



**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council

Leisure Transformation Programme

Staff Engagement

Weekly update from the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team

31st July



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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: on-line training update, HR update, 'Leisure Transformation Project Team update and staff questions/queries.

Please note: Owing to staff annual leave, there will be no Leisure Matters next week (W/B 3rd August). Leisure Matters will be back on the 14th August.



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On-line Training

This week has seen the start of the Covid-19 Lifeguard Competency Assessment Training in preparation for the reopening of the Swimming Pools in Banbridge Leisure Centre, Cascades Leisure Complex and Orchard Leisure Centre on the 7th August 2020.

This training will continue over the next few weeks so to ensure high standards are maintained.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding training module remains on line so if you haven't already completed the training, please go on line and complete it.

To complete this training please follow this link:

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

Covid 19 Risk Assessments

The Covid-19 Risk Assessments for the re-opening of gyms remain on line, if you have not completed this training staff are asked to complete this as soon as possible.

This training is mandatory for all staff to complete and is vital, as we need to ensure that we are ready to re-open our buildings, including the new South Lake Leisure Centre.

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

mark.wilson@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk



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HR update for staff

Programme of courses

Learning & Development have put together a brief programme of courses for July and August; just to remind you about these courses,

They will be run remotely and you will be able to complete them from your laptop, iPad, smart phone etc.

The courses are a mixture of skills based training and some wellbeing modules to help support us all in these challenging times.

If you are interested in any of these, you can book a place in one of the following ways:

- Through the Booking Bug - <http://abc-svr-intra.abc.local/human-resources>. *(Courses are listed under Microsoft Courses and Personal Development)*
- Emailing HRTraining@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk
- By phoning Craigavon HR Office on [028 38312498](tel:02838312498) and speaking to either Karen Baxter, Nicola Watt or Maria McConville.

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis.

The courses are being facilitated via Zoom which you will need to download. You will then be forwarded a link for access.

Please ensure that you leave us an email address or mobile number when you book your place (if you are not using a work email) so that the link can be forwarded. Your details will only be used for the purposes of sending you the training information (which will come via the Provider or HR) and will not be shared with anyone else.

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Consultations - update

Rotas have been finalised. Due to unforeseen circumstances there has been a slight delay in the administration of the letters confirming individual shift patterns. All staff will receive a letter within by Friday 7th August 2020 confirming your shift pattern. If you have any questions please contact Michelle Nugent – michelle.nugent@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Occupational Health

As part of the ongoing occupation health reviews, staff may be required to complete and audio and eyesight test with Occupational Health.

These will take place over the following dates:

- 4th August
- 7th August
- 11th August
- 14th August

If you are required to attend you will received a letter within the next week. You must attend at the date and time stated on the letter. There will be no option to change or swap appointments.

Failure to attend may impact on your start date in SLLC.

Recruitment

- All vacant posts have been advertised internally

For all staff attending interviews please ensure you confirm you will be attending your interview. Due to ongoing Covid 19 restrictions interviews will feel very different at this time. In order to prepare yourself for the interview please be advised of the following:



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Candidates will be contacted before their interview to complete a Covid questionnaire to ensure they are not displaying any Covid symptoms.

- All interviews will be socially distanced with panel members and candidates 2 metres apart
- Candidates will be required to bring their own bottled water
- Hand sanitiser will be provided
- Desks and chairs will be cleaned before and after every interview
- Candidates will be asked to remain in their cars until called for interview

Feedback sessions

Feedback sessions will be offered after shortlisting and interview for candidates who are unsuccessful – if you require feedback please contact Michelle Nugent to arrange a feedback slot with the panel.

If you have any questions please contact Michelle Nugent at Michelle.Nugent@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk



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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.

South Lake Leisure Centre new opening date

This week the new opening date of the 2nd November 2020 for the South Lake Leisure Centre was released to the public; the following press release has been circulated in the local press and on our social media channels:

South Lake Leisure Centre announces opening date

Northern Ireland's flagship public leisure facility will open to the public on 2nd November 2020 following a multi-million-pound investment.

The largest capital project to date undertaken by ABC Council, and among the largest in Northern Ireland, the new multi-use sports and leisure complex represents a major new flagship health and wellbeing destination.

Due to the current pandemic, and in line with government recommendations, work on the facility halted for a short time. Since returning to site Farrans, the contractor in charge of the build, has performed admirably to ensure the contract is completed in the shortest time possible - ready for opening in the autumn.

Farrans has been spearheading the transformative build since initial enabling works got under way early in 2018, creating 500 jobs on site during construction as part of a project which has delivered at least £6.5 million in direct wages to the local economy.

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Located at the south side of Craigavon's balancing lake, the facility is a landmark venue for the area and is situated within a pre-existing network of walking and cycling paths covering around three miles. The stunning new leisure centre will welcome visitors from across the borough and beyond to its new 50-metre pool, a young children's indoor leisure water feature, a 1,000m² state-of-the-art gym, multiple studios, health & wellbeing suite, sensory room, eight-court sports halls, spin studio, soft play area and an on-site café.

It also incorporates an outdoor water sports provision offering a wide range of water based activities including windsurfing, water skiing and paddle sports.

The scale of South Lake Leisure Centre has been future-proofed to meet the needs of a growing population and a raising demand from a range of leisure, amateur and professional sporting enthusiasts.

Lord Mayor of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, Councillor Kevin Savage, said:

"With a confirmed opening date just 14 weeks away, I am delighted that this stunning new centre - which will have fabulous facilities for everyone in the borough to access and enjoy - is almost complete.

South Lake Leisure Centre provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform and dramatically enhance the quality of health and leisure provision within the borough, providing community access for everyone to the best facilities available in the UK and Ireland."

The venue will provide a competitive range of flexible membership and customer schemes allowing easy and affordable access on a one-off or longer term basis, so that everyone can enjoy the new facility in a way that suits their lifestyle and budget.

As part of the preparations to pave the way for the official opening of South Lake Leisure Centre, interim arrangements have also been agreed for nearby leisure facilities in Portadown (Cascade Leisure Centre) and Brownlow (Craigavon Leisure Centre) to help ensure a seamless transition and accommodate staff training and orientation of the new centre.

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Cascades Leisure Complex will be open to the public for lane swimming only in August, remaining open until Saturday 10th October.

Craigavon Leisure Centre will remain open to the public for gym only until Monday 12th October.

Waves Leisure Complex will not re-open to the public. When all these facilities, which are approaching the end of their functional life close, leisure staff will begin their training in the new South Lake Leisure Centre building.

Re-opening of swimming in our indoor leisure facilities

As you are aware we are making preparations to reopen a number of swimming pools in the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Area on Thursday 7th August 2020, this will allow us to reopen in a phased manner and with restricted times for public swimming;

We will be advising customers/public this week about this re-opening and some of the changes that they will encounter when using a facility; this information will be provided to customer via the press and our social media channels and the detail will be as follows:

Council swimming pools to begin reopening from Friday 7 August for public swimming

'A number of swimming pools at council facilities across Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough will begin a phased reopening, with restricted public swimming times, from Friday 7 August.'

The swimming pool facilities initially reopening are Banbridge Leisure Centre, Cascades Leisure Complex and Orchard Leisure Centre. For the initial reopening phase, individual lane swimming only will be available for those aged 16 and over. Recreational swimming, including family swimming sessions, will not be available during the initial reopening phase, however additional updates will be communicated via social media and local press as the phased reopening progresses. Timetables will vary across each location and users are advised to visit www.getactiveabc.com/book for up to date information and for details on how to book sessions.

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Due to Covid-19, the user experience will be slightly different, incorporating new safety measures to provide safe, but friendly, leisure environments for everyone to enjoy. Sauna, steam rooms and spa pools will not be available at this time until further notice. There are four simple steps to remember when using any leisure facility.

Step 1: Book in advance:

- All sessions must be pre-booked online in advance via www.getactiveabc.com/book or by telephoning the relevant facility. This way reduces queuing in reception areas and allows for contactless payment.

Step 2: Access to facilities has changed:

- Changing rooms will be available for swimmers, however showers are not permitted at this time. Until showering is available in centres, we highly recommend that all swimmers shower at home soon after their swim.
- Users are advised to bring their own drinking water, as water fountains will remain out of use.
- Strict hygiene and social distancing rules will be in place, with a one-hour time limit in the swimming pool.
- Only individual lane swimming is permitted at this time for those aged 16 and over. Recreational and family swimming is not available during the the initial reopening phase.
- To meet the government guidelines for gathering size limits and social distancing, entry into swimming pools will be limited and capacity will depend on the size of each location.

Step 3: Personal responsibilities

- Please respect the social distancing floor markers when queuing.
- Use the hand sanitiser provided on entry, and when leaving each facility and exercise area.
- Do not attend any facility if you are feeling unwell or displaying any symptoms of Covid-19, or if you are in a period of self-isolation.
- Practice good respiratory hygiene.

Step 4: It's a new experience for everyone

- The customer experience may look and feel a little different than usual, but as always, staff will be there to guide customers through.

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- The health and safety of all users is a priority at all facilities, and users should be assured that each facility operates to the highest standards of Public Health Agency (PHA) guidelines.

Public Swimming – Rules and Guidelines (Based on regulatory guidance)

- All swimmers must be 16 years of age or older to swim until further notice.
- Each session “in the water time” is 60 mins max – 60 mins cannot be guaranteed at all times.
- Butterfly, backstroke, and arm bands/floats are not permitted.
- For public lane, sessions there will be three double-width lanes only available in each pool. These will be limited to a maximum of eight swimmers per lane in our three pools. There will normally be one slow speed lane, one medium speed lane and one fast speed lane.
- Slow speed, medium speed and fast speed lanes should be booked in advance.
- Toilet facilities are available for public use.

To book your swim session, even if you don't have a leisure membership, please visit www.getactiveabc.com/book. Swim sessions are being offered at a reduced cost of £2.35 per session for the month of August and booking is available now at www.getactiveabc.com/book.

If you are already a member but haven't set up your account to book online, visit www.getactiveabc.com/book to find out how to link your membership.

Throughout the month of August, existing all-inclusive members will not be charged for any activity, including gym sessions, exercise classes and swim sessions, to compensate for the period of closure during Covid-19.

All existing members of facilities that remain closed are welcome to use any of the other facilities that are open during this exceptional time. As soon as reopening dates are agreed for the other facilities, these will be posted on the council's social media platforms.

The new South Lake Leisure Centre will open to the public on 2 November 2020. To accommodate this in the Craigavon area the three existing facilities will phase out of operation:

- Cascades Leisure Complex will be open to the general public for swimming only on Saturday's until 10 October 2020.

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- Craigavon Leisure Centre will remain open until Monday 12 October 2020 for gym only activity.
- Waves Leisure will remain closed and will not reopen to the public.

The leisure services team is really looking forward to welcoming everyone back into the facilities and they would like to thank users in advance for their patience and cooperation as everyone adapts to these new ways of operating.

Staff use of gym/exercise classes and swimming

Again the week there have been a number of staff members have been making contact asking if they can book a session in the gym/exercise class and now swimming.

As you are aware staff (Permanent and Temporary, excluding Casuals) can avail of free gym and swimming (during public swim times) in the Armagh, Banbridge or Craigavon area.

There are a number of staff who pay a £10.00 DD to ensure that they can book exercise classes in advance, this option is still open to these members of staff but they must pay £2.50 a class until the end of July. For those members of staff who have a DD may use the exercise classes free of charge throughout August to compensate for the time lost due to the closure of facilities in March due to the Covid-19 situation.

In the past staff have been able to take part in an exercise class free of charge if there was a space available. This is now being suspended and staff will no longer be able to join exercise class free of charge; this issue will be reviewed as the covid situation changes.

If a member of staff asks how this works please ask them to contact Gary Major in advance so that he can set them up as a staff member; gary.major@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

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Re-opening of smaller Leisure facilities

The reopening date for the 6 remaining dry indoor leisure facilities was discussed and agreed this week.

The sites are as follows:

- Dromore Community Centre
- Gilford Community Centre
- Rathfriland Community Centre
- Tandragee Recreation Centre
- Keady Recreation Centre
- Richhill Recreation Centre

A number of practical and resource implications were considered;

1. To ensure that leisure staff have adequate time to plan to re-open and to manage the installation of new gym equipment and pre-works.
2. Contractors and Technical Officers can deliver works on new gym floors, electrics and connectivity during August prior to gym equipment installs with very few restrictions.
3. Legend – Internal resources will have adequate time to implement Legend and train staff in the 3 dry Armagh sites and to concentrate on re-starting leisure memberships.

Following discussion it was agreed that these centres will re-open to the public on 15 Sept or soon after. We will publicise the actual opening dates for these centres in the next 2-3 weeks.

Notes:

- It is estimated that Banbridge and Orchard leisure centres will be able to open and use their new gym areas and normal main sports halls by 25 September 2020, but can operate as temporary gym/classes set-ups until then.
- Dromore should be able to use its new gym area with new equipment on 12 October 2020, but can operate as temporary gym/classes set-ups until then.



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- South Lake LC is planned to open (with new gym equipment etc.) on 2 November 2020.
- These projected dates are based on equipment delivery dates provided by our supplier but may be subject to change.

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