

# Sports, Leisure and Open Spaces Policy and Scrutiny Committee Briefing

**Date:** 24 November 2014

**Briefing of:** Councillor Steve Summers

**Portfolio:** Sports, Leisure and Open Spaces

## 1. Sports and Leisure

### Key Performance Indicators

- 1.1 Overall performance to Q2 (April- September) remains positive and particular highlights include:
- Just over 2.1 million visits recorded to the sports and leisure centres (61% of the full year target). The centres are on track to exceed the annual target of 3.6 million visits this year.
  - 18,014 visits to the Sayers Croft Centre (61.8% of the full year target)
  - 7,180 ActiveWestminster Passport and Concession card holders across all facilities (full year target achieved).
  - 3,910 participants in the exercise referral scheme (39% of the full year target).
  - 87 registered athletes on the 'Champions of the Future Programme' (91.6% of the full year target)
  - 61 accredited sports clubs in Westminster through the 'ActiveWestminster Mark' programme (full year target achieved).
  - 6,000 participant registrations to the 2014 Westminster Mile in May (exceeding full year target)

### Improvements to Facilities

#### The Porchester Centre

- 1.2. Works to improve the existing ground floor area of Bridgefield House (the building adjacent to the Porchester Centre) are taking place to create a flexible community space for meetings, training events and activities.

## **Queen Mother Sports Centre**

- 1.3. Proposals to redevelop the reception and cafe facilities at Queen Mother Sports Centre are being progressed and a building contractor has now been appointed. The work will relocate the reception facilities to the ground floor of the building to provide more prominence of the centre from street level and an enhanced experience for customers. The cafe facilities will be moved to a more central location within the main centre which will provide a more convenient environment for residents and other users. Procurement for the works is taking place and works are due to start in the Autumn.

## **Sayers Croft**

- 1.4. Works to extend and improve one of the accommodation blocks at the site have now completed, which has provided new toilets and shower accommodation for visitors.

## **Improvement works to the Games Area at Queens Park Gardens**

- 1.5. The planned improvement works to the 'free to access' Games Area (new fencing, floodlighting and improvements to the surface) and the provision of new outdoor gym equipment at Queens Park Gardens has commenced and are due to complete in November.

## **Major redevelopments**

### **Active Queen's Park Project**

#### **The redevelopment of Moberly & Jubilee Sports Centres**

- 1.6. Planning permissions were granted in April for proposals for Moberly Sports Centre by the London Borough of Brent and for Jubilee Sports Centre and Queen's Park Gardens by the City of Westminster. Design and contractual work is being progressed and 'phase 1' of the works programme will begin at Moberly in March 2015. Jubilee will remain open whilst Moberly is redeveloped.

#### **Seymour and Queen Mother Sports Centres- Feasibility for Potential Re-Developments**

- 1.7. Officers are assessing the possibility of a redevelopment of the Seymour Leisure Centre and Queen Mother Sports Centre sites to provide a major improvement to the sports and leisure facilities. Feasibility assessments are being progressed which are being considered by the Council's 'Commercial Opportunities Board'.

## **Initiatives and Events**

### **Champions of the Future Event**

- 1.8. Pimlico Academy hosted an evening seminar for 27 'Champions of the Future' athletes currently being supported by the programme. The participants took part in a number of workshops designed to help them in broader aspects of athlete development, including diet and training methods. Following the recent summer application window the programme has now supported 87 talented young people and adults across Westminster.

## **ActiveWestminster Awards**

- 1.9. The annual ActiveWestminster Award event will take place at Lords Cricket Ground on the 28<sup>th</sup> November. 350 Award nominations have been received and the panels have almost completed their short listing with invitations going out to the top 3 finalists in each of the 10 categories. The awards team are now focused on arrangements for this 5th annual awards event.

## **Westminster Mile 2015**

- 1.10. An ambitious target of over 8,000 participants has been set for the event next year with a strong focus on promoting participation from children and families. Initial discussions with BUPA are have taken place with a view to expanding the 'activation zone' in Green Park to be much larger and attractive to participants to spend more time at the event during the day.

## **Other issues**

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

- 1.11. Officers are progressing with the procurement strategy for the sports and leisure facilities contract which is due to commence from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. A 'market engagement day' took place on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October with potential bidders for the new contract to discuss a number of 'Key Lines of Enquiry'

## **2. Libraries and Culture**

### **Church Street library**

- 2.1. The library has been subject to a number of water ingress related issues. Works started in April 2014 to rectify these issues, with the library remaining open but some internal areas cordoned off for periods of time. The biggest impact has been on the sub basement, which houses a community meeting space, youth zone and a learning zone, which has been closed since July. The building works were completed on schedule and the library re-opened on 20 October.

### **Marylebone library / Luxborough Street development**

- 2.2. A priority of the council is to provide a state-of-the-art new Marylebone Library for local residents, within a mixed development on Luxborough Street, at a time when many libraries across the country are being closed.

A procurement exercise was carried out in late 2013 and a preferred bidder was selected and the recommendation to approve the contract was given in February 2014. However the contractor requested substantial changes to the Agreement for lease and to the financing of the project which were considered material changes to the terms of the procurement and were therefore unacceptable to the council.

After consideration of options and following legal advice for progressing the contract and getting the scheme on site, the strategy is now to choose a developer from the WCC Developer Framework Panel (DFP) for the redevelopment of the Marylebone library and associated accommodation on a Design and Build contract. This strategy

has Cabinet Member approval and the necessary authorisation to proceed with the procurement process.

A mini competition will be run in accordance with the Framework Agreement governing the DFP to select a preferred bidder. Invitations to tender are due to be sent out at the beginning of November and it is anticipated that, following the appropriate completion of the tendering process, notice of award of contract will be issued in January 2015 and contract engrossment would be completed in March 2015. The need to re-procure has led to a delay in commencement of the works and it is now anticipated that the library will be completed and open in summer 2016.

### **Queen's Park library and Charing Cross library roof**

- 2.3. Queens Park library re-opened on 3 November 2014 following redecoration. New lighting was installed out of hours over and had no impact on service delivery. Essential repairs to Charing Cross roof began on 8 September 2014 and are scheduled to run for 14 weeks, the work is on schedule to be completed on time.

### **Paddington children's library**

- 2.4 The application to redevelop the Westbourne Baptist Church was approved at Planning Committee on the 11 November subject to s.106 agreements. The application includes provision of the library on a peppercorn rent for 99 years. Progress on developing s.106 has started.

### **Volunteers**

- 2.5. The Libraries volunteer recognition event will be hosted by the Lord Mayor at City Hall on 7 January 2015. Approximately 150 volunteers who support and deliver a range of activities across libraries and archives are to be invited and will be presented with a certificate.

Libraries have joined the recently launched Westminster Supported Employment scheme and will be offering short term volunteer and work experience placements and have been approached by Westminster Mental Health Recovery Team, North Westminster Recovery Team and Westminster Employment to arrange placements for their clients.

### **Archives**

- 2.6. Following the highly successful August commemorations of WW1 outbreak, the service has delivered a programme of education and intergeneration events, including workshops, walks, artefact handling, teacher inset days and re-enactments with National Army Museum. All events focus on how the war affected residents and places in Westminster and over 1,300 children and 182 adults participated.

### **Registration service**

- 2.7. Limitations on the capacity of the marriage suites at Mayfair library, compared with Old Marylebone Town Hall, have reduced the number and scale of ceremonies Westminster can host. To offset this, a partnership venue able to cater for larger wedding parties to host ceremonies at weekends has been procured. The appointed partner venue is Asia House in New Cavendish Street.

A press release about the new venue was issued on 29 October and the first of a series of open evenings for the public will be held on 1 December. A press reception from 6.00-7.00pm will be held on 17 November to enable them to see the ceremony and reception rooms and speak to the registrars. Bookings for Asia House will be taken from 3 November.

The legislation enabling civil partnership conversions to marriage will be implemented on 10 December 2014. A 'register of interest' has been compiled comprising 60 couples to date and once their conversion appointments have been allocated, the diary will be open for further bookings from 3 November. It is expected that Westminster will host the most conversions in England and Wales on the first day – as they hosted the largest number of civil partnership ceremonies in England and Wales on 21 December 2005 with 20 ceremonies held at the Old Marylebone Town Hall.

A special ceremony to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of citizenship ceremonies is taking place on 24 November at 3.00pm by kind invitation of the Dean of Westminster in the Jerusalem Chamber at the Abbey, which is not usually open to the public. Ten new citizens, one for each year of citizen ceremonies have been invited to attend.

## **Arts and culture**

- 2.8. Westminster City Council's Cultural Partnerships teams have been awarded £35,000 from the Ministry of Defence's Community Covenant for the Mobile Sport and Arts project. The project will see adult learning; arts activities and sports events take place in libraries, leisure centres, the Abbey Community Centre and sports clubs for the local community and the service personnel of Wellington Barracks and their families.

## **3. Volunteering and the Voluntary Sector**

### **City Guides**

- 3.1 Quarter 2 was extremely busy for City Guides with them supporting London's major summer events including Ride London, Open House Weekend, Notting Hill Carnival and the Tour de France. Officers are developing a new monitoring report which will better display the impact of City Guides on the community and the volunteers who participate. This will be in place by the next quarter. The new monitoring report will include the number of new volunteers at each event and dropout rates to allow us to better measure the popularity of events and engagement with volunteers.

### **Volunteer Brokerage**

- 3.2 The Volunteer Brokerage service continues to over perform its targets for volunteer registrations and placements. Including do-it.org registration, there were 1,122 new volunteer registrations for the second quarter for the final year of the current contract against a target of 712, which has exceeded the target by 57.6%. There have been a total of 258 placements for this quarter, which has exceeded by 3.2% the target of 250.

### **Team Westminster Volunteering Strategy Implementation**

- 3.4 The Work is on-going to implement the commitments contained within the volunteering strategy. The procurement of the Westminster Time Credits service is

also progressing as part of a pan London framework against which locally or thematically specific service can be called off. The Council is now inviting interested organisations to bid for the service.

- 3.5 The specification for a new Volunteering Brokerage service which combines general brokerage with a more targeted service where the Provider will broker a volunteering opportunity based on someone's personal skills and interests is currently being developed by officers. As such, the procurement of the new Brokerage Service will be combined with the procurement of the new Community Web Portal.