

Report to the Council

Subject: Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio

Date: 19 February 2013

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 that works had commenced on the refurbishment of the swimming pool changing village at Loughton Leisure Centre. The work was carried out in two stages to allow the centre to remain open. The project suffered some delays due to bad weather and late delivery of equipment but I am pleased to report the works are finally finished. As the Council was providing the capital funding, officers have been monitoring the work to ensure it was carried out to an acceptable standard.

Under the terms of the contract, SLM are entitled to raise prices each year by the October RPI which was 3.2%. I am pleased to report that SLM have decided that some prices are not to be raised at all and the majority of prices will rise by less than the 3.2%

Community Services

At the last meeting I focussed my report on the wide range of external funding that Community Services has secured for development of new projects and I am delighted to inform you that a further sum of £77,000 has recently been secured from Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, to continue a special trampolining project for primary school children. The project is designed especially for children who have low confidence, self esteem or additional needs and individuals are referred by local schools. The project is tightly monitored and over the three years that it has been running fantastic results have been achieved, including significant improvements in children's communication with peers and within their family group and overall attainment.

The Museum is awaiting the result of its application to Heritage Lottery Fund for £1,650,000 following a very positive meeting with members of the funding panel last week and has also recently secured £18,000 external funding from the Museum Development Fund.

Work on the 3G Astroturf pitch at Town Mead in Waltham Abbey has unfortunately been held up due to the wet weather before Christmas and the cold wintry weather over recent weeks, but the contractors hope to install the top surface in the first week of March, subject to a clear run of dry weather.

The Limes Centre in Chigwell will be one year old this month and a special afternoon event is being held on Wednesday 27 February to celebrate the range of activities available which include from martial arts to children's and older people's activities and the various services available at the centre.

Community Services has also been the lead in securing £84,000 funding from the LSP and Essex County Council, to appoint an Epping Forest Youth Futures Coordinator who will be responsible for identifying gaps in local services for young people and providing support and advice to local voluntary sector agencies. £50,000 of the funding will be

available to provide new services for young people across the district and to help build community capacity.