

## RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No. 12

meeting date: 12 January 2016  
title: GENERAL REPORT  
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### 1 PURPOSE

To update on activity and progress within Community Services, specifically to Sports Development, Healthy Lifestyles, the Platform Gallery and Visitor Information Centre, play areas, and the Visitor Guide.

### 2 EDISFORD - 3G ARTIFICIAL PITCH

As Committee was made aware in September 2015, the installation of the 3G pitches at Edisford is now complete. Young people, as would be expected, are now trying to access the facility and, in the interest of preventing accidents and encouraging proper and safe use of the facility, some supervised sessions have been initiated. The Sports Development Officer is available at designated times to organise young people safely in playing football and ensure that consent forms are obtained from parents or guardians. There is a small charge for the sessions. The hope is that young people will be able to access this excellent new facility whilst also being taught how to respect and take ownership so that unnecessary damage is avoided. The young people will automatically be entered onto the Freedom Card scheme, which will help us to supply monitoring information to Sport England.

### 3 HEALTHY LIFESTYLE – SERVICE CONTRACTS

RVBC has been managing Healthy Lifestyle services for over 15 years. Currently, there are health improvement programmes commissioned by Lancashire County Council (LCC), and specialist programmes for Cardiac Rehabilitation and Falls Prevention commissioned by East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). LCC commission healthy lifestyle programmes across Lancashire, and all contracts end on 31 March 2016.

In March 2015, LCC notified that they were in the process of a redesign, and there was to be a brand new service specification issued and re-procurement for these services. The new service specification came out in October with five lots, mirroring the five CCG areas. Ribble Valley sat within the East Lancashire lot and worked collaboratively with partners to put together an East Lancashire tender. The tender, considered to be a strong offer, was submitted, and notification of successful tenders was to be sent in February 2016.

However, on Friday 11 December 2015, a short email was received. This notified providers that the procurement has been discontinued on the basis of affordability, following LCC's budget review. LCC now intends to review the service and retender with a revised and lower budget. Further news of the scale of service provision, and impact this will have locally on residents who receive services through this work, is expected in the New Year.

#### 4 PLATFORM GALLERY AND VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE Roundup of activity December 2015

##### 4.1 EXHIBITIONS 2015 Winter

###### **Northern Star 2015**

A dazzling array of over eighty British craft makers in the Platform Gallery's annual winter exhibition. From 17 October – 9 January.

###### **Comments:**

"What talent" Rawtenstall

"Beautiful Jewellery by Roma Vincent" Huddersfield

"Staff was really friendly and we were impressed by all the lovely things" Whalley.

"Brilliant craftsmanship. Lots of items I wanted to buy. Very Creative." Thornton in Cleveleys.

"Think you have some brilliant items on display & I will come again. Managed to find a number of Christmas presents which are very unusual." Higham.

"Lovely atmosphere, just nice to browse. Beautiful art work. Always manage to buy something! (whether I want to or not)" Houghton, Preston.

"Super exhibition as usual. Woefully poor method of recording purchases - slow, frustrating - certainly for me the customer and must be for the staff too. Come on this is 2015! Those responsible for arranging this payment method clearly do not have the experience of using it here in the gallery. NB. I don't know any of the staff." Chipping.

##### 4.2 IN THE PLATFORM'S EDUCATION GALLERY

**December:** 4-24 Changing display promoting various Ribble Valley-based artists and arts organisations, promoting the fact that the new Ribble Valley arts website is now live [www.rvarts.co.uk](http://www.rvarts.co.uk)

###### **VISITOR NUMBERS**

<b>2015 month</b>	<b>Visitors</b>
March	3958
April	3869
May	3574
June	1724
July	2416
August	4262
September	3255
October	3604
November	2796
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,458</b>

## **Tickets**

As a service, we currently sell tickets for the Colne Municipal, Blackburn's King George's Hall / Darwen Library Theatre, Chester Zoo, National Express, Brethertons / Hodder / Moving People Coaches, Ribble Valley Fishing Permits, Stage 2 at Downham, and Clitheroe Concerts Society.

## **5 ARTS DEVELOPMENT Roundup of activity December 2015**

### **5.1 Tour of Britain**

Arts Development managed a commission with the artist Philippe Handford in conjunction with the Tour of Britain passing through the Ribble Valley in September 2015. The brief for the artwork was to create a temporary installation of a scale that was to be visible by air, and from afar, to be captured by the broadcasting helicopters on the Nick of Pendle, King of the Mountain stage of the Tour of Britain. The piece was to be situated so that it could also be viewed by Ribble Valley residents and visitors from Clitheroe. The key aim of the commission was to highlight and celebrate to residents and visitors of the Ribble Valley that the major international cycling event, "The Tour of Britain", was taking place within the borough. It created a strong memorable image that Ribble Valley and The Forest of Bowland is an outstanding cycling destination, and obtained the maximum potential from the worldwide media coverage that was achieved by the event.

### **5.2 Ribble Valley Cycling Festival**

Arts Development supported the Sports Development team in June 2015 by holding a Cycling in the Ribble Valley competition, to run alongside the Ribble Valley Cycling Festival. All Ribble Valley primary schools' Year 6 pupils were invited to create artwork showing what "Cycling in the Ribble Valley" means to them. 112 children entered, creating imaginative images. 24 special designs were chosen to feature on vinyl banners made to decorate the festival this year and beyond. Emma Lewis from Salesbury Primary School was selected the overall winner by the judges. She was awarded a new bike kindly donated by Cycles Recycled from Clitheroe, a company assisting more people to cycle more often. Emma and her family were invited to the Bike Powered Music Concert in Clitheroe Castle grounds, part of the festival, on Friday 12th June, to be awarded her prize.

### **5.3 Ribble Valley Arts website**

In December 2015, the new Ribble Valley Arts website was made live. The key aim of the website is to support Ribble Valley creative industries, by giving the public direct access to the events and businesses based in the borough, assisting the Arts to survive and thrive within the Ribble Valley. The website is managed by Ribble Valley Borough Council – Arts Development. Ribble Valley is a rural haven home to a wide variety of Arts. Its stunning scenery, bustling market towns and quaint villages set the scene as an inspirational landscape and community for creative people to thrive. Arts practitioners based in the Ribble Valley vary from hobbyists to professionals, across the full spectrum of the arts. View the Ribble Valley Arts Directory on the site for direct access to the creative talents and skills based within the borough. Throughout the year, Ribble Valley has a whole host of things to do and see, theatre, music, exhibitions, festivals, to name but a few. See the Events section to view the full diary of events. If someone is organising an Arts event within the Valley, they can add it to the Events section. Whether the viewer lives locally or is visiting for a day, there are always venues providing a regular

programme of arts to enjoy, and to inspire. Discover the art venues to explore in the Venues section. People can keep informed, and receive What's On information by subscribing to the Ribble Valley Arts newsletter, following @RVBCArtsDev on twitter or Arts Development, Ribble Valley Borough Council on Facebook. People who work in the Arts and are based in the Ribble Valley are invited to feature on the website. They may be an artist, group, designer, actor, the list goes on; if there isn't a category that fits them, we can create one for them. They can contact us through the Join page to discuss further. They can also be informed of opportunities for artists, groups, and creative businesses by signing up to the newsletter on the Subscribe page of the website. Take a look at the site [www.rvarts.co.uk](http://www.rvarts.co.uk)

#### **5.4 Bowland Revealed 2015 - Explore & Engage Programme**

In 2014, the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) celebrated 50 years since designation. As part of a wide programme of activity marking the anniversary, a major cultural programme, Bowland Revealed, took place. Bowland Revealed is a new inspiring programme of contemporary art in the outstanding natural beauty of The Forest of Bowland. Set in breath-taking countryside, Bowland Revealed began a creative journey of ambitious temporary artworks in 2014, with 4 artists creating major new work for the Landmarks Commission's programme within the landscape (one of which stayed in situ on Longridge Fell until Autumn 2015, due to popular demand). 2015 continues this programme of artistic discovery with Explore and Engage: opportunities to meet artists and take part in high quality art experiences to inspire, to engage, and to enjoy. The Explore and Engage programme involves ambitious contemporary participatory art activity in areas surrounding Bowland, particularly those areas of low art engagement, including Wyre, Pendle, and Preston. This programme will enable us to reach new people, build meaningful creative dialogue, and attract wider audiences. We recognise from our experience of high quality arts projects that we can engage people who might not normally visit Bowland. The main aim of this programme is to encourage those residents living close to Bowland, but who don't often visit the area, to participate in activity which encourages future engagement in the Forest of Bowland area and specifically the Bowland Revealed future programme. Explore and Engage will offer 5 exciting contemporary arts projects, engaging groups around Bowland and providing the opportunity to work with artists through a range of creative events and activities. Bowland Revealed is being led by the Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership with support from Lancashire Arts Development and Ribble Valley Borough Council with financial support from Arts Council England Grants for the Arts.

#### **5.5 Investing in Ribble Valley's Arts Development**

In early 2015, community groups/schools/businesses/arts organisations were asked to formally apply for their request of support from the Ribble Valley Borough Arts Development budget. This was to provide an even platform for projects to be considered for investment by RVBC. By outlining clear aims and outputs on the form, each project stated what they wanted to achieve with the activity, why it is important to Ribble Valley's development, who is the target audience, the number of people estimated to benefit, and which other partners are involved. Each request included a budget identifying their other income streams and their expenditure, alongside any in-kind support. There was a maximum amount of £2,000 available per project. Promoting this open process encourages partners to develop the Arts offer provided within the Ribble Valley. Projects were selected on the financial and social returns they would bring into the Ribble Valley.

## 5.6 Arts Award Training

### **Ribcaged Productions - £155**

There has been a contribution towards two members of staff gaining Arts Award training to become Arts Award assessors. Arts Award is a nationally recognised award designed to inspire young people to grow their arts and leadership talents: it is creative, valuable and accessible (arts equivalent of a Duke of Edinburgh scheme). Arts Award can be achieved at five levels, four accredited qualifications, and an introductory award. It can be used towards pupils' UCAS points, and encourages further study in the arts. The newly trained assessors are to work with Ribble Valley high schools and their pupils.

## 5.7 Debt Theatre Production

### **Ribcaged Productions - £1,500**

Ribcaged has created an exciting, funny theatre production, "Debt", based on real people's accounts and the difficulties they have faced from falling into debt. The company plans to tour the production free of charge across the Ribble Valley, to increase financial education amongst over a thousand 11+ year old high school pupils.

## 5.8 Spot On Lancashire Rural Touring Programme

### **Robinson Howell Partnership - £900**

This is a community touring programme, enabling volunteers in rural communities to host professional arts events on their doorstep. The aim is to deliver 10 events, in, amongst others, Whalley, Sawley, Mellor Brook, Bolton by Bowland, Ribchester, Tosside, and Grindleton, together with a 20-year celebration of Spot On.

## 5.9 Gisburn Forest Theatre

### **Robinson Howell Partnership - £500**

These are theatre workshops in Hodder Valley schools, followed by a one week intensive community arts project, leading to four outdoor promenade community theatre performances in Gisburn Forest.

## 5.10 Ribble Valley Music Festival

### **Christ Church, Chatburn - £ 1145**

This successful music event is expanding across the borough. The expansion will provide greater access to quality performing arts events for Ribble Valley residents, allowing more people to engage with performing arts and gain from its social, cultural and recreational benefits. The expansion of venues and events with the established format and reputation from Chatburn shares good practice amongst new Ribble Valley communities, and will increase visitors and tourists to the Ribble Valley. The events will also provide the opportunity for young and developing artists to gain audience experience in surroundings more familiar to them and less daunting than a concert hall.

## 5.11 The Blossom Tree Project

### **Longridge High & St Cecilia's - £2000**

This project targets vulnerable young people attending Longridge schools, addressing their needs and increasing their confidence, self-awareness, self-esteem, enhance their emotional wellbeing and increase their positivity. It will enable girls to take part in activities as a diversion away from harmful behaviours or issues affecting their lives. The after school programme includes dance, exercise, drama, beauty, creative craft activities – supported by advice sessions from partnership agencies addressing needs around sexual health, child sexual exploitation, health, risk taking, drugs, alcohol, personal safety including self-harm and internet safety.

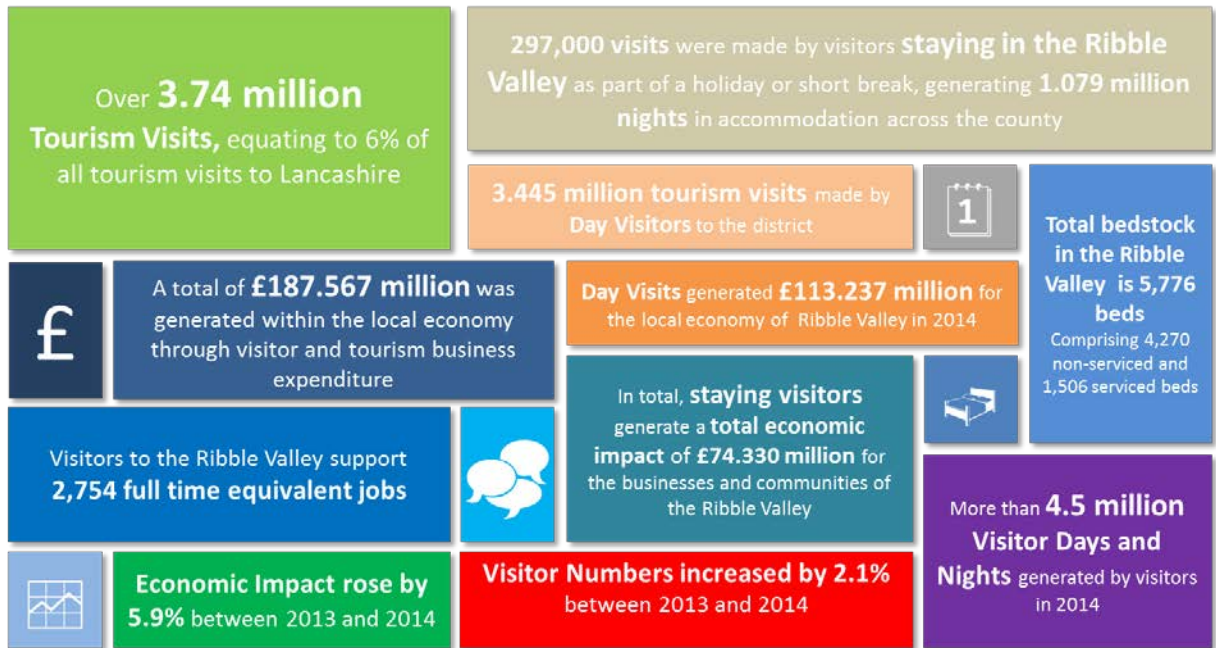
**5.12 Cloudspotting Festival Development  
Playhappy Promotions - £500**

The variety of the festival's wider programme has been improved to feature more arts and participatory art activity in addition to its live music programme. To include internationally renowned theatrical acts that have been subsidized by the Arts Council, documentary cinema, and art installations.

**6 TOURISM**

**6.1 Economic Impact latest headline data**

Tourism continues to be an important economic driver in Lancashire and, in Ribble Valley, the visitor economy is buoyant. The latest figures produced by 'STEAM', the economic model widely used to calculate tourism growth, indicates healthy growth in the industry. Whilst these statistics are always a year old, they demonstrate steady increase in the economic value and impact of tourism.



	2013	2014	YOY Variance
Total Visitor Numbers (000s)	3,664	3,742	+2.1%
Day Visitors (000's)	3,371	3,445	+2.2%
Staying Visitors (000's)	293	297	+1%
Total Visitors Days (000's)	4,418	4,524	+2.4%
Visitor Days – staying visitors (000's)	1,047	1,079	+3%
Total Economic Impact (000's)	177,110	187,567	+5.9%
Economic Impact day visitors (000's)	107,799	113,237	+5%
Economic Impact staying visitors (£000's)	69,311	74,330	+7.2%
FTE Jobs supported	2,709	2,754	+1.7%
Accommodation Stock	5,625	5,776	+2.7%
Serviced Accommodation Stock	1,435	1,506	+4.9%
Non-serviced accommodation stock	4,190	4,270	+1.9%
Vehicle Numbers (000's)	913	932	+2.1%
Vehicle Days (000's)	1,115	1,142	+2.4%

## 6.2 Visitor Guide

Tourism is promoted through a variety of channels and, unlike many destinations, there is still strong consumer and advertiser demand for a printed visitor guide. The guide takes the format of a coffee table style magazine, something that is used not only as a promotional tool to attract people here, but to guide them whilst staying in the area. This makes the guide more appealing to advertisers. The publication has 25,000 print run and a wide national distribution, working on a policy of minimal wastage. It is also distributed locally, and is used by most local accommodation providers as a bedroom browser. The contract to produce the guide has once again been subject to a competitive process, involving the submission of a print and design cost, and an evaluation of their initial design proposals, along with consideration of the sales techniques of the company. Securing the services of a company able to meet all the criteria is very challenging, and the successful company for the 2016 edition is Planet Media of Huddersfield. The contract with Planet Media is effectively an arrangement where profit is shared, so it is in the interest of both parties to work together to attract income, and to design the quality of guide that will sell itself again for 2017.

At this time the guide is almost ready to print, and it is anticipated that it will meet its income targets and retain its current size.

## 6.3 Ribble Valley Wedding Partnership

Following its successful launch last year, the Ribble Valley Wedding Partnership has grown in membership and activity. The partnership, where wedding venues are working together to promote the whole area for weddings, is believed to be the first in the country. The partnership has successfully raised the profile of the area, and has been active in social media and press coverage. It has also attended its first national wedding show, involving staff from different venues working together to promote the Ribble Valley. This has resulted in greater awareness of Ribble Valley and new



business for the area. The partnership have a press familiarisation visit planned for February 2016, which it is anticipated will attract further interest from national media.

For Ribble Valley, the partnership is not only about the venues, as there is much more that attracts weddings to the area. In addition to a stunning range of licenced wedding venues, there are also beautiful historic churches in picturesque towns and villages, and even a castle. The area also boasts a range of artistic and creative suppliers, with a wealth of talent to ensure each wedding is tailor-made and special. Suppliers are now joining the partnership and feature on the website. The Council recognises the economic importance and future potential of wedding tourism, the value of which goes way beyond the direct income generation to wedding venues and specialist wedding services. The impact of wedding guests staying, dining, and shopping in the area is significant. Also of note is the repeat visit business for accommodation providers that weddings are now attracting.

The partnership website can be found at [www.ribbonvalleyweddingheaven.co.uk](http://www.ribbonvalleyweddingheaven.co.uk) and there is also an active Facebook site which focuses on venue and events

#### **6.4 Group Travel**

Working closely with Ribble Valley Tourism Association members, a travel trade pack has now been produced to promote the locations and facilities that welcome groups. In addition, a promotional leaflet has been produced to suggest group itineraries based around food and heritage. (Both of these will be circulated at the meeting) Further itineraries are to be produced. The council has attended a number travel trade events at which the new publications have proved both popular and useful in describing the area's potential to group travel organisers, coach operators and others interested in bringing people in to discover the area. For 2015, visitor attractions in Ribble Valley have been reporting a growth in group visits into the area.

#### **6.5 Ribble Valley Tourism Association**

The Tourism and Events Officer is very involved in providing advice and assistance to new tourism businesses and supporting the development of the Ribble Valley Tourism Association, which is growing in membership and activity. Social media and website developments are also key areas of activity, not least with a refreshed website to be launched early in 2016. These areas of work will be the subject of future, more detailed, reports to this committee.

### **7 PLAY AREAS**

The Council has 18 play areas across the Borough which are maintained by the Grounds Maintenance staff who annually address general wear and tear of the equipment, plus vandalism. Whenever possible, a play area is chosen for wider scale improvement work. As a result, Mardale play area at Longridge has undergone some significant improvements this financial year.

It follows on from the work undertaken at Henthorn Road in Clitheroe last year, where some of the grass area was removed, tarmac laid and then a painted play surface was put on with snakes and ladders and other more traditional playground games for children to use.

A similar scheme has been carried out at Mardale, where a poor area of grass has been replaced with tarmac. Unfortunately, due to the poor weather, there has not been enough dry weather to get the painted surface markings down yet. This will now be



carried out in the New Year. The poor weather has not prevented children from playing on the new area of tarmac in the intervening period.

Once the weather allows, the painted game area will be done in a couple of days.

## 8 **CONCLUSION**

Committee will be informed of any relevant further developments in these, and all, areas of Community Services.

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