

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 11

meeting date: 18 January 2011
title: GENERAL REPORT
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1 PURPOSE

To inform members of the current work being undertaken in healthy lifestyles, tourism, and Arts Development.

2 HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

RVBC has been providing Healthy Lifestyle services for over ten years. These services are commissioned by the NHS on a contractual basis, through East Lancashire PCT. These contract/s were due to finish at the end of March 2011 and 2012

The NHS currently faces financial challenges and they have been reviewing their commissioned services to determine which ones should continue as they deliver positive outcomes.

We have been advised by the PCT that they will continue to commission our Healthy Lifestyle services until April 2013, which is an extension on our current contracts.

This is good news for the Council as the funding currently amounts to over £90,000. We have also been advised that there may be some variation to how we actually deliver the service and are currently working closely with our commissioners to ensure these variations serve to enhance our service for all parties concerned.

3 TOURISM

3.1 Ribble Valley Arts Trail

An information report was submitted to the Planning Committee on 16 December 2010 regarding the current work surrounding the Ribble Valley Arts Trail. This is due to the fact that this project is a collaboration between the Regeneration, Arts and Tourism Departments of the Council.

In brief the report detailed the background and work conducted so far on this project.

A steering group consisting of a local art business, the Regeneration Projects Officer, Tourism Officer and Arts Development Officer from Ribble Valley Borough Council, is meeting regularly to look at the feasibility of setting up an arts trail for the Ribble Valley.

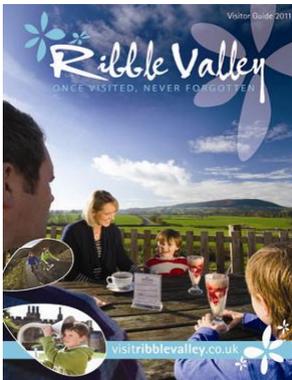
It is hoped the project will build on the success of the Ribble Valley Food Trail and would look to support local artists and businesses from the Ribble Valley that have a passion for Northern art.

A number of meetings have been held to discuss potential funding for an arts trail and a possible annual arts event that would attract further tourists to the borough. A dedicated arts trail website would be set up potentially to sit alongside the current food trail website to ensure that the two trails compliment each other. A list of potential applicants and venues is currently being compiled by the project group along with a selection criteria, application process and potential sources of funding and additional support.

Subject to funding it is envisaged that the trail could be launched around April/May 2011.

Work on the Ribble Valley Food Trail continues following two meetings of the selection panel prior to the Christmas break. Businesses will shortly be notified if they have been successfully included in the trail, with the hope that the trail can be re-launched in early spring, dates to be confirmed.

3.2 Ribble Valley Visitor Guide 2011



The 2011 Visitor Guide is now on the shelves in the Visitor Information Centre.

The guide is already being distributed widely across the UK through its distribution to other TICs and centre staff will be mailing the guide out early to hundreds of names they've collected on the waiting list.

The Visitor Guide is the principal marketing publication for promoting the area, produced by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

3.3 Clitheroe Visitor Information Centre

The visitor information centre has been given top marks in a mystery visit organised by Visit England. The mystery visit included a telephone call and visit in person. The Visit England report gave centre staff an overall score of 95 per cent for contactability, responsiveness and customer service, and 90 per cent for how the enquiry was handled.

“Staff at the centre were positive, helpful and had very good local knowledge. The centre was bright, clean and welcoming, with an extensive retail section,” the report said.

Last year, the centre was named best in the North West for customer care by the North West Development Agency, which oversees tourism in the region, also following a mystery visit.

Inspectors gave the centre a 100 per cent mark, one of the highest of the 67 tourist information centres in the North West, including at premier tourism destinations.

3.4 Exhibitions 2011

The Council's Tourism Department is already planning its attendance at the major tourism exhibitions in 2011.

2010 saw tourism members of staff attending The Great Days Out Fair at Bolton Arena, The Outdoors Show at the Birmingham NEC and also Nigel Haworth's Fantastic Food Show at Ewood Park and other local shows in Ribble Valley. We received support from the Ribble Valley Tourism Association in this year, which attended the exhibition stands and distributed the literature to visitors.

In 2011, once again Ribble Valley will be present at the Great Days Out Fair, which for the first time will take place at the Museum of Museums at the Trafford Centre on Saturday 5 March.

Due to the move of the Ordnance Survey Outdoors Show from Birmingham to London, the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board are no longer able to attend, and therefore we will not be attending as stand partners. Any further developments and further exhibitions planned for RVBC Tourism will be reported in due course.

3.5 Guided Bike Rides in Ribble Valley

Working in partnership with Lancashire County Council's Sustainable Travel Officer, we have managed to organise 2 family friendly-guided cycle rides in Ribble Valley to enhance the tourism offer for Ribble Valley. These will be run by Jonathan Wilson, a local Sustrans Volunteer Ranger and supported by the Sustainable Travel Officer from LCC.

The proposed dates for the rides are Sunday 12th June meeting at 2pm and Sunday 10th July meeting at 2pm at the Memorial Village Hall, Hurst Green.

Further details to be posted on the council's Tourism Website, www.visitribblevalley.co.uk

3.6 Ribble Valley Golf Breaks

The Tourism and Arts Officer was recently invited to get involved in a project to promote golf tourism in Ribble Valley, along with the Secretaries from three of Ribble Valley's Golf clubs.

The plan is to develop an affordable Golf Break Package, incorporating a round of golf at each of the courses along with accommodation in a Ribble Valley hotel, inn, B&B or guest house.

Using the model developed by the Heart of Wales Golf Breaks website, Clitheroe, Longridge and Wilpshire Golf Clubs are hoping to develop a similar package to attract further bookings and visitors to the area. A website is therefore being developed with all parties contributing to the design and content. A selection of nationally accredited accommodation businesses will also be approached to get involved in the scheme, to encourage visitors to stay in the area for three days and longer.

The website www.ribblevalleygolfbreaks.co.uk aims to be launched early in 2011 and further details of the project will follow in the next report.

4 ARTS DEVELOPMENT SERVICE - Roundup of activity January 2011

4.1 Platform Gallery

Final figures for the turnover of the Platform Gallery's 2010 Christmas Exhibition, 'Kaleidoscope' have defied the belt-tightening expectations of our troubled economic times by recording one of our highest years for sales.

Turnover for the Christmas period settled just below the £33,000.00 mark at £32,945.77 proving that the expertise of the Gallery staff provide a valuable economic contribution to the borough while supporting local creative industries.

The contribution to community involvement in the arts cannot be overlooked either as two children's Kaleidoscope building workshops, run in the days before Christmas (allowing parents valuable child free shopping in Clitheroe) were enthusiastically attended by 18 children. The workshops were run by Arts Development Officer, Mark Mason.

4.2 Arts Active Ageing Project

In partnership with Age Concern and the Arts Council we delivered a variety of arts based activities to encourage healthy ageing within the borough. The key ambition for this pilot project was to improve the physical and mental, health and well being of the Ribble Valleys ageing population. This was an open access programme begun in 2008 for the over 55's, some programmes were free and some programmes participants paid to attend. On 1 October, Age Concern and The Ribble Valley Seniors Forum created an event for the over 55s at St Mary's Hall in Clitheroe 'A Reet Good Do'. 150 people attended the event that included music, dance, poetry and a fashion show. The event was supported by the community bus service, The Little Green Bus, that brought some of the audience from around the borough.

4.3 Ribble Valley Art Alliance

In 2008 the Ribble Valley Arts Alliance was formed as a sub group of the Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership. The group is responsible for co-ordinating actions within its section of the Ribble Valley Sustainable Community Strategy. This is an exciting time as the arts community within the Ribble Valley will have direct input in the action planning for the future of Arts Development.

4.4 Ribble Valley Arts Alliance Website www.ribbonvalleyarts.org

The main aim for the website is to maintain the sustainability of the boroughs cultural economy. Through a concerted effort in the coming year, the site is to be developed to become user friendly, incorporating up to date social media and networking applications to facilitate collaborations between artists, commissioners, venues, promoters and the public, an online booking system for art workshops and a fully interactive, searchable calendar of Ribble Valley arts events, making it more attractive and self maintaining whilst reducing the need for financial input in the future.

The What's On section of the website has been setup to give the much-needed promotion of arts events happening in the borough. This is a valuable resource for independent arts businesses/promoters/venues/artists to promote their activities to a wider audience, for free. It gives Ribble Valley residents and tourists a calendar of upcoming arts events. We are looking to find a way of linking to the Visit Ribble Valley tourism Whats On in future to avoid duplication of data.

The Arts Directory section of the website features Ribble Valley based creative industries. This provides the public with information and direct contact to the creative organisations within the borough. The section is divided into visual arts,

venues, dance, film, theatre, drama & music. The organisations represented vary widely from children's dance teachers to local photography groups, thriving businesses to non-profit based organisations. We are using this as a framework to map the arts provision in the borough with the hope to develop a Ribble Valley Arts Trail, that compliments the Ribble Valley Food Trail. The trail would be done in partnership with RVBC regeneration and tourism departments. This will contribute to the tourism offer of the Ribble Valley. So far the directory includes 118 businesses based in the Ribble Valley.

4.5 Ribble Valley Arts Festival 2011

Through the Arts Alliance, Ribble Valley based organisations will pull together to create a month of concentrated arts activity in May 2011, based on the success of 'MayFest 2010', this will take the form of music, film, comedy, arts workshops, walks and trails and much more. By supporting independent organizations that will develop the majority of the programme, they will benefit from cross marketing through our MayFest 2011 campaign. This will be done through leaflets, banners and joint website presence. See attached leaflet original artwork was A3.

4.6 Ribble Valley Art What's On Emailout

A direct emailing network has been setup to market arts events happening in and around the borough. This is a valuable resource for independent arts businesses/promoters/venues/artists to promote their activities to a wide audience. It also gives local residents regular updates on what entertainment is available on their doorstep, encouraging community participation. Tourists from outside the borough are encouraged to visit and support the cultural experiences within the borough. All of which are an effort to maintain the sustainability of the boroughs venues in both the towns and villages. We are looking into how we can develop this idea into a self-maintaining distribution list eg. Adding a social networking aspect to sit within the Ribble Valley Arts Alliance Website.

4.7 Creative Skills Database

- The creative skills database is a resource of creative skills, which allows the Arts Development Service to search for specific skills on request.
- Creative industries can subscribe to our art emailout services and be kept up to date.
- Creative industries can pass on information via the emailouts.

304 individuals/companies have joined the Creative Skills Database, 240 opting to be added to the Creative Skills Emailout service. Throughout the year emails are sent from us informing them of arts opportunities including jobs, commissions, funding, training and exhibition opportunities.

4.8 Youth Arts Emailout

A direct emailout database has been collated enabling the Arts Development Department a quick way to distribute arts opportunities to local primary / high schools and Young Peoples Service groups. This gives them the opportunity to get involved in local and national art initiatives that they would not ordinarily hear about.

4.9 The Ribble Valley Sculpture Trail

Now that all the new sculptures are in place a leaflet has been designed to publicise and inform the public about the trail. Two new signs have been erected to highlight the Brungerley Park and Cross Hill entrances. Three information panels have been installed within the trail so that visitors can learn more about the trail with or without the leaflet. The design for the signs was developed with the

Friends of Brungerley local community group. We are looking to develop the website presence on the RVBC website, create education/visitor packs to encourage group visits.

To celebrate the installation of the final sculptures within trail, the new leaflets and signage we secured a summer exhibition within the Steward's Gallery in the Castle Museum to showcase how the Sculpture Trail has developed over the years. It was fantastic to see an overview of all the pieces within the exhibition, it really did show off the trail as a great asset to Ribble Valley. We are looking to tour aspects of the exhibition to other venues within the Ribble Valley to market the trail to new audiences.

4.10 Other Ongoing Arts Development projects:

Ribble Valley Public Art Maintenance 10/11

Castle Museum Steward's Gallery Programming 2011/12

Creativity Works – Pennine Lancashire Arts Development Network

LET – Arts Regenerating Ribble Valley Town Centres

Spot on Rural Touring – bringing professional theatre, music and comedy to village halls within the Ribble Valley

Kicking Leaves Children's Literature Festival – Pennine Lancashire

Arts Funding / Development Advice Sessions

Ribble Valley Borough Council Website, Arts Section

Arts Development Forward Planning 2011/12

The Platform Gallery Development and Programming 2011/12

Recycling Books Project - Lancashire libraries and RVBC Recycling department.

The Open Shop Project – North West Sound Archive

Contemporary Heritage – Art within the castle grounds

Community Rail Festival 2011

POPL - Perspectives of Pennine Lancashire Visual Arts Network

Arts Excellence Awards – Grant Scheme

Volunteer development – work placements & volunteers

- 5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE
Notes the contents of this report

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