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**OVERVIEW OF HEALTH & LEISURE PORTFOLIO**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the main areas of work under my Health and Leisure Portfolio were as follows:

**Healthy Darlington**

2. The Healthy Darlington Business Group met on 3 December 2009. The agenda was wide ranging, which reflects the breadth of the Healthy Darlington Delivery Plan. Presentations included the emerging messages from research on worklessness in Darlington, progress on developing integrated teams to deliver children's services and evaluation of Darlington as a cycle demonstration town.
3. Other agenda items included a progress report on increasing participation in sport, a report on the Darlington Tobacco Control Alliance, a performance report on the Darlington Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy and the Older Person's Mental Health Strategy. An update was provided on the Darlington Investors in Health (Workplace Award).
4. Standing agenda items included a report from the Partnership Director who presented an analysis framework for One Darlington for consideration.

**Narrowing the Gap: Workshop**

5. The third and final workshop in the series was held on 11th December 2009. Offered to elected Members and officers the final workshop introduced social policy for health improvement, social marketing of key managers, influencing and advocacy for change and an evaluation of the three sessions.
6. An evaluation report of the three workshops will be available in January 2010 and will inform the design of further workshops.

**Cultural Services**

**We Make Customers Happy**

7. It has been a year since the launch of the Code of Service internally. From January 2010 this standard in customer services will be published to external customers so that everyone can measure their experience against this standard. Alongside this, the way in which customers can feedback on their experience is being redesigned replacing the existing Listening To You feedback forms with a new and modern design that reflects a fresh focus on customer services. A Communications Strategy will be in progress from January to inform customers of The Code of Service and feedback boards and a website page will be in

place to publish results on service performance to customers.

## **Sports Development**

### **Dance Mats**

8. The first Darlington Secondary Schools Dance Mat Festival will be delivered at Darlington Education Village on Wednesday 20 January. Following the event the team hope to set up the first Darlington Dance Mat Club. The Dance Mats have now been rolled out to all Secondary schools within Darlington and it is hoped the festival will become an integral part of the Secondary events calendar.

### **PCT Swimming Action Plan Update**

9. In partnership with the Amateur Swimming Association the Sports Development Team have been successful in applying for external funding to offer free swimming lessons for adults over 60 and young people aged 11 – 16. The lessons will start in January at the Dolphin Centre, Hummersknott School and the Education Village running at various times throughout the day. The lessons will be eight week sessions supported by swim teachers from the Dolphin Centre and will link closely with the GEM, One Life and Swimming Club sessions.

### **School Sports Partnership Coaches**

10. Darlington Sports Development Team will be supporting the new School Sports Coaching Plan with 11 new coaches being employed to work within the partnership targeting various age groups from January 2010.
11. The current coaching programme benefits a wide range of pupils from the 5-16 age range. This has specifically targeted programmes for girls, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 4 boys and girls, disengaged young people, disability groups as well as the more able and gifted young people. The theme running through all programmes is the 'Being Healthy' strand of the Every Child Matters agenda and making choices for a healthy lifestyle. Coaches will start activity in Dance, Gymnastics, Rugby, Football, Cricket, Athletics, Golf, Kayaking and Multi Skills.

### **Darlington Primary Schools Cross Country 2009**

12. On Saturday 7 November Darlington Sports Development Team in partnership with Darlington Quakers Running Club ran the Darlington Primary Schools Cross Country at Branksome Comprehensive School. Over 450 children competed from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 in six races throughout the morning. This year has seen a record number of entries from all Primary Schools across the town.

### **Sport Unlimited**

13. Darlington Sports Development team has continued to deliver on a number of activities in the community as part of the Sport Unlimited programme. Sessions include Street Cheer and Intro to Boxing at Skerne Park Community Centre, Basketball at the Education Village and Hurworth, Badminton at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form and Longfield School and most notably Boxercise at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form. The latter has been a real success with approximately 20 participants (majority female) engaging in the activity on a weekly basis.

The activities above have played a key role in participants accessing 5 hours of sport and physical activity on a weekly basis.

### **Junior Netball League**

14. The Darlington and District Netball Junior League finished for the 2009 season on 22 November 2009 after 6 weeks of fixtures. Teams have competed in two sections, Under 16 and Under 19, and in total 10 teams and approximately 100 participants have been involved every Sunday at the Dolphin Centre. The young people attending have come from various settings including schools, clubs and colleges.

### **Darlington Teen Card**

15. The Darlington Teen Card scheme will continue to run until 31 March 2010. Young people are accessing a variety of subsidised sessions including swimming, gym, Trampoline Club, Gymnastics, Street Soccer and Hip Hop and Street Dance. Total number of visits to access swimming and gym using the teen card since April 2009 has been 2050. There are 10 regular participants accessing Trampoline Club using their Teen Card.

### **Darlington Investors in Health**

16. Darlington Sports Development Team is working with three businesses to support them in achieving their Darlington Investors in Health Award. Liaising with Castlebeck, Student Loans Company and Darlington Borough Council we have conducted a variety of consultations and some activity has been implemented. Ongoing work in partnership with NHS Darlington and Local Motion will facilitate more physical activity in workplaces through active travel, activity before work, at lunchtimes and after work and also access to community activity beyond the working day.

### **Fitbug**

17. Darlington Borough Council in partnership with NHS Darlington is launching a new project called Fitbug, which uses interactive technology to help clients measure their progress. Planning has been taking place to begin a pilot project with Darlington One Life programme and Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme. A launch will take place in the New Year.

### **Junior One Life**

18. Another Junior One Life programme has been completed. The 12-week programme has taken place at St Aidan's Academy and has included 8 families taking part in sessions to educate them on healthy eating, physical activity, self esteem and process of change. All families have graduated and will now go on to access cooking together programmes and regular physical activity sessions.

### **Staying Active – Preferred exercise options for Older Adults**

19. In partnership with Tees Valley Sport a programme of activity has been developed to support older adults to remain active. The programme has been designed to be implemented by carers specifically and a comprehensive resource has been designed. Consultation and pilot projects have been delivered with Age Concern, Lifeline Services and Middleton Hall to evaluate how effective the programme is. If the project proves successful the programme will be rolled out sub regionally. The programme works closely

with the GEM project to support low level activity options.

### **FISCH – Family Initiative Supporting Children’s Health**

20. The FISCH programme rolled out in five schools this term – Beaumont Hill, Springfield, Gurney Pease, Firthmoor and High Coniscliffe – positive feedback was received from all schools. Uptake of the after-school sessions was generally good and, importantly, retention in the clubs was high. Several of the schools were keen to continue the extra-curricular clubs and all were pleased with the booklet of games and activities for them to use after the programme. Next term, delivery will begin in January in four schools – Corporation Road, Red Hall, Bishopton and St George’s – two of which have several classes per year group.

### **Events**

#### **Darlington Fireworks Spectacular – Saturday 31 October 2009**

21. Thousands of people attended the annual fireworks display which was held on Saturday 31 October in South Park. The events team worked in partnership with a new firework company ‘Alchemy Fireworks and created a new theme, ‘Journey Through Space’ which was developed to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of man’s historic landing on the moon.

#### **Darlington Christmas Light Switch On – Sunday 22 November 2009**

22. The Christmas Lights switch was held on Sunday 22 November in the Market Square. Thousands attended the event and witnessed the switch on by Chico and the Grumbleweeds, the stars in this year’s pantomime ‘Aladdin’, at Darlington Civic Theatre. TFM Radio who sponsored the event for the first year entertained the crowds along with performances from Harrogate Hill Choir, winners of last years Carol for Darlington and other local performers before the arrival of Santa on his sleigh.

### **Civic Theatre**

23. Despite the challenging economic situation nationally, the Civic Theatre had a particularly successful year in 2008/9, both artistically and in terms of audience figures. The programme also exceeded its budget by £32,660. Based on the current position it is likely that the programme will perform at least as well as last financial year and if current booking trends for the Pantomime continue it will exceed it.
  - (a) The volume of online bookings, which was introduced in January 2008 have risen and sales via this method this financial year have so far totalled £110,091.
  - (b) Over 9,000 people have signed up to receive the Civic Theatre’s email newsletter, which was launched in April. This has enabled the marketing department to provide information and offers to customers in an immediate, responsive and low-cost format.
  - (c) Highlights have included Dinner Ladies, which was seen by 3,307 people, Horrid Henry, which was seen by 4,062 young people and Dreamboats & Petticoats which was seen by 4,194 people.
  - (d) One night shows continue to attract high audience figures, with shows such as The Hollies, Gervaise Phinn, Ed Byrne, One Night of Queen and the Soweto Gospel Choir attracting audiences in excess of 80% capacity.

- (e) The Civic Theatre's Cornmill Box Office has proven to be a popular location for in person bookings and sales made there have totalled £121,777 so far this financial year. It is also now the sole ticket agent for Darlington Football Club, providing a service to supporters who would prefer to pre-book their tickets in the town, rather than at the ground.

### **Arts Centre**

- 24. The Arts Centre in Partnership with Theatre Hullabaloo presented Takeoff 2009 Festival. It started on Tuesday 10 November with a special day programmed for North and South Tyneside 'Find Your Talent' which delivers government's offer of five hours of creative and cultural activity for children and young people from 0-19 years. Early Years educators were brought together to share performances and discussions reflecting on why creativity is so crucial to the development of young children. On Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 November 80 delegates from the UK and abroad and local nursery and school children enjoyed 11 different shows and supporting workshop programme.
- 25. Working with the Locality Co-ordinator from Children's Services, two films were chosen for screening for the pupils, families and friends of the Locality E schools. It was highlighted following on from a consultation with local residents that a children's/young people's cinema club be set up. 'Coraline' was screened on Wednesday 28 October with 164 tickets sold and 'Up' was programmed for Tuesday 22 December and achieved full capacity.

### **ArtsSpark**

- 26. ArtsSpark Youth Theatre Leaders took part in second development day led by professional Theatre Director Phil Clark looking at the future of the Youth Theatre. Phil Clark also delivered a practical workshop with the Youth Theatre members and staff.
- 27. Over 100 ArtsSpark Youth Theatre and Dance members celebrated their work at an end of term sharing, where each group had the chance to share work with the other groups, give feedback and share ideas.
- 28. The Arts Centre has become an Arts Award Welcome Centre, one of only a few venues in the North East. The Arts Award Welcome badge announces that an organisation supports Arts Award by offering young people activities, events, placements, or simply access to arts and media professionals.

### **Arts Engagement**

- 29. The Arts team have worked closely with Locality Co-ordinators to identify need for Arts projects across Darlington and have set up after School Arts and Youth Theatre projects in three of Darlington's Primary Schools.
- 30. The Arts Centre is also involved in consultation events for grandparents in Locality E, and aims to provide taster sessions in the arts for grandparents and young people.
- 31. Darlington Arts Centre worked in partnership with Youth Services on an event at the Dolphin Centre to launch a programme of positive activities for young people on Fridays

and Saturday evenings. Workshops included fashion, rock and pop music, and dance.

32. Darlington Arts Centre worked in partnership with Youth Services to provide arts activities at a Girls Night In event for young women at Branksome Community Centre. Workshops included jewellery making and dance.

### **Openart Studio**

33. Darlington Openart Studio, in partnership with NHS Darlington, is now in its tenth month of a two year programme, encouraging people from all walks of life including those with mental ill-health to explore creative and artistic experiences in welcoming and encouraging environment. From September until December the hours were extended to enable adults with daytime commitments to access the facilities. This pilot has proved popular and numbers have increased over the three months. Membership has tripled during this period. Positive press coverage from Northern Echo has stimulated further interest from people living in Darlington. Many art forms have been explored and some members have been given support to enrol on a Fine Arts Foundation course at CCAD; others have enrolled on leisure arts courses at Darlington Arts Centre.
34. A one day conference was held recently for health and arts professionals along with members to inform of the beneficial health aspects of creative activity. This was very well attended and a very positive evaluation was received.

### **Projects**

35. In partnership with NECA (North East Council for Addictions) two large murals were created by clients and a professional artist. The murals used aspects of Darlington as a theme, with Darlington Football Club and Joseph Pease for one and The Rocket as the other. These murals were created using plastic bottle tops collected by clients and made into large mosaics. The clients attended weekly sessions at Darlington Arts Centre over a 16 week project. The clients also create a further mural in a jigsaw panels approach, using their own individual interests and personal memories of what they loved and enjoyed in life. The evaluation has been excellent and the murals are in the process of being located at Head of Steam and Northern Echo Darlington Arena; there is a possibility of touring the pieces in the future.

### **Visual & Public Art**

36. Planning permission has been granted for the creation of new public art at Argos, Faverdale. The artworks consist of three blown steel sculptures by artist Stephen Newby and will be funded by Argos.
37. Six family workshops were held during the half term holidays as part of the national Big Draw campaign. The workshops took inspiration from the Archeology of Journeying exhibition by Jack Chesterman, which was held in the Myles Meehan Gallery during Friday 23 October – Saturday 12 December and explored different art forms and techniques each day. All workshops were sold out.

### **Head of Steam**

38. The Ken Hoole Study Centre is now fully operational again and receiving visitors (the study centre was closed for several months whilst essential repairs were carried out on

the roof above).

39. Museum staff are also working on a new project to create an Edward Pease Memorial Room. This room will be dedicated to the 'Father of the Railways' and include most of our fine paintings and furniture.
40. A new temporary exhibition is now showing a photographic exhibition on loan from the National Parks Authority to mark their 60th anniversary.
41. Sarah Gouldsbrough continues to encourage younger visitors to the Museum and in November, held a week of forensic science workshops within the Museum's main gallery and education room. The workshops were aimed at primary school children and 250 children participated over a four-day period.
42. The Museum is developing closer links with Locomotion at Shildon and it is expected that a joint marketing venture will take place in 2010 to encourage NE visitors to visit both Museums.

### **Public Protection Division**

#### **Investigation of Former Landfill Sites**

43. Over the last year, staff in Environmental Health have been investigating a number of former landfill sites, using funding secured through a competitive bidding process to DEFRA to determine whether they are contaminated. Work has now been completed at Summerhouses closed landfill site and has determined that this site is not contaminated.
44. Work is continuing at the Shearwater closed landfill site and it is hoped that a similar conclusion will be reached.

#### **Healthy Eating Award**

45. A healthy eating award is being progressed in partnership with the Primary Care Trust. There are two awards – one for catering premises and one for sandwich shops. The aim of the award is to provide recognition for food businesses that are committed to promoting and providing healthier food and drink choices and a good standard of food hygiene. Staff in Environmental Health are administering the award. Twenty businesses have been approached and provided with a handbook, application form, self-assessment sheet and training needs form. Applications are due in by January and will then be evaluated. An awards presentation is to be arranged.

#### **Pandemic Flu**

46. Numbers of new cases are falling nationally and locally. Work on vaccinating vulnerable individuals and key staff is well underway. The second wave of Pandemic has proved not to be as challenging as it may have been but it is important that we remain vigilant until the Pandemic is over. At that point I will be involved in reviewing our plans and actions to learn from the experience and strengthen our planning for the future.

## **Successful Court Case**

47. In a joint operation between Trading Standards and the Police, over 6,000 items of counterfeit and stolen goods were seized in July 2008. The range of goods seized included handbags, DVD's, CD's, shoes, clothing and jewellery, with over 60 different Trade Mark brands and having a retail value of £283,000. As the result of this seizure, a local man was sentenced in November 2009 at Crown Court to 36 weeks imprisonment suspended for 18 months for offences under the Trade Marks Act 1984.

**Councillor S Harker**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Health and Leisure**