



meeting      **COUNTY COUNCIL**

date            **16<sup>th</sup> December 2004**

agenda item number

## **REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE**

### **REPORT FOR THE PERIOD TO DECEMBER 2004**

#### **Leisure and Culture**

##### **Arts**

1. Over this period, about 75 performances, projects and workshops were staged by the Service.
2. Highlights include the Lumos celebration of light and lanterns at Rufford Country Park planned for Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> December. Workshops took place leading up to the event, in Carlton-in-Lindrick, Worksop, Hucknall, Retford, Sherwood, Newark MIND, Kirkby, and Mansfield.
3. The Lumos event is both a community and commercial success with the main event selling all of the allocated tickets. Staff of the 'Next Stage' team within the Arts Service should be congratulated for their outstanding efforts in engaging local communities in the Lumos project.

##### **Next Stage**

4. Besides launching the Lumos event, the participatory arts team have been working with day centres, rural communities, miners' welfare halls in a number of areas across the County. Projects include Divali celebrations with nursery/early school years, and outreach work from the Anne Frank exhibition, which was a collaborative events with the Education Department and the Arts Service that linked with the development of Citizenship skills.

##### **Harley Artmarket**

5. The annual artmarket, with over 50 stalls took place over the weekend 4/5 November, and proved even more popular this year. There was an increase on sales by regional craftspeople and makers, in the run up to Christmas making a significant contribution to the economic sustainability of the sector, and providing yet another visitor attraction to the former Coalfields region.

## Performances

6. County wide performance programmes took place in collaboration with District and Borough Councils. In this period, venues have ranged from the Concert Hall in Nottingham to rural venues, such as Ordsall, Kirkby, Thurgarton, Sutton cum Lound, Manton, Hickling, Beeston, East Markham, Keyworth, Everton, Calverton, Ordsall and Thrumpton among others.
7. In addition, the Stages programme saw successful events in Mansfield Palace Theatre, Eastwood, Southwell, Arnold, Retford, Newark and Thoresby.

## **Tourism and Country Parks**

### Commercial Activity at Rufford & Sherwood Forest

8. After a disappointing summer due to the wet weather, both the catering and trading outlets at Rufford and Sherwood Forest Country are enjoying a successful pre-Christmas season with excellent sales at both sites.
9. At Rufford to the end of November monthly retail sales were up by 10% and catering by 22% on 2003. Advance bookings for Christmas lunches in the Savile Restaurant, which started on 26<sup>th</sup> November and run until 24<sup>th</sup> December, were well up on 2003, including those for the quieter period up to 11<sup>th</sup> December. As a sales incentive, customers enjoying their meals up to this date received £5 vouchers to spend in the Lakeside Garden Shop. Up to the end of November, 524 were due to receive these, compared with 140 in 2003, an increase of 275%.

## **Sports**

### BBC Midlands Sports Awards 2004

10. Nottinghamshire's sports men and women were well represented at the BBC East Midlands Sports Awards staged at the Council House in Nottingham. The Awards, nominated and voted for by the public from across the East Midlands celebrated the full scale of contributions from 'voluntary unsung hero' to sports personality of the year.
11. It was particularly pleasing to witness a number of nominated individuals who have benefited from the support of the County Council including three paralympians, James Crisp (swimming), Danny West (athletics) and Maggie Parker (archery); and Olympians Nathan Robertson (badminton), Helen Reeves and Campbell Welsh (canoe slalom).
12. Nottinghamshire winners included the County Cricket Club for 'Team of the Year'; Nathan Robertson and Campbell Walsh, joint winners of 'Sportsman of the Year', and Jean Lawrence, a volunteer at Newark Rugby Club, who won the 'East Midlands unsung hero award'. Jean will be attending the National BBC Sports Review of the Year as the East Midlands representative.
13. One of the most welcome awards of the evening was given to Kaleigh Black who is a member of the County Council's Boccia Elite Squad. Kaleigh was

recognised as an outstanding prospect for the future and given the award for personal achievement as a Junior and a £500 bursary towards her training for 2005.

14. It is hoped that all of the Nottinghamshire people recognised will be able to attend the County Council's own sports review of the year on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

## **Young People**

### **Mill Adventure Base**

15. The Mill Adventure Base in Sutton in Ashfield is the largest of the County Council's centres for adventurous activities. The Base is managed as part of the Young People's Division and provides a wide range of opportunities for young people. The Base is to undergo a large scale refurbishment, which will be mainly funded from external sources such as the Big Lottery Fund and the Sub Regional Strategic Partnership. Tenders for the refurbishment are expected imminently and it is planned to complete the project in June 2005, subject to contracts and final agreement about the contribution from the County Council's capital programme. In total, the refurbishment is estimated as costing in the region of £1.2 million and will transform the existing, dilapidated provision into a state of the art facility, providing excellent opportunities for many years to come.

### **U Project Presentation Evening - 17th November 2004**

16. Each year, the Young People's Division (Youth Service) manages an externally funded programme of residential projects for young people leaving school who are uncertain about their next move. Known as the U-Project, these residential opportunities draw young people from schools across the County and place them on exciting week, long programmes of activities and events. At the same time as enjoying a new experience, the Youth Service staff work with colleagues from Connexions in order to offer young people advice about what they might do next. Alongside this, the young people all undertake a nationally accredited Youth Achievements Award, which can supplement their record of achievement and C.V. This year, the presentations for the U-Project Youth Achievement Awards took place in County Hall on 17th November. 44 young people attended and received a total of 77 awards.

## **Libraries, Archives and Information**

### **Charter Mark Award**

17. The Public Library Service, Archives Service and the Education Library Service have held Charter Mark for 4 years. During this time the scheme has been radically revised but it remains the government's national standard for excellence in public service for public and private sector organisations.
18. In October these services were assessed against the new Charter Mark standard and have been judged to meet the new criteria. A fuller report will be

presented to the next Council meeting when the Charter Mark certificate, which is awarded for 3 years, will be presented.

19. There are 6 criteria and 63 elements in total, of which these services met 57 in full, partially meeting the other 6. Nottinghamshire was also judged to have best national practice in relation to its social inclusion strategy and action plan. This is the first shire county with this range of services to be awarded Charter Mark under the new criteria.

### **Public Library Position Statement (PLPS) 2004**

20. All public library authorities are required to produce PLPS's. These are assessed annually by the Department for Culture Media and Sport's (DCMS) contractors, IPF Limited. Scoring systems are tweaked year on year and this year has been no exception. The PLPS is judged on two elements:

- Implementation of "Framework for the Future" (the national library strategy)
- Meeting national public library standards

21. Scores are awarded for each element, based on a scale of 1 to 4 (the latter being excellent). This year the score for each element was 3 and 3 giving an overall score of 3 (good). This improves on last year's score of 3 and 2, and helps improve the authority's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) score. This is greatly welcomed after the disappointing presentation of last year's results, and the Library Service has improved its scores, narrowly failing to score excellent on Library Standards, and either maintaining or improving the scores of the elements in Framework for the Future.

22. Combined with the Audit Commission Inspection of cultural services and the Charter Mark award, the PLPS improvement completes a remarkably successful year of continuous improvement for Libraries, Archives and Information.

### **Boots Books for Babies**

23. On 10<sup>th</sup> December, the Library Service published the social impact study of the Boots Books for Babies scheme (Headstart), which is due to complete in March 2006. The impact of the scheme, which runs in partnership with Nottingham City Council and Primary Care Trusts, was undertaken by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre.

24. Over 43,000 babies have been involved with the scheme since it began in 1998. This represents over 90% of babies born in the City and County over this period. For once it has been possible to undertake research into the longer term impact of a project of this kind.

25. The research found that Boots Books for Babies has achieved almost all the aims originally envisaged including:

- Universal engagement

- Development of motor actions and social skills
  - Love of books
  - Value of books
  - Literacy
  - Early learning
  - Library use
  - Cross-section partnership working
  - Boots Company plc aims
26. The project really has given the young children involved a “Headstart” and the project is nationally significant in its public / private sector approach. A copy of the summary report has been deposited in the Local Government Library.

### **Summer Reading Challenge 2004**

27. The final analysis of the Summer Reading Challenge has been completed. This is a national programme aimed at school age children. However, in Nottinghamshire it is significantly strengthened by the partnership between the Education Department, the Education Library Service and Nottinghamshire Public Libraries through the “Reading can change your life” programme.
28. The Reading Challenge operated at all the county’s libraries but 14 communities were specifically targeted in terms of promotion of the scheme in the wider community. The scheme gets children to register at libraries for the challenge. They then receive packs, aim to complete 6 book reads during the summer holidays, and receive certificates and medals for completion at various awards events around the county.
- 2004 was the most successful Reading Challenge ever (in 6 years)
  - 8,220 children took part in the event
  - Nearly 44% of those starting completed the challenge – the best result ever
  - Overall book issues at libraries for the target group increased by 7.62%
  - The scheme cost 79p per head
29. As part of the overall strategy for children’s reading development in Nottinghamshire, the 2004 Summer Reading challenge has been a great success.

### **Saturday Mobile Library Pilot Project - Worksop Library**

30. A new Saturday service was launched on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2004 at Sainsbury’s in Worksop and as a consequence the Worksop Mobile Library will be in Sainsbury’s car park every Saturday from 10.00am until 3.00pm.
31. This is a pilot project arising from the Nottinghamshire’s Mobile Library Service Review which in 2003 looked at existing services provided by the mobile library service and examined the potential for widening its provision to both new and existing users. This partnership with Sainsbury’s and the

offering of a new weekend mobile service is the first of its kind in Nottinghamshire and the review group will closely monitor its progress.

32. The launch day was a celebration and a promotion of reading and featured competitions for all ages. The Cabinet Member for Culture launched the service by cutting a specially commissioned mobile library cake and light refreshments were served to members of the public throughout the day. There was a great deal of interest from Sainsbury's customers and staff with the first new member being the duty manager of Sainsbury's.
33. The mobile features an increased range of contemporary fiction and selection of graphic novels and spoken word on CD. We are sure that this first day will be the start of a very successful new venture.

**Councillor Chris Baron**  
**Cabinet Member for Culture**

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