

Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee

23 February 2016

Present: Councillor S Day (Chair)
Councillors K Bolger, J Cassidy, D Drummond, P Earley,
E Hodson, L Miller, A Newman, P Oliver and M Thirlaway.

Also Present: Councillor E N Darke, Cabinet Member responsible for Leisure,
Culture and Tourism.

CL35/02/16 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors J Munby and J Pickard.

CL36/02/16 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

CL37/02/16 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest reported.

CL38/02/16 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 January 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CL39/02/16 Winter Festival

The Sub-Committee was presented with feedback from Mr Pete Warne, Tourism and Events Development Manager, on the effectiveness of the North Tyneside Winter Festival, in particular the Christmas markets, in terms of supporting the town centre economies.

At its meeting on 24 November 2015, the Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee agreed to receive and update of the Winter Festival following the Economic and Prosperity Sub-Committee's examination on the impact of Winter Festival on the tourism economy of the borough, and, invite any comments/suggestions for improvement.

The festival consisted of events organised or supported by North Tyneside Council and third-party partner events. All were featured in 10,000 copies of the official programme that was also read 1727 times online, through an electronic version on www.visitnorthtyneside.com.

There was an extensive feature in Our North Tyneside magazine and the 'What's On' page on www.visitnorthtyneside.com received 3990 visitors in November and December.

For the first time, the weather, notably Storm Desmond, directly caused the cancellation of some events and affected others.

The report focused on the events previously identified as the ones to present information on at the end of the festival.

A summary of the individual Winter Festival events held across the Borough was provided which included the St Nicholas Festival, Whitley Bay, Wallsend Christmas Market and Christmas Lights Switch-on, Tynemouth Christmas Festival and the North Shields Victorian Christmas Market.

The Winter Festival events analysis provided a cross section of the bigger activities engaging town centre traders over the festive period. Clearly, in 2015, the weather was a major factor affecting footfall, in particular at the St. Nicholas Festival in Whitley Bay. However, it was evident from both anecdotal and survey evidence that:-

- Town centre Christmas activities were popular with the public;
- Traders were keen to build upon the success of existing initiatives;
- The significant increase in footfall these events bring was a major economic benefit to local businesses.

It was noted that the marketing and promotion of the events through the Winter Festival programme afforded the Authority significant reputational profile and strengthened partnership working with businesses and the wider community.

During discussion, the following points were made:

Improvements made to the Tynemouth event near Tynemouth Priory were welcomed, however some dates had been misinterpreted by the local press although details had been correctly published by the Authority.

It was suggested that smarter use of the outside area at the North Shields Victorian Christmas Market in the form of improved matting during muddy/wet weather; and consideration given to the installation of more/better rides for future events.

In response to a query about the suggestion by some individuals that the Winter Festival Event in Wallsend could be held on an alternate date; it was explained that any interests in alternative arrangements would be considered subject to assessment of the plans submitted.

With regard to a query on running costs for events, it was explained that the aim was to achieve a 'cost neutral' position on events organised by the Authority in all cases and to reduce costs year on year, balanced against essential costs for staffing, equipment, safety and also securing partnership sponsorship.

It was **agreed** that the details of the events as indicated and suggestions offered for the development of such initiatives in the future be noted.

CL40/02/16 Active North Tyneside - Weight Management Programmes

The Sub-Committee received a report on the role Active North Tyneside – Weight Management Programmes played in helping to deal with the problems arising from obesity levels in North Tyneside.

Wendy Burke, Acting Public Health Consultant, together with representatives from the Active North Tyneside – Weight Management Programmes, presented the challenges as well as the options available in tackling the obesity issues within North Tyneside.

It was recognised that tobacco and obesity were the principal risk factors for the main causes of ill health, disability and premature death in the UK. Obesity harmed health and it increased the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, stroke, depression and many other life changing conditions. As well as the individual impact there was a wider cost to the state. It was estimated that the overall cost of obesity to the economy and the National Health Service (NHS) was around £27 billion per year. Diabetes alone cost the health service around 10% of its budget. Obesity also harms local communities and led to an increase in sickness absence and increased demand for social care services.

The overall prevalence of obesity and excess weight in North Tyneside was higher than the English average and more adults were physically inactive than other parts of the country. In reception year 9% of children in North Tyneside were very overweight, however by year six this had doubled with over 19% of children in North Tyneside considered very overweight.

Obesity did not affect all groups equally. People from more deprived areas, older people, and people with disabilities were all more likely to be obese or overweight and levels of diabetes were greater in the more deprived areas of North Tyneside.

Physical activity can reduce the risk and impact of obesity and Active North Tyneside has developed a range of programmes to target those who needed the most support.

Active North Tyneside's Weight Management Interventions included four key programmes:

- Mini Movers - targeting ages 2-4 years
- Healthy4Life - a holistic approach to include the whole family
- GYM – 'Good, Youth, Move' – targeting young people aged 14-17 years
- Weight Worries - free adult weight management programme

The aim of the programmes was to help in achieving a longer healthier life expectancy.

Challenges included the recruitment of families, complexity of families, maintenance of behaviour change and following up contact. The methods for targeted recruitment included self referral, GP referral, 'Our North Tyneside' Magazine, NTC website/intranet, flyers, Libraries/Leisure Centres/Schools, NHS & ANT signposting, word of mouth etc.

A support team was place to support the introduction of the pilot Weight Worries programme which ran from October 2014 to January 2015 from the Parks Sports Centre, with three further Cohorts during the periods March 2015 and March 2016.

During discussion, the following points were made:

In response to a query about the reasons why specific areas in the Borough had been targeted in relation to healthy and weight related issues and not others; it was explained that certain areas were targeted on the basis of the data gathered so far but not exclusively, however data for individual wards was not yet available.

A Member queried how the issues regarding children at school labelled as fat kids were dealt with as this in particular was a very sensitive area. It was explained that programmes were being marketed as positive healthy lifestyle initiatives with the support from school nurses, together with input from parents.

A Member asked about the options available to adults finding it difficult to achieve the right work/life balance in attending daytime/evening classes. It was explained that teams continued to look at the balance of gym exercise/activity classes in place across and the borough exercise/activity classes available to encourage exercise/activity e.g. walking.

Pilot feedback had indicated adults were keen to attend regular classes two or three times weekly to gain the most benefit.

In terms of the drop-out rate and whether people were allowed to come back to classes; this was encouraged at the same time taking into account an individual's circumstances.

With regard to those people who were not able to take part in high impact type exercise due to injury or ability, referral options were available to other agencies such as NHS schemes involving low impact exercises which were specifically designed around injuries i.e. swimming.

A Member asked about barriers in relation to the recruitment of people in exercise/activity classes. It was explained that the effort needed in recruiting people to participate was a major challenge, and that once people had been recruited, retaining their interest was also a challenge, although people themselves needed to be committed.

In relation to funding for the delivery of services going forward, the Acting Public Health Consultant commented that ring-fenced allocation in future was a challenge on how Local Authority's delivered on policy. She welcomed any ideas from the sub-committee on ways in which to encourage participation in the Active North Tyneside programme and multi-agency schemes as part of the Borough's health development.

The Chair, on behalf of the sub-committee thanked the Acting Public Health Consultant and the representatives from Active North Tyneside for an interesting presentation and for the work done so far in developing the Active North Tyneside – Weight Management Programmes in helping to address the overall obesity and excess weight issues in North Tyneside.

It was **agreed** that the report and presentation on the Active North Tyneside - Weight Management Programmes be noted.