

COUNCIL  
23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014



**REPORT TO COUNCIL – PORTFOLIO AREA OF  
PEOPLE AND PARTICIPATION**

**Agenda No: 11b**

**LEISURE SERVICES**

**1 – The Fusion Leisure Contract**

I continue to monitor, along with Officers, the excellent progress of the leisure contract. The most recent data received is demonstrating that in the past year there is a 26 per cent increase in leisure participation since the commencement of the new contract with Fusion Lifestyle. These figures include leisure and fitness activities run by Fusion in and outside of Braintree District Council owned centres. Work has commenced to organise this year's Inspired Sports Festival. A schedule is currently being finalised to organise activity days for young children in the rural areas of the district during the summer months.

**2 – Leisure Centre Improvements**

Along with Cllr. Tattersley I have been delighted to attend the organised tours of the soon to be open new Witham Leisure Centre. Cllr. Tattersley and I have been overwhelmed by the interest from local radio and newspapers to be part of this exciting project and between us we have hosted a number of interviews with the local media. Priti Patel MP will shortly be joining Cllr. Tattersley and me for the latest organised tour of the construction site. The new £9.5m project for the people of Witham and surrounding areas will help to further increase leisure and fitness activities within the Braintree District and will undoubtedly support better health outcomes for people year on year.

Work is due to commence on the improvements to the Braintree Swim Centre in early spring. The improvements will create a new state of the art gym and fitness studio.

**ACTIVE COMMUNITIES**

**1 – Active Communities Plan**

The Active Communities Plan, soon to be made available to all Members, is being finalised and encompasses the health agenda along with the District Council's approach to strong partnership working. The Active Communities Plan is being embraced throughout the organisation and will allow for a more joined up approach to community and locality based working.

## **2 – Community Builders**

The Braintree District Community Builders project is supporting the key health and wellbeing outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing Panel and recognises high levels of child obesity and hip fractures in the village of Sible Hedingham and the Humber Road/Spa Road area of Witham. The funding for the project has been devolved by Essex County Council as part of the Strengthening Communities strand of the Whole Essex Community Budget.

## **3 – Our Witham**

The Council has been successful in securing £3,000 of national funding to enable partnership working in Witham with a range of partner agencies and the local community. As part of the Council's involvement in the national Our Place Scheme we are required to produce a strategy by the 9<sup>th</sup> May. A mapping exercise has begun to establish the main concerns for the people of Witham around health and wellbeing and employment and skills and identifying those organisations who are responsible for addressing health and employment issues.

## **4 – Tour de France (TDF)**

Members will be aware that the Tour de France passes through our district in July. Together with Essex County Council the Council is holding planning and briefing events for those parishes on the route and there are a series of exhibitions being held in village locations in order to advise the local residents and hear their concerns and comments. The TDF has provided many opportunities for local communities to benefit including promoting their village and to raise funds from such things as temporary car parks and camping sites. My thanks to Cllr. Tattersley and Officers for enabling good progress to be achieved. The experience and memories from this great sports race will leave a strong legacy to benefit health and wellbeing outcomes within the Braintree District.

## **5 – Health and Wellbeing**

### **Health & Wellbeing Panel**

Currently we are extending invites to join the panel to the Rural Community Council for Essex, Braintree District Voluntary Support Agency, Active Braintree and Age UK. The Panel is collectively addressing two priorities for the Braintree District: Adult Obesity and the level of hip fractures in the over 65's. The Panel has been surprised and impressed by the level of activity that already exists between partners. The focus over the next six months will be to develop a communication plan to highlight the work being done in these areas, increase the awareness of those organisations involved and signpost residents to these services. The panel will also be looking to launch and promote the "Livewell" brand. My thanks to Cllr. Dr Anne Naylor, Cabinet Member for Health at Essex County Council, for supporting and contributing to our work.

### **Active Braintree**

Sitting beneath the Health and Wellbeing Panel is the newly established Active Braintree District Network (ABDN). The ABDN has an independent Chairman and a strong group of partners including the NHS; Braintree District Council; Fusion Lifestyle; Essex County Council; Greenfields Community Housing; Braintree College; Provide; Essex Cares; Active Essex and Essex County Council School Games Officer.

Its recent successes include setting up a network of all clubs; re-introducing organised health walks; funding workshop; the introduction of Park Run from Great Notley Park; Inspired Sports Festival; the introduction of Braintree District Sports Awards 2014 and free instructor-led cycle schemes.

### **“Livewell”**

This year is set to be a big year for health and wellbeing with the launch of the “Livewell” brand. This campaign will underpin a number of projects and will see the Council working with health partners to promote health and wellbeing. 20 Council staff have volunteered to become Health and Wellbeing Champions who have all undertaken a two day intensive training course including qualifying with a professional qualification from the Royal Society of Public Health. As part of the initiative staff organised a Health and Wellbeing day in early April to promote “Livewell” to staff and have three more days planned for the rest of the year.

### **6 – Community Transport**

I am delighted to announce that the Essex County Council Cabinet has committed to funding our valued and essential community transport service for yet another year. The funding amounts to £105,540. Total monthly passenger journeys are approximately 5,000 per month. The service began many years ago and was set originally set up for ‘taking Mrs Jones shopping’....

### **7 – Museum Service and Town Hall Feasibility Project**

Braintree District Council and Braintree District Museum Trust Limited are working in partnership to create a shared service with a sustainable future vision for the heritage services they fund and manage in the Braintree District. An options and feasibility study is being commissioned, jointly funded, for an external specialist consultancy to review the current Museum Trust proposals for increased revenue generation at the Warner Archive; capital redevelopment at Braintree District Museum; management of Braintree Town Hall and creation of a Braintree District Heritage Forum. The work is due for completion by late summer 2014.

From the 43 expressions of interest and subsequent application process, three consultancies are being invited for the final interview stage on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2014, before starting work in May.

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