

Council meeting

30 JULY 2013

Report of the Chief Executive

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES

1 Purpose of report

This report is presented as a monthly update on notable activities that have taken place or are planned and relate to the council's PRIDE objectives.

2 Items of note**2.1 PARTY WEEKEND**

Thousands of people came along to join in the celebrations of this year's party weekend. The carnival on Saturday 6 July was one of the best yet, with more floats and participants and people lining the route through the town centre and along to Croyland Park than ever. Thanks are due to the Carnival Committee for all their hard work to ensure the success of the event. Party in the Park on Sunday 7 July was very well attended, with people enjoying the live music, funfair and many stalls. The council put on craft activities as well as a general councillor surgery, attended by committee chairmen and vice chairmen, throughout the afternoon.

2.2 THE BIG LIFT

A former RAF crewman brought his incredible nation-wide challenge to Wellingborough on Monday 15 July. Ben Greer, who completed six tours in Afghanistan as a Chinook helicopter crewman, set himself the challenge of walking 444 miles across the length and breadth of the UK to raise funds and awareness for the 444 servicemen and women who have so far lost their lives in the conflict. He is completing the entire distance wearing a 100kg (more than 15 stone) backpack to reflect the weight of an injured soldier being carried from the front line. The visit to Wellingborough was part of the final week of his challenge, which started back in March and ends in London on Sunday 21 July, as he completes his final stage between the Cenotaph and Buckingham Palace.

Ben walked 2.2 miles in Wellingborough in 30°C heat, and was supported by the Mayor and Mayoress, as well as many councillors, officers and members of the public.

2.3 OLDER PERSONS' FORUM

A special event for the over 50s took place in Wellingborough on Tuesday 16 July. The Older Persons' Forum brought around 35 people together to share ideas, receive expert information, meet up with old and new friends, and hear about what's on offer for older people in the area. The free forum meets every three months, with every meeting having a theme. This latest one was given over to people who provide regular, unpaid help or care for others. As well as presentations from a number of organisations, there was also a range of exhibitors and representatives from support services on hand to answer questions and give out information. A line dancing taster session was included at the request of previous attendees, and light refreshments were also available.

2.4 FRAUD PROSECUTION

A woman from Irchester has been sentenced to 10 months in prison after fraudulently claiming nearly £82,000 in benefits. Her partner has been sentenced to six months for attempting to pervert the course of justice.

The pair were prosecuted in a very unusual case that saw both the fraudulent benefit claimant and her partner charged with offences. This is a unique situation as the council, together with the Department for Work and Pensions, was able to prosecute both Angela Passfield, who claimed the benefits, and Edward Conroy, who forged documents in an attempt to cover up the crime. This is unusual as trying to prosecute anyone other than the actual claimant is very difficult.

2.5 NO EXCUSES CAMPAIGN

The council's annual campaign to reduce littering is going back on the road. This year, the 'No Excuses' roadshows kicks off on Tuesday 23 July in the town's Eastfield Park, before travelling all over the borough throughout the summer months in an effort to raise awareness of environmental offences.

The successful campaign, which first launched in 2010, runs throughout the year with community litter picks and school assemblies, but intensifies over the summer with targeted roadshows in the borough's parks. As well as increasing awareness of the problems caused by littering, the roadshows also give residents the opportunity to report environmental issues in their neighbourhoods.

The 'No Excuses' roadshows will visit Eastfield Park on 23 July, Queensway Park on 25 July, Castle Fields Park on 30 July, and Croyland Park on 31 July. They will also be in Kilborn Park on 2 August, Irchester Park on 6 August, Wellingborough town centre on 14 August, Earls Barton rec on 16 August, Bassetts Park on 21 August, and Finedon rec on 23 August. The roadshows will run from 10am to 3pm at each location. Times and locations may be subject to change.

2.6 MAYOR'S CHARITY FUND

The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Ken Harrington, will distribute the Mayor's Charity Fund for 2012-13 at a reception on Monday 22 July at 7pm. The reception, held in the council chamber, will be attended by representatives from the charities benefiting from the fund. The total amount raised during Cllr Harrington's year was £1,743.60, which will be shared between Wellingborough Talking Newspaper, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Teamwork Trust, Sequel Trust, the Hope Project, and St Barnabas Church.

2.7 MAYOR'S BOWLS MATCH

The Mayor will be joined by councillors and officers at 6.30pm on 24 July for the annual Rycroft Cup bowls match between the Mayor's team and the Swanspool Pensioners Bowls Club. The match, held in Swanspool Gardens, is a Wellingborough tradition and a social highlight for the Swanspool Pensioners. Refreshments will be available after the cup has been presented to the winning team.

2.8 MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL

Wellingborough's Business Improvement District (BID) is hosting a medieval festival over the weekend of 27 and 28 July in the town centre. The festival will be officially opened by the Mayor of Wellingborough, Cllr Graham Lawman, at 10am on the Saturday and will see entertainment including jugglers, archery and street theatre taking place over the two days.

2.9 BUCKWELL END START ON SITE

A ceremony to celebrate the start of the Buckwell End affordable housing development will take place on Monday 29 July at 12 noon, attended by the Mayor, deputy leader Cllr Barry Graves, other councillors and officers. The development is on the site of a former laundry and is being built by East Midlands Housing Group. The development will be made up of a mix of two- and three-bedroom houses, flats and one bungalow for rent and shared ownership, and is expected to be completed by spring 2014. As the site is just off Westfield Road, at the edge of the town centre's conservation area, the homes have been designed to reflect the period features and materials used close by.

<p>3. Proposed action: Council is invited to RESOLVE to note the report.</p>
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4. Author and contact officer

Paula Whitworth, Democratic Services Officer (Communications)

5. Consultees

The Mayor, Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Heads of Service