

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 20 December 2016

Subject: Leisure & Community Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor H Kane

Recommending:

That the report of the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder be noted.

Community Services

Stay Well This Winter Events: As part of the Council's focus on improving the health and wellbeing of its residents in their late 60's -70's and above, the Community, Health & Wellbeing Team recently organised and delivered three very successful "Stay Well This Winter" events, with the support of the West Clinical Commissioning Group. The events took place in Chigwell, Loughton and Ongar and were attended by over 200 people from across the district.

The aim of the 'Stay Well' events was to facilitate the delivery of important messages to help our older residents stay healthy, well, safe and warm this winter. Each event started with a Wake & Shake dance based, seated exercise session to music, which was designed to help to energise the attendees and to act as an icebreaker. This was followed by a number of informative talks provided by a variety of partner agencies including; the NHS pharmacy team, the East of England Ambulance Service, Trading Standards, the NHS Falls Prevention Team, Community Matrons and the Fire Service. The topics for these included advice relating to:

- Medicine management and eye health
- Falls prevention
- Staying safe from fire and carbon monoxide
- Staying safe from rogue traders
- The importance of flu jabs

Attendees also had the opportunity to meet over 20 local service providers including; the Council's Care and Repair Team, the Alzheimer's Society, Age UK, VAEF, and West Essex Mind to name just a few. Participants were treated to a guest appearance from Epping Forest's very own Elvis (!) before heading home with a comprehensive information pack.

Epping Forest Youth Council: November saw the formal election of 25 new young people onto the Epping Forest Youth Council. The new cohort has representatives from every secondary school within the district, including the new Ongar Academy and Epping Forest College. I was delighted to meet the new youth councillors on 22nd November, when they had their first formal visit to the Council and were welcomed by the outgoing youth council and the Leader and Chairman of Council.

Our new recruits range from 12 to 17 years of age and all come with a fantastic range of ideas and opinions as to how the Youth Council will engage with their peers on priority issues. It was very sad to say goodbye to our out-going Youth Councillors who have carried out such an excellent role within the Council, but, I know from meeting the new cohort, that

they will continue to play a very important part in supporting the young people of our district to get their voices and views heard.

Disability Inclusion Project: Our Inclusion Project continues to develop from strength to strength and during October, 60 hours of sports and leisure provision was available to local families with children and young people with a disability, which attracted over 350 participants. Activities on offer included new sessions such as a farm activity day at Lea Valley Park Farm, paddle sports at the Lea Valley White Water Centre and new weekly dance sessions at the Limes Centre, Chigwell, as well as regular weekly sessions such as trampolining, football, swimming and horse riding. I am very much looking forward to joining the young participants and their families at a special Christmas party that has been arranged for 6th December, at Waltham Abbey Town Hall.

Night – time at the Museum!: As part of the plan to expand the type of activity provided at the Museum, the first ‘**Night at the Museum**’ event was held at the end of October. The event attracted around 50 people, some of which were new visitors, who enjoyed ‘out of hours’ access to the museum building and a number of ‘drop in’ activities and events which were held between 6-9pm. It is planned to develop the evening and night time programme further, with the addition of themed events.

No Borders - Arts Council England (ACE) Resilience Project: I am pleased to update you on our No Borders partnership project, which is being supported by over £270,000 ACE funding over the next 18 months. The project is a partnership between Epping Forest, Broxbourne and Chelmsford Councils, which seeks to develop sustainable services across the three areas, through the establishment of Development Trusts and new fundraising that will operate in parallel to the management of the services and by developing commercial approaches to general operation of facilities and outreach services. In addition, work will be undertaken on the engagement of new audiences and new themes of work to improve diversity.

The funding provided by ACE covers the appointment of three, new, fixed term staff and associated budgets to support this work across the three areas. Interviews were undertaken in the first week of December and I am delighted to say that we have appointed three excellent candidates, who will be in post from 1st January 2017 to end of March 2018.

King Harold Conference: As part of the celebration of King Harold, a special conference was organised by the Museum Service, which involved several leading experts from across the country. Over 70 people attended the event, which was held at Waltham Abbey Town Hall and funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Attendees had an excellent day of expert talks about King Harold, presented by Doctor Michael Lewis from the British Museum, Professor Gail Owen-Crocker from the University of Manchester and Professor Simon Keynes, from University of Cambridge.

Investors in Young People Award: The Museum was delighted to be awarded the Investors in Young People – Organisation Award, on the 10th November at the YES partnership award ceremony, at the Marriott Hotel, Waltham Abbey. The award was given to the Museum in recognition of its work with young people, including the range of volunteering opportunities offered.

TakeOver Day: Following the success of ‘TakeOver’ Days at Lowewood Museum, the first Take Over day was staged at our Museum in Waltham Abbey, as part of a national programme of events. Pupils from the King Harold Academy took over the running of the museum for the day, including leading guided tours for the public and providing theatrical performances in the Core Gallery, using props which they had made, based on items on

display in the museum. Following excellent feedback, it is planned to extend the programme in 2017.

Leisure Management Contract

With the assistance of my Portfolio Holder Advisory Group, I am pleased to report that the Cabinet considered the outcome of the tender evaluation for our new Leisure Contractor on the 1 December 2016, selecting Places for People Leisure Ltd as our preferred bidder. I am seeking Council's formal verification of this decision this evening through the report contained elsewhere on the Agenda.