

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Lynne Bowen Leisure & Culture Portfolio Holder	Council	5 June 2014	9(f)

EXECUTIVE REPORT: LEISURE AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Leisure and Culture Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Sports Development

(a) New Funding Announcement

- 2.1 Sport England have awarded £72,000 to Myerscough College along with a match funding commitment from Myerscough college of £18,000 to further the sports opportunities currently provided by the college. New sports activators will be appointed to deliver activity which will focus on sports which can be delivered within a classroom or open space environment. The sports development team provided support to the application and will continue to work in partnership with the college in their quest to improve sporting opportunity at the college which further benefits students and the local community.

(b) Cycle Wyre

- 2.2 Cycle Wyre, a recreational cycling programme, will once again be running this year throughout June and July. Weekly guided bike rides will be offered at Stanah Country Park for people aged 50+. A number of volunteers have been recruited to assist in the delivery of the programme and a Cycle Leaders Training course will be taking place to upskill all the volunteers involved.

(c) Shape Up

- 2.3 Shape up, an exercise programme aimed to get people using the park whilst improving their health and fitness will be delivered at Memorial Park, Fleetwood, during June and July. The programme aims to engage those who are not actively participating in physical activity and is a beginners based outdoor fitness programme for 18+. The programme is funded by development funding received from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

(d) Garstang Handball Club

2.4 The club which was established in January has now moved from Myerscough College to Garstang Academy (Thursday evening 5:30-6:30). The move has proved successful as the numbers attending have risen dramatically. The first two weeks since the move have seen 54 people attending.

(e) Sportivate

2.5 Delivery began in April and includes a variety of different sports such as Disability Cycling, Wake Boarding, Cricket, Rock Climbing, Netball and Multi Sports which will be delivered across the borough. These projects are being delivered by established partners including Garstang Cricket Club, Myerscough College, North Lancashire Training Group and Blackpool Wake Park.

(f) TrySport

2.6 The TrySport Community Programme continues to successfully deliver a variety of sporting activities for young people throughout the borough on a weekly basis targeting both rural and deprived areas. The total number of visits for January to April 2014 was 2,527. This was up on the previous year total of 2,494.

3. **Tourism and the Visitor Economy**

(a) Visit Garstang Centre – Visit England Awards

3.1 After a successful year where the TIC has seen growth in visitor numbers and income in 8 successive months - the Visit Garstang Centre made the National Visit England finals against 4 other TIC's from across the Country. The team are proud to have travelled to the Awards Ceremony in Cheltenham on 12 May and received a 'Highly Commended' on the night.

3.2 A quote from the Overall Summary of the VisitEngland Assessors Report was:

'This TIC has pride in its service offer to the local community, it may undersell itself by not detailing the 'over and above' achievements of staff members. A consistent high quality of service is given by this TIC and credit should go to those responsible. There is no doubt that Garstang are deservedly in the higher echelon of information providers'

3.3 Visit Garstang Centre statistics for April 2014 has shown that income is up by 6% on the previous year and visitor numbers are up by 53.5%.

(b) Launch of the i-bus Visitor Information

3.4 The new and 'first of a kind' i-bus launched on 9 April at the Marine Hall Gardens in partnership with the Wyre Together Showcase. The bus has been well received by visitors and is now being used as a Visitor Information Centre on Cleveleys Plaza from Thursday to Saturday every week until 9 November, providing literature, information and tickets sales. At this early stage, footfall is encouraging with 407 visitors between 10 April and 30 April 2014). It is anticipated that the i-bus will become busier as the summer season progresses.

(c) Lancashire Tourism Forum

3.5 The Group has recently changed its name to the Lancashire Visitor Economy Improvement Group. The next meeting will be hosted by Wyre at Fleetwood Town Football Club in July 2014. Current ongoing projects include the provision of brown signage across Lancashire.

(d) Launch of the Explore Fleetwood Interpretation Boards

3.6 The 8 Explore Fleetwood Interpretation Boards were launched on 28 March by the Mayor of Wyre, Fleetwood Chamber and Fleetwood Town Council at Fisherman's Walk. The Boards have received very positive feedback and press coverage and are a popular inclusion as part of the regeneration of Fleetwood.

3.7 Sites are – Marine Hall, Fleetwood Car Park opposite the Sea Cadet Base, Knott End Ferry, Victoria Road opposite Fleetwood Market, North Albert Street Tram Stop, London Street Tram Stop, Fisherman's Walk and Freeport Fleetwood.

4. Volunteering

4.1 The i-bus has now been on the road for over two months and, in that period there has been a steady stream of public enquires for both volunteering and tourism. Since its official launch the Council has recruited three volunteers through enquires via the i-bus. There is a partner evaluation meeting in June to discuss how the partners have found their experiences whilst being on the i-bus, with feedback at the moment being very positive.

4.2 New volunteering ventures include a "Discover Wyre" role where volunteers will promote a variety of Council services within Culture Leisure and Tourism which include the TICs, Marine Hall & Thornton Little Theatre & Fleetwood Market. Volunteers will work in all major Towns and will target residents of Wyre as well as visitors to the area.

4.3 Overall there are eight volunteers going through the application process with a further five who are now volunteering for Wyre Council.

5. Arts, Events and Volunteering

(a) LEON - Local Event Organisers Network

5.1 LEON has now been established for a year, and in this year has worked together to overcome the challenges due to changes in police not being able to staff their carnivals and galas. Embracing this transition, money has been secured to send up to 16 volunteers on a training programme which will accredit them with being able to staff temporary road closures.

(b) Memorial Park

5.2 In May, Memorial Park hosted The Witches performed by Gambolling Arena Theatre Company. The event organised jointly with the Parks Service saw 500 people attend the two shows. There was also a craft making workshop.

5.3 The next event is Spring Song On 28th May, which is a recruitment drive to encourage volunteers for the park. The day will include the I Bus, Pete Moser from More Music performing The Knick Knack man and a craft session.

In the afternoon there is a show by Nottingham Playhouse called Second Minute, about correspondence on the front.

(c) Dizzy Heights

5.4 This is family orientated festival takes place on the Bank Holiday Saturday in Fleetwood and includes La Quebrada Mexican High Diving record attempt. The event is to launch 5 For Fleetwood, the Coastal Communities Funded programme.

6. Comments and Questions

6.1 In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.