

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

**Subject:** Leisure & Wellbeing      **Date:** 6 November 2012

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Mrs E Webster

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### **Recommending:**

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

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### **Leisure Services**

Cabinet agreed at its last meeting to the use of Council capital moneys to fund the next element of "Guaranteed Investment" (£240,000) to be undertaken by SLM as part of the leisure management contract. The use of the Council's finance in this way, whereby the Council receives a reduction in the monthly management fee in return for the provision of capital, is sensible given that it provides a much better rate of return than is currently available in the money markets. The money is to be spent on a wholesale refurbishment of the changing facilities at Loughton Leisure Centre, which I hope will please all Centre users since we have been receiving complaints lately about the condition of the changing suites.

I am pleased to report that, despite the difficult economic circumstances, attendances and memberships at the Centres is holding up well. This is testament to the type and quality of services being offered to our residents at the Leisure Centres.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

I was pleased to be invited to attend a conference on 12 October run by "One Epping Forest" to discuss some of the implications of the changes in the delivery of health services within the District as we move from Primary Care Trusts to Clinical Commissioning Groups and as the County assumes greater responsibility for the wider public health. Delegates were able to hear about and discuss topics such as how the changes might impact upon our residents, the establishment of needs and priorities (mentioned by in my last report to Council) and what some of the immediate priorities might be. After the conference I was pleased to be able to introduce the County Member with responsibility for these matters, Councillor Dr Ann Naylor, to the Council's officers with responsibilities in this important area. Dr Naylor has kindly agreed to find the time to give a presentation to Members and officers so they can better understand the key issues. This is fast moving subject area and I shall endeavour to keep Members up to date.

I should also mention that Cabinet, at its meeting on 22 October, agreed to the establishment of a West Essex Joint Health & Wellbeing Committee, whose remit will be to ensure that West Essex has a voice in determining priorities and also is able to fight for its fair share of available resources.

### **Community Services**

**Sports & Health Development** Our team of sports and health experts were heavily involved in the Health Summit and demonstrated some of the excellent work that has taken place with older people through the externally funded Active Health programme.

The team are also in the process of recruiting for the Disability Inclusion programme which is externally funded through Essex County Council and will see the investment of £78,000 over the next two years to support integration of children and young people with disabilities within mainstream sports clubs.

I am pleased to say that construction work on the new 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Astroturf pitch at Town Mead in Waltham Abbey is now underway and it is hoped that completion will be in mid January 2013.

**Community Development:** I am delighted to advise members that our Community Development team has been successful in a bid for £23,500 to Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Fund in conjunction with Epping Forest College. The fund enables training to be provided for adults in subjects including IT and is currently operating in Upshire Primary School.

Our district Youth Councillors were very busy in September and October, including undertaking 'mystery shopping' visits to all of the local clubs for young people. Each of the clubs were rated for the activities provided, facilities available and welcome given to new members and a special presentation evening was held in the Council Chamber on 30<sup>th</sup> October, where the winning club was presented with the Youth Project of the Year Award.

The new Youth Council – led 'Volunteering programme' was also launched in September with 20 young people from Braeside School, who spent a day working with Countrycare to improve land at Lindersfield in Buckhurst Hill.

**Community Arts:** I am pleased to advise members of another excellent external funding success for Community Services which will see the provision of 'Transitions' which is a professional development programme for carers working with local people with dementia. The Arts team have secured £39,000 from The Arts Council, Rayne Foundation and Essex County Council to deliver two six month projects across Residential Care homes. The project has already started and is currently being delivered to homes in Waltham Abbey, Theydon Bois, Epping and Buckhurst Hill.

**Museum** – Exciting work is now being undertaken with designers and architects 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. Specialists have been brought in as part of an initial HLF award of £27,500 who are working on audience development and education outreach, innovative display storage facilities for the new premises in 37 Sun Street which are to be purchased as part of the bid and on re-design of the existing Museum building. Development plans for the current Museum include showing the beauty of the Tudor part of the building by uncovering some of the more modern alterations.