

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE

SERVICE UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD 10 MARCH TO 13 APRIL 2014

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee on a range of initiatives being undertaken to improve and enhance the quality of life for Nottinghamshire people.

Information and Advice

LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES, INFORMATION AND COMMUNITY LEARNING

Southwell Library Opening Hours Consultation

2. Southwell Library's opening hours are under review to ensure that they reflect the wishes of the local community. To this end a customer consultation exercise is currently being undertaken, both within the library and online, giving customers a choice of two options: option one involves maintaining the existing hours whilst option two offers the possibility of opening for three hours on Thursday mornings - a previously closed day. These extra opening hours also involve closing at 5.00pm, one hour earlier, on three of the least busy weekdays.
3. During Newark Library's closure for planned maintenance and its subsequent refurbishment, Southwell Library has opened all day on Thursdays. This appears to have proved popular with Southwell customers and local businesses, including traders from the new Thursday morning market in the town.
4. The public consultation closes on Saturday April 28th and the results will be reported back to Culture Committee as a matter of course.

Randomfest at Worksop Library on 15 March 2014

5. On Saturday 15 March Nottinghamshire Libraries in conjunction with Youth Services put on Randomfest, an indoor festival for young people at Worksop Library. The festival is the indoor version of the popular young adults summer festival held at Kings Park in Retford.
6. The day ran from 11.00am till 6.00pm and proved to be popular. The morning had a variety of popular workshops introducing attendees to drumming, djing and song writing. The morning also featured an acoustic stage giving young local musicians an opportunity to play in public.

7. This was followed by the main stage in the afternoon which hosted a selection of quality young local bands playing full sets. All participants valued the opportunity to play a public set with quality sound equipment etc.
8. The day proved popular with local young adults with over 130 attending and many attending all day. Advertising for the event took place through Worksop Library and through local schools and youth clubs, work undertaken by youth services. The day proved to be a good opportunity to showcase Worksop Library and youth services to local young adults.
9. Randomfest was a popular addition to Worksop Library's young adult activities, spearheaded by HeadSpace, a group of young adults who help to plan and deliver activities for young adults at Worksop Library.

ACLS Seminar – 9 April 2014

10. A very successful seminar was held at County Hall on the morning of 9 April designed to raise awareness of the Adult and Community Learning Service's scope and activities and to encourage cross-working by other Services within the County Council.
11. Forty people from a range of Services including Support for Schools, Day Services, Employment Inclusion, Arts, Children's Centres, Economic Regeneration and Libraries all took part in a carousel session providing information on the key aspects of ACLS delivery. This was followed by lively roundtable discussions, giving the opportunity for further information sharing and exploring more effective ways of working together in the future.

LAI&L Re-validate Customer Service Excellence Certification

12. Libraries, Archives, Information and Learning (LAI&L) has successfully retained Customer Service Excellence Certification (CSE) after hosting an annual compliance visit from the CSE Assessor on 18 March 2014.
13. The Assessor commended Libraries, Archives, the Education Library Service and Adult and Community Learning for continuing to improve its services and for maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, LAI&L has been awarded three Compliance Plus elements for outstanding best practice. These are for:
 - Further embedding and demonstrating a corporate commitment to put the customer first
 - Further demonstration of how you empower staff
 - The extended use of staff insight in formulating policies, procedures, processes and practices.

Library Management System

14. Nottinghamshire Libraries undertook to lead the procurement for a new Library Management System contract on behalf of 5 East Midlands authorities. The tender and

evaluation process was completed in March 2014 with the result that NCC's current provider, SirsiDynix, is the preferred vendor. Contracts and plans are now being finalised

15. The new consortium, to be known as 'EMLIB', currently consists of Nottinghamshire, Nottingham City, Leicestershire, Derby City and Rutland, but is open to other authorities joining at a later stage. All 5 authorities will migrate to the new system during 2014-15.
16. The consortium brings a range of service benefits to library customers, including the possibility of universal membership at all 159 libraries, and access to a much wider range of stock than any one authority can provide.
17. The EMLIB consortium also attains significant financial savings through a competitive offer by the successful vendor. Nottinghamshire expects to save a minimum of £110,000 over a 5 year period.
18. The tender has been successfully completed with the help and cooperation of the NCC Procurement team and ICT Services.

COUNTRY PARKS AND GREEN ESTATES

19. After two months of very wet conditions, March ended with a run of fine weather which saw country park visitor numbers increase rapidly in the run up to Easter. The Mother's Day weekend proved particularly popular at Rufford Abbey with two lunch sittings in Rufford's Savile Restaurant fully booked and all space in the Talbot Suite fully booked two weeks in advance of the day. In general it was a good period for the in-house catering team. Sales were up 12% against the previous year.
20. However, an increasing trend towards peaks and troughs of demand highlights the longstanding problem of limited all-weather car parking at Rufford Abbey at those times of year when damp ground makes parking on grass problematical. Limited parking capacity is one of the issues which will be examined in the Conservation Management Plan currently being compiled for the site.
21. A national initiative by Heritage Lottery and NESTA recently offered £100,000 of external funding for innovative ideas to make parks more financially sustainable in the long term. The Country Parks Service partnered with the Engineering Faculty of the University of Nottingham to submit a bid for a system to analyse the potential of countryside sites for energy generation. The bid passed the initial round and a representative from each organisation was invited to London to present ideas to the funding panel. If successful, the external funding would pay for a specialist appointment within the University, using the County's 'Green Estate' sites as its initial area of research.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the update on a range of initiatives being undertaken to improve and enhance the quality of life for Nottinghamshire people be noted.

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