

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 18 December 2012

Subject: Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Elizabeth Webster

Recommending:

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

Leisure Services

At the last Council I informed Members of the Cabinet decision to provide capital funding to enable Sports and Leisure Management (SLM), the Council's leisure providers, to undertake refurbishment of the changing suites at Loughton Leisure Centre. I am pleased to report that works are well underway, and whilst there is naturally some disruption, the leisure centre is operating normally.

The Christmas opening hours for all the leisure centres will be published in the Christmas edition of "Forester" and details are also available on the Council's website.

Whilst the Olympic Games now seem a long time ago, I am pleased to be able to inform Members that the Council has received letters from the organisers of the Torch Relay and from Lord Sebastian Coe in respect of the main Games, thanking the Council for all that it did in making the Torch Relay and the Games such a huge success.

Community Services

Rather than providing you with highlights of the wide range of Community Services initiatives and events that have been taking place over the last month, I would like to draw Council's attention to some fantastic information that I have about the external funding that our officers have secured, to expand community and health improvement provision across Epping Forest.

I am delighted to advise you all that over the period 2008 to 2012 our officers have been successful in attracting £1,445,000 from competitive external funding opportunities to develop programmes and projects for people of all ages abilities from across the district. The most recent of these include but are not limited to:

- support for older people's groups
- neighbourhood learning in deprived communities
- museum activities
- disability inclusion work
- dance projects
- health projects
- family learning support, and;
- free playscheme places for disadvantaged children

In addition to this, Community Services also has the following outstanding bids which we will find out about in the New Year:

£1,600,000 Heritage Lottery Fund Bid for development of the Museum Service that will include opportunities for new display and storage of the collection and a range of new community education and volunteering opportunities.

£90,000 For a Health improvement programme that will be delivered for young people across EF and Harlow

£70,000 Big Lottery Funding for a targeted trampolining programme to help children identified by schools as having low self esteem & confidence or additional needs

In these current times of austerity, this achievement must be congratulated, as funding is certainly harder to secure than it ever has been.