

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 1 November 2017

Subject: Leisure & Community Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor H Kane

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

Museum, Heritage and Culture (MHC)

Visitor Numbers: Since the Council's Museum has been refurbished and the outreach and online service developed, I am pleased to say that we have seen a significant increase in the numbers of people of all ages and abilities visiting the Museum and accessing online services. The following statistics are from the period July to end of September 2017;

8550 visitors in person : 83937 online users : 873 volunteer hours

In addition, over 1200 children participated in the MHC summer programme and over 400 people attended the family fun days at Lowewood and EFDM.

No Borders: Work on the Arts Council funded No Borders project has gone from strength to strength and one of the main areas of work that has recently been completed as part of the commercial development, is the installation of a new cake and coffee area at Lowewood Museum. Work on this began in September and the new facility provides visitors with refreshment facilities and a completely refurbished welcome area and new shop. The new space also provides the opportunity to offer room hire at Lowewood Museum (with the facility of permanent room dividers) and it is hoped that the space will help to increase the income generated through the Museum.

I am delighted to be one of the seven trustees that have been appointed to the Culture Without Borders Development Trust (which covers Lowewood and EFDM) as the initial Council representative and we will be undertaking our detailed induction and training programme in December. We still have four positions left on the Board and recruitment for these positions starts w/c 13th November (National Trustee week). It is planned for the Trust to be launched in the New Year and board members will be working hard to secure external funding to support the two museums and The Spotlight Theatre in Hoddesdon from other Trusts and Charities. Our Charity Commission registration is currently in progress.

Exhibitions: In October, the Museum opened its exhibition entitled 'A Sense of Rural Life', which runs until 10th March 2018. This exhibition features items from our own collection, as well as several items on loan from the Horniman Museum in London, as part of their 'objects in

focus' programme funded by Arts Council England. We have a range of associated events and accessible elements to this exhibition and these have been funded via SHARE Museums East.

Cultural Engagement: At the request of SHARE Museums East (which is a national resource facility for museums), our MHC team hosted and delivered a training day for the SHARE 'front of house' forum, on Tuesday 10 October at the District Museum. 25 attendees took part from all over the region and the session included training to develop staff skills in the areas of dance engagement for young and older people. There were also presentations from speakers from the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and our MHC team had the opportunity to showcase our dance programme and dementia training sessions.

Schools Engagement Programme: During September, 475 children took part in MHC's schools outreach programme, which is the highest September figure for several years.

The Space: We are gradually developing the casual hire of the Museum 'Space', which has seen an income of nearly £1500 in this financial year and this is through bookings for local community groups who receive a reduced hire fee and private organisations, which pay a more commercial rate.

First World War Projects: I am delighted to advise that our team have been successful in securing £68,500 further funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, for a project titled, 'Stephen Warner – One Man's Journey Through War'. This is for an exhibition at Lowewood Museum in 2018 and a number of associated projects that are currently underway, including work to transcribe and digitise all of the 'Warner Diaries' which are now available online. Images of Stephen Warner and the operating theatre he worked in have also been discovered and will form part of the exhibition at Lowewood Museum next year. The project's work has been supported by over 140 volunteer hours so far.

Other Funding Bids: The MHC team is currently working on a bid to HLF for a project around the life works of Walter Spradbery, who was a former resident of Epping Forest District. The project will explore the life of this nationally famous and unofficial war artist.

The team is also seeking £99,000 from the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund, to increase understanding and use of the museums' costume collection. The project will work with new audiences, especially young and older people from deprived communities and will provide opportunities to work with and study the collection, creating new ways to share it through a series of dance engagement opportunities, inspired by items within the collection. To date, we have been successfully shortlisted in the initial stage application (this is one of 14) and a final application was submitted in October. The selection committee is due to complete their decision making by the end of November.

We are also currently developing a bid for £50,000-£75,000 from NESTA, for their Connected Communities Innovation Fund. Entitled 'Epping Forest Connectors', this would be a project to bring together the community through a wider arts and culture pathways, with unique entry points across the community, using arts, culture and heritage outreach as an access point for volunteers. The partnership of EFDM, EFDC and VAEF and the links to a wide range of

community partners would bring together a raft of key community agents from across the public and community sector and dovetail information and access to it. Volunteers will be recruited as 'Community Connectors' and provided with a thorough induction and training in a wide range of skills. The training would provide a 'Community Passport' providing a menu of learning and information .The Expression of Interest will be submitted around the time of this meeting.

Community, Health and Wellbeing (CHW)

MiLife Emotional Health and Wellbeing Project: Our hugely successful MiLife project that was developed through the Youth Council and CHW team in 2016/17 continues to go from strength to strength. Last year the project was delivered to all (seven) secondary schools within the district with over 4000 students benefitting from presentations to help them build self - resilience and knowing where to go to for help, if needed. Throughout the course of the year, it became very clear that emotional and mental health and wellbeing is an issue affecting a large number of our young people and it was therefore decided to revisit schools for a second year, in order to capture all new, year 7 students.

In addition, over 2017, all year 8-11 students have been provided with a MiLife refresher assembly and pupils were able to gain additional support from professionals, via lunch time sessions, where they could access immediate support and information from a MiLife stall. Because of the success of the project with school pupils and the positive response from young people, several of the schools with Sixth Forms, were very keen for their older Year 12/13 students to be able to access MiLife support and our CHW team has therefore worked with our partners, Red Balloon Company to develop a MiLife session for the older years to attend, including a visit to Epping Forest College. The remaining programme will be rolled out into the New Year.

Local Democracy - Youth Conference 2017: I am delighted to advise that our Youth Council, Democratic Services and CHW team will be hosting the Local Democracy Youth Conference tomorrow, Friday 3rd November 2017 at the Civic offices, in the Council Chamber. We have invited 90 pupils from 9 secondary schools and Epping Forest College to the event, which is being hosted by our Epping Forest Youth Councillors. This year, our guest speaker is Alex Burghart, MP for Brentwood and Ongar. The conference will take place all morning and will include an exciting debate about Police Liaison Officers in schools, which will be followed by a quiz about local democracy and our Youth Councillors will also launch their Drug Awareness project 'Say No to N2O' the laughing gas craze that is hitting the streets. See the short film<http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/news/?p=33780>

Young Citizen of the Year award 2018: We are currently looking for nominations for the Epping Forest Young Citizen of the Year Award 2018, which recognises young people's exceptional contributions to the Epping Forest Community. As you know, the award is presented annually to a young person who has shown outstanding courage; who has been of service to their community or, to a young person who has shown extraordinary commitment, energy and effort in their particular field or towards achieving a particular goal. Any young person who lives in the Epping Forest district and is aged between 11 and 18 years can be nominated. The successful winner will receive an award of £300 and a certificate of achievement at the Annual

Civic Awards. I encourage Members to consider nominating a young person for the award and you can do this by completing the online nomination form at www.eppingforestdca.gov.uk/youngcitizen, or pick up a nomination from any EFDC building; local libraries and secondary schools. The closing date for nominations is Friday 24th November 2017.

Active Living: I have reported previously on the commencement of an Active Living programme and am pleased to advise that we currently have 42 people actively engaged with the programme. All participants that have reached the 12 week stage have increased their levels of physical activity and improved their health and wellbeing. The Project targets people who are at risk of developing health issues (both mental or physical) related to physical inactivity or poor lifestyle choices, as well as those who have a stable medical condition that being physically active can help manage. The purpose of Active Living is to help people improve their health and wellbeing through physical activity and we work together with participants, to set a personal plan of action that will make it simple for participants to find ways to fit physical activity into their daily life. The project pilot is running in Waltham Abbey and Epping and people are referred through their GP or they can self-refer and they initially have a face to face consultation before they are invited to attend a 12 week structured programme, which is designed to establish the process of behaviour change. I thought it would be useful to provide some examples of the feedback that CHW have received from participants, as below;

"Confidence kickstarted...Enjoying the sessions" 3 month goal achieved - 10,000 steps on average per day. Started Karate again Fridays with grandson. Aqua Aerobics once a week Monday morning. Had induction at gym with machines (this was 12 month goal). Still doing bowls and walks with U3A."

"Got confidence back, feel so much better, running up the stairs, can't thank you enough I am buzzing. Love the sessions everyone is so nice and supportive" 3 month goal to wear dresses on cruise (tried dresses on and ready for cruise in a few weeks time) 1 year goal to drop a dress size achieved already. Ski machine every day for 10 mins "I couldn't do 1 minute three months ago" Aiming for 30 mins by 1 year. Bowls still twice a week. Walking at lunch time with husband 15 mins 4 times per week (when at work)."

"I can now do 39 'sit to stand' in 1 minute. Only 4-6 hours seated. Got Fitbit - do average 6000 steps per day - when I come to Active Living/do dance I reach 10000. "I love it I get tips from others. Built confidence so I can talk out in the group which I don't normally do. Feeling better about myself. Confidence coming back and I get to do it with my sister which is lovely" Dancing with U3A on Wed. Achieved goals of increasing walking, getting WII out and having a go. Seated exercise at night, steps ups on step. Doc checkup and blood pressure is the lowest it has been in a long time.

"Try to walk everyday for 2 miles at least. Go to gym twice and do seated exercise at home. I try to get up every hour to move (works from home mainly). "Nice to meet people, I was feeling isolated where I live this was good to meet people. Helped with my anxiety and depression and felt supported by such a nice group. I really miss it when I was away or feeling unwell"

Stay Well This Winter – Waltham Abbey: The first ‘Stay Well this Winter’ event of 2017 took place at Waltham Abbey Town Hall in October and attracted 100 older people who were provided with informative and interactive health and wellbeing advice, highlighting the great services available to older people this winter. The day which is provided in partnership with West Essex Clinical Commissioning group, included informative talks from Pharmacists, Community Nurses and specialist health advisors. There was also information stands from Alzheimer’s Society, VAEF, Essex Road Safety, Essex Fire Service, Provide, EFDC and many more. The next Stay well this winter events are on Wednesday 25th October at Theydon Bois Village Hall and Friday 10th November at Roding Valley Hall, Buckhurst Hill, both events are proving to be extremely popular with Theydon Bois being fully booked and only few spaces left for the Buckhurst Hill event.

Community Workshops for Adults: CHW have organised a series of new, creative workshops for adults, some of which took place in October and the remainder due to take place in November and December. The workshops are held on Monday evenings and include topics such as ‘Let’s get pumpkin carving’, ‘Make your own bubble-licious bath bombs’ and ‘make your own Christmas floral arrangements’.

Leisure Management

Places for People (PfP), the Council’s Leisure Management Partner have after an initial period of mobilisation, now started to move forward on the delivery of the major capital projects which were central to their tender submission. I was delighted to attend the “ground-breaking” ceremony of the new Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre at Hillhouse, and see the excitement of a group of young students from the local Hillhouse Primary School burying a time-capsule to commemorate the event. It was good to see the progress already made with the pool tank excavations already largely complete, and the framework in place to start pouring concrete for the learner pool. Once complete in a year’s time, the new Leisure Centre will be a fantastic facility for not only the residents of Waltham Abbey, but the whole District.

In early November, work is due to also commence at Epping Sports Centre to greatly improve the Health and Fitness facilities for users. At Loughton Leisure Centre the planning application has been submitted for the major new extension and, if successful, work will commence in December for six months. Inconvenience for existing users is to an extent inevitable, but PfP have contingency arrangements to manage the disturbance. As reported previously, I have also asked PfP to explore the feasibility of providing a new crèche facility at Loughton and the final decision around this issue will be based on benefits and costs.

Finally, the new refurbished Fitness Suite and Spinning Studio work undertaken by PfP at Ongar Leisure Centre, is proving to be very popular with increased numbers of people participating in regular exercise activities.