

## **EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

### Commercial Services

#### **1. Newham Grange Leisure Farm**

Newham Grange Leisure Farm is set to be transformed into a much improved leisure, cultural and educational facility for the Tees Valley as a result of a £1.2m funding proposal approved by Council in May 2018.

An application for a further £1.8m of support for the investment has now been submitted to the Tees Valley Combined Authority.

Plans are being currently being finalised to determine exactly what the new developments at the farm will look like and include the following enhancements:

- New Welcome Centre incorporating cafe with indoor play area and farm shop
- Outdoor play area outside pay perimeter for free public use
- Development of a Market Square
- New indoor play barn
- Relocated and improved outdoor play
- Barn for public events use
- Improved car and coach parking
- Expanded and improved covered petting/activities space
- Restoration of the Georgian farmhouse as an education centre
- Development of farm and wildlife trails
- New stock and feed barns built
- Further development of community allotments
- Other general improvements

In addition to capital works improvements, a range of complementary activities to increase the farm's offer to the local community and visitors from outside of the region are currently being explored and developed, some of which include:

- Educational programmes to assist schools in their curriculum delivery, support education for pupils with Special Educational Needs and provide post 16 year old students the opportunity to gain valuable skills to help in routes to employment.
- Heritage programmes to focus upon the historical development of farming, everyday life in the Georgian era, preindustrial history and stories of the Tees Valley.
- Environmental and sustainability activities to be developed with local partners including the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust.
- A range of artistic and cultural offerings to enrichen the experience of all visitors, with potential to work with National cultural partners and a featuring a rolling Artist in residence programme to work on a participatory programme with children and young people.

A range of improvements are already being implemented and new attractions have been installed including a large sand pit, pedal tractors and go-karts which are proving very popular

with the young visitors to the farm. The farm has also recently seen the arrival of 18 new piglets, 36 lambs, 12 calves and numerous rabbits.

The future of the farm is looking very positive and all involved are enthused about the changes ahead and excited to be part of the transformation of this much-loved attraction.



## Environment

### **2. Albert Park**

Albert Park Lake has a history of high nutrients and algal blooms therefore to help combat this, a dye has been introduced into the lake to help block the sun's UV rays and inhibit weed growth. This dye will colour the water however it does not pose any risk to the wildlife which inhabit the lake, and is completely safe for human contact.

The events programme for May half term had lots of activities running throughout the week including learn to ride, storytelling, arts and crafts, tennis and I-Spy trail,

As part of local history month and to celebrate Albert Park's 150th birthday a number of reminiscence walks have taken place in the park during May where members of the public can learn about its history of the park from our Rangers, whilst also discussing their own memories of times in the park.

To help celebrate Dementia Friendly Action Week, live music took place on Saturday 26th May from the park's band stand.

### **3. Stewart Park**

After what has been a very wet winter and spring, works to help resolve the issue of flooding at the wetland area have been ongoing and the pathways are now clear. Further works are currently in the process of being costed up to permanently resolve this issue going forward.

Party in the Park took place from 1st to 3rd June, Planet Circus will arrive on 24th June for two weeks, the Cleveland Show on 28th July, and the Endeavour Festival is due to take place on the August Bank Holiday (further details to be released nearer to the date).

Vital work continues on the Temple and Flower Garden areas with Friends of Stewart Park and their help is greatly appreciated. Middlesbrough Environment City in conjunction with the friends have also carried out some works at the Marton cross roads entrance which is now greatly improved.

#### **4. Area Care**

Improvement works have now been completed at The Avenue play area which included the removal of the old fence and shrubbery to open up the area, and erection of a new, replacement fence and planting of new slower growing smaller varieties of shrubs. The remaining areas were re-turfed and the rockery improved with the installation of new planting.



Town Centre floral displays were delivered early June and included 3-tier flower towers and hanging baskets which were placed around the Town Centre, basket tree hanging baskets on Centre Square and lamp post baskets in Bedford and Baker Street.

#### **5. Waste Services**

We would like to thank residents for continuing to participate in the garden waste collection scheme. It has proved to be very successful so far this year with a large amount of garden waste composted which in turn significantly reduces the amount sent for final disposal at the EFW Plant.

#### **6. Enforcement Team**

Operation Harlow, which was conceived, planned and executed by officers from the Environmental Crimes Unit and Cleveland Police, commenced in April to help tackle a wide range of environmental and criminal activities.

Since April a total of five exercises have been completed with partners from the Police, Licensing, Environmental Crimes Unit, Street Wardens and Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency working together.

The operation has two purposes, the first part is to proactively patrol Middlesbrough in marked and unmarked Police vehicles with the intention of stopping and searching vehicles which are suspected of illegally transporting either general waste or scrap metal. To date a total of 12

vehicles have been stopped, resulting in licensing prosecution, fines and vehicles being issued with prohibition notices for dangerous defects.

The second part of the operation is to foot patrol the rear alleys of the Central Ward of Middlesbrough to tackle bag slashing and the associated problems this causes. The operation has been particularly well received by members of the public who continue to support and pass on information by telephoning the Contact Centre or by self-serving on the Council's website. To date the operation has resulted in one arrest for theft, several potential cannabis farms have been identified, abandoned vehicles and trailers have been identified and removed, illegal scrap yards have been dealt with and drug dealing activity has also been reported. A number of bag slashing perpetrators have also been identified, with a prosecution currently pending. It is anticipated that Operation Harlow will be on going and that working partnerships will be developed and expanded to include other agencies such as HMRC and DWP.

In another highly successful partnership, Enforcement Officers conducted a joint Operation with Licensing Enforcement to visit and inspect Scrapyards across Middlesbrough. The Operation which began in April saw Scrapyard Operators given advice and guidance regarding improvements which needed to be made in relation to trade waste, licensing, and record keeping. Following a recent revisit Enviro Crimes officers are taking Duty of Care enforcement action serving a fixed penalty, against the owner of a scrapyard who appears to have ignored their initial advice.

## Bereavement Services

### **7. Linthorpe Cemetery**

In an event associated with Local History Month and National Cemeteries Week (12th – 20th May). A presentation was made in the Hebrew Prayer Room in Linthorpe Cemetery by Ian Stubbs from Friends of Linthorpe Cemetery & the Teesside & Cleveland Local History Society. The event marked the heroic passing of PC Henderson who was shot dead in Linthorpe in the line of duty and buried in the cemetery in 1893. The event was support by the local police cadets, direct descendants of the officer and by the Police and Crime Commissioner Barry Coppinger.



*L – R: The Rev David King (Force Chaplain), Crime Commissioner Barry Coppinger, descendants of the family of PC Henderson, Assistant Chief Constable Jason Harwin.*

## 8. Fair Funerals

Fair Funerals have recently ran a successful national campaign for children's funerals to have no fees levied against them. The law is being changed to accommodate this. Here in Middlesbrough we already do not charge for children's funerals. There are however charges that Funeral Directors make and where headstones or other memorial items are requested there is also a charge.

## 9. Donation to Dementia Friendly Middlesbrough

£5000 has been raised by Teesside Crematorium for Dementia Friendly Middlesbrough from its latest share of funds from the national Metal Recycling Scheme. On 30<sup>th</sup> May at Acklam Green Centre Cllr Denise Rooney presented Dementia Friendly Middlesbrough with the cheque. The group were there to watch a dementia friendly screening of the film "Summer Holiday".

Brian Rowcroft said "That is a fabulous donation to the project. It will enable me to support more activities for people living with dementia and their carers/families and friends in the community".

