



Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 25 January 2016

Councillor Community Fund

A total of 145 grant payments have been made from the Councillor Community Fund since April 2015. The total amount of funding awarded at the end of November is £52,119.35, providing support to a wide range of local voluntary organisations and local projects.

Partnership Support

Since the grant year beginning July 2015, 9 Small grant payments have been made, totalling £23,600.86 from the £50,000.00 pot. The Small Grants panel continue to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss and consider all applications.

The Partnership Grant is open to applications once again at the end of this month. An event was held today (Monday 25th January) in the Guildhall for the opening of the grant, showcasing organisations that were successful in 2015/16, and informing other organisations of the process and what the CEFAP panel look for in applications.

Community Centres

The Our Place project continues to progress. Meetings have been held with all community centres involved and their action plans are being delivered. The Partnerships and Communities Team are currently working on the development of a partnership bid to fund further youth work. In addition to this, various projects for the community centres are being supported, such as a community consultation programme in Bellinge, and planning for various open days and days of action around the centres.

Events

It has been a quiet few weeks since the Christmas German Market finished on the 20 December and the Christmas trees and lights were taken down in early January.

The council is currently looking at plans for 2016 incorporating Council and Partner events.

The new pay on foot parking operations in St Michaels & St Johns MSCP's have been well received by customers and have enhanced the council's service provisions with credit / debit card usage growing month on month.

The refurbishment works to the lift L7 in the Grosvenor Centre car park was placed on hold during the Christmas period to support the shoppers using the car park but works have recommenced and will be complete in early March.

The replacement programme of 20 surface car park payment machines has commenced and will be complete by early March, 15 new machines will offer customers credit / debit card payment options which will enhance the customer offer.

The free Saturday parking offer over the Christmas period again proved very popular with many of our car parks including two of our MSCP's being full at various times throughout the day. This was a factor which contributed to very good footfall figures throughout December as well.

Culture & Heritage

A Christmas craft workshop held at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery in December was well attended. The Over 60s series of lectures recommence in January and with the introduction of a £2.50 charge per head.

A collections volunteer event was held during December to celebrate the achievements of our volunteers during 2015 (including the successful store move) and looking forward to working in the new temporary Guildhall stores in 2016.

A donation was received in December of a large Northampton Crest which is associated with Nationwide Anglia Building Society in Northampton.

Northampton Museum & Art Gallery was the venue for a book launch in December of a book on the 1460 Battle of Northampton written by medieval historian Mike Ingram and illustrated by renowned historical illustrator Matthew Ryan.

An event was held in December at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery to update local businesses on the progress made with the Cultural Quarter redevelopments.

During December Northampton Museum & Art Gallery saw several corporate hire events by Senate Chambers, the Voluntary Impact Services and ACAM Music School.

Customer Services

Through regular liaison and reviewing the reasons for repeat calls, Customer Services and Responsive Repairs have agreed additional resource of a Responsive Repairs Team Leader being based within the Contact Centre. This has proven successful reducing avoidable contact and complaints whilst providing agents with technical advice and support.

Customer Services are pleased to introduce a new partner into the OSS, The Northamptonshire Centre for Independent Living (NCIL) will be having weekly surgeries providing support for disabled and older people across Northampton promoting independence in own communities.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Community Engagement