

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

18 November 2020

COUNCILLOR VIRGINIA GAY - CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, WELLBEING & CULTURE

For the period September 2020 to November 2020

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Leisure

Sports and Leisure Facilities

Since reopening the three Council owned leisure facilities on 25 July following the first Covid lockdown period, all three centres have increased visitor numbers month-on-month. The leisure operator 'Everyone Active' has implemented very robust and effective systems to keep their customers safe. The user figures are as follows.

Month	Visits
July	2,346
August	12,813
September	22,259
October	29,222

The three dual-use sports centres were due to reopen at the start of November, however given the current lockdown this will be put back until December, when hopefully all facilities be able to reopen again. Construction of the Sheringham Leisure Facility is continuing throughout this lockdown period

Countryside

The Council has been successful in retaining all three Green Flag awards: at Holt Country Park, Pretty Corner Woods and Sadler's Wood. The team have however been hard at work clearing the many trees that came down during the high winds in October. The Council's woodlands remain open during this lockdown period.

Wellbeing

Grants

Community Transport Fund – One large grant application has been received for the period July 2020 – October 2020. This will be considered by the Community Transport Panel in November. Organisations that provide community transport were proactively contacted and encouraged to apply for a grant. It was identified that the majority of Community Transport schemes

have currently suspended or reduced service due to Covid 19 and still have funding available from previous grant awards.

The new North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund reflects the Council's increased focus on environmental and community sustainability. The panel met on 7th October to consider ten applications. Grant awards in response to seven applications, totalling £65,621.22, were recommended; two grant applications were not supported and one was deferred.

For projects requesting grants under £1,000 a smaller Panel will meet monthly to enable decisions on these grant applications to be made more quickly.

Social Prescribing

The Council has contracts to deliver Social Prescribing services in North Norfolk on behalf of Norfolk County Council and two Primary Care Networks in North Norfolk. The five Social Prescribing Officers support vulnerable people in dealing with or managing complex or significant issues which are impacting on their health and wellbeing. Currently this is not a self-referral service. Organisations such as health, social care, police, housing associations and internal NNDC services, with consent, refer vulnerable people for support. During September and October 136 referrals were received. In total this year to-date, 507 referrals have been received.

This figure is lower than in previous years, possibly due people not going to their GP (or other organisations) as readily, because of Covid. Following the easing of the previous lockdown, the number of referrals increased, and that could be anticipated again closer to Christmas and into the new year.

NCC has reviewed the arrangements for ongoing funding of Social Prescribing Services and the outcome of this is awaited.

Information, Advice & Guidance

The Council has previously funded Norfolk Citizens Advice to provide an Information, Advice & Guidance service. In line with NCC, this is now being reviewed. Due to Covid 19, Norfolk CA did reopen offices in North Walsham and Holt on a limited basis in August but it is expected they will have closed again due to the November lockdown.

An interim grant has been given to Norfolk Citizens Advice whilst a review of IAG services is carried out. The review will consider the outcome of a NCC review into the future funding of IAG and its links/relationship with Social Prescribing, which is due imminently.

Covid 19 related activity

The Council is collaborating County-wide in the provision of a local Contact Tracing service in North Norfolk; this is for people who have tested positive for Covid 19 but where national or NCC contact tracers have been unable to reach them by phone. A team of NNDC officers is visiting addresses, as appropriate, to request that they register details of people they have been in contact with. Advice and support is being offered to people who are required

to self-isolate.

Since the announcement of the November lockdown, NNDC has been working with NCC and Third Sector organisations to establish systems to provide support to enable Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people to self-isolate. In contrast to the first 'shielding programme' systems for self-help are far better developed. Supermarkets have significantly increased the availability of on-line and phone shopping services, additional support in respect of prescription delivery and loneliness and isolation support are also available. The emphasis is on advising and supporting CEV people to access services themselves in order to meet their needs whilst self-isolating. Systems are in place however, to provide food boxes in urgent circumstances. There is also funding available to help people experiencing hardship due to Covid 19 and winter pressures.

The situation is constantly being monitored and NNDC will increase support as required.

Culture

NNDC's Arts & Culture Fund has seen a reduction in grant applications, undoubtedly as a result of Covid 19. One grant application for a rural theatre project was received for the period July 2020 – October 2020. This will be considered by the Arts & Culture Panel in November. Unfortunately due to Covid 19 some previously funded projects had to be cancelled, postponed or delivered virtually.

Local organisations benefitted significantly from the 'Culture Recovery Fund' grants awarded by Arts Council England in October, as follows.

- Cromer Pier/ Pavilion Theatre (Openwide Coastal): £250,000
- Sheringham Little Theatre: £76,644
- Wells Maltings: £95,000

Pier Management Contract

Openwide, together with Nigel Hogg Productions (Cromer Pier Show's Musical Director) successfully enabled a Covid-safe Summer 'Strictly Variety' Show to take place in the theatre from 23 August to the end of September. There was a total of 21 shows, and even with limited numbers there were nearly 2,000 visitors, with almost every show sold out.

Both parties have again agreed a suitable format for a similar Christmas Show to be organised. This would run from 4 December until 1 January, Covid restrictions permitting (although this is obviously being reviewed, in light of the current and anticipated restrictions).

Openwide's Culture Recovery Fund award will help ensure plans can be made for normal operations to resume as soon as it is possible to do so, providing financial support for the investment in a summer show hopefully next year.

Meetings attended:

Since September I have attended all NNDC committee meetings of which I am a member. In addition, I have attended a meeting of the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund Panel, North Norfolk Joint Museums Committee, Norfolk Records Committee, The Norfolk Health and Well Being Board, the SPARSE Rural Economy Sub Group, the North Norfolk Ambulance Response Time Working Group and the raising of the Green Flag at Sadler's Wood.