

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

<b>Date</b>	<b>2 APRIL 2012</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>PROGRESS IN DELIVERING THE LOCALISM CORPORATE OBJECTIVES 2011-12</b>

**1. PURPOSE/SUMMARY**

This report sets out the Council’s progress in delivering the Localism corporate objectives 2011-12.

**2. KEY ISSUES**

- Particular successes are:
  - 112 families in Fenland have been prevented from becoming homeless
  - 110 homes have received Disabled Facilities Grants, enabling residents to continue to live independently in their own homes
  - The Community House in Wisbech has engaged with over 500 people from the Waterlees Ward
  - Over 300 older people have attended Golden Age events, which identified about £10k in benefits that the residents did not realise they were entitled to
  - Improvements to the Manor Leisure Centre have resulted in increased visits and income
  - An increase in attendance and income for swimming lessons at Fenland’s leisure centres
  - A group of young people have gained a level 1 Sports Leaders UK Award as part of the Respect project
  - ‘Democracy Day’ arranged by the Youth District Council, gave 45 secondary students the opportunity to engage with local decision makers

**3. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Panel consider the progress made by the Council in delivering the Localism corporate objective.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference No.</b> (if applicable)	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Steve Garratt, Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Whittlesey Affairs Cllr Ralph Butcher, Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing & Rural Affairs
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<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	Corporate Plan 2011-2014

# **Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

**2 April 2012**

## **Progress of Localism Corporate Priority**

**April 2011 – February 2012**

## **L1 Supporting Vulnerable Members of the Community**

### **Process benefit applications quickly to ensure residents can access financial aid**

#### **Support residents in claiming the benefits they are entitled to**

#### **Respond to changing government policy regarding the processing of benefits applications**

##### **Benefits**

With the current economic climate, the Council is continuing to see more customers seeking help in applying for benefits, with a 20% increase in 2011-12 at an average of 84 each week, compared with 2010-11. At the same time, the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) has introduced a new data transfer system that allows changes in state benefits to be reported to us electronically, with over 50 changes now being advised each day.

Meeting targets of 17 days for assessing new claims for benefit and 10 days for changes to benefit have been challenging over the last financial year in light of the above considerations. However, the continued commitment and determination of the team has meant that despite these challenges, new claims are now being assessed in an average of 20 days and changes in an average of 11 days.

Recent performance data from the DWP collated from all Councils nationally shows that the Council remains high performing despite the current climate. National average performance for new claims is 24 days whilst that for changes in benefits is 11 days.

Technology is now also being used to make the process of applying for benefit more informative. The on-line benefits calculator allows customers to see what benefit they may be entitled to and then apply on-line as part of the same process. Help for customers is also available face to face and over the phone to help provide a number of access channels to benefits.

### **Deliver the Homelessness Strategy and our statutory Housing Duties**

#### **Homelessness prevention**

Between 1 April 2011 and 29 February 2012, the Council accepted a duty to re-house 69 families. Of these, 76% of applicants received a decision about their situation within 33 working days. During the same period, the Council prevented 112 families from becoming homeless by a variety of prevention techniques (including mediation, utilising deposits to access the private rented sector for families and single people) enabling families to remain in their own homes and saving valuable resources.

## **Deposits**

The Council is working on a new homelessness prevention project to help single people who are under 35 into affordable private rented accommodation by assisting them with a deposit. This initiative will help those who will be affected by the changes in Local Housing Allowance which came into effect in January 2012 and will assist individuals to access homes that meet the decent homes standard. Since the project started in January 2012, 5 people have been assisted with the deposit scheme to gain accommodation. The scheme is funded through homelessness prevention grant from Central Government

## **Rough Sleepers**

The Council has a statutory responsibility to undertake an annual survey to identify the number of people sleeping rough on a specific date in Fenland.

Our estimate for this year is that an average of 7 people are sleeping rough each night. The Octavia View and Migrant Night Shelter projects in Fenland provide assistance to rough sleepers and encourage them to find accommodation.

Fenland has been successful as part of a broad sub-regional application for funding to provide an outreach worker for a year. Working in partnership with the Council, the Police and UK Borders Agency, the role will help to signpost rough sleepers to local hostels, to return to their country of origin or to re-connect to other areas where they have a local link.

## **Migrant Night Shelter**

The Council has recently supported a successful bid with The Ferry Project under the Homelessness Transition Fund to enable the night shelter in Wisbech to continue its valuable work until October 2013. Under the new funding arrangement commencing in March 2012, the night shelter will be available for both the indigenous and migrant single homeless people, along with a support provision with an emphasis on volunteering, training and work.

Since opening in January 2011, the night shelter has provided an accumulated 2,462 nights of accommodation. 72 clients have found employment and 25 have engaged in education courses as a result of the support service provided at the shelter.

## **Octavia View Performance**

Performance at Octavia View (run by The Ferry Project) continues to go from strength to strength. Since opening in June 2010 there have been 150 single homeless people positively moved on to independent living; over 160 have undertaken further education courses, volunteering placements or full time employment.

The café and shop are open and an osteopath business is run from the premises.

### **Work with other agencies to promote new ways of working through the Inequalities Charter**

#### **Credit Union**

The need for a Credit Union was highlighted in the development of the Council's Housing Strategy and the need has been reinforced recently from activity by a national illegal money lending enforcement team tackling illegal money lenders in the Wisbech area.

Work is underway to establish potential options for enabling the provision of a credit union in Fenland.

#### **Private Rented Accommodation**

The Council has been successful as part of a county-wide bid in securing additional funding to develop Home-Link. This is a system that manages the housing register and advertises social rented properties for let. The £40k funding will enable enhancements to the system, including implementing a private rented sector module to encourage private sector landlords to advertise properties. These landlords will need to meet an approved standard of service to tenants and property condition, giving greater choice to Fenland residents looking for a home.

#### **New Private Sector Renewal Policy – Improved Conditions for Vulnerable Residents Living in Private Sector Accommodation**

The Council approved and published its revised Private Sector Renewal (PSR) policy earlier in this current financial year.

The new policy includes retention of a minor works grant to assist vulnerable households where urgent works are required to resolve health and safety hazards. 15 homeowners have been assisted under this scheme in the year to date.

In cases requiring major works, there is now an option under the policy for residents to be assisted via the Houseproud scheme. The scheme is operated by the Home Improvement Trust (HIT), a Government-approved organisation facilitating various types of assistance from Financial Services Authority (FSA) compliant lenders, including equity release with a guarantee of no repossession in the lifetime of the client.

## **Improving Housing Conditions for Vulnerable Residents Living in Private Sector Accommodation**

- A total of 163 homes have now been improved through the £1.1 million inward investment scheme secured in 2009/10. 'The merged works scheme' has enabled vulnerable private sector residents living on Roddons estates the benefit of the Roddons property improvements secured through stock transfer to bring their homes up to the Government minimum housing standard. The scheme is now completed and the only actions outstanding are the reporting and evaluation of the project, which are due to be completed by the end of the year.
- Work continues to install external wall insulation on solid wall properties occupied by low income and vulnerable residents. Fenland District Council has acted as the lead agency in this project and, in partnership with the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk (BCKL&WN), secured £1.12 million investment across both district areas from 2009/10. The scheme is now progressing to completion at the end of the year. 24 Fenland households will have benefited or are about to benefit from the scheme, making their homes warmer and more energy efficient. In conjunction with this scheme, 6 households will have received assistance from Fenland District Council with other works necessary to meet the decent homes standard.

## **Helping Residents who have Problems with their Private Rented Homes**

Since April 2011, the Council has received 158 private sector house condition complaints from tenants, resulting in requests for advice, guidance and inspection of housing conditions. Many of these requests relate to poorly maintained houses occupied by the most vulnerable tenants in our society. Interventions to date have resulted in both formal and informal action by the Council to alleviate these conditions and reduce the hazards to health of the occupants.

The Council's partnership with Roddons Housing Association has resulted in several requests for assessments for statutory overcrowding. These relating to families currently housed in unsuitably sized privately rented accommodation. Interventions have facilitated these families to move to more suitable and spacious homes and enabled the privately rented properties to be made available for letting once more.

## **Proactive Houses in Multiple Occupation Partnership Work with the Fire Service**

The Council continues to work in partnership with the Fire Service and other partners to proactively tackle safety issues amongst Fenland's Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). There are an estimated 600 HMOs in Fenland, of which 13 are mandatory licensed in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Council has agreed to enhance its joint working approach and service to the community by sharing intelligence on unauthorised converted properties, taking a joint approach to prevention and share expertise relating to hazards found during routine inspections by either service. A raft of information has also been provided for both landlords and tenants on the Council's website to enable customers to be fully informed about their rights and responsibilities.

A range of enforcement actions have been taken to secure improvements or closure of properties where more serious hazards have been encountered.

## **OTHER**

### **Home Adaptations for Vulnerable Residents (Disabled Facilities Grants)**

A total of 110 homes will have received adaptations within the current financial year, enabling residents with disabilities to continue to live independently in their own homes. Works typically involve provision of level access showers, access improvements and stair lift installations making a positive impact on increasing the quality of life for vulnerable people in Fenland.

## **L2 Promoting Cohesion throughout Fenland**

### **Deliver the Fenland Community Cohesion Strategy through the Diverse Communities Forum**

#### **Diverse Communities Forum**

The Equality Act 2010 puts the Council under a statutory duty to positively promote good community relations, challenge unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. Part of the Council's strategy in achieving these aims is to work in partnership with the local public services, housing associations and the voluntary and community sector.

The Fenland Diverse Communities Forum has been established in part to meet these aims, but also for the community to advise public services on how best to involve and consult with the wider community, identify problems that affect people's quality of life and work together to find solutions.

The Forum consists of a core group which both develops and delivers the District Wide Community Cohesion Action Plan and Wider Group of service users and providers which both contribute to delivering the plan and receive the services:

The Forum is currently updating a district wide action plan which looks to address the key issues identified.



## **Deliver services in the areas of greatest need**

### **Overall Engagement Levels at Community House**

The Community House is located in the Waterlees Ward of Wisbech. The purpose is to provide a community hub for the community to receive advice and signposting to services and to support building capacity in the community. During 2011/12 so far, there has been 1,233 contacts / interventions by the Community House and its team. This has equated to 527 different people, compared to a target of 450.

The Community House services have predominantly been accessed by White British customers. However, during the year people from Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, Portugal and China have also been engaged with between 1 October and 31 December 2011.

Over the past year, 91% considered the activities by the Community House to be very good or individuals were very satisfied with provision.

### **New Services at Community House**

Throughout the year the Council has worked with partner organisations to encourage the delivery of new services at the Community House, these new services have included:

- CAB debt advice
- Big Energy Week
- Norfolk & Waveney Enterprise Services – Business Start Up sessions
- Cambridgeshire County Council Locality Team Drop In
- Drinksense x 2 programmes (Worksense and Engage)

These services have provided essential support to residents of the area

Over the past year the Council has been visiting residents in the Waterlees, Clarkson and Staithe wards to find out what kind of opportunities they would like to see take place at the House. The team has so far visited 437 homes, of which 194 forms have been completed. Findings so far relate to a particular interest in family activities, activities for young people and children and development of ICT Skills.

Through this process, specific information of issues relating to the community has been gathered, such as:

- Anti social behaviour / street drinking
- Street lighting
- Volunteering opportunities

## **Volunteering at Community House**

Volunteering continues to be encouraged at the Community House and throughout the year the House has seen nearly 20 volunteers.

Tasks have included:

- Door to door visits with the Menu of Opportunity
- Assistance with events (eg National Play Day, Football Cohesion Day)
- Fund raising (Bright Sparks)
- Community led events (Halloween Garden Party where more than 80 people attended).

## **Some examples of community events held in North Wisbech:**

- **Waterlees Football Community Cohesion Event - August 2011**

A Football Cohesion Event was jointly arranged by Roddons and FDC (together with a range of other partner organisations and community groups), based around five-a-side football tournament and skills session for 12 -16 year olds.

The idea of the event was to bring together people from different backgrounds and ages. Some of the teams comprised of young people originating from Eastern Europe, other parts of Wisbech and the Waterlees community itself.

Over 30 people took part in the football event, with approximately 70 additional people attending.

- **Cherry Road Fire Impact Day – October 2011**

This multi agency event was held with the aim to reduce instances of arson within the Waterlees area, highlighted as being a problem by Fire Service. It was also an opportunity to engage with the local community, build awareness and identify any interest in volunteering. Community House was a focal point in its planning and delivery.

36 people were engaged with, offering home fire safety advice and a clean up also took place to reduce further risk of fire. CrimeBUster acted as the central information hub for the whole event.

15 residents volunteered for involvement in future community activities.

## **North Wisbech Learning Community Family Fun Day**

A Family Learning Event was held in October, with the purpose of providing activities for families to participate in. A total of 120 people attended the event with 100% positive feedback from those that responded. A wide range of families took part in the event from many different nationalities. A total of 12 health

checks were conducted during the course of the day, which led to 2 referrals to GPs.

### **Council Investment to Support Rural Communities**

The following schemes have been awarded Capital Grants from the Council's Rural Capital Grants programme:

- Benwick Village Hall Committee (which were awarded £100,000) from the Rural Capital Grants scheme has to date drawn down £45,000 of their total funding allocation. The project is progressing well and will complete within the original timescales.
- The Parson Drove "Safer Routes to School project" was awarded £15,000. It is nearing completion with works estimated to complete in April.
- The Eastrea Village Hall Project has started to develop. They were awarded £50,000 towards their new village hall and contractors have now installed a site building on the land in readiness for the works to be carried out.
- Christchurch Parish Council was awarded £100,000 for a new village hall but experienced difficulties in a shortfall in match funding therefore they have been unable to progress the project further. Further updates are awaited.
- Parkfield Sports and social club, Wimblington were awarded £35,000 towards a storage area and a new sewerage system. The project is now completed and an end of project compliance meeting has taken place.
- Parson Drove Amenities group skate park project were awarded £18,655 towards new equipment. The project is now completed and an end of project compliance meeting has taken place.
- Newton was awarded £26,808 for new play equipment on their playing fields. The project has now completed and an end of project compliance meeting has taken place.

The following Rural Capital Grant Applications have been received and the Council is working with the communities concerned to provide all the information required to enable Cabinet to consider the application:

- Doddington Parish Council for a new skate park,
- Manea for a new pavilion
- Tydd St Giles for new play equipment.
- FACT for a new vehicle

### **Timebanking**

Fenland District Council has been awarded £9,000 from Improvement East for funding towards a Timebank project in the March East ward. The year long project (starting in March) will work on an intergenerational aspect, bringing older and younger people together to give their skills on a voluntary basis. It is aimed to enlist the help of 40 volunteers within the ward and a Service Level

Agreement is currently being developed with the Volunteer Centre to help coordinate the project.

### **Provide information and guidance to new arrivals to raise their awareness of their rights and responsibilities**

#### **New Arrivals Pack**

The Council, in consultation with partner organisations, has produced a New Arrivals Pack, which has been used to update the 'Useful Information for New Arrivals' document. The amount of information available has been expanded and the format changed to useful hand outs which can be given to customers. This ensures information can be updated in a more cost effective manner, and better inform migrants of their rights and responsibilities

### **L3 Supporting our Ageing Population**

#### **Deliver a programme of Golden Age events, including Golden Age Fairs and Fenland @ your service shop events**

##### **Golden Age Events**

Golden Age events have continued to be popular this year, with over 300 older people attending and receiving around £10k in benefits that the residents themselves did not realise they were entitled to.

##### **Golden Age Website**

The Council is currently receiving between 450-500 hits a month on the Golden Age website. This valuable resource offers advice and assistance to older people by signposting key contacts to over 46 partner organisations. Support includes enabling older people to remain independent and identify any unclaimed benefits to help increase their quality of life.

#### **Plan our services to meet the changing needs of an ageing population**

##### **Ageing Well**

Fenland delivered an Ageing Well workshop in February, supported by the County Council and Local Government Association.

The workshop – which was very successful – focused around a series of events taking place across Cambridgeshire, enabling open conversations about health and wellbeing to take place. The outcome of the events will inform the Health and Wellbeing Board's county wide strategy. The final event took place in Cambridge on 16 March 2012.

## **Community Alarms**

The Council has been successful in securing funding as part of a county wide bid to purchase community alarms. The alarms are being offered to individuals leaving hospital and to those needing assistive technology to prevent issues such as falls. It is hoped that this will enhance independent living and assist with independence through rehabilitation. 60 alarms are available for the Fenland area, over half of which have already been distributed.

## **Healthy Homes Project**

The Healthy Homes project is delivered by Age UK Cambridgeshire and partner funded by Fenland District Council, Cambridgeshire Adult Social Care and NHS Cambridgeshire.

The project provides a comprehensive service for older people at risk of falls, covering medication checks, minor repairs, aids and adaptations and home security measures. Also referrals are made to other agencies as needed to enable clients to live safely and independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

A total of 203 home visits and assessments have been made during the year to date. 96 residents have been assisted with minor works including repairs to pathways, gutters, door locks, and minor electrical and plumbing tasks.

All clients using the service receive an information pack which is regularly updated. Client satisfaction with the service is high, with 95% of clients rating improvement to their daily lives as 'better' or 'much better' as a result of the assistance given.

## **Handyman Service**

The Fenland Handyman service (which is currently delivered by the Council's partner care and repair agency who are part of the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk), recently received national recognition by way of a commendation in the National Home Improvement Agency of the Year Awards 2011.

Scope of works carried out by this service include home safety and security, minor electrical and plumbing works, home energy efficiency measures, general minor repairs and odd jobs.

To date this year, the service has responded to 390 enquiries, carried out a total of 214 jobs, made 30 referrals to other services and made 87 visits where substantial advice was given. The introduction of charges for the service had initially resulted in a number of rejections, though was subsequently regained following further marketing and publicity via an article in the Cambridgeshire Times.

The service continues to be highly rated by users, with 98.4% of those responding to customer surveys to date rating the service as excellent.

### **British Heart Foundation – Hearty Lives Project**

The Council is working together with the British Heart Foundation to support older people maintaining and improving their health. The Council's Lifestyle Coach is working in community locations screening elderly people's health and giving advice on remaining active. More than 900 lifestyle assessments have been completed so far this year.

Working together with other agencies, the Lifestyle Coach is working towards community members running drop-in sessions in community locations themselves.

### **Maintaining Physical Activity levels in older people**

#### Tea Dances

Working together with the County Sports Partnership and Age UK, the Council has been hosting Tea Dances on a fortnightly basis. These sessions prove popular with older residents, keep people active and are a social event.

#### Breathe Easy Sessions

Following comprehensive training, the Council has been running Breathe Easy sessions for people who have suffered from heart or stroke problems in the past. These classes ensure that exercise levels are appropriate and there is a high level of care. Attending classes ensures that participants are able to maintain their lifestyle and their physical wellbeing.

#### Long Term Conditions Sessions

The Council runs classes specifically for older people with long term conditions (eg arthritis, Parkinsons Disease, mental health issues, etc). These sessions are suitable for people who can undertake chair based exercise and instructors have been trained by NHS staff.

#### Leisure Centre Sessions

The leisure centres have seen more than 75,000 attendances by people aged over 60 years in the past year. Activities range from swimming to spinning, short mat bowls to badminton. All physical exercise is aiding elderly people maintain their health as well as create and maintain social connections.

### **Continue to support community transport services**

#### **Doddington Hospital Dial a Ride Pilot Bus Service**

There are currently a significant number of transport projects being progressed in Fenland, with the Core Strategy transport issues being the main priority. Work is however continuing to progress to deliver the Doddington Hospital dial a ride

transport project. This includes some technical issues around how the project will work, along with developing a 12 month press and publicity plan. It is expected that this project will be launched in the next few months.

### **Community Grants Update**

The Council has completed the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for the organisations awarded £5,000 or more. The last SLA review from Care Network has shown the added value of the funding as follows:

- Care Network has provided regular ongoing support to schemes as requested, including recruiting for new volunteers. They are exploring the possibility of re-vamping the March scheme. They have extended the coverage of the scheme in March and are exploring the possibility of separating it from the Doddington and Benwick scheme and have held meetings at all three medical practices in the town.
- At present there are 12 car schemes, providing coverage for all Fenland villages and the four market towns.
- Fenland has greater coverage by car schemes than other districts in the county and Care Network facilitates training to promote best practice methodology to inform and update volunteers.
- The Development Officer has visited and trained new volunteers for Doddington & Benwick, March, Manea, Parson Drove Surgery, Chatteris and Whittlesey.
- In September, Care Network ran a community car scheme workshop in Whittlesey, open to all schemes in Fenland, which was attended by 18 volunteers. The workshop included information for new and existing volunteer drivers looking at legislation, risk analysis, confidence, insurances etc. There are additional plans to run a similar course in the future due to the success of the workshop.

## **L4 Promote Healthy Lifestyles**

### **Encourage more people in the community to be more active, more often through our leisure facilities**

#### **Improvements to the Manor Leisure Centre**

Major works have been completed at the Manor Leisure Centre including:

- Creation of a soft play area
  - More than 15,000 visitors so far and nearly £32,000 income across the service.
- Creation of a dance studio and reception area
  - Class attendance across the service is up 15% to 58,500 at the end of February 2012.
- Creation of seating/viewing gallery to poolside

- This improvement has enabled the centre to attract the City of Peterborough Swimming Club to hire the facility on a regular basis.
- Creation of a function hall, bar and kitchen
  - The revisions to the hall have supported the fitness class programme and improved conditions for everyone using the facility.
  - The functions business is still in its infancy, but early signs are positive, with several functions having already taken place and another 17 bookings already in place – including several weddings. This business will be developed over the coming year, with word of mouth following successful events being key to achieving the facility's potential.

The Council's capital investment in the leisure centres is improving customer experience and helping to maintain income levels. The investment ensures that a quality, customer focused, modern product is offered and directly improves the range of simultaneous activities available to customers.

### **Chatteris Leisure Centre**

Work is well underway to construct a new leisure facility in Chatteris at the Cromwell school site.

This £1.1 million partnership project, funded by FDC and Chatteris Town Council, will provide a gym and dance studio for the town and is due to open in September 2012.

### **Leisure Centre Customer Usage information highlights** (April 2011 – February 2012)

<b>Highlight</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Comparison to previous year</b>
Leisure centre attendances	715,915 (581,601 at end of December 11 – reported quarterly in performance table)	-6%
Soft Play income	£31,755	-
Fitness class attendances	58,500	+15%
Direct Debit Income	£578,000	-2%
Swimming Lesson income	£249,000	+15%
Casual swimming income	£155,000	+12%
Vending sales	£72,500	-20%
Customer satisfaction	88%	-



### **'Come Back to us' Membership Drive**

A recent project to improve customer retention generated increased income by reducing cancellations of gym membership. This project involved contacting leavers and offering them incentives to renew their gym membership package. Over the course of the project, 163 customers have been contacted with sign-ups expected to generate an additional £2,300 of income.

Following this success, 'Come Back to us' will continue to be used on a rolling basis to generate valuable customer feedback, and increase customer retention and income.

### **Swimming Lesson Enrolments**

Swimming is proving more popular than ever this year, with income and swimming numbers up on previous years. A key aspect of the Council's swimming pool programme is swimming lessons and income from classes is up £33,000 on the past year. Casual swimming has seen income increase by £18,000.

More than 1,600 children have signed up to take part in the swimming lesson programme. This is particularly encouraging considering the economic climate. The Council swimming lesson coordinator has consolidated classes where possible to reduce costs, and focused heavily on waiting lists to get new people into the scheme and increase the Council's income where possible.

Swimming is a key skill for young people, with many parents opting to use the Council's swimming facilities and professional teaching staff to ensure that their children can swim.

### **Leisure Website Redevelopment**

The Council has worked to redevelop and launch the revised leisure centre website. The pages provide customers with easy access to information on activities, promotions and services, as well as online booking and payment options. The ease of payment for activities is crucial in enabling the customer to access the services and the new pages facilitate this.

In addition to revised content and easy access, more information about customers accessing the pages will be available. This information will be helpful when updating pages and adding additional links or promotional banners to the pages.

The new website should play a leading role in maximising income in the leisure centres and encouraging additional footfall in the coming year.

## **Respect Project**

This ten week project delivered diversionary activities (which promote a healthy lifestyle and education) for young people who are associated with anti social behaviour. This project also included a level 1 Sports Leaders UK award.

Anti social behavior has a high profile in Fenland and tackling this issue is a key priority for the Fenland Community Safety Partnership. This project was devised so that young adults between the age of 14-16 who have encountered issues within school or out in the community with the Police had the opportunity to be engaged in positive activities. These activities encouraged team work and resulted in a sense of achievement.

The project was run in conjunction with the Fenland Community Safety Partnership and Living Sport at the Continuum School, Wisbech - a school that works with young people who have been excluded from mainstream education and Pupil Referral Units.

## **Promote healthy lifestyles for Fenland residents**

### **Wisbech Gets Physical - Primary School Project**

The Wisbech Gets Physical primary school project continues to inspire young people to exercise. It is also up-skilling teachers so that they are better able to teach PE in schools. This long running primary school engagement project reaches over 300 pupils every week, providing dedicated professional sports coaching during school time. Teachers are up-skilled to deliver specific sports whilst young people are linked with local clubs enabling activity to take place within the community.

A total of 12 schools have now signed up to take part in the project in 2012, with each school providing £1,000 of funding to support the employment of coaching staff. This has ensured the continued provision of a school's club linked project in the North of the district. The outcome of this project is positive engagement with young people and a consequential increase in the health of young people, with 80% of participants reporting a positive effect on lifestyle.

### **FENDIS Golf and Fun Day 2011**

The Fenland Disability Sports Forum (FENDIS) annually hosts a Golf and Fun day in conjunction with Fenland District Council. This year's fun day took place on 8 July. The day's activities not only included a 9 hole round of golf but also rugby, football, cricket, lifestyle checks, archery and arts and crafts.

On the day, 130 participants and 80 volunteers attended. The event was a great success and enjoyed thoroughly by all.

## **Summer Holiday – Young People’s Activities Campaign**

In partnership with Fenland sports clubs, the Council developed a sports programme for young people during school summer holidays.

Fenland District Council supported local clubs and organisations to deliver a range of activities themselves this summer, ranging from hockey and football, to cricket and tennis. This approach reduces the cost to Fenland of these important diversionary activities and it supports local clubs in attracting new members.

This summer, 840 children passed through the new holiday activity programme, with 37 activity sessions delivered across the district.

## **Promoting Healthy Lifestyles at Community House**

As part of the summer activities at Community House, the Council worked with the Oasis Children's Centre to put on family-orientated events in the Community Garden. The events helped to address the Every Child Matters criteria, focussing on 'be healthy,' 'stay safe' and 'enjoy & achieve' elements. A key challenge is to tackle the higher than average rate of obesity in the area. Advice on healthy eating for both children and adults was available at the event. An additional issue in the area is the number of child admissions to A&E, and so awareness was raised of how to keep safe in the sun.

## **Give It A Go**

The Council provided half term holiday sessions for 8-12 year olds which consisted of four taster sport sessions - football, rugby, swimming and hockey. The aim of the event was to encourage children to participate in club based sport after the event. All of the sessions were led by coaches from those specific sports clubs in the Wisbech area, for example, Wisbech Acorns football club and Wisbech Hockey Club.

A total of 50 children have taken part and many showed an interest in joining the clubs. This type of scheme encourages young people to take up sports; developing grassroots within clubs is essential to maintaining a good voluntary club infrastructure in the area.

## **Work with local GP consortia and others to develop effective commissioning of health services in Fenland**

### **Local Health & Wellbeing Partnership**

To support the emerging Health & Wellbeing network in Cambridgeshire, a refresh has been undertaken of local Health & Wellbeing partnership arrangements.

A new local partnership, incorporating representatives from three local GP Commissioning Groups was formed in March 2012 and will help support the county wellbeing network to achieve more coordinated delivery of services in the Fenland area.

### **Exercise Referrals**

To improve the wellbeing of the local community, the Council offers exercise referrals to clients from local GP surgeries. The referrals are heavily discounted, offering free swimming for three months, discounted gym sessions and a high degree of care and support.

The scheme helps local people improve their health when a trip to the gym or pool is not something that they are comfortable with, or where they have a health condition that requires specialist care. Staff carrying out exercise referrals are specially trained to deal with a variety of conditions, including clients who have heart conditions.

More than 300 clients have been referred to the leisure service this year, realising £10k income. An additional 30 referrals have been made in partnership with the NHS Smoking Cessation team. The majority of clients who have completed the scheme state that their health has improved as a result of the taking part in the programme.

### **Kick Ash - Anti-Smoking Project in Secondary Schools**

The Kick Ash project was launched by NHS Cambridgeshire in Sir Harry Smith Community College, Whittlesey. The scheme encourages peer mentoring to help reduce smoking levels in secondary school children in Cambridgeshire.

The Council is supporting the project by developing a link between the school, children who have quit or refrained from smoking and the gyms at Fenland's leisure centres.

### **British Heart Foundation Health at Work Seminar**

As part of the Council's work with the British Heart Foundation, local businesses were offered free places at a day long seminar, with the aim of encouraging and promoting health within their work place.

Twenty businesses took part and the day was a success. All those present gained valuable information and practical advice to help them improve the health of their workforce. The key message is that investing in the health of your employees is an investment in your business, as healthy employees are more productive and less likely to take time off work than those who are not as healthy.

## **Healthy Heart Classes**

The community in Fenland has significantly worse levels of heart disease and stroke than the rest of the region. In order to improve the local situation, the Council is running Healthy Hearts Class in each of the 3 leisure centres using initial funding from the British Heart Foundation.

These classes are targeted at those customers referred from a health care professional following recovery from a cardiac event, for example heart attack, angina etc.

The aim of these classes is to aid recovery and reduce the risks of a recurrence in the future. The classes have a regular following and the Council is working with local health professions to improve the number of people taking advantage of the expert tuition that the Council provides.

## **L5 Engaging Young People**

### **Maintain our commitment to engaging with young people and raising their awareness of democratic processes, particularly through events like Democracy Day**

#### **Youth District Council**

The Youth District Council (YDC) has met a total of 6 times in 2011/12, with representatives from 5 Fenland secondary schools regularly attending meetings.

During the year the YDC agreed that their campaign for the year would be on 'Dignity and Respect' focusing on bullying, self esteem and ASB. The YDC has progressed this by producing a poster campaign for distribution within schools, supporting activities during Anti Bullying Week and meeting with the secondary school head teachers to discuss a consistent approach to bullying in Fenland.

The YDC supported the Youth Arena initiative, which engaged with over 100 targeted young people and the recent Safety Zones which promoted community safety to primary school children.

The YDC 'Youthroom' website underwent a revamp in 2011/12 following suggestions from the YDC. A large proportion of this work was undertaken by Matthew Halmshaw, a YDC member from Cromwell Community College. Matthew volunteered two weeks of his summer holidays to work on the website.

The YDC organised another successful 'Democracy Day' on 14 October. The event was attended by 45 students from 4 Fenland secondary schools and supported by Councillors and officers. Once again the opportunity for students to engage with local decision makers proved to be an excellent session and enjoyed by students, teachers and Councillors alike.

Over 30 young people from the YDC and other youth organisations from Fenland participated in the YDC's annual trip. This year, the visit included a tour of the House of Commons, as well as observing a sitting of the Lords. The group of young people also had the opportunity to take part in a Q&A session with the MP's office, during which they were able to put across their views and ask a number of important questions. The day ended with a trip to the London Eye and a brief tour of the Olympic site in Stratford.

### **Youth Bus Project**

The YDC has supported this project and were pleased to see the Youth Bus has been used by 11 young people from Manea to go to Sno!Zone at Milton Keynes. This has been followed up by engagement work undertaken in Manea which enabled the Council to find out how the scheme can be better promoted to young people within the village. The Council will be liaising with the Parish Council to improve promotion.

## **Commit to consulting with young people on issues that affect them**

### **Manea Youth Engagement**

To support the development of positive youth activities within Fenland's rural communities, the Council undertook an engagement activity at Manea for young people aged 14+. The event was attended by 18 young people. The Council organised a DJ session and carried out some consultation. The feedback has identified a need for young people to have access to a warm, safe environment in the evenings.

The consultation feedback is currently being collated to pass onto the Parish Council, the young people locality team and other outside agencies to progress.

### **Mobile One Stop Shop**

The Council's Mobile One Stop Shop was taken out to all three Leisure Centres in August to engage with younger people, who are the least represented part of the community in terms of visitors to the "fixed" Fenland @ your service shops in the four market towns. Information and support was offered to 60 young people on the Council's services, as well as information packs from local schools and colleges.

## **Maintain the funding distributed to youth projects via the Youth District Council**

### **Youth District Council Grants**

The YDC continued to allocate funding via their grants scheme during 2011/12 and to date have allocated £7k to local community groups working with young

people. With other bids submitted, it is anticipated that the YDC will have once more met their target of allocating 100% of their funding.

The YDC has also been pleased to update Members on the successes of their grant scheme and reported back throughout the year on the impact their funding made in 2010/11.

Highlights included funding:

- Sarah's Street Dance from March to take part in a regional competition and winning a total of 8 trophies
- Camping equipment for a Girl Guides group to enable members to take part in new activities
- Supporting Chatteris ABA to host their annual boxing gala showcasing young boxing talent
- ICT equipment for Air Cadets to enable them to undertake more qualifications

## **OTHER**

### **Chatteris Friday Night Project**

The Chatteris Friday Night Project is nearing completion. After comments from the young people attending the King Edward Centre, both the Locality Team and Fenland District Council decided to move the venue to Furrowfields car park and place the Teen Machine there for young people to access.

A number of support services have been represented during the sessions, including the Drug and Alcohol Teams, Connexions advisors and Young People's Workers to support the positive development of the most disengaged young people.

With remaining resources, the Council and Cambridgeshire County Council have decided to organise further positive engagement sessions over the summer holidays in 2012/13, with targeted young people in the town. The Council is planning to hold a consultation event on Wenny Road Rec in May to ascertain what the young people would like to see during the holidays. Taster activity sessions are also planned to work with the young people to decide what they want.

### **Community Support to Tackle ASB**

The Council teamed up with the Cambridgeshire County Council Locality Team to help refurbish the skate park in Bath Road, Wisbech. The event attracted over 30 young people who helped to pick up litter, paint the skate ramps and generally refurbish the area. As a result, the young people were also able to discuss their ideas of how to redevelop the area.

The same group were then taken to the Corby indoor skate park to help raise their aspirations and to consider how fund raising could be used to further improve their own local park.

## **L6 Raising Aspirations and Improving Learning Opportunities**

### **Support further and higher education providers to promote a range of learning opportunities for Fenland residents**

#### **Skills Summit**

Work to increase skills levels and improve employability levels has continued to move forward after the Fenland Skills Summit – Enterprise in Education event, held on 13 March.

There was clear energy and enthusiasm in the room at this fully-booked event and a commitment from business representatives to work with local partner organisations to make improvements which will benefit the whole area. The event follows last year's successful Skills Summit, which highlighted a range of common skills issues among young people, businesses, schools and other public bodies, the biggest of which was a lack of basic skills and competencies among young people.

The Fenland Enterprise in Education (FEE) project arose from all the information gathered at last year's Summit. This year delegates heard updates from the FEE project manager and took part in a structured discussion to make sure the project developed in a way that will address local needs, linking local schools with businesses in a meaningful way.

Councillor Chris Seaton, the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for the Economy, welcomed delegates to this year's event. He thanked businesses for their support and input for skills improvement work that is currently going on in Fenland and the importance of skills for the prosperity of the whole area.

#### **Work Placement Programme**

The Council has widened its work placement programme to extend beyond local schools, and placements can be offered to university students, to the long-term unemployed (Seetec) and to individuals with disabilities (via Shaw's Trust, Remploy, etc).

#### **Encouraging Skills Development of Young People through the Arts**

A Young Curators bid was been submitted to The Lottery Fund for £22,000 through Atelier East. The bid was successful and 12 people have been recruited for the project. The aims are to work with hard to reach young people in



Waterlees and March East looking at how the areas have changed since the 1900s and devise a new archive.

### **Work with local school head teachers to assist in improving educational attainment and teacher recruitment**

#### **Raising Aspirations Project**

The Raising Aspirations project (which was originally funded through LPSA money) was set up to help provide an easier transition from primary to secondary school, by supporting 10 and 11 years olds in making positive life choices about their future professions.

Part of the project encompassed a website platform called "Starz". Children are able to log into the site, use video conferencing, website searches and upload their own careers research in a safe environment made just for children. There are a number of job descriptions on the site which children can access in order to look at different types of jobs available locally in addition to land based and factory based roles which have been the traditional roles which families in Wisbech have gone into. The job descriptions are in age appropriate language to explain what sorts of activities each one entails and details what subjects are needed to enable the child to go into that profession.

#### **Careers Advice**

The Council attended a successful careers fair at Cromwell Community College in Chatteris where pupils aged between 12 and 14 years had the opportunity to discuss their career aspirations.

A workshop session enabled the pupils to explore what having a job is like and to discuss their own particular interests with Council officers from HR and Environmental Health.

The pupils enjoyed having the opportunity to think about the variety of careers available to them and to discuss aspirations with their peers.

The Council has been able, at careers fairs like these, to raise the profile of Local Government as an employer, communicating information on qualifications, training and careers pathways to young people in the district.

The Council has also been involved for a number of years with interview skills workshops and presentations with some of the local schools, as well as CV development sessions with hints and tips for the effective completion of application forms.

## **Work with businesses, local schools and Cambridgeshire county Council to ensure a successful Building Schools for the Future programme**

### **College of West Anglia (CWA)**

On 20 October 2011, the Council's Cabinet confirmed the Council's support for £1.5m investment in the CWA campus in Wisbech. This will help to provide a new technology block to enhance the further education offer for the Fenland community.

This 3 way agreement between FDC, CCC and CWA will see a modern multi-million pound facility provide a much needed boost to skill and education development in the area, focusing on engineering, motor vehicle, plumbing, electrical and computer aided design (CAD) courses.

## **Launch an Apprenticeships scheme to enable the Council and local businesses to train the workforce of the future**

### **Apprenticeships**

The Council is currently working in partnership with F1 Training to deliver apprenticeships within the organisation, and since January 2011 has been offering apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships to existing staff, with excellent achievement rates:

- Customer Service
- Business & Administration
- Team Leading
- Management
- Cleansing and support services

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Enrolments</b>
Apprenticeship in C/Service	30 (8 achievements)
Apprenticeship in Cleansing and support services	26 – (23 achievements)
Apprenticeship in Management Resource Management	5
Apprenticeship in Team leading	12 (2 achievements)
Advanced Apprenticeship in Customer service	7
Advanced apprenticeship in Business & Administration	16
Advanced apprenticeship in Management	24 (5 achievements)

The Council is also currently helping to promote opportunities in partnership with F1 Training to deliver apprenticeships out into the local community.

### **Fenland Enterprise in Education**

The Council has developed a project called Fenland Enterprise in Education (FEE) which will bring education establishments and employers together to help prepare young people for the world of work. Over sixty businesses have pledged their support to the project and more are expected to get involved as the project progresses. This project has come about after extensive research and consultation at the Skills Summit 2011 highlighted that local business people would like there to be significantly improved formal relationships between schools and businesses in Fenland. £10,000 of funding has been secured already from the Fenland 14-19 Partnership to fund a part-time post to manage a strategic relationship between schools and participating businesses.

The Fenland Enterprise in Education project website is almost complete and development on a new logo and brand for the project is complete and will soon be launched. Interest from various parts of the UK has been generated through social networks and Fenland is seen as being ahead of the times for this work in facilitating closer working between schools and businesses.

## Performance

PI	Description	Baseline	Target	Year To Date	Variance
2 - Localism					
2.1 Supporting members of our community					
LPI FACS 10	Overall average time taken to process new claims and changes to benefits	11.05 days	12	13.13	-9%
LPI FACS 1	Time taken to process new claims for benefit	19.22 days	17	20.37	-20%
LPI FACS 2	Time taken to process changes to benefit	9.42 days	10	11.43	-14%
2.2 Promoting cohesion throughout Fenland					
LPI TD 23	Number of racial incidents	23	35	7	-78%
LPI TD 24	% of racial incidents which resulted in further action	100%	100%	100%	0%
2.3 Supporting our aging population					
LPI HCS 3	% of attendees satisfied with Golden Age Events	100%	96%	Annual	
2.4 Promote healthy lifestyles					
LPI LS 1	% of people who say they are more active or eat healthier as a result of attending our programmes	80%	80%	73%	-9%
LPI LS 2	Number of customer visits to our leisure centres	N/A	750000	581,601	3%
2.5 Engaging young people					
LPI HCS 4	Annual satisfaction survey of young people involved in YDC activities	100%	80%	Annual	
2.6 Raising aspirations and improving learning opportunities					
LPI ED 1	Apprentice scheme launched successfully at business summit	N/A	100	100%	0%