

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

24 June 2020

COUNCILLOR VIRGINIA GAY - CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE & WELLBEING

For the period March 2020 to June 2020

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Business as usual activity

Arts & Culture Fund Grant

Thirteen grant applications were received for the period November 2019 & February 2020. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 some projects had to be cancelled, some postponed and others delivered virtually. Grants totalling £9,500 have been awarded to four projects. Grants will be offered to several other organisations once confirmation has been received whether the postponed projects will take place.

Community Transport Fund Grant

One grant application was received from Great Massingham Community Car Scheme. A grant of £2,000 was requested and awarded.

The Big Society Fund

Following agreement by Cabinet the BSF has been revised and refocussed to reflect the increased focus on environmental and community sustainability. The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund will support communities to develop new and innovative projects which will improve their environment as well as their health and social wellbeing. The process for assessing grant applications between £1,000 & £15,000 will remain the same as that for the Big Society Fund

There will be a shorter, simpler application form for projects requesting grants of under £1,000. A monthly decision panel will enable these smaller grants to be turned around more quickly.

The new documentation pack in respect of the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund should be available on the NNDC website from the end of June 2020.

Countryside sites

Facilities at some of our sites closed down temporarily but access to all of the sites remained open. The team has therefore been working throughout, as normal, and have used the reduction in visitors to make improvements to the

sites in preparation for Green Flag applications where appropriate. Unfortunately, there have been incidents of antisocial behaviour and vandalism.

The team has continued their improvements around Holt Country Park. New maps and interpretation boards are soon to be implemented. New benches and bins have been purchased to be installed around the play area ready for when this reopens.

Two new trails have now been installed at Pretty Corner Woods, and a third easy access trail is due to be completed later in the year.

Covid 19 related activity

Culture

Both Cromer Pavilion Theatre and Sheringham Little Theatre will be severely affected by the closure of Theatres and will continue to be impacted by the inevitably slow return to their previous audience and commercial activity levels. Both have furloughed their staff and have applied for relevant grants (the Little Theatre being awarded a grant from the Arts Council England of £20,000).

Wellbeing

The Community Support Hub has been responsible for identifying and responding to the needs of vulnerable people in our community. The outputs from this have been reported elsewhere but in summary we have:

- Called extremely vulnerable (shielded) and others registering for support or thought to need help
- Facilitated the delivery of food parcels to people in need
- Facilitated the delivery of medication to households
- Made calls to 466 people thought to be in need of companionship, almost half of which on a repeat basis
- Maintained close links with local community and voluntary groups, which have provided an amazingly valuable response to the crisis, supporting their local communities and working alongside our staff to ensure the needs of vulnerable people are met.

Our sports development activators have helped people to be active during lockdown by setting up online resources and by telephone coaching.

Beaches

All six of our previous Blue Flag beaches retained their award in May and Wells Beach retained its Seaside award status. Whilst lifeguarding has been disrupted by the consequences of the pandemic crisis, a level of service has been resumed and options are being pursued to ensure all of our Blue Flag beaches are as safe as can be. The lifeguards at Sea Palling starting on 30 May, and in Cromer on 12th June, the following locations will have lifeguarded beaches between 4th July and 6th September: Wells-Next-The-

Sea; Mundesley; Sheringham West.

Leisure Centres

The Council's leisure centres closed once legal restrictions were in place but the Leisure Operator is making plans for them to reopen in a way that satisfies public health guidelines and government regulations. It will be a challenging and complicated process to get them functioning to anything like their former numbers of users or range of activities. Reopening will therefore be staged.

The repairs to the roof of Splash were completed just before the site was required to close as a result of the pandemic. Construction of the new Sheringham Leisure Centre, however, was only delayed for one month due to the crisis and good progress is now being made on site.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

A meeting is being scheduled with Norfolk Museums Service, to review the activities in North Norfolk that are the basis of our funding agreement.

I am also to attend a meeting of District sub-committee of the Health Board (where I will report on performance at NNDC and our response to the Covid crisis).

3 Meetings attended