

South Lakeland District Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
26 April 2019
Executive Report 2018/19

Portfolio: Culture and Leisure Portfolio

Report from: Cllr Robin Ashcroft

Portfolio Responsibilities

The Council plan objectives in relation to promoting culture, leisure activities and the arts.

To work with our cultural organisations to attract investments and promote South Lakeland as a premier area for Arts and Events.

The relationship of the Council with its citizens; civic participation and the Council plan objectives around leisure, health and wellbeing and working with communities.

Working with key partners with regards to public health and community safety.

Policies, Plans and Strategies

- Arts and Events
- Grants Strategy
- Licensing and Statement of Gambling Policies

Key Areas:

- Arts and Culture
- Grants
- Public Halls
- Use of community assets for the promotion of arts and culture
- Young People/ projects
- Heritage and Events
- Heritage Listed buildings and built environment
- Voluntary Sector Engagement in relation to Culture and Leisure
- Leisure and Recreation
- Licensing and Gambling

Arts, Culture and Events

The Council has been working in partnership with key Cultural Strategic Partners and organisations to encourage, advocate and promote cultural arts and events across the district.

In order to promote South Lakeland as a leading Cultural destination and premier rural events for arts, events and festivals, the Council is working with Arts Council England and other cultural authorities to identify and enable funding to support and facilitate significant initiatives.

South Lakeland is already striving ahead in supporting some leading cultural events such as The Lakes International Comic Arts Festival, Lakes Alive, Kendal Mountain Festival, Great North Swim and Tour of Britain.

Following the launch of the Great Place initiative the Council has been working closely with Craven District Council, Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks to continue development. An action plan is being delivered to develop sustainable resilient creative communities and economy's which celebrate the skill and experience of creative people and good quality of life. This will retain and attract younger people to our districts to influence, support and create our future economy.

Grants

Throughout 2018/19 the Council has continued to support community organisations and cultural partners through grant funding.

A decision was made at Cabinet on 6 February to review the grant commitments each year to the agreed Strategic Cultural Partners. This approach will support the development of South Lakeland's reputation as a leading rural cultural destination, strengthen the district's cultural and creative industries, contribute to community's health and wellbeing, and support the Council in times of financial uncertainty.

Public Halls/ Use of community assets for the promotion of arts and culture

The Council supports a variety of different cultural events through the use of public halls and other owned Council assets which support various areas within the Council Plan. The events take place on one off or a regular basis showing how the public halls support the local communities include. Just some of the events include:

- Main hub base for leading festivals such as Kendal Mountain Festival and Comic Arts
- Regular community coffee mornings and bingo
- Language classes
- Meditation, Yoga and other fitness classes
- Local amateur operatic society productions
- From October to March classical midday music concerts
- Magistrates and Civil Courts held on a monthly basis
- Eden and South Lakes Credit Union
- Children's theatre arts school, encouraging children to reach their goals
- Employee badminton sessions

The Town Hall is becoming increasingly popular for wedding ceremonies. A total of 27 ceremonies were held at the Town Hall in 2018. Bookings for future years are also being taken, to date 29 ceremonies have been booked for 2019 and one for 2020.

The results from the 2017 Quality of Life survey showed that 41% of residents were satisfied with the Museums and Public Halls and the council run theatres and concert halls. The Council hopes to increase this level of satisfaction by working with partners to offer a range of events and facilities at public halls attracting a diverse range of residents.

Young People/ projects

In summer 2018 the Council worked with National Citizens Service (NCS) to provide local government workshops to young people.

These workshops were tailored to teach young people about the role of their local councilor, encourage young people to vote and to teach them of the different roles and responsibilities of each tier of local government.

The council worked with groups of young people between the ages of 16-18 from across South Lakeland, Barrow and Lancaster. These workshops encouraged them to engage with national aspects and local democracy including an overview of the political parties, the impact of the media and getting them to identify their priorities for the local area.

The Council will begin to work towards the NCS programme for 2019 to continue to support young people and encourage them to participate in the democratic process.

Heritage and Events/ Heritage Listed buildings and built environment

A formal agreement for the Burton in Kendal Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCA) has now been confirmed following the submission of a detailed Delivery Plan. The delivery plan identifies the how almost £500k worth of works will be undertaken over the three year life of the programme. Historic England's £120k funding contribution will be matched with £150k from SLDC and a further £15k from Burton in Kendal Parish Council. The scheme is due to commence in March 2019 with a £100k public realm enhancement of The Square to be implemented in autumn 2019.

SLDC has also recently awarded £4k of funding to the Cartmel Village Society to enable them to complete a conservation area management plan for the Carmel Conservation Area.

Leisure and Recreation

The Council has had another successful year in partnership working with our leisure providers GLL to increase opportunities for residents to access local leisure facilities in Kendal, Ulverson and Windermere.

In the 2017 Quality of Life Survey results, 34% of residents reported that they were satisfied with the sports and leisure facilities available. The Council has been working closely with GLL to encourage more residents to use the facilities available and make improvements.

Kendal Leisure Centre held a healthier, happier Sunday fun day event in November 2018 to increase access to services to residents. This event brought together community groups,

statutory and voluntary organisations to promote a variety of health and wellbeing topics. The event was well attended.

Following approval from Cabinet in September 2018, further funding was agreed to progress the proposals for a new Leisure Centre at Ulverston. This funding will support the investigation of financing options and finalise the designs of the ambitious project. If these further detailed assessments confirm the feasibility of the project it is hoped to replace the existing ageing facilities at Priory Road in Ulverston with a new £9 million leisure complex.

Each designated bathing water locations in South Lakeland have been rated excellent by government inspectors for the fifth consecutive year.

This year the Council has again contributed to the Swim Safe campaign. This is a national campaign offers free outdoor swimming for children aged between 7-14, to ensure children understand the important water safety messages.

Licensing and Gambling

Throughout 2018/19 the Council has been working closely with Cumbria Constabulary to develop the multi-agency hub.

Following approval at Licensing Regulatory Committee on 5 November the Council introduced the new Animal Licensing Regime which changed the way in which animal boarding establishments, dog breeding establishing, pet shops and riding establishments are licensed. This new regime will require animal premises to be carried out by a qualified inspector, and a review of current licenses held which will enhance the protection of the animal's welfare.

In November 2018 the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy was reviewed in line with national changes to the DVSA driving standard test, changes to taxi ranks (as introduced by CCC) and changes to mandatory training of drivers on safeguarding of vulnerable individuals.

In summer 2018 a review of the Gambling Policy was undertaken following a consultation with key stakeholders. The revised policy has led to the enforcement and licensing of gambling being conducted in a fair and balanced way which is beneficial to businesses and communities.