

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING**

**DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN**

**DATE: 6-11-14**

### **YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES**

#### **Off For Fun – Summer Holiday Programme 2014**

Young People's Services delivered a comprehensive and varied summer programme of activities for children and young people of all abilities, aged 5 – 19 years. The Off for Fun summer programme ran for 5 weeks, from the 28th July – 31st August 2014.

Attendance reports for this period show that Young People's Services engaged with over 1,600 children and young people resulting in 9,704 attendances. In addition to the Off For Fun summer provision, Young People's Services generic projects i.e. youth clubs, continued to operate during the summer holidays and results show an additional 2,513 attendances – a total of 12,217 attendances during the 5 week summer holidays. The 2014 summer figures shows an increase of 854 attendances compared to the same period last year (2013 – 11,363).

#### **Junction 4 Skate Park**

The Skate Park opened on Saturday 20th September with over 500 attendances in the first week. The centre is being well received, with some young people attending 4-5 times per week. A programme of specific sessions is being developed and will be launched soon. Specific sessions for young children 'Mini Mania' (5-7 year olds) and Over 16s have already been introduced in response to feedback from young people. .

Between 20 September and 11th Oct, Junction 4 has attracted 1,415 attendances, 51% from Darwen, 31% from Blackburn and 18% from other towns. The centre has attracted young people from as far away as Stockport, Oldham, Chester, Ellesmere Port, St Helens, Southport and Thatcham (Berkshire). Several professional skaters and BMX riders have heard about Junction4 through word of mouth and are visiting the site. There are currently 45 direct debit members and Facebook 'Likes' have increased from 1,600 to over 2,100 since opening

### **LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICE**

#### **Mythical Maze – 2014 Summer Reading Challenge**

This is a national literacy development scheme aimed at children aged 4 – 12 years, which supports informal learning. Children read six books during the summer holidays and gain small awards as incentives as they progress.

The initiative is a fun way to help children to keep their reading and literacy skills sharp during the long summer break. This year's statistics show an increase in both registrations and completions. 1,579 children enrolled on the scheme during the summer holidays, an increase of 7% on the previous year's figures. Completions rose by 4%.

### **Central Library Exterior Restoration**

Work is nearing completion on the Town Hall Street elevation. The removal of the scaffolding is scheduled for the week beginning 17 November 2014. Stone cutting and masonry restoration is due for completion 5 December 2014 and the main entrance will reopen at this time.

## **LEISURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### **Wellbeing Service**

The new Wellbeing Service was launched in April 2014 to simplify access to a wide range of services that can help local people improve their health and wellbeing (including the wider determinants of health – debt, housing, skills training etc.) Since April there has been close working through the GP Practice networks, supported by the Clinical Commissioning Group as well as connections with the 3rd Sector to update them about the service, raise awareness and provide detailed information on how to refer/signpost into the single point of access.

Information is also more readily being shared with teams within the Council, promoting the Wellbeing Service as an integral part of the commitment to workplace health and wellbeing to improve attendance and support staff to stay healthy.

Currently over 25 different services can be accessed via the wellbeing service, our reporting systems have shown that people having this single point of access to services is working and has improved the number of contacts into the Wellbeing Service with 1,487 contacts in the six months from April to September 2014; this equates to 68% of the annual target set for 2014/15.

### **VENUES: King George's Hall & Darwen Library Theatre**

Both venues have enjoyed sell-out shows over the last 3 months. 1,800 tickets were sold for the Happy Mondays at King George's Hall and Darwen Library Theatre hosted 2 warm up shows for comedian Dave Spikey with a full tour date next year in Blackburn. As a prelude to the classic Soul Night all-nighter, King George's Hall hosted an exclusive screening of "Northern Soul" the film. An audience of 700 enjoyed this new iconic film prior to its countrywide release on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

Advance ticket sales for both this years' Pantomimes (Snow White at King George's Hall and Mother Goose at Darwen Library Theatre) are strong with over 10,000 tickets sold to date.