

EXECUTIVE REPORT

FULL 20.10.05

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**COUNCILLOR ALLAN HOLIDAY - PORTFOLIO HOLDER****KEITH PARKER - LEAD OFFICER****1 KEY ISSUES - PROGRESS REPORT****SPORTS DEVELOPMENT****Summer Activities Programme 2005**

Sports Development had another successful Summer Activities Programme with a total of 1300 young people attending the sessions.

Once again the football tournaments proved to be popular with 132 young people attending these over the 6 weeks. Winners and runners up of the football tournaments left with t-shirts, wristbands, rucksacks and water bottles, which were donated by Cumbria Sport.

Community Sports Coaches Scheme

A national network of professional sports coaches is being established by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in conjunction with local sports partnerships, aimed at encouraging increased participation in physical activity by young people. A 3-year programme to employ up to 30 coaches in Cumbria is being developed, by the Cumbria Sports Partnership. Copeland is a part of this initiative and in September 2005 our first Community Sports Coach Started in Copeland. Donald Cramb is our Hockey Community Coach. He is employed part time in Copeland and Part Time in Allerdale.

Donald has already had a massive interest from the schools in Copeland where he will be delivering multi Skill / Hockey sessions. Community Sessions have already started at the Astro Turf in Cleator Moor where the long-term development of this is to have a junior hockey club established.

ARTS DEVELOPMENT

This month saw the completion of Making Whitehaven (Lego-opolis.) This project had explored the build environment and regeneration issues using lego and invited youth and community groups. The artists involved had also delivered a huge amount of outreach work on the streets of Whitehaven. The opening of the exhibition attracted 100 visitors with the daily opening thereafter averaging 25 visitors.

In Parton we continued to run a Monday night music session for 12 to 19 year olds and a Thursday drumming group for younger children and their carers. Parton continues to be an incredibly successful youth and community programme at the hub of the Copeland supported North Copeland Youth Partnership.

The English Heritage/Copeland Borough Council Millom Writers Group has been an incredible success. This is an adult project working with a professional writer and photographer exploring the work of Millom's favourite son – Norman Nicholson. Early evaluation is promising.

The National Trust/Copeland Borough Council Ennerdale Valley project has begun. Artist Jane Dudman is working with Ennerdale, St.Patrick's and Montreal School in Cleator Moor. There will be an initial evaluation in October.

The rural touring scheme held tango workshops in Stainburn School and Millom Palladium, Cinema in Egremont Town Hall, Live Blues in Bootle.

The Millom Youth Theatre also used the Palladium to perform a production of 'Jack' to the pupils of Haverigg Primary School.

THE BEACON

Visitor Figures for The Beacon during September were 5680, a considerable increase on last year (3956 in September 2004). This has largely been due to the popular exhibitions on show.

Harbour Gallery visitors for September were 2376 (1476 in September 2004). The current exhibition "Titanic – Honour and Glory" is proving very popular and attracted over 800 visitors during its first weekend. The exhibition will continue until 5th November.

Family Events. Half term workshops for both children and adults are fully booked. Activities to promote The Big Draw, a National event to get people of all ages drawing, include Underwater Odyssey for children and Life Drawing for adults.

Whitehaven Young Archaeologists' Club. On 24 September, the Young Archaeologists learned the skills of Underwater Archaeology with local diver Colin McCourt.

WHITEHAVEN CIVIC HALL

In August of 2005 the Civic kept its run of high profile bands visiting at an all time high when The Music played a warm up gig before headlining this years V Festival. People from all over the country flocked to Whitehaven to see the north's current number 1 guitar band. A total of 533 customers attended another packed out Civic Hall show. Only 3 other show's were staged in

August, a quiet period for events as people take themselves away on holiday and soak up the sun, all of these being outside hire events.

In September the new events season kicked off with a varied month of entertainment. With tributes to Paul Weller & Dusty Springfield, punk-rockers The Wayriders and a return to the hall from old favorite – Dominic Kirwan, the Civic certainly provided entertainment for all tastes.

SPORTS CENTRE

Cumbria Fire Service had a recruitment drive at the Sports Centre for female firefighters on Monday 1st August.

John Kane raised nearly £2000 for the Air Ambulance using our gym for sponsorship

Bowls Centre/Synthetic Pitch

A new Cumbrian Hockey coach is now in place and an arrangement has been made for use of the synthetic pitch for 3 hours per week for long-term development involving at least 2 clubs. This will also include the hiring of the facilities including the bowls centre for hockey coach awards.

Swimming Pool

The last few months have been a busy period for maintenance at the pool, work undertaken includes:

The balcony ceiling has been re-placed and now matches the other ceiling areas brightening the pool hall up.

The pool was closed on Friday 23rd and Sat 24th September to replace the main electrical boards, which have been responsible for two previous closedowns due to electrical failure.

The disabled change has been renovated and has received favourable comments from customers using these areas.

Scaffolding is round the front of the building as work is currently underway to secure the roof at the pool and is due to be completed by the end of November.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Cumbria in Bloom

Members will be aware that Copeland Borough council this year's hosted the annual Cumbria in Bloom Award Presentation. This was held at Muncaster Castle on the 6 September and was very well attended.

This year we had 8 towns and villages from the Copeland area enter into the Cumbria In Bloom competition winning 8 Silver or Silver Gilt awards.

In addition Whitehaven, Thornhill and Nether Wasdale were overall winners in their respective categories.

Britain in Bloom

Members may also be aware that Whitehaven represented Cumbria in this year's National Britain In Bloom Finals, judging of the town took place in August. The Britain in Bloom award presentation was held on the 28 September, and was hosted by Cardiff City Council. On the evening, the Whitehaven "in bloom" group were delighted to receive the RHS Silver award.

Perhaps even better, St Nicholas Gardens missed out on the award for the "Best Park in the Country" by just two points. A category which was won for the grounds to the University of Nottingham.

Again, I am sure that members will agree with me in passing on the councils congratulations to the team.

Home North West Group Limited - Invitation to Tender

The Council's Services have received a formal invitation to tender for the provision of a grounds maintenance service, to commence from April 2006 and for a period of 3 years. The section already do some of the work for Home Group so this tender gives the service an opportunity to consolidate its position for a three year period.

Clean Neighbourhoods Act

I wish to inform members that following a 'Master Class' on the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 attended by Cllr J Johnson, Martin Jepson (Head of Legal Services), Toni Magean (Open Spaces Manager) and Steve Bishop (new Enforcement Manager) late in August, a project working group looking at the implementation of the act has been formed.

High Hedges - Update

Since June 2005, a new power to control high hedges has enabled the Council, as a last resort, to assist in resolving disputes between neighbouring properties. Since June Officers have taken 15 enquiries regarding High Hedges and subsequently received two official requests to resolve such disputes

Allotments

Via successful marketing campaigns such as those in Copeland Matters and Retired in Cumbria publications, the tenancies within the Councils 5 owned have reached an all time high with a total of 161 plots taken out of 169 available plots. Following on from this, The Parks Dept will continue to promote healthy living & eating, recreation and communication within our allotment service.

Trees

The Tree Council has just announced that the first of Copeland's ten applicants has been successful in obtaining funding towards this year national tree week. The Parks Dept will be expecting confirmation of the other nine applications over the next few weeks.

Environmental Health

Defective Private Sewer Serving properties on Coronation Drive, Grant Drive and Craig Drive, Whitehaven

On 13 July 2005 notices were served under the Building Act 1984 on the owners of the 68 properties involved requiring the repair of the sewer. No appeals against the notices were made and they expired on 2 September. The notices have not been complied with so officers are now making arrangements to have the work carried out in default.

Flood and Coastal Defence Engineer

An appointment has been made and it is hoped that the person concerned will commence duties by mid-November.

Waste Management

Christmas refuse collection arrangements are now well advanced. In consultation with our waste management team I have agreed that all residents will have at least two collections of general waste immediately prior to Christmas and another two collections of general waste following New Year. This means our refuse collection employees will benefit from a close down between Christmas and New Years Eve.

3 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

4 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

None