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**OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND LEISURE PORTFOLIO**

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**Purpose of the Report**

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

**Healthy Darlington**

2. The Darlington Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is now available and is being shared with relevant leads who have a role to commission health and wellbeing. The production of the JSNA is a shared responsibility across the Directors of Children's Services, Community Adult Services and Public Health. The aim of the JSNA is to describe the future health and wellbeing needs of the population of Darlington and to inform service developments to meet those needs.
3. Following the publication of NHS County Durham and NHS Darlington's Commissioning Intentions document – November 2008, two Annual Operation Plan 2009/10 Stakeholder Events were held in February 2009. At the event on 12 February 2009 at Hallgarth Hotel, Darlington Director of Public Health provided an overview of the local health and wellbeing challenges.

**Sports Development**

**Locality Cluster of Activities**

4. The locality working positive activities is now well underway, with the Sports Development Team delivering a comprehensive range of sport and physical activity sessions after school and in the community. Activities include Street Cheer, Table Tennis, Dance, Multi Activity, Football, Cricket, Trampolining Dance Mats, Gymnastics, Basketball and Biking. Over 500 young people have already been engaged and plans are already in place at the locality forums for more positive activity provision after April.
5. A diverse range of interventions have been developed alongside Children's Services within all of the locality areas including dance mat sessions, family activities, as well as breakfast and after school clubs and the 'Junior One Life' clubs. Junior One Life is a 6 – 12 week physical activity and weight management programme for parents and children (8-11 yrs).

## **Community Sports Coach Appointed**

6. The Sports Development Team have appointed a Part Time Community Sports Coach, funded through Tees Valley Sport, who will work on the delivery of the extended schools programme and also deliver multi skills clubs within the School Sports Partnership. The CSC will also help to develop the casual sports coaches within the team and is a real positive for the service.

## **NHS Darlington Partnership**

7. Joint work with NHS Darlington will facilitate the delivery of a range of sport and physical activity and health interventions. The programme will include:

### **Zone Active +**

8. The Zone Active programme was a community-based sports project funded through Sport England and was originally based within three wards - Park East, Lascelles and Eastbourne. The programme will now be extended throughout all wards in Darlington to promote Sport and Physical Activity and look to engage children and adults to increase their activity levels.
9. Key aspects of the Zone Active Development Plan include delivering the third Darlington Community Games and work with the GEM (Get Everybody Motivated Project) to engage those of a low level of physical fitness; the programme currently runs within various wards of the town. It will support continuation of the GEM project and link closely with rehabilitation programmes and Darlington Community Mental Health Team. Further development of other community programmes will also occur including stroke rehabilitation, obesity intervention and mental health.
10. In partnership with the Youth Services, a programme of positive activity will be delivered to engage young people that have drug and/or alcohol abuse issues. The main element of this will be a Football Club that engages males and females and supports their personal development.

## **Transport Programme**

11. In partnership with a local Bus Company, a project is being developed to support young people to have greater access to positive activities within Darlington. The programme is adding value to the Darlington Teen Card; this card can be purchased by all young people for £1.00 this then allows them to use all bus routes at off peak times for only 50p.
12. To support young people to make use of this subsidised travel, a programme has been developed where the Teen Card will also allow young people to access the Gym, Swimming and Exercise sessions within the Dolphin Centre for a 50% subsidy. Additionally young people can access Sports Development Community sessions for free these include Street Cheer at the Arts Centre, Trampolining Club, Gymnastics Club and Basketball Club.

## **Targeted Swimming Action Plan**

13. A Mapping exercise of existing swimming provision has identified that there are various swimming/water based activities that could be further developed across Darlington. The “targeted swimming action plan” will look to address these and develop swimming programmes addressing these gaps in provision.
14. Development will focus on all target groups and look to work across all levels of swimming. Projects include Darlington Triathlon Club Swimming Development, Water Babies Courses, and Female Learn to swim sessions with a focus on BME groups, Diving and Swimming Camps, GEM in the water and Swimability programme engaging disabled swimmers /non swimmers.

## **Children Centre’s Subsidised Swimming Plan**

15. Swimming is a key element of children centre’s activities, it allows parent and child engagement and supports development of Fundamental skills for the children. Across all children centres in Darlington there will be the opportunity for all families to access subsidised swimming. This will promote life long participation in Sport and Physical Activity for children and support with parental motivation towards the benefits of Swimming/Physical Activity.

## **Dance Mats**

16. Following further partnership working alongside NHS Darlington, each Secondary School in Darlington now has a set of Dance Mats to help tackle obesity and get more children physically active. The new Dance Mats were installed at Carmel College, Hummersknott School, Hurworth School and Branksome School in February. Training has been provided and a development plan agreed for Dance Mat provision throughout Darlington with Darlington School Sports Partnership.

## **Healthy Vending**

17. A pilot scheme will soon be underway at the Dolphin Centre to offer healthy choices for customers through vending provision. This includes reducing some confectionary lines and substituting with healthier options. Monitoring and evaluation of this scheme will occur alongside the PCT to inform future direction in line with local obesity prevention work.

## **Darlington Playing Pitch and Facilities Strategy**

18. Darlington Borough Council are working in partnership with Sport England, Darlington PCT and leisure specialists PMP to undertake a sports and physical activities facility strategy and playing pitch strategy for Darlington.
19. The main aims of the strategy are to:
  - (a) Assist the Council in meeting the demand for playing pitches and sports facilities and to secure, as appropriate, external funding for improvements.
  - (b) Support the development of community sport and physical activity in Darlington.
  - (c) Provide information to inform decisions and determine future development proposals.

20. Consultation is ongoing with local sports clubs/organisations, national governing bodies, key pitch providers, local schools and neighbouring local authorities and in addition there will be a quality assessment of all sports facilities and pitches throughout Darlington. The draft strategies will be ready for consultation in April 2009.

### **Sports Unlimited**

21. The Sports Unlimited programme is a three-year Government funded project (approx £62k for Darlington) aimed at increasing the number of young people who have access to a minimum of 5 hours sport every week. Following the consultation results, the Year 2 Development Plan for Sports Unlimited is being finalised. The Year 2 plan will involve more work with National Governing Bodies to try and ensure some sustainability and there is a clear pathway for all participants to continue their relevant activity.

### **Darlington Doorstep Walks**

22. Darlington Doorstep Walks currently have 67 members and 26 walk leaders, 16 of which are within specific organisations around Darlington. These organisations have come under the Darlington Doorstep Walk scheme to increase participation in walking with their service users, the scheme will help with promoting these walks and support in the development of trained staff.
23. Prambles walks (parent and pushchair walks) are starting at various localities around Darlington. Mount Pleasant start Friday 27 February and McNay Street start 4 March. Various parent and child walks will happen around Darlington, the first walk being 21 March from North Road Primary School.

### **West Park Bike Track**

24. Taster Sessions and Open Days have been arranged and have encouraged new riders to access the bike track. Coaches are accessing the pilot scheme for specific BMX coaching. Meetings have taken place to discuss and look at developing a Go-Ride club in Darlington this will have sub groups of all disciplines of cycling to allow children to access and develop all disciplines. Peter Root the Regional Manager for British Cycling attended the meeting and advised how to move this project forward.

### **Youth Crime Action Plan**

25. In partnership with Darlington Youth Service the Sports Development Team has planned various activities on Friday and Saturday evenings to help provide diversionary activities for young people across Darlington. Basketball tournaments have been delivered at Eastbourne School and Branksome Comprehensive, Street Cheer Clubs at the Arts Centre and Eastbourne Methodist Church. Dodgeball tournaments are being delivered in March and targeted Football sessions have started at The Dolphin Centre.

### **Events**

## **Chinese New Year Celebration – The Market Square – 26 January 2009**

26. The Events Team worked in partnership with Darlington Chinese Association to stage an event to celebrate Chinese New Year, which for 2009 is Year of the Ox. The event included performances of traditional Chinese music song and dance by several performers including pupils from Hummersknott School. There was also the opportunity to sample Chinese tea and fortune cookies during the event. Despite the event being held on a Monday afternoon, it attracted a good audience.

## **Best of Darlington Awards 2009 – Darlington College – 13 February**

27. In its fourth year, the events and sponsorship team worked in partnership with Darlington College, NHS Darlington and Darlington Partnership to deliver an event that presented the final nominees and winners of the Best of Darlington.
28. The event, which was held at Darlington College, had a record number of nominations and attendees; A Special Achievement award was presented to Duncan Bannatyne and the Young Citizen of the year awarded to Ashleigh Trevarrow and Citizen of the Year awarded to Robin Blair.

## **North East Theatre Consortium**

29. Darlington Arts Centre has secured a grant of £26,000 on behalf of The North East Theatre Consortium to develop and tour Queen Bee a new play by Margaret Wilkinson.
30. The Consortium is made up of the Arts Centre, The Customs House, South Shields, The Queens Hall, Hexham and New Writing North. Queen Bee is a contemporary ghost story with a broad appeal and will be performed at the Arts Centre as well as touring to the other Consortium venues plus other prestigious National venues.

## **Holocaust Memorial Day**

31. On Tuesday 27 January 2009 Darlington Arts Centre was the host of the annual Holocaust Memorial Day Ceremony. The theme for this year was ‘Stand up to Hatred’ and the event was attended by 180 people who were welcomed by The Mayor of Darlington. To accompany the event an exhibition was held in the Arts Centre created by students from Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College and the film ‘Boy in the Striped Pyjamas’ was shown and was attended by 540 people, over 2 days.

## **Darlington School Partnership Dance Festival**

32. This event was held at Darlington Arts Centre on Thursday 12 February 2009. 34 school groups took part, with total participants of approximately 500 young people, from Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4.

## **Visual and Public Art**

33. Kathryn Wakeman and Gail Henderson held their ‘Worlds of Difference’ exhibition in the Myles Meehan Gallery Friday 28th November - Saturday 17th January 2009 attracting over 4,000 visitors. The artists also gave a free gallery talk open to the general public.

## **Women's Refuge Arts Workshops in the Arts Centre Galleries**

34. Workshops were held with the Women's Refuge based on the exhibitions at the Arts Centre. The adults worked with Yvonne Preston taking inspiration from the 'Worlds of Difference' exhibition to create their own painting on canvas. The children worked with Frances Connolly taking inspiration from Lee Hutchinson's 'Expression' exhibition in the Lounge Gallery to create a large scale painting and individual paintings. The aim of the workshops were to develop positive images of women and the work produced are to be exhibited on the premises of the domestic violence unit in Darlington. There were 12 adults and 10 children participating.
35. The workshops received very positive feedback from all participants and staff from the Refuge. Brian Ord and Nick Banks' exhibition 'Journey's End' runs in the Myles Meehan Gallery Friday 23rd January – Saturday 14 March 2009 and the artist gave a talk to the general public based around their techniques and inspiration.
36. The Public Catalogue Foundation is currently cataloguing all oils and acrylic in public collection across the country. The County Durham Catalogue has now been completed and includes Darlington Borough Art Collection improving public access to these artworks and raising the profile of the collection locally and nationally.

## **ArtSpark – Young Peoples Theatre**

37. Darlington Arts Centre and Civic Theatre have been successful in an application to the Arts Council's Free Theatre Initiative, securing a £10,000 grant. The Free Theatre initiative is a two-year pilot programme offering free theatre tickets to under-26-year-olds, at least one day a week in up to 95 theatres throughout England. The scheme is part of a strategic approach by government departments to give increased cultural opportunities to young people. The scheme is designed to reach new audiences and develop a new generation of arts attendees.
38. The Scheme was launched in February half term, in which various activities were organised nationally in participating venues to promote the scheme. Darlington Arts Centre and Civic Theatre hosted a number of activities to welcome young people.
  - (a) A Pirate Party was organised at the Arts Centre on Tuesday 17 February, for the audience of the show Potted Pirates, for children aged 6+ and their families. Activities included a treasure hunt, Pirate hat making, face painting and storytelling.
  - (b) On Saturday 21 February young people aged 16+ had the chance to receive the first free theatre tickets available through the scheme, for Cabaret at Darlington Civic Theatre.
  - (c) Also on Saturday 21 February, young people were invited to take a guided tour of the Civic Theatre, in which they explored the backstage area and the Cabaret set.

39. Darlington Arts Centre hosted the first Urban Splurge Event on Friday 20 February, organised in partnership with Youth Services, to provide positive activities for young people on Friday and Saturday evenings as part of the governments Youth Crime Action Plan. Various activities were organised for young people including a film programme, rapping workshops, Eco Bag Design workshops, Dance workshops and a DJ and chill out Lounge.

### **Arts Development**

40. The Openart Studio, funded by NHS Darlington to promote positive health and wellbeing re-opened on 16 January 2009 and is open every week on Fridays. Attendance is good and the programme for the summer is currently being developed.

### **Working with Diverse Communities within Darlington**

41. Following on from the Maximise Diversity work, the Arts Development Team have continued to develop the relationship with the Darlington and District West Indian Association (DDWIA).
42. Working in partnership with the DDWIA two events were programmed:
  - (a) 'The London Community Gospel Choir' on the 5 February at the Arts Centre. The evening was introduced by representatives from the DDWIA and attended by 35 people from West Indian Community. The event was completely sold out.
  - (b) 'This is Soul' on the 11 February at the Civic Theatre. A group from the DDWIA attended the show and the evening was a great success.

### **Head of Steam – Darlington's Railway Museum**

43. A new exhibition will be installed in the Waiting Room and will run from April to December 2009. It is entitled 'Everything but the Bear: Memories of Tubwell Row Museum' and will consist of text panels and artifacts in cases. Two Contemporary Artists will install their work in the Museum.
44. Heritage Lottery Funding has enabled the installation of new exterior lighting in the grounds to assist customer, staff safety and building security.
45. Head of Steam will hold a Roman Day on the 19 July to highlight the town's association with Piercebridge Roman Fort. The day will include a re-enactment group; Roman food and pottery; archery; artifacts from the site; text panels and coach trips to the original Fort. Head of Steam's First Birthday celebrations will take place on Sunday 5 April 2009. This open day will provide a whole range of family activities and workshops.

## **Public Protection Division**

### **Trading Standards**

#### **Trading Standards – Scamnesty Campaign**

46. During February, Trading Standards participated in a National Scams Awareness Month to raise awareness of false lottery draws, phoney competitions and dodgy emails. Residents were invited to drop evidence of scams into special Scamnesty bins located at both libraries, Town Hall reception, Customer Contact Centre and the Public Protection Office. All the evidence was collected and will be used to prevent future scams. Information on how to recognise and avoid falling for scams was also available at these locations. Information and examples of typical scams were also displayed on an Outdoor Market stall to further raise awareness of scams to shoppers. A number of press release and radio interviews were undertaken during the month, highlighting the problem of scams.

#### **Underage Sales**

47. As part of Trading Standards programme of checking sales of alcohol to underage children, a sale to an underage volunteer has occurred. This sale is currently being investigated by Trading Standards and the Police.

#### **Consumer Education Talks**

48. Two consumer education talks on consumer rights were given to over 50 members of the Ladies Circle and Parkinson's Disease Society. A talk on animal health was also given to members of the NFU.

### **NHS Darlington funded health projects delivered by the Environmental Health Section**

#### **Promoting Food Safety Project**

49. The PCT has provided £10,000 to fund an initiative in March aimed at supporting food businesses improve their hygiene standards and improving access to information about hygiene standards for consumers. The initiative involves:
- (a) Improving access to information for consumers about standards of hygiene in food businesses based in Darlington by:
    - (i) Providing access to premises ratings Tees Valley Food Hygiene (TVFH) Award via a National website operated under the "Scores on the Doors" name.
    - (ii) Advertising of the TVFH Award in the Council's A-Z Directory.
    - (iii) Encouraging high scoring premises to display information, in addition to the Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Certificate, at their entrance. Plastic door stickers have been printed for 3, 4 and 5 star premises to be distributed in March to town centre businesses to coincide with launch of the Scores on the Doors website.
  - (b) Providing free training for premises with two star or less (3 premises 0 star, 8 premises 1 star, 49 premises 2 star at 1 January 2009) by delivering six Safer Food Better Business courses free of charge. Each course will be to groups of 10-15 people.



- (c) 100 electronic probe thermometers have been purchased for either issue free of charge, or for sale at £12 (cost price +VAT) to food business operators in Darlington. This initiative focuses upon improving the accuracy and frequency of temperature monitoring during food production. The criteria for issue of probe thermometer free of charge will be:
- (i) One thermometer to those food business operators that attend Safer Food Better Business training in March 2009.
  - (ii) One thermometer to those food business operators having premises with two stars or less (Tees Valley Food Hygiene Award Scheme) where there is no reliable electronic probe thermometer available and the FBO has not received a FOC probe thermometer previously.
  - (iii) Business operated by a registered charity preparing ready to eat food, and the food business operators has not received a free probe thermometer previously.

### **Noise in the Hospitality/Entertainment Industry Project**

50. The Noise at Work legislation requires employers to assess the noise exposure of their staff and determine what action is necessary to protect staff from excessive noise exposure and hearing loss. A recent seminar organised by the Tees Valley Unitary Authorities for the hospitality industry identified that little progress has been made in implementing the legislation due to lack of technical knowledge.
51. £15,000 funding received from the NHS Darlington in 2008/09 will enable the Environmental Health Section to carry out free of charge some of the preliminary assessment work and provide businesses with the noise data that will enable them to make decisions on what needs to be done.
52. Specialist noise monitoring equipment has been purchased to carry out this work. This includes a hand held noise meter to be used by Enforcement Officers and digital dose-meters to be worn by staff to measure direct noise exposure. Additionally an occupational health specialist has been contracted to carry out audiometric testing of people working in pubs and clubs in Darlington to measure hearing loss.

**Councillor Andrew Scott**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Health and Leisure**