

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Lynne Bowen, Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder	Council	12 April 2018	8(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. Arts, Events and Volunteering

2.1 The Final Homecoming –A First World War Centenary Event

The council has been successful in obtaining a grant of £10,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the Final Homecoming project. The grant will be used to welcome a visual arts and a music residency in Fleetwood, as well as supporting filming, community exhibitions and other projects throughout the borough. Outcomes of an application to the Arts Council will be known at the end of April.

2.2 Just Reminiscing – A Dementia Reminiscence Programme

The Council has obtained a stock of artefacts and replicas to develop reminiscence activities across the Borough. The project will work with residents with dementia and their carers but will also engage with other older residents who may be isolated and lonely. The project, which will be piloted at Fleetwood Market from May, and rolled out across the borough in the summer months, will be encouraging members of the community to volunteer and act as session facilitators.

2.3 SpareParts/ Tram Sunday

Planning is underway to develop a professional and community programme for this year's SpareParts Festival, a transport themed arts festival delivered in conjunction with Fleetwood Festival of Transport. Spare Parts is now taken out to other transport festivals in Crewe and Sandbach and, following three years of strategic funding from the Arts Council, will roll out to two other festivals in St. Helens and Rochdale by 2020.

2.4 Larkholme Grasslands and Rossall Sea Defence Completion

Planning is underway to develop a programme of activities and community showcases to launch the Grasslands and the completed promenade at Rossall on Saturday 19 May.

3. Sports Development

3.1 Trysport

Our new Trysport programme brochure has now been launched and will be distributed to all schools. TrySport is a programme sponsored and promoted by Wyre Council, and is delivered by Fleetwood Town Community Trust and Fylde Coast YMCA. We currently offer various sports and activities including football, badminton, dodgeball, street dance, multi sports, fitness classes and skateboarding. The programme provides opportunities for young people to increase their levels of physical activity by getting involved in a wide variety of sports and activities.

3.2 Health Walks

Working with the Challenge Through Sport Project and Fylde and Wyre Social Inclusion Team we are setting up walks to encourage increased levels of physical activity for people with mental health issues and/or those recovering from substance misuse. The project involves training staff and volunteers to become walk leaders and promoting a number of walks to their service users. Our Coast and Countryside Service will be delivering the necessary training.

4. Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre

4.1 New Theatres Brochure

As in previous years, a new programme for the theatres has been produced and was sent out at the beginning of this year. This year's brochure has been mailed out to 31,000 local residents with another 4,000 brochures being distributed from our theatres and other local information points across the area. For the first time, the brochure also promotes shows which are staged by local organisations including Thornton Cleveleys Operatic Society and Poulton Drama.

4.2 New Box Office Service Offer

Thornton Cleveleys Operatic Society and Poulton Drama are regular hirers of our theatres and have chosen to sell their tickets through our computerised box office system. They are therefore now benefitting from the wider publicity as well as a professional box office service on the night and lead up to their event. In this way we are offering our customers an enhanced service without pushing up the community hire charges. Wyre Theatres retain 10% of all box office income as a commission for selling tickets on behalf of hirers, but the hirer benefits from greater coverage and an improved service. This is all part of our plan to work more collaboratively with our hirers and encourage local people to make better use of their local assets. This also improves customer service for ticket buyers who tell us that they prefer to have one point of contact for all ticket sales at our theatres.

4.3 Recent and forthcoming events at Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre

Key events have taken place in both theatres over the last few months and these included:

The 36th Fleetwood Beer and Cider Festival at Marine Hall, which was a great success. It included the first appearance of our 'Gin and Prosecco Bar' which was extremely popular. This new attraction also encouraged a more diverse audience than in previous years.

We presented an Easter themed family show at Thornton Little Theatre and a special Easter Bank Holiday Tea Dance on Bank Holiday Monday.

Our 'Harmony and Health' free singing sessions at Marine Hall continue to go from strength to strength with over 70 local people attending the weekly Tuesday afternoons on a regular basis. Since February the sessions have also been taking place at Thornton Little Theatre on Tuesday mornings. The feedback from these groups has been tremendous with several regular attenders reporting dramatic improvements to their physical health and emotional well-being. The costs associated with these sessions have been met through health funding which has meant that the Theatres can be used for these important community health initiatives without having to subsidise them. They also bring new customers through our doors, many of whom have never visited our venues before.

Healthier Fleetwood held their Tea and Talk Event at Marine Hall in February on Valentine's Day. This was another collaborative event which involved all Healthier Fleetwood partners. Many Council services were also represented including volunteering and countryside rangers as well as the YMCA.

Continuing with the Health theme; our first Annual 'One You' event was held at Marine Hall last weekend. This event was all about health and well-being in its widest sense and served to engage more people from the area, to widen involvement and included third sector partners as well as local businesses. Stalls this year included a juice and smoothie bar, skincare, physiotherapists and art therapists as well as council services and Healthier Fleetwood partners. We hope to grow this event year on year, as happened with the Annual Food and Drink Festival and Christmas Market which both now attract over 5,000 people to Fleetwood on a Sunday.

In March we welcomed 'Fleetwoodstock' back to Marine Hall for the first time in over five years and we have also started up a new partnership with Fleetwood Folk and Blues Festival and are looking at ways to work more closely with them, including the co-promotion of events.

5. Tourism

5.1 Marsh Mill

Marsh Mill opened once again over Easter weekend with a special celebratory event. Working in conjunction with La Shack Gifts (an onsite trader) the event had live music in the square, costume characters and the Mill was open for tours, children's crafts and the sails turned. The event was promoted directly to 20,000 households (promoting the village and Mill by offering a discount voucher) as well as through online promotion.

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.

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