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**OVERVIEW OF LEISURE PORTFOLIO**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. During the last eight-week cycle the following were the main areas of work under my Leisure Portfolio.

**Chartermark**

2. The Leisure and Arts Division have been successful in attaining Chartermark status following a detailed two-day site inspection on 28 and 29 September. This award is made to all Leisure and Arts service, incorporating Catering, School Meals and Building Cleaning.

**Sports and Physical Activity Development**

3. A Zone Active bid has been awarded. The grant of £180,000 made by Sport England, will support a three-year project in raising physical activity levels across Lascelles, Parkgate East and Eastbourne Wards. Additionally, this grant has been matched by further contributions in kind and cash support from partners, which increases the overall resources available to over £250,000. The project has been seen as a pilot in encouraging communities to work together in sharing resources and ideas in promoting physical activity. It is estimated that activity programming will commence in early 2005.

**Eastbourne Sports Complex**

4. New fitness equipment to the value of £40,000 has been procured for Pulse Suite 3 within Eastbourne Sports Complex. The tendering process resulted in the contract being awarded to Techno gym, who are one of the worldwide market leaders in fitness equipment provision and one of a limited number of suppliers who comply with the Inclusive Fitness Initiative recommendations. The combination of cardiovascular and fixed resistance equipment will be supplied and fitted during the last week in November and will complement a refurbishment of the indoor provision at this site

**Mayor's Ball**

5. The theme for this year's Mayor's Ball, 'The Spirit of the Caribbean' provided an excellent base from which to design a colourful, vibrant, cultural event that provided a flavour of the Caribbean through visual displays in partnership with Darlington College of Technology, an exciting entertainments programme and excellent cuisine. The event was a real success with extremely positive feedback from guests on the evening and provided a strong foundation to further develop the event for 2005.

## **Youth Service**

### **Youth Participation**

6. Sarah Bell (21) and Jenna Newman (17) of Darlington Youth Service have been chosen to represent young people in the region at local and national level. Both were voted onto the National Members Group, which is part of the UK's largest national voluntary youth organisation, during the 'Life Actually' conference in July. This is the first time the North East has been represented at the NMG.

### **Vibe Awards**

7. This year, The Vibe Awards saw achievements of eighty-two young people from across the Borough recognised at a spectacular event on the 4 October at the Civic Theatre. The Youth Service aiming to highlight and celebrate the amazing achievements of local young people set the Awards up ten years ago. This year's event was organised in conjunction with Darlington Partnership and The Northern Echo.

### **Voices Event**

8. Eighty-five young people representing school councils in local secondary schools attended the Voices Event held at the Arts Centre on 20 October to celebrate Youth Democracy Week. Organised by young people and the Youth Service, the event sought to promote youth participation in issues they feel are important to them. Workshop sessions were held in the morning on Votes at 16, STAR (Student Action for Refugees), Youth Democracy, Peer Education and Connexions. The afternoon session was given over to presentations by young people to the Deputy Mayor.

### **Civic Theatre**

9. Pantomime Peter Pan is breaking all box office records so far. A high profile marketing campaign is well underway with a regional Christmas card competition, billboard campaign, TV and radio ads as well as AA signage into the town.

### **Big Draw**

10. On 16 October 2004, the Civic Theatre hosted the visual arts project known as "The Big Draw Day". This is an event aimed at involving children and adults in the visual arts and over 80 people participated. The theme of this event was the legendary ghosts and apparitions of the Civic Theatre.

## **Arts Centre**

### **Take Off Festival Success**

11. Takeoff is England's leading annual celebration of professional theatre for children and young people. It is organised by CTC Theatre, based at the Arts Centre on Vane Terrace, where the festival was a hit in 1996 and 1999.
12. In four packed days 1500 young people of all ages enjoyed 15 excellent shows from Italy, South Africa, France and Belgium as well as all parts of the UK including Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

### **Sponsorship**

13. Road Run - Sherwoods were once again main sponsor for £3,000, with the Northern Echo giving valuable coverage as media partner. New sponsor Highland Spring provided 5000 bottles of mineral water for the runners.
14. Mayor's Ball - Main Sponsor Latimer Hinks gave £2,000, and Alpha Radio provided £1000 towards the cost of the entertainment.
15. Northern Sinfonia - The Dolphin Centre will be the venue hosting a series of concerts from Northern Sinfonia. The first concert is in November with another three in the New Year. Roman Bathrooms Limited are giving £800 in sponsorship for the series of concerts.
16. Roundabouts - We are delighted to welcome several new roundabout sponsors: Digital Office Solutions, E A Clayton Limited, City & Northern (for Morton Palms) and Philips Collection Services Limited, who are sponsoring two roundabouts. In addition, existing sponsors Gallerina are now sponsoring a second roundabout.

### **Darlington Railway Centre & Museum**

17. A recently commissioned Conservation Plan highlighted concerns about the condition of the Museum roof. A subsequent structural engineers report suggested the need for some essential repair and maintenance work. Further investigative work is required to identify the true extent of the essential maintenance, which will enable a design project to be completed. Prior to the investigative work there is a requirement to erect a number of props in certain sections of the main Museum building to support the roof trusses in areas where it is felt the damage may be worse. The initial works to erect the props began on Wednesday 13 October and was completed on Monday 8 November. The props are now in situ and the Museum will be open as normal whilst the repair project designs are reviewed.

**Councillor Lee Vasey**  
**Cabinet Member with Leisure Portfolio**