

# Sports, Leisure and Children's Policy and Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016

**Report of:** Cllr David Harvey

**Portfolio:** Cabinet Member for Sports and Leisure

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## 1. **Sports and Leisure**

### **The Active Queens Park Project - the redevelopment of Moberly & Jubilee Sports Centres**

- 1.1 Progress continues to be made with the Active Queens Park project and works are on schedule for both the Moberly site and Jubilee phase 1 which includes the re-provision of 12 affordable homes.
- 1.2 The appointed contractor is progressing communications activities including the circulation of regular newsletters to ensure local residents and stakeholders are informed.
- 1.3 The works to deliver the new Moberly Centre are planned to complete in February 2018. The existing Jubilee Centre will remain open until the new facility at Moberly is opened to the public.

### **Seymour and Queen Mother Re-Developments**

- 1.4 'Outline Business Cases' are being developed by Officers in Growth, Planning and Housing as part of the development of initial feasibility studies for these sites.
- 1.5 A key objective for any re-development project will be to deliver an enhanced sports and leisure offer for the local community.
- 1.6 A full public consultation programme will be implemented to ensure stakeholders are engaged as part of the development of proposals for these sites.

### **Outdoor Learning- the Sayers Croft Centre**

- 1.7 Works to improve one of the residential blocks are progressing in response to feedback from customers.
- 1.8 The works will ensure that en-suite accommodation is provided within the block (which is the only accommodation block not to provide these facilities).

- 1.9 Improvements to the outdoor adventure facilities are also planned to further improve the attractiveness of facilities for visitors.

#### **Paddington Rec- fitness suite extension and conversion of a 'dog exercise area'**

- 1.10 One of the key capital improvements which form part of the new leisure contract is an extension to the gym and exercise studio at Paddington Rec. The extension will be developed in the space to the rear of the existing gym.
- 1.11 Officers are also progressing proposals to convert one of the three dog exercising areas into an area of tranquil green space which would be accessible for all users. The new area would connect with the adjacent blue bell glade.
- 1.12 The proposals will be subject to consultation with park users which will be progressed in the coming months.
- 1.13 I visited the team at Paddington Rec and had a tour of the facilities on 27<sup>th</sup> May. The staff do a fantastic job, are committed to the improved health of all residents and I would like to commend them for the work they do.

#### **Leisure Centre contract re-let**

- 1.14 Officers are progressing with the procurement of the contract which is due to commence from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. It is a 10 year management contract and includes the management of the Council's entire sports and leisure centre portfolio.
- 1.15 As part of the process, a number of new improvements have been secured which include:
- £9m capital investment in a number of improvements to facilities and new equipment across the centres
  - 130 hours of 'free to access' sport and physical activities per week through the ActiveCommunities and Neighbourhood Sports Club programme
  - Exercise referral as part of the base specification for the service
  - New financial support for local talented athletes
  - Improved marketing and communications activities
  - Improved opportunities to promote local employment including new apprenticeships
- 1.16 The mobilisation of the new contract is progressing. All GLL staff who currently work in the Council's eight centres will be protected through the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) or TUPE regulations and will automatically transfer to the new contractor in July.
- 1.17 Staff consultation meetings have taken place and the feedback from staff has been positive.

#### **Christ Church Bentinck and Greenhouse Sports**

- 1.18 Officers continue to work closely with Greenhouse Sports regarding the redevelopment of their new facility on the corner of Cosway and Bell St (Church St Ward).
- 1.19 The new facility will be used for table tennis, judo, multi sports and events and will also provide a variety of community based activities.

- 1.20 Planning permission for the new facility has now been approved and Officers continue to provide support to the club with funding submissions and operational considerations.

### **Westminster Mile**

- 1.21 The 2016 Vitality Westminster Mile took place 29<sup>th</sup> May 2016. This flagship event is now in its fourth year and officers are involved in planning for the event alongside the London Marathon (LM) Team.
- 1.22 Just under 7,000 registrations were achieved which is the highest number achieved to date.
- 1.23 The event included a variety of races which involved families, adult and elite races. Over 60 ex-Olympians will participate and elite athletes included David Weir who broke the 3 minute mile record in the wheelchair race.
- 1.24 Although a few Councillors came along to the Westminster Mile, only 4 Members took part. Next year it would be good to see more Members taking part and I hugely encourage them to do so.

### **Daily Mile**

- 1.25 Following the excellent progress that is being made with two pilots in Westminster at Hallfield and Ark Atwood Primary Schools, I attended a special briefing session on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> June.
- 1.26 The event involved Elaine Wyllie (the founder of the Daily Mile from Sterling in Scotland) as well as Members, Head teachers from Westminster schools and Council Officers from across the Sports, Children's and Public Health departments.
- 1.27 As part of a launch event for the Daily Mile at Hallfield School on 17<sup>th</sup> March, a film has been produced to showcase the event and help promote the initiative to other schools. The film is available at <https://youtu.be/w47jX75N5fY>
- 1.28 The next step is to imbed and encourage a structured roll out of the Daily Mile across our schools, recognising the need to use pilot partners to provide the evidence to persuade our schools to join the Daily Mile across the City.

## **2 Libraries and Culture**

### **Usage of Libraries**

- 2.1 In response to Cllr Rigby's request at the last committee meeting regarding the usage of our libraries, the Library team has produced a briefing note to show the statistics we have available. This is attached in the appendix of this report for the Committee's reference.

### **Visits**

- 2.2 I am very keen to get a better understanding of the circumstances of our libraries, particularly to get to know the staff better and understand the strengths and weakness of the service. As part of this, on 27<sup>th</sup> May, I visited Church Street, Victoria and Westminster Music Libraries and I am very grateful to the staff at each site for being such wonderful and informative hosts, highly focused on the value added for both residents and other users beyond Westminster.

### **Victoria library**

- 2.3 In 2009, Land Securities was granted planning permission for the Nova development, to include a new library. The new application was determined in January and the s.106 has now been amended so that the community space will be delivered to the City Council at a peppercorn rent. The s.106 agreement provides 1400sqm of library space over four floors, however, Land Securities have informed that the delivery date of the building depends on the date that the land is handed back from London Underground. November 2018 is therefore the estimated date and officers are awaiting a firm programme from Land Securities.

### **Westminster Reference library**

- 2.4 The remedial works to the damaged vaults below the library are at the planning and technical feasibility stages and it is expected an agreed programme and indicative timelines will be ready in June 2016. The council's costs will be met through the party wall agreement.
- 2.5 Most of St Martin's Street is blocked off as a result of this damage as the vaults lie under the street as well as the library. Since 24<sup>th</sup> March access from the south to the library (and to Leicester Square) is via Long's Court. This detour, along with the hoardings, are having an adverse effect on library visitor figures.
- 2.6 A further impact of this damage is the delay it has caused to the refurbishment works which were scheduled to start in April.

### **Marylebone Library**

- 2.7 I continue to be in regular contact with Ward Members to brief them about the Marylebone Library development.

## **3 Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries**

### **Park Events**

- 3.1 A major film premier, "Alice through the looking glass", took place on 16<sup>th</sup> May. This involved a large area of Leicester Square and the gardens.

### **Rough Sleeping**

- 3.2 The number of rough sleepers using the parks and gardens has continued to increase with warmer weather conditions, mainly in the south of the City. The parks team are working with a number of agencies to try to resolve the problems and offer support to the homeless groups.

### **Hanging Baskets**

- 3.3 The hanging basket contractor has completed the change over from winter to summer hanging baskets; a total of 2,500 baskets are on the streets of the City, with funding contributions from various sources including local resident groups, business improvement districts and some ward funding.

### **Re-turfing**

- 3.4 The large dog run area at St George's Garden in Pimlico has been re-turfed. Areas in Soho Square and Victoria Embankment Gardens have also been re-turfed.

## **St Johns Gardens, Horseferry Road**

- 3.5 The boundary wall on the Page Street side of the gardens which was in a very poor condition due to root growth from a large London plane tree has been rebuilt and the railing on the top put back. A further section of wall on Page Street is also being pushed over the pavement by tree roots and this will be addressed next.

## **4 Volunteering and Voluntary Sector**

### **Do-It local website**

- 4.1 The Do-It Westminster site has now been now running successfully for 3 months. As at 17<sup>th</sup> May, there were 383 live opportunities in Westminster. In the week prior to that, 7 people registered their interest, 19 opportunities and 168 organisations were added. Overall, 943 hours have now been logged by volunteers for opportunities in Westminster.

### **Time Credits**

- 4.2 The last quarter reporting demonstrates that Spice continues to maintain high performance levels against its annual targets, in particular;
- 174% target for individuals engaging with time credits;
  - 99% of target for hours given (total time credits earned) for the year;
  - 163% of target for local corporate spend partners.
- 4.3 All targets have been met or exceeded, with the exception of the percentage of those new to volunteering which is currently at 60% against the annual target. However, this is not of great concern – the KPI target is ambitious, quarter by quarter trend shows a progressive increase and it was expected that current volunteers would be the initial focus for engagement.

### **Westminster Advice Service Partnership (WASP)**

- 4.4 The WASP contract has been extended, in accordance to contract terms, for the period to the end of September 2017. This includes the provision of a part-time advisor at the Housing Options Service and reduction of provision across other areas, in line with demand.
- 4.5 WASP latest report for January – March 2016 indicates that performance during this period has remained largely strong, although low use of the drop-in service at children centres has resulted in a failed KPI during this period. This is the first time the KPI has not been met although officers have been aware of reducing numbers over the last few quarters. Officers and Westminster Citizens Advice are continuing to work to ensure the advice service meets the needs of this group.

## **5 Community Engagement**

### **Open Forum Website**

- 5.1 Response to the new Open Forum website continues to be positive. Over 3,000 people have now visited the Open Forum website and nearly 900 people have taken part in a consultation or left a comment.

- 5.2 The website has been used to help gather views on the Baker Street Two-way proposals, cycling, mental health, City Save scheme and Children Centres.
- 5.3 Further activities planned include supporting Community Cohesion Commission, Oxford Street West and Building Height Policy review.

### **Open Forum Meetings**

- 5.4 We are at the early stages of planning three public meetings where the Leader, Councillors and officers from departments across the council will be available to talk with residents about the services that they provide and discuss ideas and issues that affect the whole community.
- Tuesday, 22nd September, 6:30pm – 8:30pm at Church House, Dean's Yard, SW1P 3NZ
  - Monday, 23rd January 2017, 6:30pm – 8:30pm at Porchester Hall, Porchester Road, W2 5HS
  - Monday, 20th March 2017, 6:30pm – 8:30pm at Lords Cricket Ground, St John's Wood Rd, NW8 8QN
- 5.5 These will be part of a series of 10 - 15 meetings that we are hoping to hold over the course of the year to bring the Council closer to the community and ensure residents can feedback to us on issues that are important to them.

## **6 Community Awards**

- 6.1 On 1<sup>st</sup> June, the Council hosted the Community Awards in partnership with Groundwork London and One Westminster. The Community Awards is an opportunity to recognise the commitment to volunteering and the benefits it brings to the local area and the people who live there. We received over 100 nominations and were particularly pleased to see new names and organisations taking part for the first time. I am grateful to Jackie Rosenberg from One Westminster and Ben Coles from Groundwork London for acting as awards hosts for the evening and to the Lord Mayor for introducing the evening.
- 6.2 We are investing an additional £32,000 in volunteering compared to previous years highlighting the importance we believe it has in building communities.

**If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect any of the background papers please contact Lucy Hoyte x5729**  
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