

meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011

agenda item number **7a vi.**

## REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

### Report for the period May – June 2011

1. The following are summaries of work relating to my portfolio. This report reflects the wide range of initiatives being undertaken, all of which help improve and enhance the quality of life for Nottinghamshire people.

#### Nottinghamshire Archives

##### Manorial Documents Register

2. On 21 June I was very pleased to launch the Manorial Documents Register for Nottinghamshire at a special event held at Nottinghamshire Archives.
3. The project, managed by Nottinghamshire Archives, was funded by The National Archives. It updates and computerises the previously hand written index of manorial documents, which had been in place since 1926. The Register records information on Nottinghamshire manorial records from over 200 manors, held at 49 different locations worldwide, some in publicly accessible institutions such as Nottinghamshire Archives and others still in private ownership.
4. The Register can be accessed at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr/> and makes Nottinghamshire Archives manorial records more accessible to potential researchers.

##### Ancestral Tourism

4. The Nottinghamshire Ancestral Tourism Partnership, funded by Renaissance East Midlands, and now led by Nottinghamshire Archives, has produced a guide and website.
5. *Discover Your Nottinghamshire Roots* provides information to family historians, to encourage them to visit the County to trace their family tree in the County's archives, libraries and museums.

6. The guide can be downloaded from <http://www.nottinghamshireroots.com> or printed copies are available through Nottinghamshire Libraries and Archives.

#### Ask the Archivist

7. 9 June marked International Archives Day, and along with over 100 archives worldwide, Nottinghamshire Archives took part in Ask the Archivist on Twitter. Answering questions on a wide range of archival subjects, the event made use of new social media to open up archives services to a different audience. Nottinghamshire Archives will be evaluating this as an alternative way of promoting its services in the future.

### **County Parks and Green Estate**

#### Rufford Abbey Country Park

8. I am pleased to report that Rufford Abbey Country Park was awarded the VAQAS quality standard for a third year, after a mystery shopper inspection of the Park on 1 June.
9. The Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Award is a scheme run by Enjoy England - the national agency for tourism promotion. It aims to encourage high standards of facilities, access and visitor welcome at sites which operate as tourist and visitor attractions.
10. The inspector concluded that "Rufford Abbey Country Park continues to offer a very memorable visitor experience, exceeding first time visitors' expectations with an extensive range of content and facilities available".

#### Newark Footsteps

11. The "Newark Footsteps" group, led by Rufford Park Ranger Steve Koefoed, has been awarded the "Walking For Health" national accreditation for a third year. The Walking for Health initiative encourages more people to become physically active in their local communities, especially those who are not currently very fit, or who are recovering fitness after illness.

#### The STARS Awards

12. Myself and Councillor Keith Girling attended the 6th Annual STARS Awards, on 9 June, as guests of Experience Nottinghamshire.
13. The Awards celebrate the achievements of staff and students in the tourism, culture, leisure and hospitality industries, rewarding them for their excellence and dedication. Experience Nottinghamshire created the awards in 2006 to assist in improving the skills, training, attitude and retention of staff within the tourism industry.

14. At the event, Assistant Catering Manageress within the County Parks Service, Yvonne Stone, was awarded the Excellence in Customer Service Award. My congratulations go to her on achieving this well deserved award.

### **Olympic Torch visiting Nottinghamshire**

15. It gave me great pleasure last month to receive the news that Nottinghamshire has been chosen as one of the areas that the Olympic Torch relay will pass through immediately before next year's Olympic Games.
16. We have a lot of work going on behind the scenes to ensure that the County makes the most of this prestigious event, and in due course I will be able to provide further detail on the Torch route through Nottinghamshire. In the meantime, this month we have been promoting the national search by the Olympic organisers for torch bearers, and Council staff have been nominating individuals who they feel have raised the profile of sport in Nottinghamshire.
17. And all the while, Nottinghamshire's Olympic and Para Olympic hopefuls are putting in much hard work as they prepare for the Games, with 25 local athletes receiving our Shining Stars funding to help support them with the considerable training costs that elite athletes incur.

### **Economic Development**

#### Nottinghamshire Work clubs

18. I am pleased to report that the Nottinghamshire Work Clubs website, [nottinghamshireworkclubs.co.uk](http://nottinghamshireworkclubs.co.uk) has been launched. Details of work clubs in our libraries will be held on the website as well as other work clubs delivered by partner organisations. Members of the public can search for a local work club. In addition details of pledges of support from employers, organisations and other businesses are held on the website.
19. Two more work clubs will be launched by the end of June in Sutton and Kirkby Libraries. The Worksop Library work club continues to be well attended with 12-15 members per session and already 4 members have found employment.

#### Business Engagement

20. I am pleased to report that my Deputy, Councillor Keith Girling, chaired the meeting of the Nottinghamshire Business Engagement Group (NBEG) which met on 26 May at the new Arnold Business Centre. Derek Brewer of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club gave a presentation on the Ashes bid, outlining the importance of this bid to the future of the club and the benefits that an Ashes Test at Trent Bridge could well bring to the Nottinghamshire economy and local communities. NBEG members were also advised of the County

Council's BD: UK bid, which will aim to deliver high speed broadband to rural businesses and communities across the County. Members of the Group reported an increasing feeling of optimism amongst local businesses - there are clear signs that the economy is improving.

**COUNCILLOR JOHN COTTEE**

Cabinet Member for Culture and Community

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