

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Lynne Bowen, Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder	Council	7 September 2017	8(f)

Executive Report: Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Leisure and Culture Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Arts, Events and Volunteering

2.1 Wyre Creative Network – Arts Exhibition

An arts exhibition by artists from the Wyre Creative Network will be taking place at Marsh Mill this weekend during the Heritage Open Weekend (9th and 10th September 2017).

- 2.2 Larkholme Grasslands Project** We have held some fantastic workshops with Larkholme Primary school. The grasslands are just a short walk away from the school and it was clear that the children already have a sense of ownership of the space and this will increase as they see the space develop. The school feels the project ties in nicely with their curriculum and we anticipate this is the start of a five year project that will give each year group the opportunity to experience it. During this next term Larkholme Primary will be taking a class down at a time to the site so the children can gather some ideas of the space which will be arranged with Balfour Beatty. Creative writing and art workshops will take place in the school before the October half term holidays. A poet and artist are to be commissioned to support this work.

- 2.3 Events** - The Arts and Events Team have had a very busy summer actively supporting and attending events. Local gala committees have worked hard with the team to produce vibrant events that have been well supported by the local community. There is increasing interest in using parks and open spaces in the area both from community groups and from commercial event teams. This is an aspect of the team's work that is expected to grow as we develop the website to showcase the potential for events in Wyre. The Arts and Events Team are now working on the new event applications for 2018 with a new circus planning to visit Memorial Park, the return of the Royal Marines to the seafront in Fleetwood and a proposal for a kite festival.

- 2.4 Volunteering** - The Mount research volunteer role was launched on 21 July at Fleetwood library. Thirteen people signed up to the role and are currently researching as much information that they can find on this important Fleetwood landmark. Long term it is hoped that the volunteers taking part in the research will become Mount volunteers promoting The Mount as a venue for various events and helping to maintain the surrounding gardens.

3. Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre

- 3.1** The Summer has been extremely busy for Wyre Theatres with weddings, events and shows.
- 3.2** We have hosted a number of large wedding receptions and have experimented with new decorative lighting which was a great success and received great praise from customers. Although the lighting has now been removed it will be used again for future events as appropriate.
- 3.3** The 2017 British Theatre Dance Championships returned to Marine Hall in July. Now in their 59th year, this is the third year that the Championships have been held at Marine Hall. 47 dance schools compete across the week, involving around a thousand individual performances. Over 3,000 spectators attend the event travelling from all over the country. The competition is becoming incredibly popular, so much so that although the organisers added an extra day into the programme this year; they still needed to turn some hopeful participants away. We are pleased to say that the Competition organisers have already confirmed their booking with us for July 2018. Not only does this event generate a lot of income for Wyre Theatres, but it also brings additional spend to the area through hotel stays and visits, and food and drink sales.
- 3.4** Thornton Little Theatre and Marine Hall both hosted other dance competitions and performances from local organisations who regularly use the venues.
- 3.5** Other highlights at Thornton Little Theatre included local string orchestra 'Phoenix Strings' celebrating their 10th Anniversary with a special concert, as well as a Theatre Show from 'Melting Pot and Visage Theatre Academies' - theatre groups involving mainstream and children and adults with special needs.
- 3.6** St Mary's, Shakespeare and Larkholme Schools all held their end of Year 6 school leavers concerts at Marine Hall this year.

4. Sports Development

- 4.1 National Cycle to Work Day – 13 September 2017**
National Cycle to Work Day takes place next week on Wednesday 13 September. Cycle to Work Day encourages adults across the UK to get on their bike and give cycle commuting a go for one day. Cycling is a great way to boost health and fitness, improve your wellbeing and show some love to the environment. We are encouraging staff to take to two

wheels for the day particularly those who are giving it a go for the very first time.

4.2 Lancashire Active Healthy Minds encouraging Sport in Schools

We are currently working with the Youth Sports Trust, Lancashire Sport, Lancashire County Council and NHS Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group on a project that highlights the important role of physical education, school sports and physical activity in maintaining the positive mental health of children at school. Aside from the physical benefits, sports at school is evidenced to promote resilience, motivation, empathy and conflict resolution in young people. 40 Lancashire Schools will be enrolled in the programme next year and we are working with partners to encourage local schools to take part.

5. Comments and questions

- 5.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.

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