

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD**

**18 May 2010**

**Report of the Chief Leisure Officer**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 2012 OLYMPICS**

**Summary**

**This report updates Members on work linked to the 2012 Olympics and, in particular, the Council's partnership approach with Kent County Council to help 'Deliver a Legacy'.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 This Council has been working closely with Kent County Council with regard to its approach towards the 2012 Olympic Games, with a focus on 'Delivering a Legacy'. The County Council is coordinating the approach to the 2012 Games through its Kent Strategy for the 2012 Games. The focus is on a number of the sectors, namely:

- Sport
- Tourism
- Arts
- Business
- Volunteering
- Young People
- Transport

1.1.2 This Council is represented on the Kent Coordinating Group for the 2012 Games which is made up of representatives from a variety of sectors including education, police, district councils, voluntary sector, etc.

1.1.3 Further information on the approach to the Olympics within the County can be found on the following website [www.kentsport.org/london2012/](http://www.kentsport.org/london2012/)

## **1.2 Pre-Training Camps**

- 1.2.1 There has been a particular focus in trying to attract nations to host pre-training camps within the County. There is a great deal of competition for these camps both within the UK and abroad, and it is pleasing to note that the first major foreign nation to announce a pre-training camp in Kent will be based at the Tonbridge Judo Club/Tonbridge School. The Club and the School will host the Ukraine and Belorussia Judo Squads which are heavily tipped to achieve medal success at the 2012 Games. In addition to these two nations, the Council is working closely with Tonbridge School to attract others, due to the excellent mix of facilities and accommodation on the School site. The Council previously co-funded the athletics track at the School, which was where Dame Kelly Holmes trained, and we have recently shared the cost of refurbishing and floodlighting one of the School's all weather floodlit pitches, which it is likely will be used by a major hockey nation as a pre-training camp.

## **1.3 Olympic Torch**

- 1.3.1 This Council is supporting Kent's campaign for the Olympic Torch to enter the country at Dover, as was the case when the Olympics were last held in London. This would be a major coup for the County and would hopefully enable the torch to then pass through various districts. I am aware that the torch will be visiting World Heritage Sites within the country and the proximity of Canterbury Cathedral near to Dover is obviously of significant assistance in this regard.

## **1.4 Sports Participation**

- 1.4.1 This Council has an ongoing aim to encourage access to sports participation within the borough and recent national research from Sport England indicates that Tonbridge & Malling has the second highest level of sports participation within the County. The Sports Development Officer is working on a number of new initiatives to enhance this including a new Tonbridge Half Marathon in March 2010 and a range of cycling initiatives. These initiatives will be linked to the Olympics with the aim to ensure that they continue in the longer term. The role our leisure centres will play nearer to the Olympics has yet to be determined but investment is continuing to ensure access for all.

## **1.5 Supporting Sporting Excellence**

- 1.5.1 This Council, along with other districts within Kent, offers free access for national sports people to all its leisure facilities. The Scheme, known as FANS, allows people achieving sporting excellence to train in our gyms and swimming pools free of charge, providing a much needed source of assistance. We currently have 11 participants in the scheme, with sports ranging from table tennis to curling.

## **1.6 Churches**

- 1.6.1 Meetings have been held by Kent County Council with the Diocese of Rochester. The Diocese is part of 'More Than Gold', which led community celebrations at Athens, ran a hospitality tent at the World Cup and organised big screen festivals at previous Games. The Diocese will be producing a 'Toolkit' on how local parishes can get involved in the 2012 Games, including such opportunities as providing home stays for family members of teams training in the county.

## **1.7 Tourism**

- 1.7.1 This borough co-ordinates its promotion of tourism through the Heart of Kent tourism consortium. The consortium involves the districts of Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks and produces a number of publications including the Heart of Kent holiday guide. The consortium also has a website which receives over ¼ million hits per annum. The tourism consortium is currently considering the significant benefits that the Olympics may bring to the area and I am aware that a number of our hotel and bed and breakfast providers are already becoming fully booked for the period of the Games. The 2010 Open Weekend to promote the Olympics will take place on 24/25 July. The idea of the weekend is to run any form of sporting/cultural event to link to the Olympics. This Council will be running its highly successful Festival of Music and Fireworks at Tonbridge Castle that weekend.
- 1.7.2 As a member of Visit Kent, this authority supports its "Big Day Out" initiative, which is a key element in Visit Kent's 'Celebrating Kent' Campaign. The aim is to encourage local people to explore where they live, so we can improve their product knowledge of the many tourist attractions and hidden gems that are on their doorstep. Visit Kent want more local people to develop a sense of pride and ownership about where they live which, in turn, will generate a greater enthusiasm for the Kent tourism product and a positive view towards visitors. This campaign will take place every year up to and including 2012.
- 1.7.3 Visit Kent is promoting the county as an alternative destination for visitors to be based during the Olympic Games due to its proximity to London, good transport links as well as the unique culture and heritage package Kent has to offer.

## **1.8 Arts**

- 1.8.1 The majority of this Council's arts programme is delivered through the West Kent Arts Partnership. Other authorities represented on the partnership include Maidstone Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council.
- 1.8.2 Working towards 2012, the partnership is looking to deliver a project entitled "Traditions". This project will explore traditional forms of Kentish folk dance, song, music and story telling to promote and encourage people to be physically and mentally active and healthy with the aim being to create a new dance based on

the unique heritage of West Kent - created in collaboration with participants of the project.

- 1.8.3 Workshops will be held in primary schools led by a lead artist with support from the local folk community. Participants will learn dances and learn where the dances originated from. English Heritage will have the opportunity to feed ideas into the 'Dance for Kent'. Students will create banners, masks and costumes based on traditional English stories and myths to wear in a performance of the Kent dance as part of the 2012 celebrations in West Kent.

## **1.9 Volunteering**

- 1.9.1 The residents of Tonbridge and Malling have a good track record in volunteering, particularly in sport and, as London 2012 has identified that it will require 70,000 volunteers for the Games, the Council will actively encourage as many people as possible to volunteer their services. This is currently happening through the organisation and promotion of sports leadership courses and the development of a dedicated Olympics page on the Tonbridge and Malling website.

## **1.10 Olympic Resilience Manager (Kent)**

- 1.10.1 Former Chief Superintendent, Mark Salisbury, has recently taken up the role of Olympics Resilience Manager for Kent (and Medway). This post is part funded by Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue and Kent County Council, but serves the needs of all Category 1 and 2 responders and other partners/stakeholders in terms of the Safety, Security and Resilience needs of the Kent 2012 campaign.

- 1.10.2 On 22 April 2009 the implications to resilience in Kent in relation to the 2012 Games pertaining to the Kent 2012 campaign were discussed at the Kent Resilience Forum Policy Group meeting. As a result a subsequent multi agency meeting took place where the following themes emerged:

- Capacity
- Capability
- Security
- Congestion and overload
- Scale
- Overall 'increase' considerations with existing problems and issues
- Overall resilience of Kent (and Medway) during this period
- Public safety

1.10.3 It was the considered view of all the agencies that the work associated with these issues did not sit with one specific agency, team or discipline. In this sense, it was agreed that a dedicated post be created, that was autonomous, and would feed into the existing Kent 2012 Coordinating Group (chaired by the Head of Sport, Leisure and Olympics), the Kent Resilience Forum structure, local public safety groups looking at Olympic related safety issues and, importantly, integrating with national and London based Olympic organisations such as the Olympic Security Directorate, for which the postholder will act as the lead liaison figure for Kent.

### **1.11 Legal Implications**

1.11.1 None.

### **1.12 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.12.1 Any work relating to the 2012 Olympics will be met from within existing revenue budgets.

### **1.13 Risk Assessment**

1.13.1 None.

### **1.14 Policy Considerations**

1.14.1 Community, Healthy Lifestyles, Young People.

Background papers:

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Nil

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