

CABINET MEMBER LEISURE AND TOURISM

CABINET BRIEFING – 3 MARCH 2011

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Consultation

Consultation has taken place (7 Feb – 19 Feb) to obtain library users' views on what pattern of library opening hours they prefer when the hours are reduced as of 1 July 2011. The five larger libraries will be open 44 hours per week, and the smaller libraries open 30 hours per week. The consultation took place via forms for people to complete in libraries, and via Sefton's e-consult on the website. There has been a very good response to date.

SPORT AND RECREATION

Leisure Centres

Celebrating a New Year and a New You, the leisure centre marketing campaign to generate new members and additional income had nearly 1,000 new members join Active Sefton. The campaign runs until the end of February and the additional Direct Debit income of more than £100,000 represents an £11,000 increase compared to last year.

The new Netherton Activity Centre continues to develop at a fast pace with the top floor of the building now being built.

Embracing the virtual environment the Dunes Splash World mascot, "Murtle the Turtle" has featured on Facebook for nearly three years and has achieved a record 745 online friends so far. Utilising this customer forum, the mascot offered discounted entry to the centre via a one-off promotion. It is anticipated that this online promotion will generate around £116,000 worth of additional income to the centre.

Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre continues to establish itself as a key venue for water sports and adventurous activities as it has gained the support of key national governing bodies including the Royal Yachting Association and British Canoe Union who have worked in partnership to develop the centre as an outstanding venue for these activities. To date, the centre has already been a success with the resident club, the Crusaders Dragon Boating Club, who have become the Junior National Champions. In addition, the centre has been awarded a two year licence to deliver activities for young people by The Adventurous Activities Licensing Service; has become a Royal Yachting Association "Training Centre" and has most recently applied to become a Royal Yachting Association Onboard centre.

Positive Futures

Utilising Aiming High For Disabled Children funding, the Sefton Positive Futures team have been able to make a significant increase in the range of short breaks provided for disabled children and young people in Sefton. The most noteworthy increase is the total number of children receiving non-specialist group based provision which has risen by an amazing 200% from an 08/09 baseline of 93 children to 279 children in 09/10.

Providing positive diversionary activities for young people at risk of social exclusion, the Sefton Positive Futures team have continued to tackle hard hitting issues through a range of diversionary workshops. Working with the RSPCA, Sefton Environmental Health, Dog's Trust, Dog Licensing

Officers and Guide Dogs, the team have presented a range of workshops with more than 50 young people attending from a number of schools. Promoting the events on a national scale, the activities drew the attention of Real Radio who interviewed members of the Positive Futures team on air about the success of the events.

Crossing the boundaries of education, the Sefton Positive Futures team have been using sporting opportunities to target educational problems with young people in Sefton. 14 young people from a Crosby school who were experiencing problems associated with poor attendance, behavioural issues, low confidence and self esteem issues attended and successfully completed their Bronze Skills Award and Exercise Awareness course on the FA Tesco Football Skills programme, before also attending two Breaking Cultures workshops on racism and bullying with fantastic results. As a result of the programme, reports have illustrated an improvement in the pupils' attendance at school, improvements in their behaviour and dramatic increase in their levels of confidence and self esteem, so much so that several of the young males have applied for places on the Sefton Coaching Academy which can lead to qualifications and employment.

Continuing to provide opportunities for disabled children, young people and their families, the Sefton Positive Futures team have extended their range of activities to offer "Dance 4 Life" sessions in key locations across the borough.

Maintaining their leading position, the Sefton Physical Disabilities Indoor Cricket team successfully defended their Champions crown this year after fending off teams representing the six boroughs in the Merseyside Sports Partnership. The successful defence of the title was only surpassed by the boys' exemplary sporting behaviour which was commented upon by opposition coaches.

Active Lifestyles

The Active Lifestyles Programme, commissioned by NHS Sefton, incorporates a number of services designed to work with residents in need of weight management support or suffering with/at risk of developing heart disease, through a combination of physical activity, dietary support and behaviour change.

A six month review of the programme has seen more than 2,000 referrals being made to the programme, which continues to rise each month.

TOURISM

Marketing

PR – Media value secured via tourism team activity for general resort promotion was £238,366 to the end of January. Several media competitions/reader offers ran through December to support the Christmas event in Southport, media value generated was £41,184. Business Tourism (conference) PR media value to end December was £241,136. Group travel PR media value to end of December was £83,270. Event PR media value for 2010 was £1,041,959. Total value of PR generated for Sefton/Southport via tourism so far for the 2010-11 fiscal year is over £1.6 million.

Design & Print - Southport Short Breaks & Holiday Guide (2011) has been delivered and sent to distributors (80,000 copies – no cost to tourism, funded via advertising). Southport Pocket Guide delivered and in distribution. Walking & Cycling Guide delivered and in distribution.

Website/new media – Work under way on refreshing the Sefton's Natural Coast (SNC) site – styling to be in line with visitsouthport.com. The Tourism Facebook and Twitter sites are now both active with daily (and more frequent) updates. E-Newsletter sent to database monthly, now over

7,000 contacts. January newsletter featured a number of special offers for subscribers – and was very well supported by STBN members.

Business Tourism – Tourism conference sales team will attend Confex (1-3 March). Sefton will be stand-sharing with TMP and ACC Liverpool. Stand design agreed by 3 partners and build underway.

Travel Trade – Tourism will be attending BoBI (Best of Britain & Ireland) and Great Days Out travel trade exhibitions (both in March). David Palmer group travel event in February was attended. Travel trade 2011 update printed and will be sent with spring newsletter late February.

STBN – Southport Tourism Business Network meetings all scheduled for next quarter. Main Alliance (Board) Meeting on May 3 2011.

Dispersal Officer

Southport Ambassador Awards - More than 500 nominations received for the tourism, hospitality and retail awards taking place 30th March at the Southport Theatre and Convention Centre. Judging, tickets sales, sponsorship and preparation for the awards now taking place.

Sefton Natural Coast Website - Working in partnership with Coast and Countryside and coastal partners, currently designing and producing new website which should go live end of March.

Research - research conducted, now waiting on reports for Southport Airshow, Lord Street Summer Festival, Southport Christmas event, SNC research and Destination Benchmarking. Partners For Growth - working in partnership with The Mersey Partnership monitoring PFG funded projects

Events

RLPO Lunchtime Concert at Bootle Town Hall on 17 February; these concerts will continue until the end of this financial year.

Southport Food & Drink Festival 12–15 May 2011 – trade bookings going well, sponsorship nothing confirmed yet but some positive leads, taste pavilion themes are chilli, chocolate, English Wine and pies (tbc). Gala Dinner and awards going ahead with voting taking place now. Radio City confirmed as Media Partner.

Southport International Jazz Festival 26–29 May 2011. Headline acts confirmed Clare Teal, Jay Phelps (formerly of MOBO winning Emphirical), Orghesta Cache, King and Skid play Bird and ‘Trane and Tubby Hayes Tribute Band.

Summer Classics – in discussions with a private company with the aim of achieving an event at no financial cost to the Council.

Southport Air Show – Provisional flying programme in place, trade bookings up on this time last year, first emergency planning meeting taking place on 25 February, event infrastructure currently being secured.

Fireworks Championships – competitor planning and site visit taking place on 23 February, currently re-assessing site layout with a view to increasing income.

Business Tourism

As we approach the end of the 2010/2011 financial year a total of 26 conferences have been confirmed worth an estimated £14m in economic impact.

Despite the last quarter being very slow, the beginning of 2011 has been slightly more positive with an increase in both enquiries generated and familiarisation visits conducted. In fact, 11 enquiries have been created since 1 January, worth an estimated £12.7m in revenue to the borough if secured.

The Business Plan is due to be refreshed and, in light of the severe change in the economy and resultant depressed tourism market, the team is working alongside destination stakeholders with a view to pooling ideas and revitalising the strategic approach of the resort in terms of targeting conference business. A planning meeting will take place and initiatives formalised will then be launched during International Confex in London (1 – 3 March) when Southport will be partnering Liverpool Convention Bureau and ACC Liverpool once again.