

Report to the Council

Subject: Leisure and Young People Portfolio

Date: 24 July 2007

Portfolio Holder: Councillor M Cohen

Item: 6 (h)

Recommending:

That the report of the Portfolio Holder be noted.

Roding Valley Lake

On 28 June 2007, I advised the Council of the need to incur emergency expenditure to mitigate the impact of adverse environmental conditions experienced at the Roding Valley Lake. I can now report that the oxygen levels in the Lake have returned to normal.

The Council has worked closely with the Environment Agency throughout this incident and even with their extensive knowledge they cannot be definite with regard to the cause, now that bacteriological tests have ruled out sewerage contamination.

The Environment Agency have agreed to assist the Council in further advice on the future management of the Lake and any re-stocking. However, it should be stressed that whilst it has previously been necessary on occasions to take remedial action to combat algae growth, nothing as sudden or catastrophic has been experienced, nor could reasonably have been anticipated.

No other affects on wildlife, birds etc., have been observed, with evidence that some fish have survived, although at this stage, it has not been able to quantify how many.

Epping Forest Youth Council

Following on from the work of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel on Young People, which concluded that there was a need to assist young people to enable them to formally articulate their views on issues affecting their lives and to become more involved in the democratic process, significant progress is being made in the establishment of a Youth Council for the Epping Forest District.

Support for the initiative has been received from all of the District's secondary schools, with the intention of holding elections to co-incide with Local Democracy Week in October. The Youth Council's members will receive support and training in undertaking their role. I am sure all Members of the Council will welcome this initiative as a positive way of young people being able to directly engage with the Council.

Race for Life

Finally, I would like to report on the tremendous success of the fourth Cancer Research UK "Race for Life", hosted by North Weald Airfield on the 11th July. Some 2,600 women runners took part over the 5K course and raised a massive sum approaching £285,000, to support valuable medical research.