

Bromsgrove District Council

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Cultural Services

Aligned to Provide Good Things for me to See, Do and Visit

24th February 2016

I am pleased to present an update report to the Council about the areas covered by my portfolio.

In doing so I would like both to look back over recent events and forward to emerging issues.

As you will be aware it has been a very busy year for the Leisure & Cultural Services Team with many key projects and schemes being progressed to improve infrastructure which impacts the quality of people lives.

Play Areas

Throughout the year the Team have managed the Districts Council's play portfolio effectively to reduce the risk of avoidable accidents, and to ensure that there is a range of sustainable and safe play provision across the District.

The Team have recently undertaken a significant training programme for the whole of the Environmental Operational Teams, in the "Basic Level" of play area inspections. This will enable the Team a much faster turn-a-round time for faults and repairs to improve the service to the children and young people of the District

During the year we have undertaken number of play area refurbishment and replacements including the following:

Hagley Teen Play provision: Skate Park and Risky Play areas installed in partnership with the Parish Council at the recreation ground.

Wythall Park: Silver Street play area completed using 106 contributions from Selsdon Close Development in partnership with the Community Association.

Lickey End Outdoor Fitness: equipment and enhancements of play tunnels scheduled for installation w/c 8th February using 106 funding for play within the District.

Future work planned in the next 12mths:

Bromsgrove Town Centre Recreation Ground programmed for complete new installation of the play area and removal of existing to provide a high profile town centre scheme. This will form first phase of the overall improvements to the town centre rec with future landscape improvements being funded by the new development at Recreation Road.

Wythall Park, Silver Street sports improvement works will continue using the Selsdon 106 as per Agreement and this will include improvement to the Cricket Club Pavillion and changing areas.

Bleakhouse Farm Development 106 funding phase 1 received for the Wythall Community Gym. The 2nd phase funding will be released for improvements to Woodrush Rugby Club and pathway improvements to Beaudesert POS.

Artrix Football Pitch restoration will be completed during the Spring 2016 using Section 106 funding from Fire and Police development.

Parks and Open Space General

Key works under taken within the Parks and Open Spaces Team include:

Unauthorised Access Measures: A total of fourteen unauthorised access measures have been installed across the District on District Council land to ensure that sites are secured to prevent disruption to local residents and minimise ongoing costs to the Council.

Parks Transformation Team: The Parks Intervention group is now established and applies the Systems thinking method to transform the way of working at Lickey End and Sanders Park. The trial team have completed its first full year and involves all aspects of the delivery from the strategic provision, biodiversity, litter and refuse through to events and all aspects of the service delivery. As we progress into the New Year we will be rolling the service into new ways of working with a view to increasing usage and satisfaction rating from customers and ensuring the transformation principles are used to remove waste from the system.

Sanders Park Habitat creation WWT (40K): In partnership with Worcester Wildlife Trust and The Environment Agency, we have been developing an exciting project to enhance the Battlefield Brook at Sanders Park, as part of the Love Your River – Bromsgrove project. This will help improve the bio-diversity of the river corridor and help to improve the EA's water carrying capacity of the water course.

The Overspill Car Park: Sanders Park will have funding from the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust to create a large French Drain to eliminate the on-going issue with standing rain water. This works is valued at circa 7K and will be completed by March 2016 and will mean that the current issues faced where we lose some spaces will be removed and allow more users to park on site at peak times.

Battlefield Brook: BDC have carried out repair works to the crumbling section of the brook near to Watt Close to increase safety aspects and ensure the long term appearance of this key feature.

Sanders Park Toilets refurbishment: Extensive toilet and pavilion building alterations and enhancements have been undertaken to provide a better visitor experience, whilst facilitating easier maintenance of the toilet provision, and an improved Café offer which has the ability to be expanded in the near future.

Catering Contract: Sanders Park catering franchise has been re let through a tender process. The lease is for ten-year period and will include the caterers

investing in the building to extend the inside spaces, refresh the catering offer and increase the number of lines provided to the customers. It will also include some transfer of off peak booking arrangements to allow the services on site to be run outside of core office hours.

Planning Negotiations: The Team are actively working with the Planning Department and Developers in the District on pre-applications and live applications. The aim is to achieve the highest quality of Public Open Space, Sports Pitch and Play Provision throughout the District.

The team have been negotiating with developers to provide the most sustainable Open Spaces which will enhance these future developments and provide the essential elements of Sports Pitches, Green Space and Play that help these developments become communities. A good example of this is the work on the proposed Perry Field Development.

Arts & Events Team

The Arts and Events Team have worked in the following areas:

Mercian March: The Events team delivered a series of public events to the wider community of Bromsgrove. A highlight in the calendar was the Mercian March. The 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment exercised their Freedom rights and marched through Bromsgrove on Monday 16 February 2015.

Attendance 2000

Street Theatre: 6 Street Theatre Events were delivered across the District, bringing professional street artists of all kinds to perform and to encourage local community engagement.

Bandstand Events: A full "Bandstand" programme of entertainment was enjoyed at Sanders Park throughout May - Sept. With a number of key events provided by the team working with providers and partners: Austin's in the park, Summer Fun in the park, Choirs in the park.

Bonfire: the annual Bonfire and Firework event was well attended and went smoothly without any significant issues

Attendance: 7000

Artrix: a new 3 year funding agreement 2015 – 2018 with Artrix was agreed and were finalised following the end of the original 10 year funding agreement. The Council also supported and worked with Artrix as part of their 10 years anniversary celebrations.

St George's Day: A celebration in the town centre in partnership with Artrix, How College and Dancefest to create a dance performance 'Quiet Revolution', celebrating the changing role of women in the First World War.

Attendance: 1200

Bromsgrove Festival BF: The Team worked in partnership with Bromsgrove Festival to support them to deliver a series of new events in the town centre events space. The festival took place across Bromsgrove district with many local arts organisations participating, as part of the council's funding an economic and social impact study was commissioned demonstrating the value of the festival.

Summer Jam BF: As part of Bromsgrove Festival Officers worked in partnership with them and organised Summer Jam music and arts in Sanders Park in June.

Film YMCA: The Teamed worked in partnership with the YMCA with young people from Charford to create a film, which was premiered at Artrix in June.

Town Centre: October - as part of the town centre new events calendar, the Team hosted the White Hart Morris, Chester Morris and Cardiff Morris Men to perform an array of Morris dancing in the High Street.

Artrix: October - in partnership with Forthright Productions, after their successful Arts Council England grant, to deliver their production 'The Gary and Robert Blues'. The production concentrated on the journey through one man's mental health issues.

Council House: October - organised an 'Arts, Culture and Heritage Day' as part of the '5 Ways to Well Being' event.

Christmas:

- November - with the Friends of St John's to deliver the first Christmas Market on Friday 20th and Saturday 21st November in Bromsgrove town centre, as part of the Christmas lights switch on event and the normal market. As part of the council's funding an economic and social impact study was commissioned demonstrating the value of the Christmas Market.
- December - to extend the Bromsgrove town centre Christmas offer, the Team organised performances on 2 Saturday's by Blackwell Concert Band.
- December - with the YMCA a 'Winter Solstice and Christmas Celebration' event, alongside 'make and give' Christmas workshops, for young people at Starlight Café in Charford.

Next year's programme remains stable with no new sessions planned, however we will continue to look at ways to improve the sessions and use of funds available, to make sure the services are well regarded by residents. We will also look at external funding sources where possible to continue to offer a wide and diverse range of sessions.

Business Development Team

The Business Development Team have had a very busy period since the Autumn overseeing the move to Parkside and addressing the challenges that moving to a new building presents. Key areas of work include:

Parkside: The BDC Facility Management Team have now commenced work at Parkside to ensure facilities management is provided to the new joint building, efficiently, economically, and to a standard that enables quality services to be delivered by all of the occupants.

Clearly this has presented some challenges and officers are working hard with the Project Management Team for the works and the construction contractor to address any areas of concern as smoothly and as quickly as possible. Moving forward we are positive that the issues faced will be addressed proactively with the key challenge in 2016 to make sure that the wider benefits of the new building are not over looked, whilst ensuring the aspirations of all partnerships are realised as soon as possible.

Toilet Cleansing Team: under the Facility Management team, the toilet cleansing operatives work to ensure that the public toilets in the Town Centre, Sanders Park, Alvechurch and Rubery are clean, safe and available 7 days a week. 2015 has seen an increase in the quality of the services provided at a reduced cost to BDC whilst also taking on additional duties such as Football changing rooms cleaning to support the wider Council budget position.

Sponsorship: currently the main 4 roundabouts on the A38 are sponsored along with the site at Fairfield. 'Advertise here' signs are in place on the other 5 sites and although lots of interest has been received, some of these are smaller businesses that find the prices for full sites too high. As a result we will start to look at our current agreements and policy documents to see if there are options around joint sponsorship/shared sites.

Christmas Lights: another successful year last year for Christmas lights – giving the town a lift throughout the festive period. The 3 year contract arrangement has now ended and new specification will be written to look at future years to ensure that we maintain the current standards provided whilst maximising the opportunities the new contract offers.

Sports Facilities

During 2015 a number of key sports facility projects have been supported and delivered including:

Barnsley Hall Playing Fields: Completion of this project scheduled by end of the current financial year which has created 4 football pitches and 4 changing room blocks, these are leased to a local junior football club with up to 20 teams playing each week.

Bromsgrove Sports & Leisure Centre: The replacement leisure centre for the Dolphin Centre has progressed well from a design, cost, funding and planning perspective. As members will be aware there has been a lot of debate around this project with the agreed facility mix receiving a number of comments and stimulating a lot of healthy debate both within the Council and outside it.

Currently the project is on track for starting on site in May 2016 with an opening in Sept 2017. The Lottery Funding Agreement with Sport England is being finalised

and negotiations with BAM FM for the access to the Sport Hall at peak times remain positive and will be concluded within the next month or 6 weeks.

As part of the project officers have commenced the procurement for a new operator for the site and this will be concluded in the early part of spring 2017.

South Bromsgrove High School: The Council has played a key role in the creation of the first 3G Astro Turf Playing Pitch (ATP) at the School through initially supporting the FA and the school with this scheme and in autumn 2015 providing the final piece of the funding jigsaw. The pitch is due to open in the near future and through our efforts and funding we will have a new community facility available very soon.

Bromsgrove Hockey Club: There will be a new sand dressed ATP shortly following funding and support from BDC in line with the above comments. The investment will allow the club to become self-sufficient and sustainable and to continue to offer opportunities for adult and junior to play sport regularly to a high standard.

Victoria Ground: The Council continues to work with Bromsgrove Sporting and support their efforts to improve the ground and climb the football league structure. This year we have assisted the club in achieving additional funding for new floodlights and undertaken landlord works on the main electrical supply to support the new lights installation.

Woodrush High School: Through the availability of section 106 funds we have supported WHS and ensured that the facilities on site both old and new will be available for a 15 year period through a community use agreement. The funding agreed in 2015 will provide the fit out costs of the recently completed Woodrush Hub and is the final package that includes a new library, youth centre, fitness suite, dance studio and ancillary facilities.

Key piece of work moving forward in this area will be to link the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy and Infrastructure Plans to the aspirations of local sports club and organisations with key piece of work being around the use of section 106 funding to support local rugby, cricket and bowls clubs in areas such as Central Bromsgrove, Wythall, Hagley and Woodrush.

All these schemes will be designed to increase participation, improve access and infrastructure or make a club, school facilities and organisations sustainable so their benefits can be felt for years to come.

Sports & Physical Activity Development

The following 4 keys areas are where the team have focused their attention this year.

Health Intervention

Bromsgrove shows a middle-high level of excess weight which is 0.8% higher than the national average; however levels of activity across the district are middle-high. The Active People's Survey shows an increase in people exercising 3 x or more per

week but a decrease in lower level activity such as 1 x week. Bromsgrove are retaining active people but not engaging as many inactive people as previous years.

Sports Development identifies areas for intervention. The following have been a focus over the last year:

Activity Referral: A scheme that works with local medical professionals where they signpost/refer people into an activity programme at the Dolphin Centre. Participants who have completed the programme have experienced reduced blood pressure, improved mental health, better weight management as well as improving strength, mobility and the ability to carry out everyday tasks. It is our intention to review the programme to ensure that participants receive one to one appointments with a trained instructor who will review their progress through the intervention. We hope this will attract more participants to the programme and improve retention rates.

PSI (Postural Stability Intervention): This is a national scheme which helps people who may be at risk of falling. People can self-refer into this scheme or be referred through a medical professional. This scheme is run in partnership with Public Health and the County Sports Partnership. The intervention helps to improve strength and mobility as well as improving confidence as many of the participant's lives alone so are socially isolated.

Couch 2 5k: This scheme has been hugely successful in getting inactive residents engaged in physical activity. The programme encourages people to walk/run their way up to 5km over a 9 week period. It is all inclusive and the age range is vast. There have been a total of 218 new runners since January with many people who have previously finished a course continuing to run in running groups.

50+ classes: Aimed at people over the age of 50, but welcome all ages. These sessions are targeted to improve physical activity in the older age group. Activities provided include yoga, pilates, tai chi, aerobics.

Barriers to Health Interventions: The main barrier here is finding venues to host activity programmes as Bromsgrove District Council don't have any council run facilities, facility hire, with no jurisdiction on how long it can be booked for. This makes it difficult to plan effectively and programme new initiatives. Certain areas suffer more from this than others, and this is usually in the areas of highest need e.g. Sidemoor and Charford. The lack of transport around Bromsgrove is also an issue, as there is a reliance on Burt's Bus but demand for this is high. To get around these activities need to be planned on days when Burt's Bus is available. Sessions have been put on in the past and the main reason they fail is lack of transport.

Disability

One of our aims is to make physical activity inclusive for all disabilities. Partnerships with schools like Chadsgrove have proved popular and successful. Successful funding bids from Make It like Mandeville (Inclusive Sport Fund) and Sportivate (Sport England) have enabled more disability delivery using sports such as Bowls, Climbing, Boccia and Badminton. These sessions have now become sustainable so will continue to be delivered.

Positive Activities: Sports Development working with the Arts & Events Team put together projects to provide free activities for young people in areas of highest need throughout the Bromsgrove District. Over 40 young people attended the programme with the aim to reduce anti-social behaviour in the area. The main challenge going forward will be trying to sustain this beyond the funding period which ends in March 2016. Discussions are taking place in a couple of weeks with coaches to see what options we have going forward.

Children and Young People

We are currently working with providing Primary Sports Project which is a coaching service delivered to the schools as part of their provision for curriculum and after school club physical education. As part of this we partner with the All Active Academy, delivering the Change for Life clubs, which target the inactive children in each school.

One of our priorities for the forthcoming year is to strengthen the school to club links by partnering with more schools and local sports clubs. We successfully received £7000 Sportivate funding through the County Sports Partnership to help resource this.

Current projects being run for young people include:

- Flashmobs in schools
- Bumps to Babies for young mums.
- Couch to 2k/ X Box 2 2k
- Dolphin Centre Gym 6 week programme
- Martial Arts
- Youth Inclusion Activities

Club and Coach Development

Sports Clubs are a key driver in increasing participation within sport, whether it's playing, officiating, coaching or volunteering. The development of players can ensure a clubs sustainability and drive it forward, attracting new members and reinvesting in facilities. Our role is to advise clubs on how to submit funding bids, gain club mark quality accreditation, train/ grow their volunteer structure, deliver taster programmes and signpost participants to the club to help improve membership.

The role of Club and Coach was vacant for 12 months until November 2015. Since November, clubs have been systematically met with to assess their needs and ideas on how they want to develop their club. The first Club Forum was held on 26th January, 24 sports clubs attending from both Redditch and Bromsgrove and the feedback has been really positive. Key partners in driving these plans forward are National Governing Bodies, and now that the Whole Sport Plans for each sport have been drafted, we will get a clearer picture of sport priorities over the coming weeks.

Future Work Plans

Health Intervention

Building on year 1 of the PSI Programme we are required to double the amount of referrals into the programme and the amount of participants that are retained on the course at strategic points.

The team will look to remodel the Activity Referral programme to engage more GP Surgeries, provide more one to one advice and guidance to participants and obtain data to evidence the impact of this intervention programme on people's health and well-being.

We will also look to target our resources into rural areas where residents are often socially isolated. This will be an opportunity to use current programmes which are successful such as Couch 2 5k, Walking for Health and Mobility classes.

Due to the success of running activity we will be looking to piggy back on the success and popularity of cycling nationally to encourage inactive residents to participate in a physical activity, which is affordable and can be done anywhere at any time.

Disability / Inclusion

We will switch our attentions to providing activities for hard to reach groups such as those from BME (black, minority and ethnic) groups and clusters of residents living in rural areas. Working alongside partners such as Worcestershire County Cricket Board, we will be providing activities to include Street Cricket, Handball, and Walking for Health and Beginners Running. These activities will work to engage all age ranges, and abilities from children through to adults.

To continue the success of the Make It Like Mandeville funded projects we are continuing to expand the sailing sessions at Upton Warren; investing in specially adapted boats to cater for a wide range of disabilities.

Working with the Health and Intervention Officer and Health Partners we will look to provide activities for residents and their carers suffering with mental health illnesses. This will be an opportunity to help them with rehabilitation as well as giving carers the opportunity to get much needed rest bite as well socialise with other carers working under similar challenging circumstances.

Children and Young People

Working closely with the School Sports Partnership we will look to provide an exciting range of activities for children and young people to encourage them to participate in Sport and Physical Activity. In particular we will target girls as nationally

this is seen as a high priority by Sport England the DCMS. We have submitted plans to the Worcestershire CSP to obtain Sportivate funding for this purpose for projects such as Girls Can Dance, Girls Swim and Sportivate Cricket. All of these projects work to break down the barriers which traditionally prevent young people staying active such as cost, stereo-types and locality.

We will be working closely with local schools, School Games Organisers and community sports clubs to increase opportunities for participation. Part of this plan will be to provide tournaments in schools covering activities such as Hockey, Rugby and Netball all of which will provide CPD for teachers, volunteer opportunities and community club links. Working alongside the All Active Academy we will provide free Change4Life clubs which target inactive children who would not normally access sports clubs.

In partnership with the Community Safety Team we will look to provide activities for young people in hotspot areas in an attempt to reduce ASB. This will be an opportunity to apply for grant funding to run short intervention programmes to stimulate demand.

Club and Coach Development

Our top priority in this area is to create a coaching pathway programme so that we can identify a network of volunteers to work in schools, colleges and in local sports club sessions.

We will look to support clubs to increase their volunteer workforce, increase membership, link more effectively with schools and obtain quality accreditation status.

Finally, we will look to offer a range of taster sessions in our parks during spring and summer periods to encourage families to take part in a range of sports and activities. We will work in liaison with local Sports Club and Regional NGB's so that there is an exit route to go to should participants want to participate in activities after the initial taster programme has finished.