

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Annual Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture	
Report No:	OAS/FH/18/001	
Report to and date:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11 January 2018
Portfolio Holder:	Andy Drummond Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture Tel: 01638 751411 Email: andy.drummond@forest-heath.gov.uk	
Lead officers:	<p>Mark Walsh Assistant Director (Operations) Tel: 01284 757300 Email: mark.walsh@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Damien Parker Service Manager (Operations, Leisure and Culture) Tel: 01284 757090 Email: Damien.parker@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Christine Brain Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) Tel: 01638 719729 Email: Christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk</p>	
Purpose of report:	<p>As part of the "Challenge" role, Overview and Scrutiny are asked to consider the roles and responsibilities of Cabinet Members. It is part of the Scrutiny role to "challenge" in the form of questions.</p> <p>Therefore, to carry out this constitutional requirement, at every ordinary Overview and Scrutiny meeting at least one Cabinet Member shall attend to give an account of his or her portfolio and answer questions from the Committee.</p>	

Recommendation:	<p>Members of the Committee are asked to question the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture on his portfolio responsibilities, and having considered the information, the Committee may wish to:</p> <p>1) Make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture for his consideration;</p> <p>2) Request further information and / or receive a future update.</p> <p>3) Take any other appropriate action as necessary.</p>		
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Consultation:	• N/A		
Alternative option(s):	• N/A		
Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> •	
Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> •	
Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> •	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> •	
Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> •	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
	Low/Medium/ High*		Low/Medium/ High*
None			
Wards affected:		All	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		None	
Documents attached:		None	

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation

1.1 Background

1.1.1 As part of its "Challenge" role, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the roles and responsibilities of Cabinet Members. To carry out this constitutional requirement, at every ordinary Overview and Scrutiny meeting at least one Cabinet Member shall be invited to give an account of his or her portfolio and to answer questions from the Committee.

1.1.2 Last year, on 12 January 2017, Councillor Andy Drummond, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture, attended this committee and presented a report which summarised the areas of responsibility covered under his portfolio.

1.2 Scrutiny Focus

1.2.1 The scope of this report differs from that of last year as the Cabinet Member has been asked to prepare a report which answers the following specific questions identified by the committee members as being relevant to the leisure and culture portfolio:

- i. **Rural Communities:** What proposals does the Portfolio Holder have to ensure leisure and cultural is fully inclusive to all within Forest Heath, in particular rural communities?
- ii. **Rural Communities:** How does the Portfolio Holder propose to ensure that rural communities do not become the forgotten few?
- iii. **Rural Communities:** Is there a specific leisure and cultural programme for rural communities for 2018?

1.3 Response to Key Questions Set out in the Scrutiny Focus

1.3.1 **How do we ensure that the leisure and cultural service is fully inclusive to all within Forest Heath, in particular rural communities?**

Forest Heath is categorised in DEFRA's Rural and Urban classification system as a Rural District. The majority (54%) of those living in the rural district live in what it terms as rural hub towns (Mildenhall, Newmarket and Brandon). 34% live in rural town fringes e.g. Red Lodge, USAF base, Lakenheath, West Row and 12% live in rural villages and dispersed dwellings, or rural hamlets and isolated dwellings (Source: Census 2011).

The sports facilities provided by Forest Heath and managed by Abbeycroft Leisure (i.e. its Leisure/sports centres) are evenly distributed around the District and provide a range of facilities which are accessible to all. The biggest facilities are located in the hub towns where the largest populations live.

Over the last two financial years Section 106 monies have been used to help deliver the following improvements to leisure and cultural facilities in the District:

2016/17 spend: (1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017)

Location	Improvement	Sum
Beck Row	New football changing rooms	£116,722.50
Kennett and Kentford	Village hall extension at Kennett (design)	£6,262.00
Exning	Recreation ground project	£2,589.00
West Row	Tennis courts	£25,110.00
Red Lodge	Lawnmower for volunteers managing the SSSI	£1,950.00
Newmarket	Works at Lady Wolverton play area	£10,530.87
FHDC – Numerous Public Open Space's	Wildlife Audit	£11,375.00
Red Lodge	New Children's Swing at Heatherset Way	£5,268.00
Red Lodge	Sports Pavilion - Table Tennis tables	£3,900.00
Red Lodge	New item of play equipment Orchid Drive play area.	£2,311.00
Red Lodge	New goal posts	£1,374.00
Red Lodge	Heatherset Way play area surfacing	£1,988.00
FHDC – Numerous Public Open Space's	Public Open Space Warden role	£3,963.76
Red Lodge, Newmarket and Brandon	Play area improvements	£71,057.00

2017/18 spend: (1 April 2017 to date)

Location/group	Improvement	Sum
Kennett and Kentford	Village hall extension at Kennett	£190,318.00
FHDC – Numerous Public Open Space's	Public Open Space Warden role	£19,000.00
Exning	Tree works in St. Martins churchyard and Duck Lane	£1,720.00
Newmarket	Yellow Brick Road artwork for map	£435.00
Red Lodge	Red Lodge Heath purchase of a neighbouring piece of land.	£5,106.00
Moulton	New Zip Wire	£12,664.24
Red Lodge	MUGA - Heatherset Way	£4,591.06
Brandon	MUGA - Warren Close	£22,489.66
Mildenhall	Douglas Park new item of play equipment	£1,648.80

In the last two years we have undertaken a full audit of all the publicly accessible pitch based facilities in the district. This is to determine their condition and usage and has, on the whole, indicated that in most areas they are sufficient to meet current and future predicted demand for the next ten years. Where there are identified needs we are offering assistance, where we can, via Section 106 funding.

Members will be aware that the new Mildenhall Hub facility will provide a range of new leisure and cultural facilities.

In Brandon a new walk/run route was installed. The objective was to encourage those who are not already engaged in physical activities to get walking and running. We will be looking to support other walk run routes in the district in the coming year.

FHDC support the Keep Active programme, which Abbeycroft delivers which is part of a Sport England funded project. The programme is delivered in a variety of settings, aimed at young people and those aged 55+, and has been well supported.

Our Families and Communities Team work with community groups to enhance facilities and provision within the district. Through the locality budget scheme a range of sporting clubs have received financial assistance to grow membership and train volunteers.

Officers work with a range of service providers as well as sporting clubs to support communities, this could be through helping with funding applications through to establishment of new clubs. Examples include Indoor Curling in Lakenheath and Red Lodge, youth football clubs and historical art projects.

A number of our smaller villages also host Fit Villages and examples of this can be found in Freckenham, Worlington and Barton Mills.

From a heritage perspective we continue to work with Heritage partners with initiatives that involve the community.

FHDC has, for many years, worked with partners on initiatives to both raise the profile and improve the Brecks. The recent Heritage Lottery Fund project 'Breaking New Ground' has been incredibly successful and has engaged with rural communities across the Brecks area;

See link to the Breaking New Ground:

<http://www.breakingnewground.org.uk/>

<http://www.breakingnewground.org.uk/our-projects/a-future-for-all/beastly-brecks/>

Officers continue to work with the County Museums Development Manager to support any joint heritage developments through the Association for Suffolk Museums. The Association for Suffolk Museums is an independent charity and membership body with four main aims:

- To provide leadership for museums in Suffolk
- To act as the representative for museums in Suffolk
- To attract and manage resources for the benefit of its members
- To increase access and learning in museums for the benefit of the people of Suffolk

With regards Arts; 'Market Place', a major Arts Council funded Creative People and Places project, works with artists, arts organisations and communities to build, commission and deliver ambitious new ways of engaging more people in great arts experiences. We have just been successful for a phase two 3 year programme of activity with a grant of £695,000 from Arts Council England for Forest Heath and Fenland districts.

<http://www.cppmarketplace.co.uk/whats-on/brandon-fire-flint-23-september-festival-day/>

1.3.2 **Rural Communities: How does the Portfolio Holder propose to ensure that rural communities do not become the forgotten few?**

We have much to be proud of, but there is always more we can do. Participation in leisure and sport in Forest Heath is above the English national average, however, there are geographic and demographic pockets where participation rates are above or below the national average. The current economic climate and peoples changing habits also provides a challenge in maintaining and improving provision in the area.

Physically active and inactive adults

Rate	Forest Heath	East of England	England
% Active	58.2 %	57.8 %	57.0 %
% Inactive	26.9 %	27.6 %	28.7 %

Source: Public Health England - Public Health Outcomes Framework.
Measure: percentage of physically active and inactive adults. Time period(s): 2015

FHDC will continue to support initiatives such as Fit Villages, the Keep Active programme, and Active lives initiatives:

See link to the current active lives local FHDC programme:

<http://onelifesuffolk.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Forest-Heath-June-2017.pdf>

Participation in cultural activities (arts based events) in Forest Heath was below the English national average, when the poll was last undertaken in 2009/10;

Active People (Arts)

Forest Heath	37.91%
England Average	44.25%

Source: Active People (arts) 2 year av. % - the percentage of adults in the local authority who have either attended an arts event or participated in an arts activity at least three times in the past 12 months. Engagement must be for leisure purposes. The average has been calculated using data from 2009 and 2010.

FHDC will continue to engage groups and encourage a diverse offer of Leisure and Cultural opportunities throughout the District. Lullaby is one such opportunity providing award winning specialised concerts for children aged 2 to 7 years. Workshops have taken place in numerous venues in Forest Heath libraries, schools and nurseries.

See Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlpRT0HnPMQ>

The Council have also been supportive of the Suffolk Cinema Network (SCN) which provides film screenings organised by the community with professional advice and equipment supplied by the SCN.

See Link: <https://www.suffolkincinemanetwork.org/>

1.3.3 **Rural Communities: Is there a specific leisure and cultural programme for rural communities for 2018?**

As stated above Forest Heath as a whole is defined as a rural community so the programmes available at the Councils leisure centres are open to all in this rural community.

Earlier this year the Council endorsed the adoption of the West Suffolk: Promoting Physical Activity Framework which sets out how the Council will encourage people across West Suffolk to lead active lives. The new Partnership Agreement with Abbeycroft will specify that they will meet outcomes from the Promoting Physical Activity Framework. Through the performance management arrangements that are in place we will capture the initiatives they deliver in rural areas.

In terms of specific outreach work in villages;

FHDC contributes funds to Suffolk Sport, who work with Abbeycroft Leisure, to identify and assist with the delivery of an initiative called Fit Villages.

Fit Villages provides activity in small rural communities to increase physical activity and reduce social isolation by utilising local community facilities.

One such example is the chair based exercise programme at Barton Mills and others can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.suffolksport.com/fitvillages>

Suffolk Sport are keen to work with Parishes and villages to develop a sports offer for their local people.

Following the success of the Brecks 'Breaking New Grounds' HLF programme the partnership has now received stage 1 funding to draw together a programme entitled Breck 'Rivers and Fen Edge'. Like the earlier HLF project this new initiative will set out an ambitious programme of events and activities in the Brecks for people to get engaged with.

See Link:

<http://www.breakingnewground.org.uk/news-archive/the-brecks-fen-edge-and-rivers-landscape-partnership-scheme-wins-national-lottery-support/>

1.4 **Proposals**

- 1.4.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee ask questions of the Cabinet Member following his update.