



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

D305

Council 26 February 2013

CABINET MEMBER REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

Report by Cllr Sara Mildmay-White Deputy Leader, Culture and Sport Portfolio

Portfolio includes:

- Arts and Cultural Development;
- Cemeteries;
- Festivals and Events;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Heritage Services;
- Parks and Open Spaces;
- Public Halls; and
- Sport and Olympics

1. Victory Ground Facilities Project

1.1 You will have heard from the Leader about the new Victory Ground Facilities Project.

1.2 This was made possible by the Community Asset Transfer to the cricket club, school and Victory Ground consortium. We will continue to investigate ways in which we can provide excellent facilities for the Borough in the future and by a range of means to enable them. I wish the Victory Ground Project the best of luck in the future.

2. Leisure Trust – New CEO

2.1 I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Warren Smyth who has been appointed as the new joint Chief Executive of Abbeycroft and Anglia Community Leisure. Warren has taken up his new position, and I know he will work closely and in partnership with the Head of Leisure Culture and Communities to provide and develop the service in West Suffolk.

3. Heritage

3.1 Zebra Science clubs started at Moyses Hall in January, on Thursday and Saturday afternoons. Zebra Science is a partnership company set up by two experienced science teachers who wanted to increase opportunities for primary aged children to access practical science clubs. We hope that the word will spread about these clubs and more local children will be able to take advantage of this opportunity.

- 3.2 In February Moyse's Hall Museum supported the BBC 'Your Paintings' project with a new display of a pair of fascinating 17th century portraits showing Elizabeth Risby, of Thorpe Morieux, and her children, as part of the current exhibition called 'Making an Impression'. Two more oil paintings (by Elizabeth Kaufmann and Rose Mead) have been put on show in another part of the museum as part of this project. The BBC 'Your Paintings' project is promoting the nation's oil paintings in public ownership, the majority of which are normally kept in store.
- 3.3 West Stow was one of the car parks awarded under the Park Mark scheme in early January. The objective of the scheme is to draw attention to police accredited safer parking.
- 3.4 The Heritage Service has submitted a bid for Heritage Lottery 'Skills for the Future' funding. This bid proposes partnership working with Suffolk Archaeology and the Suffolk Record Office in Bury St Edmunds to develop skills for trainees to work on heritage collections cataloguing.
- 3.5 I have recently approved a new pricing structure for Heritage admissions. The annual family heritage ticket is now even more value as it includes a season ticket to the car park at West Stow (and therefore Nowton Park too). A family heritage ticket for unlimited visits to West Stow and Moyse's Hall for up to 5 people will cost only £30 for a whole year – that is far better value than other similar schemes. The day ticket prices for Moyse's Hall have been held at £4 for an adult and £2 concession for a single visit; at West Stow the day ticket price has been reduced to £5 for an adult and £3 concession for a single visit. I am confident that this combination of admission offers will encourage the best possible range of visitors to take advantage of our excellent heritage facilities in the coming year.

4. Parks

- 4.1 The Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony held on Monday 28 January was well attended again this year. This year's multi-faith service also provided a forum for an emerging group interested in enhancing the memorial garden area to promote their project. The group in question aim to enhance the existing garden area with a sculpture bench seating and some form of dedication to record the murder of the 57 Jewish residents killed in 1190.
- 4.2 I am very pleased to hear that Clare Town Council's negotiations with the County Council concerning the future management of Clare Castle Country Park are now progressing well. Clare Town Council held a public meeting on 29 January 2013 at which it received local support for its proposals for the Country Park which is currently being maintained on behalf of the County Council by our parks service.
- 4.3 Event bookings for the forthcoming year in the Borough's parks appear popular with over twenty eight having been received in the last five week period. These include various circuses, fairs, sporting events and the Bury Motor Show which will, it is proposed, now occupy the father's day weekend in June, at Nowton Park (the weekend formerly occupied by the Nowton Fair in past years).
- 4.4 At the time of writing this report, the Friends of Abbey Gardens are due to hold their first AGM on the evening of 25 February, in the Athenaeum. The group

have had a busy year and I thank them for the support they've given to the Gardens and associated staff.

- 4.5 The Parks Team have assisted the Bury In Bloom group with the re-landscaping and installation of a new sculpture on the Kings Road Roundabout. Bury In Bloom have recently appointed a new Campaign Manager and I wish Melanie Lesser every success in her new position.

5. Cemeteries

- 5.1 An additional thirty six above ground cremated remains vaults have recently been installed in Bury St Edmunds Cemetery. These vaults have proven popular with the locally bereaved and are providing a revenue stream into the Bury St Edmunds Cemetery which helps sustain its maintenance.
- 5.2 We have recently seen the completion of the willow fencing at the Meadowland burial area of Haverhill Cemetery; this has greatly enhanced this particular compartment. We have been mindful to work closely to gain opinion and approval of our plans for this area from the families who have loved ones resting there.
- 5.3 Further progress has been made at both cemeteries with memorial headstone testing and the fixing of failed stones.

6. Festival and Events

- 6.1 Bury St Edmunds Festival is launched on 20 February. The 4 day festival is providing a wide range of activity across the town as usual including a concert by Lesley Garrett and Emma Johnson, a celebration of youth music in West Suffolk and jazz singer Stacey Kent. The shorter length is allowing us the time to discuss what the future shape of the festival should be and how it sits alongside the Apex and the other arts activity in the town.

7. Public Halls

- 7.1 As Members will be aware, there is a separate report on the agenda for this meeting which will give us the chance to talk about the Theatre Royal's proposals for collaboration with the Apex.
- 7.2 The Apex foyer now has a new café/bar installed which is helping to bring more life and energy to the space. This presence will be enhanced as the weather gets warmer and seating is provided outside the front which will help to attract customers. Although January is a fairly quiet time, the Apex has had some notable successes including sell-out shows by Elkie Brooks and a Frank Sinatra show. There was also a large and very appreciative audience for the Academy of Ancient Music who stayed for a further 4 days to record their next CD – a great success which will pave the way for more recording opportunities.