

# **Leisure, Culture and the Third Sector Scrutiny Board**

**15 February, 2016**

## **Summary of Matters Considered at the Board**

### **Report of the Chair, Councillor Ahmed**

The Scrutiny Board met on 15 February, 2016 and the following items were considered. I have selected the main points of the discussion that I feel members of the Council will be particularly interested to know more about. For more detail, a copy of the minutes is available on the Committee Management Information System (CMIS) via the Council's website at <http://cmis.sandwell.gov.uk/cmis5/>

#### **1. Outcome of Consultation Exercise Regarding the Future Management of Canada Geese**

The Board received a report setting out the results of a public consultation exercise that the Council undertook in September and October 2015, into the way it manages canada geese populations in its formal parks.

The report also outlined the measures that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Environment proposes to take to manage geese numbers going forward, as a result of the consultation responses.

Members discussed the implications of feeding the birds and what steps can be taken to discourage this. The Director-Neighbourhoods reported that signs are often unsuccessful at discouraging feeding but he undertook to see if the wardens service can assist with educating the public and undertaking focussed work in areas where feeding is a particular problem.

The Board is satisfied with, and endorses the actions proposed by the Cabinet Member in managing canada geese populations.

## **2. Update on the Community Activity Network**

The Board received an update on the Community Activity Network, which is a town based group of voluntary organisations, sports clubs and providers supporting the provision of locality based physical activity and sport sessions. The Council has secured around £45,000 per town for the project from Sport England. There is a Community Activity Network Development Officer in each town, whose role it is to strategically co-ordinate the delivery of physical activity and sport in each town and support local organisations to develop by building capacity and supporting them to secure external funding.

Scoping and insight work carried out by the community activity network development officers has informed the development of a delivery plan for each town detailing the activities occurring and the gaps in provision. The insight work has identified gaps across the borough in relation to provision for early years, ante/post natal and families in particular. As a result of the first round of funding applications in November 2015, a total of £81,000 has been awarded to new projects to address these gaps, which will support around 1,600 Sandwell residents per year to become more physically active.

In addition to the funding from Sport England around £461,000 of additional funding has been brought in Sandwell in the last six months as a result of the work of the community activity network development officers. This represents over 50% of the investment that the Council is expected to make over the course of the two year project.

The Board congratulates the officers involved in the project on its early success.

## **3. Evaluation of the Summer Activities Programme**

The Board received details of the comprehensive programme of summer activities that the Council commissioned to take place in its parks for young people aged 0-19 years during July and August of 2015. The aims of the project were to commission relevant activities to take place between 9am and 9pm each day; with the aim of reducing levels of anti-social behaviour; increasing levels of participation on physical activity and supporting the Early Help agenda by reducing the number of referrals.

A community voluntary organisation was appointed to lead the co-ordination and management of the programme in an identified park for each town and each lead organisation was given access to a grant of £5,000 to commission activities.

A total of 3,774 young people registered for the programme. The Board noted the participation levels in each town and the age ranges of participants. The project has contributed to an increase in participation levels to 31% (from 25.5% in 2012/13), as shown by Sport England's Active People Survey 2014/15. Also notable is a reduction of 4% in anti-social behaviour activity recorded during the months the project was running. There was also a significant reduction of 26.5% in the number of referrals to Early Help.

The Board welcomed the report and notes how all of these positive outcomes result in resources savings for the Council, as well as health and wellbeing benefits for the participants.

**Councillor Ahmed**  
**Chair of the Leisure, Culture and the Third Sector Scrutiny Board**