

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

12 January 2009

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 YOUTH & PLAY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Summary

This report updates Members on activities and initiatives for children and young people (key corporate priority) since the last meeting of this Board.

1.1 Staffing

1.1.1 Following the departure of the two part-time Youth and Play Development Officers Giovanna Hammett and Karena Harmer in September 2008, the post of Youth and Play Development Officer was advertised as a full time position. The advert generated a large amount of interest and the recruitment process concluded with Jeni Ashmore being appointed and Jeni started with the Council in mid November.

1.1.2 Between November and December Karena Harmer agreed to assist in the induction programme for Jeni. This included preparation work on the different schemes and activities, and for Y2 Crew, which Karena will continue to work on following its success last year.

1.2 Leybourne Lakes Country Park – Junior Ranger Programme

1.2.1 Leybourne Lakes Country Park first piloted the Junior Ranger Programme in 2006 with the aim of encouraging young people to become actively involved in maintaining the Country Park.

1.2.2 Preparations for this year's programme include a focus on conservation and the environment, including building mini beast boxes, painting benches, completing pond surveys and discovering what lives in the Park on the discovery nature trail. Proposed dates for the course are Saturday mornings from 10:00 am – 12:30 pm, in April and May for a maximum of 12 young people.

1.2.3 Both Leybourne Lakes Country Park and Haysden Country Park have also run special event days and sessions. These included Wildlife days with orienteering and wildlife hunts and Bat Walks which were heavily oversubscribed with attendances in excess of 50 people at each event.

1.3 Try Angle Awards

- 1.3.1 The Try Angle Awards are a partnership scheme between Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council to celebrate the achievements of young people aged from 11–18 years.
- 1.3.2 Young people can be nominated for an award by their school, youth group, parents or friends. The categories are bravery, personal achievement in the arts, music, sport or outdoor activity, volunteering and service to the community, good friends and young carers, citizenship, environment and personal development.
- 1.3.3 Planning for this year's award ceremony is now under way with the first Steering Group meeting having taken place on the 12 November 2008 to discuss key aspects including funding, speakers, entertainment, and the co-ordination of the media. This year the ceremony will be taking place in Tonbridge with initial proposals for the venue including the Angel Centre or the River Centre. Nominations for the 2009 awards are now open and an online form can be downloaded from the Council's website.
- 1.3.4 The Chairman of this Board attended the "Spirit of the Try Angle Awards" the county final evening on Sunday 30 November, held at the Ashford International Hotel. The event celebrated young achievers from across Kent.

1.4 TM Youth Forum

- 1.4.1 The Youth Forum meets five times a year and is a panel representing the views of young people who live in the area of Tonbridge & Malling.
- 1.4.2 At the Youth Forum meeting held on the 18 November the Co-Chairs of the Forum Francesca and Kelsey Heard announced their resignation due to other outside commitments. They did, however, take the opportunity to pass on their appreciation for the experience and opportunities that the roles had given them. Their announcement has coincided with a process of reviewing the Forum and will allow a new Chair, Vice-Chair, Administrator and Events Manager to be considered from the interested young people.
- 1.4.3 In consultation with members of the Youth Forum, leaflets and posters have recently been re-designed in order to ensure that the content is up to date and relevant, and to help attract a wider range of young people. These are now ready to be printed and distributed to local schools, youth groups and community groups in the New Year together with the DVD.
- 1.4.4 We are currently undertaking an analysis of our current Youth Forum members taking into account where they live and what school they attend in order for us to target those areas which are under represented.
- 1.4.5 Members of the Youth Forum are currently looking into organising a summer event and have nominated a smaller group of young people as a Steering Group

in order to plan this. The first Steering Group met on the 10 November 2008 to look at what message they wanted to get across to the public and what kind of workshops/activities they would like to have at the event. The Steering Group is currently in the process of designing a questionnaire to send out to schools and youth groups to get other young people's views.

1.5 Easter Activate

- 1.5.1 Arrangements for the 2009 Easter Activate Programme are now being finalised with the activities running from the 6-17 April 2009 offering young people aged 8-16 the chance to try out some more unusual activities. This Easter the activities include martial arts, fencing, jewellery making, bollywood dance, art, cookery, drama, film making, outward bound, windsurfing, trampolining and golf.
- 1.5.2 The first draft of the Easter Activate brochure is already complete and being checked before final print and distribution to schools, libraries and leisure centres in early March 2009.
- 1.5.3 The online booking system will be available for parents to be able to reserve and pay for spaces on courses and sessions run in the Easter Activate programme. These bookings will be taken together with the regular postal bookings from the brochures that will continue to be distributed to local schools.

1.6 Legal Implications

- 1.6.1 The Council has powers to undertake this activity by virtue of Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972. Under the requirement of the Children's Act (1999) and in accordance with the Council's Child Protection Policy all staff will be subject to an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check no older than 12 months.

1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.7.1 The cost of the activities will be met from the 2009/10 Leisure Development revenue budgets.

1.8 Risk Assessment

- 1.8.1 A risk assessment of all the activities and venues is undertaken in liaison with the Council's Health & Safety and Insurance Officers. Each of the facilities used will be requested to produce adequate insurance certificates and risk assessments.

1.9 Policy Considerations

- 1.9.1 Young People, Healthy Lifestyles

Background papers:

contact: Jeni Ashmore

Nil

Robert Styles, Chief Leisure Officer