

## EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016

### Culture

#### 1. Oberhausen Cultural Exchange

Following on from my visit to the Ruhr Region in September, delegates from our twin town of Oberhausen visited Middlesbrough between 7-9 December.

The purpose of the visit was to sample Middlesbrough's cultural regeneration and, after a welcome lunch hosted by the Mayor of Middlesbrough and I, they spent much of the visit touring a number of our fantastic cultural assets including:

- The Transporter Bridge;
- A tour of the Town hall with a discussion of our renovation plans;
- A visit to the Dorman Museum and the Dresser Collection;
- A tour of the Cultural Quarter and Digital City;
- A visit to Platform Arts and House of Blah Blah.

The purpose of the trip was to see what Middlesbrough has to offer, and to see how both towns can work together to promote cultural activity. We already do this in terms of promoting local music talent, and there is clear scope for collaboration and using shared experiences across other platforms. Working with international partners is a good way of tapping into European funding for cultural projects, and we will be looking into how to develop this – and other means of collaboration – further.

#### 2. Mima

Mima has launched a grants programme as part of the international Arte Util ('useful art' – art that has beneficial outcomes for its users) scheme. The successful 'Localism' exhibition at Mima – which was refreshed in December and continues until February 2016 – has already promoted 'arte util' in the form of New Linthorpe Pottery and New Boosbeck. After a visit to the exhibition, the Deputy Mayor and I have already started to see how cultural projects such as these could be used to utilise and build on local talents and expertise, and perhaps even create jobs in our area.

Funding is available for up to three projects which seek to contribute to social change using cultural activities. Teesside based organisations or community groups are eligible to apply for activities taking place in 2016.

#### 3. Dorman Museum

An exhibition of the children's book illustrator Nick Sharratt's work will go on display from the 23<sup>rd</sup> January. 'Pirates, Pants and Wellyphants' will include drawings from some of his most well-known works including the Tracey Beaker books, and Pirate Pete. The exhibition includes the chance for visitors to create their own characters in a recreation of Nick's studio, and a storybook section. The event runs through to April 2016.

#### **4. Christmas Lights and Reindeer Parade**

Unfortunately, due to extremely high winds, the annual reindeer parade and Christmas lights switch on scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> November was cancelled. The events team devised a contingency plan for the carnival parade element which enabled the 250 local school children involved to perform music and dance to family and friends in the Town Hall and celebrate all of their hard work. The Christmas lights switch on was re-arranged for 3<sup>rd</sup> December, which also marked the start of late night Christmas shopping in the town centre. Despite a mostly wet day, the weather improved for the event which was well attended.

#### **5. Pantomime**

Cinderella, the 2015 Middlesbrough theatre pantomime, opened to large audiences. Featuring local favourites, Scott Gallagher and Katie Lowe, and Cheryl Ferguson from Eastenders, the production has received excellent reviews in the local press. Current figures indicate that sales will comfortably exceed figures for Jack and the Beanstalk in 2014/15.

### **Leisure and Sport**

#### **6. Leisure Trust**

After a lengthy process, the Mayor's Executive approved the award of the Managed Sport and Leisure Services contract to Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) for a fifteen year tenure. This decision will see continued investment in our leisure facilities and job creation.

SLM is a specialist in this field, with over 27 years' experience. It currently operates 117 sports and leisure facilities under contract with 36 Local Authority partners, the nearest to us being Redcar and Cleveland. However, I have sought – and received – guarantees that Middlesbrough's leisure facilities will be managed as a separate entity with the people of Middlesbrough in mind.

There are a number of benefits that come from this decision:

- **Savings**

This decision will see us saving £1.23 million.

- **Investment**

In terms of wider investment and continued improvements to our facilities, SLM have also put forward a series of proposals in all facilities that fall under this contract – the Sports Village, the Neptune Centre, the Rainbow Centre, the Manor and the Municipal Golf Centre – in the region of £2m. While it is possible that we could have retained the facilities in-house, the council could not guarantee this level of investment. We are committed to ensuring our facilities are top-class and fit for purpose, and our partnership with SLM will see this happen.

- **Jobs**

The contract will also see our leisure staff, and 27 cleaning staff, be TUPE transferred over to SLM and we will ensure this is done smoothly. Furthermore SLM will create 6.88 FTE jobs to the existing staff, and recruit a minimum of 10 apprentices by April 2017. SLM are also committed to ensuring 75% of its staff are from the Middlesbrough area.

This is not privatisation. All assets will remain Middlesbrough Council's, who have leased them to SLM. What we have is a partnership between the Council and SLM that will see massive investment, jobs created, and training provided. Furthermore, SLM and Middlesbrough Council are both committed to tackling health inequality, and will be working on initiatives to target hard-to-reach groups and increase participation across the facilities. The Council will take part in the governance structures of the Trust, and retain a Strategic Sport and Leisure Manager who will work closely with SLM in the application of this contract and ensuring our SLM's aims continue to match ours.

## **7. Tour de Yorkshire**

The Tour de Yorkshire is one of the most spectacular events of the British sporting calendar, and we are now able to say the Middlesbrough will host the final 'start' – the leg which decides the winner!

We will be working to put on a series of events around the Tour de Yorkshire, both sporting and cultural, and due to the route – which goes through Great Ayton and Whitby – we will be looking to tie the life of Captain Cook into our celebrations. This is a fantastic coup for our town, and the Tees Valley as a whole. The first Tour de Yorkshire brought 1.5m spectators to the roadside, generating over £50million for the regional economy. This is also great opportunity for the area and to showcase Middlesbrough to the world.

## **8. Service Overview**

### Rainbow Leisure Centre & Marton Manor

Quest is the Sport and Leisure Quality Assurance Framework delivered through Sport England. – The Rainbow Centre has recently had its annual Quest directional review and although awaiting the final report has received encouraging feedback from the Assessor. The mystery customer visit conducted as part of the review resulted in excellent comments with the venue scoring 100% in many of its areas.

The Manor Programme Development –new agreements with the Teesside Ability Support group (TASC) and Parkway Day Nursery have allowed the Manor to increase participation for adults with disabilities and young children aged 0-4 years as well as increasing the venues profile and income generation.

### Hemlington Recreation Centre

Hemlington Recreation Centre is progressing with the asset transfer proposal. MBC have begun meeting with several interested community groups and organisations.

The centre has begun a partnership with Middlesbrough College to deliver outdoor training courses and activities on Hemlington Lake.

In addition, Hemlington has continued to develop its programme: The venue is now host to Hemlington Juniors football club, who play all of their 2015/16 TJFA and cup fixtures at the Recreation Centre, as well as their junior football academy. This involves opportunities for over 100 local children aged from 4 years to 18 years to participate in football activity.

### The Neptune

The Neptune has now completed the redevelopment of the office and multi-use rooms previously part of Joe Walton's on the first floor. The venue has already managed to

establish regular bookings in this space providing a new income stream and establishing a new customer base of the venue.

Making Waves Hairdressers and Relaxation Station, formerly based within Southlands Leisure Centre, have now both transferred their businesses to The Neptune.

Middlesbrough Swimming Club finished the year's events with a graded meet on the 12th/13th December and MASC Club Championships 27th December.

A new sport is coming to The Neptune in 2016 in the form of Water Polo. Sheffield Beacon will be utilising the venue to host their Elite Squad Training Camps and matches in 2016 with dates already confirmed for their first 6 events.

## **9. Middlesbrough Sports Village**

Work is nearing completion on the external "snagging" following the finalisation of the rest of the site.

There have been ongoing issues with parking on the road through the Sport Village which is creating significant difficulties for people wishing to use the road and is also spoiling the recently developed grassed areas alongside the sports pitches. Temporary work has already helped to reduce the problem through the introduction of temporary barriers and signage however joint work has now commenced to look to find a more suitable long term solution.

## **10. Healthy Habit Promotion**

Active Middlesbrough has recently introduced a special "Healthy Habit" 1 month promotion. Using the principle it takes 1 month to develop or break a habit, the campaign is designed to help encourage new and more casual users to buy into a 4 week long membership and develop their own healthy habit.

During November 185 people signed up for the £28 offer allowing them access and all the benefits of our premium Active Extra Membership including gym, swimming, fitness, small court hire and more in all of Active Middlesbrough's venues for one month.

The service is now working on ensuring that at least 30% of these healthy habit customers convert to full paying memberships with an offer which includes joining now and not paying until January therefore receiving up to a month free of charge. This will hopefully support the service in achieving the level of sales required by the end of the financial year.

## **11. Swimming Development**

### Swimming Lessons

Active Middlesbrough's Marine Team Swimming lessons are continuing to grow and now have over 1200 children participating between the Rainbow Leisure centre and the Neptune pools.

The Marine Team Lessons are based on the ASA (Amateur Swimming Association) framework and in the past ASA have commented on Marine Team as being the best example of swimming lesson branding they have seen. Following on from ASA's comments a number of similar brands have popped up around the country.

### School Swimming

Throughout 2015/16 over 40 Middlesbrough primary schools participated in school swimming lessons at The Rainbow Centre and Neptune pools. Providing intensive swimming teaching working towards the school's curriculum objectives of all children being able to swim at least 25 metres by key stage 2, as well as teaching stroke competence and self-rescue.

### **12. Gym Memberships**

Record-breaking sales continue for Active Membership's, recording the busiest November that Active Middlesbrough has ever seen. Total live annual membership's currently stand at 3,700 and are well on the way to hitting our target of 4,400 live members by the end of the financial year in March 2016.

### **13. Bubble Football & Archery Parties**

Active Middlesbrough has formed partnerships with 2 external providers to enhance and develop extra diversity to the party provision at Middlesbrough Sports Village.

- Boro Bubble who deliver fun football parties and bookings with a twist that the entire upper part of the body is encased in a large inflatable ball.
- North East Archery Crossbow Entertainment (ACE) whole host parties and bookings where people get to compete in "force on force" tag archery games.

These new partners exclusively hire the facility and offer food as an additional option to customers, who are re-directed back through the venue for food and room hire. The offer is growing and feedback has been positive around the activities.