

CULTURAL STRATEGY 2009 to 2013

INTRODUCTION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Waverley's vision remains to enhance the quality of life and ensure that all Waverley's residents, both young and old, have the opportunity to pursue a wide range of cultural activities through which they can make enjoyable and fulfilling use of their leisure time and thus increase their well-being.

'Cultural activities' means different things to different people. From all types of sporting activities (competitive, team, relaxation, or enjoyment and mild exercise) to participation in the arts whether actively or as a spectator (theatre, music, dance, choral, and operatic) – I have not yet mentioned sculpture, painting, and museums. With three quarters of our borough classified as Green Belt and Areas of Great Landscape Value, we must include the enjoyment of our wonderful countryside of which the Council manages over 1000 hectares for public use.

No wonder Waverley is an aspirational area within which to live! As a result Waverly Borough Council recognises its responsibilities to provide our residents with a broad range of cultural activities of the highest standard, and inclusive to all. Waverley has committed to operate 5 leisure centres within our urban areas managed by a professional leisure management company. That we can offer the range of cultural interests is only possible because of the hard work and total dedication of volunteers working within our clubs and societies throughout the Borough. It is also only possible because of the hard work, skill, and dedication of our small team of officers who 'make things happen' – their enthusiasm and tenacity knows no bounds.

The Cultural Strategy illustrates Waverley Borough Council's medium term objectives. By so doing the Strategy serves four purposes:

- It is a means of imparting information to our residents.
- Secondly, it is a working reference for the many hundreds of clubs, groups, and organisations within our Borough.
- Thirdly it is an essential tool upon which our officers rely to seek funding and grants,
- Finally it identifies the partnerships across the borough, the county, and with cross-boarder colleagues.

As a Council we are doing all that we can to promote health and well-being within our communities. Recent innovations include free swimming for the under 16's and over 60's, and many other activities are aimed to combat the increasing levels of obesity in children and to maintain good levels of fitness in adults. Our 'Walks for Health' provide exercise and social interaction and are increasingly popular.

We shall be working with Primary Health Practitioners to provide help for patients with early depression, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. Our IN2 Leisure Cards ensure that our facilities are totally inclusive to all regardless of affordability, capability, and age.

With such an extensive programme, communication is a challenge. We will be using the Waverley Web Site and 'Making Waves' but we recognise that we must adapt our means of contact to suit all age groups. That said we shall also employ text messaging, e-mails, and 'Face Book' in order to communicate the details and timetables of our extensive Youth Programme to young people.

Finally, we have historically published our Cultural Strategy as a booklet and will continue to do so. For the first time however the primary location of our Cultural Strategy will be on the Waverley Borough Council Web Site. This is the medium our officers, partners, and funding sources use as a first choice – it is the first choice too now for the majority of our residents. Such a step will allow us to continually up-date our Strategy as we implement action plans and introduce new programmes and initiatives over the next five years.

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