



**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council

Leisure Transformation Programme

Staff Engagement

Weekly update from the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team

12th June 2020



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Staff Engagement

As you are aware that despite the disruption, the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team' continue to plan for the opening of SLLC, and to move forward with the Transformation Programme as far as is practicable.

The team have committed to communicate with our indoor leisure staff as effectively and as regularly as we can.

In this update, we will focus on a number of issues: Covid-19 situation, on-line training update, HR update for staff, update from the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team, Health and Wellbeing suite SLLC, encouraging members / customers to keep fit and staff questions/queries.



Covid-19 Update

With the first week in June almost over, we are reaching that time of year when everyone is normally looking forward to summer holidays with family and friends. Things are certainly very different this year, but with the beginning of the easing of restrictions, we are making small steps towards recovery. One day we will be able to look back on this, and feel very proud that we came through this difficult time together.

Health & Wellbeing Updates

Dental update from HSC

Dental practices have been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To help explain the changes to your practice, some of your most frequently asked questions about dentists and their work are answered by some of the clinical leads of the Urgent Dental Care Clinics. More at: <https://bit.ly/2XH0q24>

GPs urge people to get early advice for cancer signs

Cancer professionals and GPs are urging people to be aware of the general signs and symptoms of cancer and to contact their GP, without delay, if they are experiencing these. This follows a significant drop, of up to 70%, in the number of red flag referrals since the start of the pandemic. More at: <https://bit.ly/3deG8n3>

Understanding the pandemic

A series of blogs have been developed by the Public Health Agency to help raise an understanding around the management, impact and epidemiology of the COVID-19 pandemic in Northern Ireland.

They also feature articles and advice on looking after your physical and mental health in this difficult time. More at: <https://bit.ly/2zuBlj6>

Working safely during coronavirus

As the lockdown restrictions are reviewed, increasing numbers of staff may be returning to the office environment. Initial controls that were put in place to protect staff are being reviewed by facility managers and the health and safety team. Some of the changes that you will see over the next weeks and months relate to social distancing measures, hygiene, and staff awareness, and will include; extra sanitisation stations throughout buildings, one-way systems where possible,

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standard signage across facilities, reception screen improvements, frequently used doors propped open during working hours and increased cleaning material availability in offices.

Everyone has the potential to bring the virus to the workplace. It is important that going forward we protect ourselves and our colleagues by:

- Staying at home if you have symptoms
- Frequently washing our hands
- 'Catch it, Bin It, Kill it'
- Complying with the controls that are in place in our facilities

It is important to note that, where possible, staff are still advised to continue to work from home until further notice.

Council staff help raise over £2,000 in 'Lough Down Swim' challenge

Two of our staff members Cathy Devlin, Investing for Health Officer, and Dorothy Johnston, Casual Swimming Coach and Teacher at Waves Leisure Complex, have helped to raise over £2,000 for Lurgan Area Community Aid, by swimming 3.1km in their back garden in the 'Lough Down Swim' fundraiser!

The duo are part of the Lough Neagh Dunkers, a brave group of open water swimmers! When one of their fellow dunkers organised a charity swim to help the local Lurgan community with support and food parcels during the current crisis, Cathy and Dorothy decided to rise to the challenge with seven other friends and collectively swim the length of Lough Neagh, 28km, in their own little pools, on a tether, in their back gardens.

Cathy explained how she got involved, "When the idea to help out our local community came up we decided that since we were both missing out on our usual swimming, this would be a great challenge to take on while also supporting such a worthwhile charity."#

"Swimming tethered in a little pool is hard as you are working against your body in a state of resistance and it takes a lot of commitment to keep going! In addition to that is the fact that you are swimming in coldwater, most of our back yard swims have been in temperatures of just 12

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degrees, but we still loved it! She added, “We are delighted to have been able to contribute to the overall total and know that we are really helping local families during this difficult time.”

Congratulations ladies from all your colleagues at Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council.

On-line Training

The on-line training portal launched on the 4th May 2020 for our indoor leisure staff to complete training during this time of exceptional closure.

- 90% of staff have completed the NOP & EAP training for SLLC and there are still a few support sessions taking place for the last few people to complete this training.
- RLSS training for Craigavon; 90% completed and Banbridge/Armagh is close to 100% members of staff completed the training.

Safeguarding Training

This week we are launching ‘Safeguarding Training’ on the portal which is essential and mandatory for all staff to complete across indoor leisure. All staff are asked to complete this training on or before the 1st July 2020.

To complete this training please follow this link:

<https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/leisureupdates/#trainingportal>

Safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff to complete and is vital, as we need to ensure that we are ready to re-open **all** our buildings, including the new South Lake Leisure Centre. Once you complete this training the system will recognise that you have done so.

If you have any issues access this training please contact Mark Wilson:

mark.wilson@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

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We will be expanding the online training modules that will be available in the coming weeks, this will include Microsoft Word & Excel Training and Managing Mental Health.

Please keep up to date with Leisure Matters for more details.

HR update for staff

One to One Consultations

Thank you to all staff for their input in the one to one consultations last week, as you are aware we will now move to the next stage of the process and will have a final consultation with you in the next 4 to 5 weeks.

Please keep up to date with Leisure Matters over the coming weeks for updates, training opportunities and recruitment.

Time and Attendance

We understand that during these times some staff members are carrying out a range of working patterns outside their contracted working arrangements. There are a number of examples of these and we are communicating the most reasonable approach at this time:

Employees who:

- Are able to work 100% of their contracted hours, should as far as reasonably practical, clock in and out and normal arrangements will apply.
- Are required to work beyond their normal contractual hours and who submit a claim for TOIL, flexi or overtime must have authorisation prior to working from their HoD/Manager before any payment or updating of records can be applied.
- Are not able to work to 100% of their contracted hours and who are on the flexi system, at this stage, are permitted to put corrections in the time and attendance system so that it equates to your standard targeted hours, even if some, or all, of these hours are not actually worked.
- Have been re-deployed to another role, if you are on a time and attendance system you should update it in line with points above. It is the employee's responsibility to maintain your time and attendance records and managers will continue to approve these. If you need to discuss any

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issues in relation to the above please contact your HR department within the location you are based.

Annual Leave

Annual leave allows employees to take paid time off from work for the purpose of having regular breaks so that they can rest and re-energise.

In line with the Leave Policy, you will continue to accrue annual leave and that you will use your leave at the rate, it accrues each month, dependant on your service with the Council. Any pre-booked leave that you have requested will be honoured and deducted from your annual leave allowance, dependent on the needs of the service.

If you do not have pre booked leave, it is expected that you will use 50% of your annual leave by 6th November 2020. All approval for leave must be sought in line with the leave policy. If however, you are considered to be a frontline worker and unable to take annual leave requested due to Covid-19, you may be permitted to carry over leave beyond our normal carryover in line with the government guidelines. This will be confirmed on a case by case basis by your line manager in conjunction with the HR Operations Manager.

Quarantine on return from holidays abroad

In line with recommendations from government guidelines, you are requested on return from holidays abroad to self-isolate for 14 days.

If you had, a holiday booked prior to Covid-19 and your holiday provider has not cancelled your holiday the Council will request written proof that this is indeed the case and will following discussion with the employee, arrange for you to work from home or undertake duties via self-isolation during the 14 day period. If however, you book a holiday whilst aware of the need to self-isolate for 14 days on return, and you return to self-isolation you will be expected to take unpaid leave or a period of further annual leave at this time for 14 days.

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Update from the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team'

The 'Leisure Transformation Project Team' gave you some information regarding some of the projects that we have been working during the closure on a number of projects in relation to indoor leisure across the Borough.

Since the closure 'full Council' has met twice using 'Zoom', with the meetings being live streamed to the public, if you would like to view future meetings please follow this link: <http://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/maycouncilmeeting/>

At the Council meeting held on the 25th May 2020, Members agreed to re-establish a number of committees using virtual meetings which included the 'South Lake Leisure Centre Board'.

The first 'virtual' meeting of this Board is being held on Monday 15th June 2020, with a second meeting on Monday 29th June 2020, future dates for July and August have yet to be confirmed. The meetings will be held in private session, as were the previous 'in person' meetings.

As you will be aware from previous 'Leisure Matters' communications, work has not stopped on the transformation of indoor leisure.

The last meeting of this Board was held in March 2020 so there is a lot of information that we have to update Members about. They have further key decisions to make over the summer before SLLC opens and it is good news that the Board will be in place to provide governance and oversight.

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Health and Wellbeing suite SLLC



Last week Council invited suitably qualified and experience practitioners to register their interest in working from the health and wellbeing suite at South Lake Leisure Centre on a self-employed basis.

We understand and are aware that during this closure period it may be difficult to reach all those therapists who would like to register their interest with us so we have agreed to share the information more widely through the various social media channels open to us and through the local press.

We have; therefore, extended the closure date for expressions of interest to 26th June 2020.

Please feel free to share this information as widely as you can to any one that you know might be interested in taking up this opportunity.

To register interest and receive further information on this exciting opportunity, please go to: <https://getactiveabc.com/south-lake-leisure-centre/health-and-wellbeing/> for more details or email Joanne Martin: Joanne.martin@v4services.com

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Encouraging members/customers to keep fit

As you are all aware that Council has been encouraging our members/customers to keep active whilst they stay at home. We all know that having a regular exercise slot added into a daily routine helps boost mental wellbeing and improve physical health.

So as our outdoor spaces are now open to the public it was agreed that we should deliver a number of activities outdoors if possible.

To date our 'Sports Development Team' have been delivering a number of activities in our Parks and Open Spaces from Monday 8th June 2020. These activities have included dance, body weight exercises (star jumps, squats) they are limited in what they can offer as a number of regulations must be adhered to:

- People must book the activity on line via Getactive.
- Must adhere to social distancing and hygiene standards.
- There is a maximum of 4 people that can attend; however, this is going up to 10 next week.
- No equipment can be used at the moment until regulations change.
- They are ½ hour sessions as the facilities have no toilet facilities available; however, this is changing on Monday 15th June some public toilets are opening.

At the moment there are 3 activities being held across 3 days and they have been fully booked to date. Given the success our 'Sports Development Team' are going to increase the number of activities on offer and the venues used.

So now indoors are moving outdoors !! This is a departure from what we normally do in the setting of an indoor leisure centre, but in the next few weeks we hope to be offering a range of classes outdoor. Again like Sports Development these classes will have to be booked and all regulations adhered to.

A number of staff have been contacted about taking these classes, further details will be released once the timetable has been confirmed.

If you would like to get involved;

Please contact Paul Coleman: paul.A.coleman@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk



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Staff Questions/Queries

The 'Leisure Transformation Project Team' are interested in hearing from you, if you have any questions/queries or have a specific issue that you would like us to address during this unusual period of closure, please contact: joanne.grattan@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk with the detail.