Arts and Playschemes sessions were as popular as ever. However, as expected, the Olympic Games did have a negative impact on some of the holiday activities available with some sessions that would usually be full to capacity not meeting previous years' attendance levels, therefore resulting in a slight reduction in income across the board.

Sports and Health Development delivered a successful & first 'Urban Games' for the District at Townmead Leisure Park in Waltham Abbey in early September, which was supported by funding from Essex County Council. The event was attended by over 120 young people who took part in parkour, skateboarding and BMX biking. The team are also starting new running programmes and netball courses later this month and in October, in Waltham Abbey and Epping.

Local Paralympians - Former Epping Forest Sports Award winners Emma and James Hollis from Theydon Bois both competed for the Great Britain swimming team in the 2012 Paralympics. Although unfortunately James did not qualify for the finals, his older sister Emma was placed in 6th place in her final, even though she had suffered from injury a few weeks before the event.

Community Development – Highlights during the summer holidays included 'Play in the Forest' in conjunction with the City of London and the ever popular Play in the Park programme which was available at 12 different locations across the district, from Nazeing and Abridge to Ongar. Many of the Playscheme days were fully booked, but some suffered from impact of the Olympic Games.

Epping Forest Youth Council – The Youth Council has been very active over the summer period in preparation for a busy autumn, which will see the development of a range of community volunteering projects. Youth Councillors also visited the Houses of Parliament for a day, which was organised by Robert Halfon MP. Three members of the Youth Council have also been invited to attend the new Epping Forest Youth Strategy Group which is a sub group of Epping Forest Children's Partnership and involves local County Councillors, Essex County Council Youth Services and EFDC officers. The group aims to address local youth issues at a strategic level across Epping Forest as identified through the long standing Children's Partnership.

'Works Like a Charm' – A special arts trail created with residents of Limes Farm Estate, Chigwell was opened on September 14th at the new Limes Community Centre. The trail

displays the good luck treasures and charms that people of all ages and abilities have made over the last six months as part of an arts project led by the Council's Community Arts team. The various charms, treasures and trinkets will be on long - term display buried in the walls and on the fascia inside the building.

Health Summit – Members are advised that a district-wide 'Health Summit' is being staged on Friday October 12th at the Marriot Hotel in Waltham Abbey. The event which is being led by One Epping Forest Healthy Communities Group will provide the opportunity for local stakeholders to discuss the key health issues in Epping Forest and plan for ways to address these.

Museum – The Museum is currently in the process of appointing consultants to undertake the detailed technical and design work as part of the second stage funding bid to Heritage Lottery Fund for the £1,165,000.00 towards development of the Museum premises and education programme. The second stage bid will be submitted in November and will additionally include a detailed overall business plan along with plans on audience and education development, which will see the Museum placed as a sub regional museums hub-site.