



Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement & Community Safety

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 13th March 2017

Councillor Community Fund

Since the beginning of April 2015, a total of £172,844.80 has been spent on local projects that have been supported through the Cllr Community Fund.

Partnership Support

The Partnership Grant Application process has closed and the panel meet at the end of this month, to consider the applications. 29 organisations were supported in 2016-17, all are delivering real outcomes and benefits to the local community

Forums

Holocaust Memorial Event was held in the Great Hall on Thursday 26th January. A full programme was delivered, including performances by the Russian Dancers, Northampton School for Boys and the screening of a film that was developed by Screen Northants, as well as readings and speeches by the Mayor, Leader and the Chief Constable. Furthermore a civic ceremony was held in the Guildhall Courtyard to Mark the day on Friday 27th January at 12pm.

To mark International Women's Day, an event was held in the Great Hall on Saturday 4th March, the event included performances, women's support organisations, offering information, crafts, workshops, food from Elsie's Café and pamper sessions.

We announced Pat Haslem as the winner of our 5th year Inspirational Woman Award in conjunction with BBC Northampton. The award saw a record number of nominations this year and continues to go from strength to strength.

In partnership with Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire we are holding an Afternoon Tea Dance on the 25th March, this is formed from one of the Pensioners Forum Action Plans for 2017.

Northampton Youth Forum are working with Aquarius, CAMHS and Gamble Aware England on projects for International Youth Day on the 12th August.
As well as a historical project with the Museum volunteers.

Volunteers

We continue to see an increase in supporting and placing volunteers with our local community groups, including;

Gardening at Parklands Community Centre, litter picking and gardening at Vernon Terrace Community Centre, (this has been weekly since the start of the year), a volunteer placed at Spencer/Dallington Community Centre to support the start up of their community café and the Girl Guides are embarking on a project at Weston Favell Parish Hall.

Events

The Chinese New Year (Sunday 12th February) event was a success with thousands of people visiting the Market Square to watch the Changing Face singer, the Lion / Chinese unicorn dance and many more performances.

The events on the council's parks and open spaces gathers momentum from early April with the Bands in the Park season commencing on Sunday 2 April in Abington Park; HMS Laforey Parade in the town centre - Sunday 2nd April; Terry Wire memorial Harley Davidson in the town centre – Saturday 8th April; Circus on Midsummer Meadow – 20th to 23rd April; Fair on

Kingsthorpe Rec – 20th to 23rd April; Fair on the Racecourse – 27 April to 14 May; Food Festival in Becketts Park – 13th to 14th May.

Looking forward we have the Beer Festival in Becketts Park, Racecourse Festival, Carnival, Race for Life and more.

Culture & Heritage

The Northampton Town & County Art Society Annual Show saw 20 exhibits sold during the exhibition at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery.

A series of five Art History talks took place in January and February attracting 199 attendees. A further series is planned for May and June.

February saw an archive film screening by the Northamptonshire Film Archive Trust sell out and attended by an audience of 66.

Four February half term workshops held at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery were also sold out attracting 72 young people.

The first phase of the renovation work has commenced at Abington Park Museum and is due to finish in mid-June. Work in this phase concentrates on decoration and repairs to the Great Hall and function room.

Museum Expansion Project

Work is underway to produce the Employers Requirements documents. A start up meeting has taken place with the exhibition designers to begin work on developing the concept briefs for the galleries. The main museum site closed to the public on Sunday 18th February to enable staff to begin work on the removal of objects from the exhibition galleries in advance of invasive surveys and building works.

Customer Services

One Stop Shop (OSS) Partnership working continues to grow in strength ensuring essential services under one roof. With many partners relocated or providing drop in sessions within the OSS we are helping more people at an earlier stage helping to prevent debt and homelessness. We are pleased to Welcome Working Links as a new Partner. Working Links have been available in the OSS since 20th February and are holding sessions every Monday from 10:00 – 16:00. Working Links works with people from all backgrounds with different needs and expectations. Their aim is to help people with their employability needs and rehabilitate people back into the community.

Community Safety

Overall crime continues to increase seeing a 8.3% (+1,617 crimes) since the beginning of April 2016. However, on a positive note the increase is beginning to slow down. Serious Acquisitive Crime is showing an increase of 33.2% (+838 crimes) with vehicle crime rising by 46.2% (+644 crimes), domestic burglary by 14.6% (+115 crimes). However, domestic burglary is showing a reduction compared over the past 3 months. The rate at which violence against the person is increasing continues to slow in comparison to 2015/16 with an increase of 4.6 % (+299 crimes). Anti-Social Behaviour incidents reported to Police have increased by 9.1%. Environmental ASB reports have increased by 9.4%. Personal ASB has increased by 1.2%, and nuisance ASB by 12.5%, but both are now seeing a reduction on previous months. However, figures still remain lower than the same period last year.

Bridge Street closures that were put in place over the Christmas Eve and New Year period worked well, and were welcomed by the licensees.

The Nights Out Northampton campaign is being launched later in March, with a range of social media, publicity and promotional materials being used. PubWatch were briefed on the campaign and are fully supportive.

Work to identify priority locations for 2017/18 for Community Safety Partnership 'Weeks of Action' is underway. Final decision on locations will be made by the CSP at their March board meeting.

Councillor Anna King
Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety