

# Leisure, Culture & Tourism Deputy Leader's Statement 2020/21



## **INTRODUCTION**

East Staffordshire Borough Council has three Corporate Priorities:

- **Value for Money Council**
- **Community Regeneration**
- **Environment and Health & Wellbeing**

The following statement sets out how the Deputy Leader for Leisure, Culture and Tourism and officers within this portfolio area will contribute to achieving these priorities, as well highlighting key achievements from 2019/20.

However the activities outlined in the statement are often cross-cutting themes with overlaps into other areas, and throughout the statement there may be examples of joint delivery with other Executive Members as well as managers from other sections.

Each of the statements made by the individual portfolio holders will then be collated to form the basis of East Staffordshire Borough Council's Corporate Plan for 2020/21.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019/20**

Over the past 12 months, the Council has been working hard to improve its services and is currently on track to achieve [INSERT%] of this portfolio's milestones set for 2019/20 by the end of this financial year.

Some of these achievements are highlighted in the following section.

### ***Leisure Services Contract Management***

Following the Leisure Services contract going live, this year saw Everyone Active embedding themselves in East Staffordshire and the users of our services beginning to reap the benefits of this enhanced offering. The Council continued to monitor the contract performance and to develop, with Everyone Active, the necessary service plans set out in the contract specification required for the effective delivery and monitoring of the service. The Council had project oversight of capital improvements across all three leisure facilities, in conjunction with independent technical support, to ensure value for money from the works which enhance the quality of the services available and maximise revenue and efficiency at the sites.

The developments at Meadowside Leisure Centre included:

- Extended and significantly upgraded fitness suite
- New four story soft play area
- New Clip 'n' Climb facility
- New Health Suite including steam room and sauna
- Upgraded dry-side changing rooms
- New studio
- New immersive virtual spin studio
- Upgraded cafeteria, reception and adjoining corridors

Uttoxeter Leisure Centre also benefited from an upgraded fitness suite, with a new community gym being introduced at Shobnall Leisure Complex.

This year the Council also considered opportunities to benchmark its leisure facilities and associated value for money data using relevant models available

and reviewed the Council's Leisure related strategy and policy documentation, to create a plan for updating these to reflect the Council's new partnership approach to its sport and leisure services as it moves forward.

### ***Open Spaces Service Development Initiatives***

The Council has carried out a detailed review of the Grounds Maintenance contract and will apply learning and experience from the past nine years into a new specification for the management and maintenance of parks and open spaces. The process to finalise the new specification is to be commenced in 2020 with a view to a new contract starting in November 2021.

Burial capacity at Stapenhill Cemetery has continued to diminish over recent years. However, for some considerable time the Council has had allotment land earmarked for the future expansion of the Cemetery. In the summer of 2019 specialist consultants provided key information for the necessary remedial works. Subsequently, a capital bid has been prepared with the ambition to start work in the first half of 2021.

In partnership with Eon, the Council have commissioned the replacement of older less energy efficient lighting columns with new LED lighting. These new lighting columns will reduce the energy charges incurred by the Council and will also contribute to the Council's effort to reduce its carbon footprint.

June 2019 marked the first anniversary of the new lone working system. The review of the system highlighted that procedures and processes for keeping staff safe have been significantly enhanced. The system continues to be rolled out into other service areas, with existing users provided with refresher training to ensure familiarity with the system is maintained.

### ***Brewhouse, Arts and Town Hall Developments***

During 2019/20, experience gained during the previous Cultural services procurement process was used to put forward a number of options for consideration that looked at different delivery models for the Brewhouse Arts Facilities, Civic Function Suite and Arts Development. These provided various

levels of potential revenue savings for the Council but also looked at creating a more sustainable, efficient and adaptable service for the future. Following a number of recent developments coming forward, such as the Stronger Towns fund, consideration of options for the preferred delivery model for the service will be taken forward to 2020/21.

### ***Planting Strategy and In-Bloom Awards***

The Council's horticultural team have built on the years of success at the West Midlands "In Bloom" awards and have devised a future planting approach for key locations across the Borough. This plan seeks to enhance the visual image of these sites whilst also maximising the use of more sustainable planting.

The Council scooped 4 gold awards at the 2019 "In Bloom" awards, and saw Winshill win silver gilt at the national awards held in London. The floral success of East Staffordshire continues with Uttoxeter being entered into the national awards for 2020, marking it the third time in four years that East Staffordshire has had an entry at the national level.

In 2019 the Council entered the Washlands / Stapenhill Gardens as a Green Flag entry for the first time. Although the new combined entry fell short of achieving the Green Flag, judges commented on the high quality of Stapenhill Gardens (stating that the site was worthy of a Green Flag as a lone entry) and the excellent potential of the Washlands, suggesting a bright future for both sites as a combined entry or as two separate stand-alone entries, once works to the Washlands have been completed. Bramshall Park in Uttoxeter retained its Green Flag award for another year.

### ***Market Hall Development Initiatives***

Building on the success of previous years, the Market Hall has again held a number of successful events throughout the year, reaching its target of 25 commercial events. These included the ever popular Ultra White Collar Boxing nights and specialist craft fairs. In addition, new for this year, a Food & Drink Festival and the hugely successful 'Makers Market' came to Burton for the first time.

The Market Hall continued its APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) Benchmarking membership in order to continually monitor performance across all aspects of the Market Hall operation. The Market Hall also underwent another NABMA (National Association of British Markets Authorities) Markets Health check in order to gain insight into its achievements and potential improvements that could be made. Drawing on the APSE findings, Markets Health check and previous procurement experience, an evaluation of the potential future options for the Market Hall commenced but following recent potential developments around the Stronger Towns Fund, these options will now be considered in 2020/21.

### ***Marketing Initiatives***

Over the past 12 months, the Council again achieved its annual marketing objectives, with officers working hard to promote services and events from within the Leisure, Culture and Tourism portfolio in addition to wider Council activities such as Waste Management and Regeneration. Campaigns supported during 2019/20 have included:

- Three Brewhouse seasonal programme campaigns
- Christmas in Burton seasonal events campaign
- Burton Children's Festival campaign
- Be Your Own Boss campaign
- Love Your Local Market campaign
- School Holiday Activities campaign
- East Staffordshire In Bloom campaign
- Young Market Trader campaign, which led to three traders reaching the national finals to represent East Staffordshire.

Throughout the year the Council has also continued to work in conjunction with a range of partners to deliver a variety of town centre events, and have attended numerous outreach days to showcase the Council and raise the profile of its services.

## **OBJECTIVES FOR 2020/21**

The Council is determined to continue to build on its successes during 2019/20 as it moves forward into the 2020/21 financial year. It will continue to improve performance, service delivery and value for money through delivery of the Council's three Corporate Priorities. Achievement of these priorities will be supported by the Leisure, Culture and Tourism portfolio through delivery of the objectives detailed in the following section. The specific performance indicators identified to measure these objectives are referenced in the paragraphs below.

### ***Leisure Services Contract Management (Target Ref No. LCT01; LCT02; LCT03)***

This year the Council will continue to monitor the performance of the Leisure Operator, Everyone Active, and will report on this on a quarterly basis through the Leisure Services Partnership Board and the relevant Council committees. LG Inform expenditure data, from 2017-18 (prior to outsourcing of the service) shows East Staffordshire as spending much more per head on Cultural and related services than other English district authorities and Nearest Neighbours, but a similar amount to geographical neighbours (Lichfield and Stafford). This information supports the decision the Council took to outsource its leisure facilities as this will result in reduced costs and greater efficiencies moving forward. In addition to supporting the development of the relationship between the Council and Everyone Active, the Council will continue to ensure compliance with the Leisure Operating Contract and effectively review the intended outcomes for residents and users of the Council's sport and leisure services.

The Council will also be undertaking a benchmarking exercise focussed on its sport and leisure services, as a follow up to the information gathered as a baseline in 2019/20, to support the delivery of the Leisure Operating Contract.

The Artificial Turf Pitch at Shobnall Leisure Complex is nearing the end of its life, so in 2020 the Council will be undertaking a procurement process to appoint the necessary contractors to replace the pitch, which is used primarily for

hockey and other outdoor team sports. This project will be undertaken using Section 106 funding secured for use at Shobnall Leisure Complex, and will ensure a fit for purpose all-weather playing surface continues to be available at the facility.

***Marketing (Target Ref No. LCT04; LCT05)***

This year the Council will again develop and communicate annual marketing plans for each of the Leisure, Culture and Tourism services in order to deliver a focussed strategy for promoting and delivering Council services. These marketing plans will be supplemented by the Marketing Officer collaborating closely with other Council teams to drive bespoke marketing programs and campaigns. In addition to this, the Leisure, Culture and Tourism team will attend or deliver a minimum of five events or outreach days in conjunction with its partners to further promote Council services. These events and outreach days will be held through the year, in locations such as, Burton Market Place, Indoor shopping centres, outdoor open spaces and at networking/specific industry events, in conjunction with a range of local and regional partners.

***Open Spaces (Target Ref No. LCT06; LCT14 LCT15; LCT16; LCT17)***

Open Spaces play an important and significant role in the economic, social and environmental activities of the Borough. Therefore, a development plan is to be established outlining the strategic direction of parks and open spaces for the next five years with a focus on community health, sustainability and climate change. This plan will include activities such as tree planting, tree management and volunteer recruitment.

In 2019 the Council and its partners gained a tremendous haul of awards at the West Midlands “In Bloom” awards. This forthcoming year will be no different with the Council aiming for two gold awards and supporting Uttoxeter in their entry into the national competition. Furthermore, the Council will aim to increase the scores allocated to the open spaces entered into the Royal Horticulture Society’s “It’s Your Neighbourhood” parks award.

In 2020 ESBC will seek to retain the Green Flag award for Bramshall Park in Uttoxeter. Building on the judging experience of 2019, Stapenhill Gardens will also be entered on a trial basis as a standalone Green Flag entry. This entry will provide a starting point to an eventual expansion and joint entry with the Washlands, once a number of projects from the Washlands programme are complete.

October 2021 will see the Council's Grounds Maintenance contract expire with the current provider. This contract, one of the largest operated by the Council, defines the standard for parks and open spaces across the Borough. As a result, the Open Spaces Team will work in collaboration with the Council's Procurement Team to prepare the new tender and specification documentation, ensuring that it is reflective of the organisational learning garnered over the life of the current contract and set up to succeed during the forthcoming decade.

***Facilities and Health & Safety (Target Ref No. LCT07)***

The Council operates a diverse portfolio of properties. Many of these buildings are ageing and are potentially energy inefficient. Subsequently, it is proposed that a review of Council owned buildings is undertaken alongside research into alternative forms of energy. Such a review will help inform a programme of potential works that could increase the Council's energy efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint.

***Brewhouse, Arts and Town Hall (Target Ref No. LCT08; LCT09)***

During 2020/21 the Council will bring forward proposals for implementing a new model for the delivery of the Brewhouse, Arts and Town Hall (BATH) service. The new model is expected to be more efficient and effective. Following the implementation of this new model, the Council will also look to develop a new BATH Service Strategy in order to reflect this new delivery model. This strategy will provide a three year plan in addition to a series of targets for the new service model to deliver against, and will have a particular focus on improved value for money and benefit to the Council's service users.

***Cemetery (Target Ref No. LCT10)***

Burial space is gradually reducing at Stapenhill Cemetery and previous studies have highlighted this issue and advocated the case for expansion. As a result, a specialist consultant is to be appointed to commence preparatory work on the conversion of allotment land into future burial space.

***Markets (Target Ref No. LCT11; LCT12; LCT13)***

The Market Hall team will bring forward a future options review, taking into account potential developments around the Stronger Towns Fund. Continuing to showcase the Market Hall as a unique, exciting events space, the Council will also look to hold 25 commercial events in the year.

The Market Hall will remain an APSE Performance Networks member to continually benchmark and monitor best practice within Markets.

***Tourism (Target Ref No. LCT18)***

East Staffordshire has a number of advantages and attractions as a tourist destination. Working in partnership with key stakeholders the Council will seek to develop a tactical plan that illustrates the strengths of East Staffordshire as an emerging tourist destination.

## MEASURES AND TARGETS FOR 2020/21

The Leisure, Culture and Tourism portfolio has identified a number of measures and targets for 2020/21 which will contribute to the delivery of the objectives detailed above. These are set out in the following tables.

### Value for Money Council

Ref	Measures	Target 2020/21
LCT01	Maintain Robust Mechanisms for Contract Managing the Leisure Service Arrangements	Report on the performance of the Leisure Operator on a quarterly basis
LCT02	Review Strategic Sport and Leisure Approach in Line with Leisure Services Contract Arrangements	Undertake a follow-up benchmarking exercise supporting the delivery of the leisure operating contract (February 2021)
LCT03	Work with Leisure Operator to Continue to Provide High Quality Sports Facilities	Replace the Artificial Turf Pitch at Shobnall Leisure Complex (November 2020)
LCT04	Improve Awareness of Council Services, Venues and Initiatives	Develop and communicate annual marketing plans for each leisure, culture and tourism service and achieve 85% of these targets by year end. (April 2020)
LCT05	Improve Awareness of Council Services, Venues and Initiatives	Attend and deliver a minimum of 5 events/outreach days (including Burton Market Place, Indoor shopping centres and Parks/open spaces etc) to promote Council services in conjunction with partners. (March 2021)

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Target 2020/21</b>
LCT06	Procurement of Grounds Maintenance Contractor	Commence the process for the Grounds Maintenance contract retender (March 2021)
LCT07	Improving Energy Efficiency-Facility Developments	Review energy usage in Council owned buildings (e.g. Town Hall, Cemetery etc) and investigate alternative energy sources. (March 2021)
LCT08	Brewhouse, Arts and Town Hall Developments	Complete the implementation of a new service delivery model. (March 2021)
LCT09	Brewhouse, Arts and Town Hall Developments	New Brewhouse, Arts and Town Hall service strategy document completed (October 2020)

### Community Regeneration

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Target 2020/21</b>
LCT10	Increase Capacity at Stapenhill Cemetery	Commence preparatory works for the expansion of Stapenhill Cemetery. (December 2020)
LCT11	Market Hall Development Initiatives	Implement the outcome of the Market Hall future options review (March 2021)
LCT12	Market Development Initiatives	Hold at least 10 commercial events in the Market Hall/Market Place (March 2021)

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Target 2020/21</b>
LCT13	Market Hall Development Initiatives	Continue to benchmark Market Hall performance through APSE membership (March 2021)

### Environment and Health & Wellbeing

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Target 2020/21</b>
LCT14	Open Spaces Initiatives	Develop a Borough wide parks development plan (December 2020)
LCT15	Open Spaces Initiatives	Achieve 2 in bloom gold awards and support Uttoxeter in the 2020 National In bloom awards (September 2020)
LCT16	Open Spaces Initiatives	Achieve 1 Green Flag award, a minimum of 2 Gold awards at In Bloom and (September 2020)
LCT17	Open Spaces Initiatives	Increase the marks awarded to the 9 parks in the “It’s Your Neighbourhood” Parks category by an average of 10% (September 2020)
LCT18	Develop Tourism within the Borough	Develop a tactical approach and plan for tourism in East Staffordshire (October 2020)