

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE, AND YOUNG PEOPLE**COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT****PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN****DATE: 31st January 2013****Darwen Library building work**

Some exterior and interior remedial work is planned for February 2013. This will include the repair and possible replacement of some windows in the atrium area of the library. Disruption to services will be kept to a minimum.

BSF Community Use

All four BSF schools are now on board for delivery of community use activities; Witton Park High School joined Pleckgate High School and Darwen Vale High School with the start of their offer on 14th January. Central Blackburn High School with Crosshill will commence on 4th February.

Co-ordination of the Stop Smoking Service

In collaboration with Public Health, Leisure, Health and Wellbeing will host the Stop Smoking Service manager and programme support posts from January 2013. The added value of integrating healthy lifestyle and wellbeing services as part of the Council's Culture, Leisure, Sport and Young People department has been recognised and evidenced through other successful health and wellbeing partnership initiatives including re:refresh, Health Trainers and the Healthy Communities Partnership.

Culture & Entertainment King George's Hall & Darwen Library Theatre

The last 2 months have been busy particularly with the end of the Comedy Festival and the Christmas programme. The Hairy Bikers show went well, as did Jimmy Carr and Lancashire Hotpots. Christmas lunches grew although the Christmas party nights were down slightly. The Blackburn Bands Party Night was revived and did well on 21st December. The Pantomime at Darwen did better than last year but Mother Goose at King Georges Hall sold less public seats, but schools and groups were up. Income continues to do much better than last year with parts of the business such as Blakeys growing by 30% with more events and encouraging more pre-concert meals.

Young Peoples Services

The service is continuing to see an increase in attendance over previous years across all areas of the service. Targeted Youth Support is continuing to deliver quality engagement programmes to young people who are deemed at risk. Over the past six months this part of the service has experienced increased demands through its referral processes and is now working above the agreed numerical target.

DIG IT – The Youth Music event at Blakeys has become an established programme for young people aged between 13 to 19 years, offering supported showcase opportunities. This has seen an increase in young bands within the area. Attendances at these events have increased to over 125 per event. The Christmas Day and Boxing Day sport programmes at Audley offered an opportunity for Children and Young People to engage in a range of competitive sports, developing both physical wellbeing and self confidence. The Christmas Day event alone attracted over 450 young people. Children with Disabilities schemes has seen attendances increase through the Autumn term culminating in over 40 attendances per day over the holidays. Take Over Day – 14 Young People came together to take over and work along Senior Politicians and Officers from within the Council and Capita.