

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

13 JULY 2023

COUNCILLOR SIMON RING - CABINET MEMBER FOR TOURISM, EVENTS AND MARKETING

For the period 19 May to 30 June 2023

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

This first 6 weeks has been very much a fact-finding mission and a relationship building exercise. With heritage, culture and leisure also in the portfolio there have been a great number of officers and outside interested bodies to meet. There has also been a need to work closely with other cabinet members as the portfolio crosses many a boundary. This has highlighted the importance of the collegiate approach that this administration has adopted.

There have been two areas of portfolio matters that were started before my appointment that has seen some progress.

Firstly, the consultation on the future use of the Alive facility, KASET, has begun. The consultation has included

- An online survey
- Meeting with Skateboard GB and a GB Skateboarder who lives in Ely. He wants to retain the indoor park to support his training for the Olympics.
- We had our first consultation event on the 22nd June where approx. 30 existing skatepark users and/or parents aged 10-50 turned up to make their case for keeping KASET. We had a few other people come from the college and a couple of parents of other Lynnsport users. They liked the TAG active activities but also felt fencing the skatepark in would keep it safer.
- Our 2nd consultation event took place on the 29th June with approx. 20 people attending, most of which came the previous week and some new younger skatepark users. They were much more open and constructive with the designs on this occasion, providing some good feedback and have arranged a KASET user group meeting for the 6th July to provide joined up feedback on designs from skateboarders, scooterists and BMXers.

- So far, most of the people who have attended the consultation events have been existing users who wish to retain the skatepark, but other feedback has seen TAG Active/Nina Warrior type activities as the favourite for the indoor area and other suggestions have included a splash pad outdoors, lido, swimming pool. Other feedback has included a facility needs to be free, or local children will not be able to afford it, which of course the planned outside skatepark is proposed to be.

We have only had 218 attendances in June 2023, our average for the previous year is 458. This is comprised of 33 Adults visits from 19 unique adults and 185 Juniors visits from 65 unique juniors. 49 from within the borough and 19 outside of the borough with 16 address not provided. Continual evidence that the current offering is not only being subsidised but many of those enjoying that subsidy are from outside of the Borough.

As soon as the consultation period ends a report will be made public on the results of the survey and face-to-face meetings.

The second ongoing action that I attended was the West Norfolk Prosperity Funding Programme Board. Myself and a number of officers went through a shortlist of grant applications. The range was varied and wide, from existing and new organisations, and I am excited to see the results of all of these bid applications over the coming year.

A full list of successful applications will be published in due course. I'd like to commend all of the officers involved in the diligent manner that they have applied to this selection process, especially Nicola Cooper and Jemma Curtis. With some minor tweaking to the scoring process and proactive marketing, I believe that the next round, if available, will provide an even better response. I was particularly encouraged to hear of the positive advice given to many applications that failed, either because they hadn't provided sufficient evidence, or that this was not quite the right funding stream. Pointing people to the appropriate funding streams is so important.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

I plan to attend many of the upcoming events including Festival, Festival Too and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Heritage, Culture and Leisure in the Borough cannot operate effectively without the support of a multitude of happy and willing volunteers. It is clear that, for whatever reason, the value of these volunteers has not been recognised and as a result there is a very clear division between them and the Council. It is also clear to me that the volunteers would benefit greatly by having a single point of contact at the Council.

One thing that makes little sense is that we trust volunteers to spend huge

amounts of time unaccompanied within Borough owned heritage assets, yet we don't trust them enough to have the ability to open and close those same assets. This means that they are always reliant on council officers being available to open and close and as a result our wonderful heritage is unavailable for some of the busiest visitor times.

I plan to bring forward to Cabinet ideas around the volunteer relationship and co-ordination. As well as ideas around making greater use of our heritage to increase the value of the visitor economy.

Designers have now been instructed over the St George's Guildhall. I will be working with officers, cabinet colleagues and outside organisations regarding the sustainability of the Guildhall, using the Town Deal Board outcomes as a starting point. Adjustments will undoubtedly need to be made once the full actual costings have been received and the effects of significant levels of inflation, since the bid was made, is taken into account. ALL stakeholders will be given the opportunity to shape the future uses of the Guildhall.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

I have had numerous meetings with officers and outside bodies

Officers

Oliver Judges
Geoff Hall
Duncan Hall
Matthew Henry
Martin Chisholm
Philip Eke
Bethany O'Brien
Philip Bayfield
Jemma Curtis
Tim Fitzhigham
Honor Howell
Tommy Goode

Outside bodies

Civic Society
Town Guides
Preservation Trust
Hunstanton Town Council
Members of Hunstanton Action Group
Classical Music Rocks
Volunteer Fair

I have regular scheduled meetings with most of the above officers and will continue to meet and fact find with outside bodies including those already met

with.