

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 29 July 2014

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

Summer Holiday Programme – I am delighted to advise you that the Community Services Department has developed a fantastic selection of holiday activities that are available throughout the summer for children and young people of all abilities and their families. The exciting programme ranges from ‘own a pony for a day’ for children with additional needs, through to mountain biking, family arts events, kayaking, adventure days and Play in the Forest, as well as the ever popular Playschemes. All prices for the activities available have been kept as minimum as possible and the Play in the Park and Play in the Forest sessions are free of charge to families. I would encourage all members to pick up a copy of the Summer Activities brochure which is available in the Members’ room, so that you can see what is available within the district. If you would like to visit any of the activity sessions, please do not hesitate to contact:

Jo Cowan – Arts Manager on 01992 564553

Tony O’Connor – Museum Manager on 01992 564984

Gill Wallis – Community development Manager on 01992 564557

James Warwick – Sports and Health Manager on 01992 564350

Dance and Performance: The annual eNgage dance showcase event took place on Tuesday 24th June at Harlow Playhouse, with performances from over 200 young people. For many of the youngsters, this was their first performance in a professional venue, including a group of Primary School children from the district, who performed a choral piece, which they had learnt as part of the district’s Choral development project.

Tour De France - Funding was secured from the Royal Opera House Bridge to work with four schools in the run up to the Tour de France. Workshops were delivered for pupils by the outdoor art group ‘Kinetika’ who worked with the children to create and decorate 120 large flags to line the Tour de France route and each depicted an aspect of the district that pupils are proud of. The flags will now go on display in different venues across the district.

In addition, Community Services were involved in ‘decorating’ the Tour de France route, by painting the Essex County Council Seaxes, in colours of the Tour de France cycling jerseys

on the road in Epping High Street. The Arts team were also responsible for organising the huge cyclist art work that was cut into grass on the North weald Airfield. Both of these artistic tributes to the Tour de France were shown on the live and repeat television coverage of the event.

Beyond Borders: The Arts team are currently working with Essex County Council to deliver their 'Beyond Borders' diversity programme. Work so far, has included workshops at Epping School where pupils worked with artists in the development of a performance of a scene from the Hindu epic 'Ramayana'. This was showcased at the Epping Town Show on 6th July.

Further External Funding for Epping Forest District: The Sports & Health Development team have again, been successful in securing external funding for inclusive activity in Epping Forest District. Young people and adults with disabilities will have new opportunities to get involved in sport after the Council received £145,479 of funding from Sport England's Inclusive Sport fund. The project is one of 44 across England that will benefit from £8.06 million of National Lottery investment from Sport England to open up more opportunities for disabled people to play sport. The Epping Forest Project which is called 'Six for All', will work with local sports clubs to assist them in developing specialised disability sections, so that people of all ages can take part in sport both as participants and coaches. The project will create a range of participation, voluntary and paid coaching opportunities, so that people with disabilities can benefit from continued sports participation throughout their lives.

High Beach Youth Cycling Club: Community Services has developed a fully sustainable, new mountain biking club which takes place in Epping Forest at High Beach. The club is open to youngsters from 8 years plus and is a competitive mountain biking club, which meets for training every Saturday in the car park at the Kings Oak Hotel Pub, High Beach, from 10am – 12noon. All abilities are welcome and the club helps young people develop the skills needed to be able to enter local and regional competitions. The club has 17 paid members and 12 pay as you go members.

Cycling for Health: An adult cycling for health programme that was launched in 2013, has gone from strength to strength with the excitement of the Tour De France and now includes a series of weekly led rides, which take place in Epping Forest and the Lee Valley Park. The rides are led by Sports & Health Development staff and take place every Wednesday at 10am. Participants do not even need their own bike, as hire bikes can be arranged if booked in advance. A diary of cycle routes has been produced and is available from the Council's website.

Epping Forest Youth Council: An exciting 'Speed meeting' event was held on 9th July which involved the new Youth Councillors, Elected Members and senior management of the Council. All participants had the opportunity to find out about each-others roles and ask specific questions of interest in a 5 minute 'speed meeting', in a friendly and relaxed environment. Photos of the event can be seen on the Council's website.

World Cup fever in Waltham Abbey: I was delighted to go along to a special event in Waltham Abbey in June, where over 70 children aged 8 – 11years old descended on Town Mead, to take part in a World Cup Festival.

The children were from schools all over Essex and they spent the morning trying the various Skill Stations, which tested their shooting, dribbling, passing and much more. and then the

afternoon was when the real action took place, with Spain, Holland, Mexico, England, France and Brazil competing in a mini World Cup and showing off all the skills they had learnt in the morning.

The festival was organised as part of the Council's Inclusion Project which is funded by Essex County Council, which provides Sports and Leisure opportunities for Children and Young People with Disabilities or SEN. Tottenham Hotspur Foundation sent along two coaches to help with the event and they were joined by students from Epping Forest College who did a fantastic job.