

Appendix E

CULTURAL SERVICES

Portfolio Holder Statement Update – Half Year (Oct 2013)

1. What have the measures in the Portfolio Holder Statement been telling you about how things are going in service during 2013/14?

The Events experiment concluded in April 2013 and Executive approved the funding to create a permanent second Events Management Officer in June 2013. During the experiment and in the subsequent months, planning and management of events has become more formal and professional, with an emphasis on appropriate risk management. This has led to significant numbers of positive comments from external organisations and internal contacts working with the team. It is evident that there is a high demand for events across the district, and the Council need to be clear about their role in their successful delivery.

The new structure was approved for the Royal Spa Centre and Town Hall in Jan 2013. The FFF matching process was implemented to match existing staff to the new posts, and the remaining vacant posts were recruited early in 2013. Slight delays in appointing to some of the specialist technical roles, and the departure of the Operations Manager after only 3 months in post, had an impact in delaying the introduction of new procedures across the service, however significant progress has been made and obvious changes have been made in both the procedures and the “culture” of the team working across these two venues. Feedback from hirers and promoters has been encouraging and the development of the staff in the new teams is evident to see. Ticket sales at the Spa Centre are on track showing an increase of £46,000 on the same period last year.

The Art Gallery & Museum restructure was completed in April 2013, and changes made in the establishment in accordance with the FFF process. New procedures have been put in place where required, and new contacts have been established internally and externally to create more joined up thinking for this service. The review included input from the LGA/Arts Council Peer Review team who were also able to suggest new approaches for the longer term strategic development of this service which will be followed up later in the year.

The Sky Blues in the Community project (IMPACT), operating in Warwick West has become established in the first half of the year.

2. Which measures have been of particular interest or concern during the period and what have you learnt about your systems from these measures? Please attach the final version of your SAP customer & operational measures for the year.

Monitoring income at the Spa Centre we are able to see the variation across the range of the programme. The positive message is that overall footfall in the venue continues to rise steadily. Panto sales and Comedy Festival sales have been very encouraging, whereas sales for community/amateur performances, which generate significant income for the venue are showing a downwards trend. The temporary closure of the cinema has impacted on the income for the venue; this will be addressed when the cinema re-opens in early 2014.

The encouraging income figures and levels of expenditure at the leisure centres are as a result of specific actions. The approach taken to address the areas of concern in both income and expenditure has largely been one of good housekeeping and removing inconsistencies. This requires consistent and clear messages to the teams involved, and close accurate monitoring of the results.

Active People 7 results are due to be released in December 2013 which will show how participation in sports and physical recreation compare with our neighbours in Warwickshire, the sub region and nationally.

The Sky Blues IMPACT project can report that to the end of August 2013, 185 sessions had been delivered, offering over 3,500 hours of activities to 522 people aged from 2 – 70yrs.

Attendances at the Art Gallery & Museum are slightly up on the same point last year, which itself was a record high. Individual exhibitions have again attracted good attendances as have the Friday Focus and holiday activities throughout the first half of the year.

3. What have you done to date as a result of learning from these measures?

Royal Spa Centre Autumn/Winter programme was released in June 2013, and distributed using new approaches to target specific segments of the customer base.

Marketing group established within Culture with reps from each area of the service. Early progress has been seen in the exchange of promotional material between the sites so that each site promotes each others services; the Media Team have increased their support in respect of monitoring social media (Twitter accounts) and overseeing press releases from the service. Sports and Leisure managers are working on the development of a new brand to identify their services; this will be essential at the point that the programme review is concluded and needs to be marketed. In the meantime all new printed material will carry the new brand.

4. What has been the impact of what you have done to date?

Early signs are that this new approach of targeted market at the Spa Centre is working both in terms of income, but also in the venues reputation and ability to attract better quality acts.

The first half of the year has been successful in the leisure centres. Of particular note is the performance of the gyms which is approx. £20,000 up on target at this point in the year, while the revised swimming lesson programme is approx. £40,000 up on target. Whilst these figures are very encouraging, work needs to continue through the second half of the year in order to maintain the performance to year end. Progress is being made on controlling expenditure at all the sites, in particular in respect of revising staffing rotas and working practices to control staffing costs. Again, this is "work in progress" and needs to become embedded in the management of the sites in order to report positive year end figures in March 2014.

5. What else do you plan to do as a result of learning from these measures?

Work will continue within the sports and leisure team to drive up income in the second half of the year. A review is underway to address inconsistencies in the way that bookings and classes are charged; the procurement and pricing of resale items is currently being reviewed to increase profit margins, and work is planned to refresh the childrens parties and holiday activity programme. Work will continue on the programme review which includes a fundamental review of the activities, opening times, and principles of charging in the leisure centres. Promotions are being planned for November to target gym memberships and swim promotions for December and March.

Based on experience of the 6 months since the new structure was implemented at the Spa Centre and Town Hall, a further review of the Front of House team is being considered. This will reflect the need for a change to box office opening hours in order to reflect peak demand periods, and also to build in the new posts created through the change of a proportion of casual hours to annualised hours contracts.

6. Of your key projects (as identified in your portfolio holder statement) how many were completed and how many are not? Of those that were not completed please indicate what the revised dates are.

Project	Progress	Original milestones	Revised milestones
Feasibility of alternative delivery options	<p>Initial discussion re the scope and format of the project completed.</p> <p>Vision and principles for sports and leisure service establish – November Executive report</p> <p>Report to Nov Executive to identify funding for the work to be undertaken.</p>	Project start – April 2013	<p>Report – Nov 2013</p> <p>Tender process commence – Jan 2014</p> <p>Further report – April 2014 (provisional date)</p>
Completion of Built Facilities and Playing Pitch audits; production of strategies	<p>Built facilities audit completed May 2013</p> <p>Playing pitch audit – data collection now complete. NAA analysing the data</p> <p>Vision and strategy report to Executive November 2013</p>	Report – July 2013	<p>Consultation with stakeholders – Spring 2014</p> <p>Playing Pitch Strategy report due end November 2013.</p>

Implementation proposals from programme review and associated staff changes	<p>Project Officer left WDC in Feb 2013 which left the project under resourced for some time.</p> <p>Engaged with ASA who have provided support on wet and dryside programme reviews</p> <p>Programme schedule now agreed</p>	<p>Report – Sept 2013</p> <p>Implementation – Jan 2014</p>	<p>Consultation Spring 2014.</p> <p>Staff recruitment and training autumn/winter 2014.</p> <p>Implementation January 2015</p>
Outcomes of Art service review	<p>Review completed and reported – May 2013</p> <p>New team structure in place – summer 2013</p>	<p>Implementation – October 2013</p>	N/A
Feasibility of working with Rugby AG&M	<p>LSAG&M benchmarked Rugby AG&M as part of the LSAG&M FFF review; both are undertaking reviews of through the Arts Council funded Making Space project to facilitate more sharing of collections and expertise.</p> <p>WDC and Rugby BC have both been approached by WCC regarding the scope for county-wide museums partnership working and are open to further discussions</p>	<p>Project start – April 2013</p> <p>AG&M Making Space project report to Arts Council 19th November 2013</p>	Jeff

Implement new arrangements for delivery of events in the district	<p>Experiment completed.</p> <p>New post added to establishment June 2013</p> <p>New ways of working established</p>	<p>Report – May 2013</p> <p>Implementation – June 2013</p>	N/A
Bowls England – Nationals and office relocation	<p>HQ Relocation started May 2013; completed Sept 2013</p> <p>Work ongoing through summer to deliver project including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Car parking - pavilion works - caravans - irrigation - tourism & Economic Dev impacts <p>Ongoing work with Friends of Victoria Park/local residents</p>	<p>Implementation – April 2013</p>	<p>Update report to Executive – Nov 2013 (pavilion works and car parking)</p>
Tender for provision of corporate catering services (Town Hall and other venues)	<p>Tender documents produced and tender process live (Sept 2013)</p> <p>Award for tenders due November 2013</p>	<p>Project start – April 2013</p> <p>Implementation – Sept 2013</p>	

Corporate marketing project – consider options	Project scope amended to focus on Cultural Services – priority to get actions happening to underpin income levels. Group established and actions agreed; monthly meetings	Project start – April 2013 Implementation – Sept 2013	
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7. Does your Service Area Plan/Portfolio Holder Statement need to be amended? If so, please describe the changes.

Ongoing work with Bowls England re the delivery of the extended Nationals from 2014. This project has developed in the first 6 months of the year and has taken up significantly greater officer resources than originally anticipated. This has impacted on other work within the sports and leisure area of the team resulting in timescales for other work being slipped as described above.