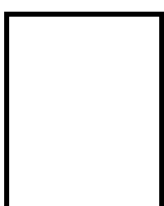
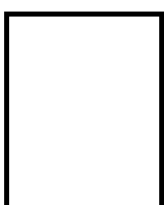
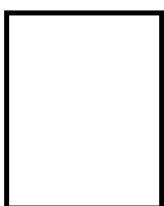
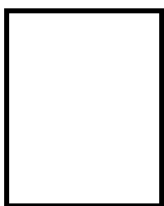
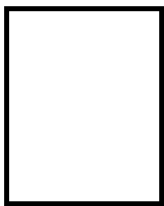


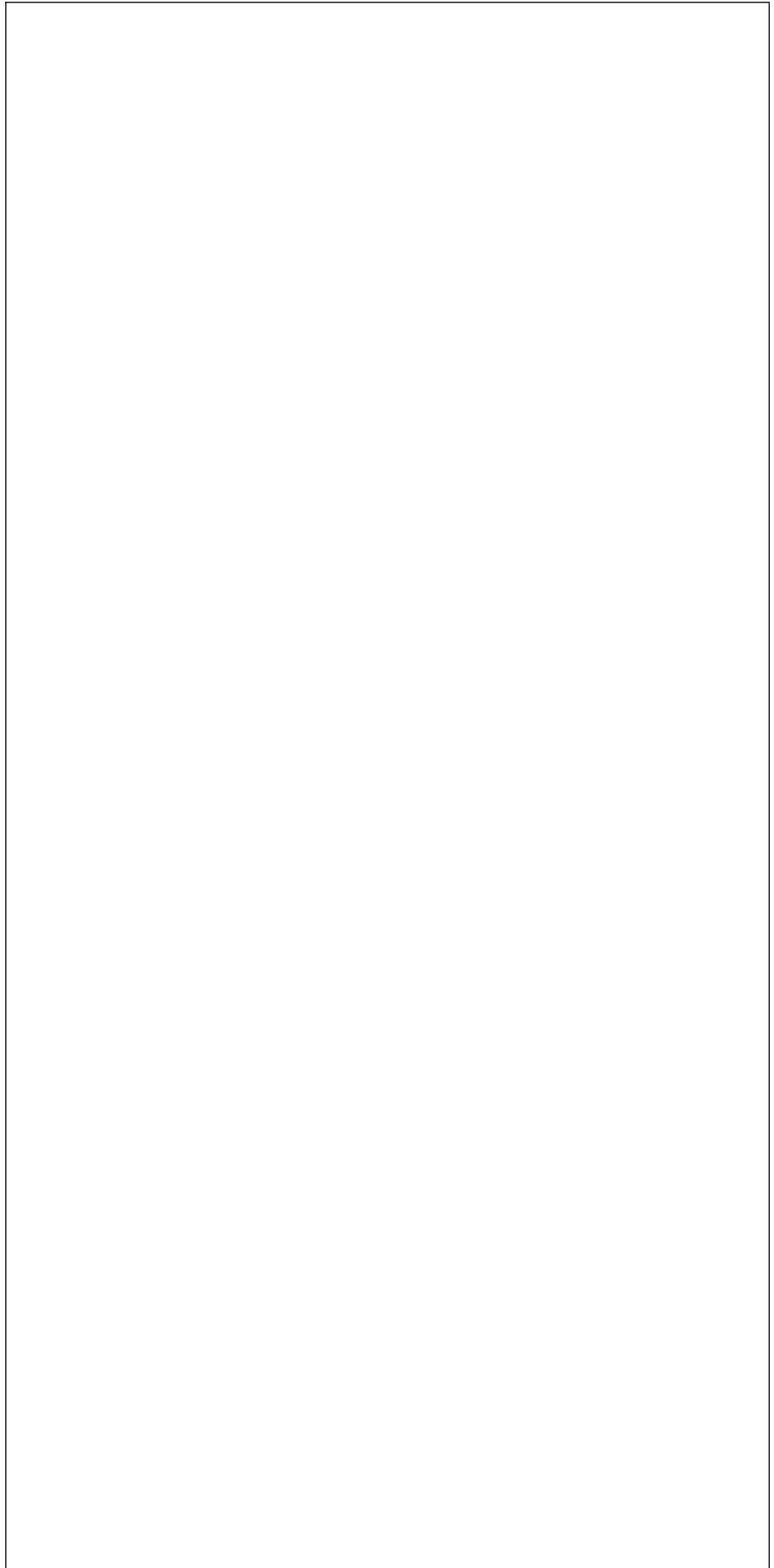
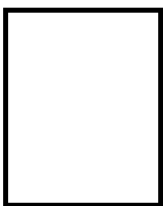
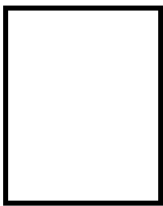
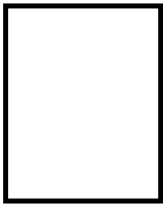
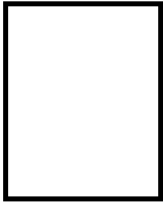
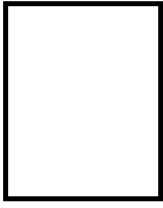
## BRIEFING PAPER

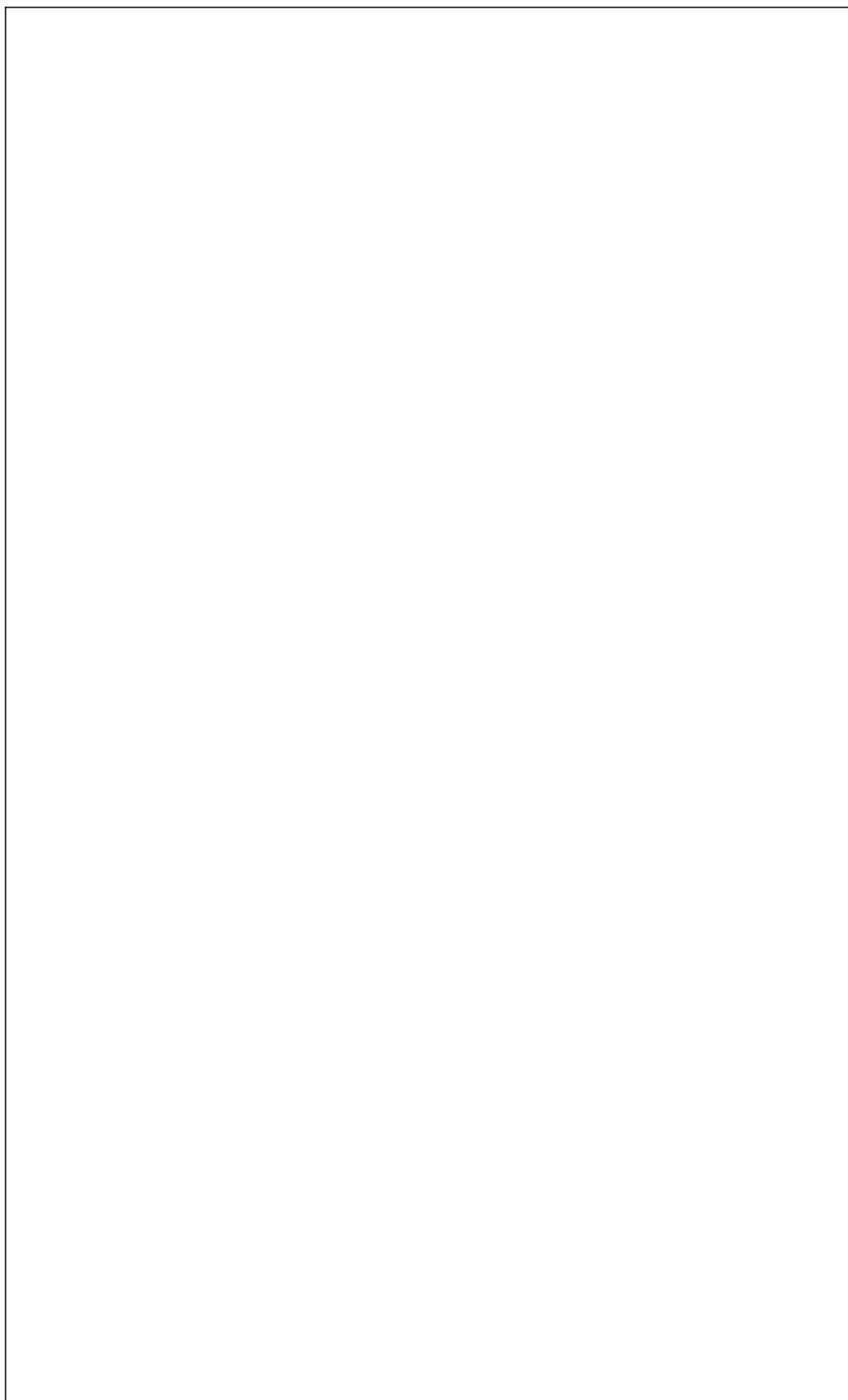
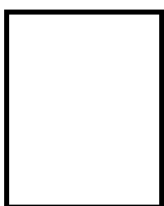
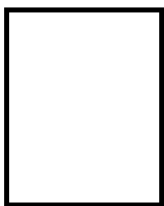
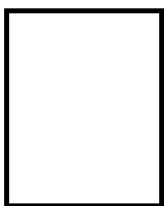
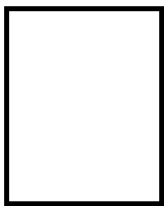
**TO:** Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**FROM:** Executive Member for Culture Leisure, Sport and Young People

**DATE:** 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013







---

**TITLE OF BRIEFING PAPER:** Overview of Culture, Leisure, Sport and Young People Portfolio

---

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to provide the Regenerations and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee with:

- An overview of the portfolio's service areas, and
- Present key achievements over 2012/13 and highlight the potential challenges over the coming twelve months

## 2. CONTEXT

Culture, Leisure, Sport & Young People (CLS&YP) is a cross-cutting portfolio which manages and operates a wide range of buildings and provides unique and diverse services which local residents choose to access. Service areas within the department help to deliver programmes aimed at improving the health and quality of life for those who live, work and visit Blackburn with Darwen.

The Department plays a central role in tourism and regeneration in the borough through its provision of leisure services, heritage services and King George's Hall as well as activities targeted at young people. The Borough's leisure centres, libraries and museum act as outreach mechanisms to promote health, culture, learning, cohesion and social inclusion by being integrated in the heart of communities.

The CLS&YP department recognises the impact and important contribution its service areas have at a micro and macro level, hence following the comprehensive spending review and subsequent downsizing across the department, priorities for 2012/13 and were refocused to include:

- I. Increasing participation in physical activity and leisure opportunities for the benefit of Blackburn with Darwen residents*
- II. To increase engagement and participation in wider cultural opportunities*
- III. To increase access and awareness of positive activities for children and young people in the Borough*
- IV. To promote leisure & cultural services and cultural industries as a major contributor to the economic and regeneration agenda*
- V. To deliver service transformation and sustainable services*

In addition to the initial departmental priorities outlined for 2012/13, the following Corporate Plan priorities have been outline for till 2014/15:

- 1) **Community Voice** - Securing the active participation of local residents in shaping local services; working with volunteers to effectively deliver the borough's leisure and cultural offer

- 2) **Strategic Review of Leisure and Culture Assets** - Linking to the wider corporate asset review with particular reference to Blackburn and Darwen Town Centre Regeneration strategies.
- 3) **Health & Wellbeing** - developing an integrated health and wellbeing service in partnership with other Council departments, the third sector and local health organisations which encourages people to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- 4) **Young People** - Developing a borough wide, integrated offer for children and young people in partnership with other Council departments, the Youth Zone and other 3rd sector youth organisations
- 5) **Culture and Creativity** - Developing a vision for Blackburn with Darwen as part of a creative and cultural Pennine Lancashire. Promoting culture's contribution to social regeneration and community cohesion within the borough

Performance measures and initial targets have been agreed for each corporate plan priority, the targets will be reviewed in line with the budget settlement once the organisation gains a clearer understanding of future downsizing and remodelling of services over the next two years.

## **2.a Cultural Services**

The landscape for Cultural Services has changed dramatically, with major changes, downsizing or closure of national agencies. Locally, the Library and Information Service offers access and interpretation of high quality information, supports learning, provides community contact points and offers a 24/7 digital service. Technology has become a key driver to enable the library service to develop a modern 24/7 culture in an efficient and accessible way. Information provision is an important function of the library service offer and the service is well placed to lead the Council's gateway for its residents' information needs, either face to face or via digital channels. By becoming more customer focussed the service will be better able to contribute to the delivery of the wider Council agenda.

The Borough's Arts services are responsible for Community and Voluntary Arts, Public Arts Development and Creativity Works, also acting as an advice and advocacy service for Arts in Blackburn and Darwen. Arts Services manages and co-ordinates arts activities for and in Blackburn with Darwen. 'Arts' covers a wide range of activity from visual arts to performing arts and includes public art in the town centres as well as community based creativity. Blackburn with Darwen has over seventy Arts Groups and Organisations, and the services work collaboratively with peers across the Pennine Lancashire footprint

The Museum Service preserves, displays and interprets Blackburn with Darwen's cultural and artistic heritage for the whole community. The service has two venues; Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery and Turton Tower. The Museum Service currently offers a number of services such as Permanent exhibitions of local history, classical and contemporary art, crafts, and South Asian culture and art. Temporary exhibitions include work of local community groups, local artists, important art and historic artefacts, as well as educational service to support adult and children's learning.

## **2.b Leisure and Sport services**

The government encourages local authority involvement in sport and physical activity through the government's Legacy Plan for the Olympic and Paralympic Games and a new Physical Activity Plan, through which physical activity participation and sports' contribution to health, community safety, education, economic regeneration, community cohesion and pride in one's locality is acknowledged.

Locally, this is strongly supported through the department's leading involvement in delivering the leisure and sport offer through the boroughs five leisure centres, BRSA (Blackburn Rovers Sports Arena and through community use at four new Building Schools for the Future sites. The established health partnership is further strengthening due the imminent transfer of Public Health function for Blackburn with Darwen to the Council which will provide further opportunities for collaborative working to really tackle the root causes of poor health in people of all ages in Blackburn with Darwen. This integration provides greater opportunity to strengthen universal delivery and to commission sport and physical activity services to add value and meet local health outcomes.

## **2.c Young People Service**

The young people's service leads the 'youth offer' for young people in Blackburn with Darwen. Working with partners, the service recognises the core purpose and positive outcomes of youth work in contributing to the personal and social development of young people through informal education. A key aim of the service is to support young people through positive activities to reach their full potential and make a successful transition into adulthood.

The service directs its resources to working with 5-12 and 13-19 year olds and up to the age of 21 for young people with disabilities. The service is creates safe and welcoming environment for young people to meet, have fun and form positive relationships. Young people from a broad and diverse variety of backgrounds are offered the opportunity to gain skills, confidence and the ability to face the challenges of life and be active citizens within their community.

## **2.d Community Assets and Countryside Services**

Whilst almost all the Community Centres have now been transferred or handed back to 3rd sector organisations, the department still retains the management of Bangor Street Community Centre and the co-ordination of multi-agency work on the wider campus. The Department also provides a support function to the organisations now running centres in terms of funding, CRB, administration of grants and volunteer training.

A countryside service operates the Witton Park Visitor Centre and organises and delivers all the events and activities in the park as well as approving and regulating externally organised events on the showfield. The service also operates Sunnyhurst Woods Visitor Centre and liaises with all the other providers in the Park such as Myerscough College, Self Unlimited, Green Gym and Community Payback.

Witton Outdoor Leisure provision supports all the sporting activity within the Park, principally around the track in liaison with Blackburn Harriers. The team also support and manage the changing facilities at Witton all-weather pavilion, Pleasington pavilion and playing fields, Blacksnape pavilion and playing fields and support activity at both Pleckgate and Everton facilities

### **3. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS / ACHIEVEMENTS**

Within the challenging past twelve months the department has effectively maintained and delivered a core offer of service resulting in positive outcomes and achievements across the portfolio:

- The CLS&YP portfolio was instrumental in developing and supporting the highly successful Olympic Torch Relay event in June. The fantastic event was supported by thousands who lined the route and came into the town centre for the Community activities and the Torch bearer's presentation. The department coordinated volunteers involvement in the organising and delivering of the event (for example: the event was supported by 32 sports club volunteers with 5 clubs delivering demonstrations as part of the borough's celebrations)
- Successful transfer of majority of the community centres to local volunteers and/or community groups. Community members have been trained and supported to manage their local community centre. By the end of the financial year all but one Centre will have been transferred, with a development group established to assist with a smooth transfer of the final centre
- Securing the 3 year contract to operate BSF Community Use; continuing the successful delivery at Pleckgate and opening Darwen Vale High School for community use in October 2012. Witton Park High School Community Use starts on 14th January with Central Blackburn High School commencing early February
- Continued positive impact of re:refresh on health and well-being; targeted groups (women, over 50s, BME communities and those living in the 25% most deprived areas) show increased uptake of local activities compared to 2011/12 figures. 2012/13 has also seen the positive inclusion of wider health programmes under the re:refresh umbrella such as NHS Health Checks adding value to the health trainer and self-care programmes
- Young people service was recognised as the highest performing service nationally by the NYA (National Youth Agency) for its 'reach' of 47% of the 13-19 cohort in Blackburn with Darwen
- Strengthening and flourishing relationship with voluntary sports clubs through the Community Sports Forum (established 12 months ago): 42 new coaches have received further training/education; 2 more local clubs have gained club mark accreditation, with a further 6 being registered as working towards accreditation and 're:refresh 2012' delivered 39 community events; involved 11

sports clubs; 4730 volunteer hours and created an additional 200 new club members

- Development of an improved membership offer for fitness gyms which compliments the re:refresh free leisure, enhances participation and retention and increases revenue generation (for example: Darwen Leisure Centre membership increased by 400 members between September and October)
- Although the service has experienced significant reductions in opening hours, resources and staffing, Blackburn Central Library continues to maintain a status as one of the 50 busiest libraries in the country
- The YPS service has increased in attendance by up to 15%, as a result there is an increase in the number of youth club sessions delivered at key venues (e.g. Knott St, Darwen, Kaleidoscope). Targeted work such as work with vulnerable young people at risk and Children with Disabilities has increase and the service is meeting the increasing demand. Youth Voice activities and BwD Youth Elections continue to remain extremely popular. The service coordinated the recent 'Take Over Day' where many young people were given the opportunity to shadow key Council Officers and Elected Members in their day to day roles. The 'Off For Fun' Holiday programmes have continued to remain extremely popular
- Successful planning and agreement to begin the development of the Witton Park athletics and leisure scheme, which will include an improved outdoor athletics provision, a new indoor athletics facility, a forty five station fitness suite, a multi-purpose room, changing facilities and a covered spectator seating area for people viewing the outdoor athletics.
- The Library and information Service has delivered Adult and Children learning programmes, Family and Health Events in partnership with key stakeholders which have proven to be very successful and contributed to wider council priorities and targets
- The portfolio is supporting a newly established voluntary group to organise the Blackburn Music Festival scheduled for June 2013
- Improvement in the shows and events and an increase in attendances and income have improved the performance of cultural venues in comparison to previous years
- The Museum and the Arts Development Service have both continued to hold a strong reputation nationally and have further secured external funding to develop work locally and lead projects across the region. (For example, the Museum has secured £300K to develop collaborative work with schools to help contribute to the learning of local young people)

#### 4. **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS & CHALLENGES**

Following the comprehensive spending review of 2010/11 and the subsequent corporate downsizing and transformation exercise, all service areas within CLS&YP portfolio were rationalised and experienced remodelling which impacted on the level of service offered to local resident.

- In addition to the former efficiency savings there is an expectation for further savings of up to 20% over the next two years. This will bring a significant challenge and pressure to maintain and deliver effective services to meet the needs and expectations of service users and community members.
- To complete the final asset transfer to the local community and continue to ensure all voluntary groups are effectively managing services and community centres within a climate of diminishing support infrastructure
- The countryside services is challenged to continue to deliver a professionally run offer of facilities as well as to engage with and support the new athletics development, planned to open in early 2014, against a backdrop of finding efficiencies in line with other services within the department.
- Maintaining and increasing income levels within the continuingly tight financial climate to support the identified efficiency savings across leisure as part of a new look borough-wide leisure offer, including BSF Community Use schools
- Culture and Entertainment budget efficiencies are to be delivered primarily through income generation and increased marketing promotion. In addition to the service's identified savings, there is a secondary impact on the service through reduction in spending and efficiency savings across other departments, agencies and partner organisations.
- The health reforms and development of collaborative and commissioning relationships with CCG in order to sustain existing community delivered clinical programmes such as cardiac rehabilitation
- Accommodating new partners/new ways of working at the Blackburn Central Library – subject to Advice Services project outcomes and LIS efficiencies plan, there is a potential to operate advice services from Blackburn Central Library in the future which could impact on service users and effectiveness of the offer of a modern Library and Information Service

**Cllr Damian Talbot**

**Executive Member for Culture Leisure, Sport and Young People**

Contact Officer: Martin Eden

(Director of Culture, Leisure, Sport & Young People)

Ext: (58)5102