



**Armagh City  
Banbridge  
& Craigavon**  
Borough Council

**Leisure Transformation Programme**

**Staff Engagement**

**Weekly update from the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team**

**16<sup>th</sup> October 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, on-line training update, HR update, 'Leisure Transformation Project Team' update and staff questions/queries.



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## **Covid 19**

Due to the rise in cases of Covid-19 across the region it is increasingly important that we look after each other as colleagues in our work environment. It is crucial that we follow the protocols in place in the workplace, and the general Public Health Agency (PHA) guidance to wash our hands, keep our distance, practice good respiratory hygiene, wear a mask where appropriate, and limit our social contacts.

There is no doubt that the situation we find ourselves in is having a significant impact on our daily lives, but it is vitally important that we continue to try to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in our community. To highlight this important message Council has launched a new digital campaign entitled 'Stop the spread' as a public appeal to support government and Public Health Agency (PHA) messaging across the borough. The campaign was launched last night by the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, and we ask that you like and share this messaging to broaden the reach of our campaign. To view the launch message click: <https://bit.ly/3dhXksY>

## **Take 5 Workplace Health Challenge**

The Council's Health and Wellbeing Committee are excited to announce a new Take 5 Workplace Health Challenge.

In teams of 5 you will be competing against each other to improve your physical and emotional wellbeing over a 5 week period starting on the 19 October and completing on the 23 November.

Each team will nominate a Team Captain and each team member will record their daily fruit & veg intake, if they had breakfast, their daily physical activity minutes and also how they connect, give, learn and take notice on a daily basis. There will be two prizes, one for the best team and one for the most improved team.

To register your interest please contact Cathy Devlin on ext 1533 or email [cathy.devlin@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.devlin@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk) by the 12th October.

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## Electric Vehicle Chargers

Have you installed an electric vehicle charge point in your home?

If so, NIE Networks is asking all residents in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area who have installed, or plan to install, an electrical vehicle charger, to notify them.

It comes as statistics show that although there are almost 3,500 electric vehicles registered in Northern Ireland, NIE Networks have only received notification of one third of domestic charge points. The utility needs to be notified if a customer plans to install a domestic charge point, or even if they just plan to charge the vehicle via a normal 13amp plug, so it can invest in the electricity network where needed and ensure the network has sufficient capacity. It is also critical for safety and ensuring a property does not exceed the supply capacity.



If customers have installed, or plan to install, an electrical vehicle charger, they can submit their notification to NIE Networks online in just a few minutes by visiting [nienetworks.co.uk/connections/low-carbon-technologies](https://nienetworks.co.uk/connections/low-carbon-technologies)

## **Saturday 10 October is World Mental Health Day**

World Mental Health Day 2020 is the most important one yet. Uncertainty and major changes to the way we live our lives are having a considerable impact on us all. Prioritising our mental health has never been so important.



Here's an outline of how we are supporting this year's campaign.

- This week the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor visited several groups - Action Mental Health (AMH) New Horizons in Craigavon, The Right Key Recovery Centre in Loughbrickland, Armagh Men's Shed and Links Counselling in Lurgan - to thank them for providing a vital community resource and for supporting people who are experiencing mental health issues, are recovering from mental ill health or are at most at risk of developing a mental illness.

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- Over the past five weeks, we have been sharing the 'Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing' messages - Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give - as part of the HSC's Working Together to Promote Mental Wellbeing campaign. We will share more messages on social media this Saturday to mark the end of this campaign and remind people once again to look after their mental health or seek support if they are struggling to cope.
- Our Health and Wellbeing Committee announced a new Take 5 Workplace Health Challenge this week. You can join a team of five and compete against other teams as you support each other in improving your physical and emotional wellbeing over a five-week period starting on 19 October. See intranet for more details.
- In addition, we signposted local communities to our online Directory of Support Services and Crisis Helplines and encouraged those in the community who need help to access professional counselling from a wealth of organisations and charities. A direct link to the directory is available at [armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](http://armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)
- Key council buildings lit up green on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October to mark World Mental Health Day.

For more information on World Mental Health Day, visit [www.wmhd2020.com](http://www.wmhd2020.com) and follow [#WorldMentalHealthDay](https://twitter.com/WorldMentalHealthDay) [#WMHD2020](https://twitter.com/WMHD2020)

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## **New Covid restriction announced by NI Executive 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

The NI Executive announcement on the 14 October, sees the return to greater restrictions across Northern Ireland. I know that this will have a significant impact on our daily lives, and that this is hard for us all as a society, but it is vitally important that we support the new restrictions to curb the spread of this pandemic as winter approaches.

As a result of the announcement Council is striving to continue operating services, but acknowledges that there may be some impact on service delivery. Essential services will be prioritised, with redeployment from other service areas taking place with immediate effect, and work will continue across all other departments in conjunction with line managers service needs.

Over the last seven months we have worked hard to enable remote working across service teams, so I am advising those staff that can work from home to please do so. Our offices have also undertaken Covid Risk Assessments to enable the office environment to function safely for those staff that will be required to come to work. With reduced capacity within the office environment, staff can safely perform their duties with their Line Managers support. All facilities will remain open. However, this situation will be kept under review in-line with service priorities, and further clarifications from the Northern Ireland Executive, anticipated tomorrow.

In the days and weeks ahead it is essential that certain council services continue to operate, whilst other services will operate on a reduce capacity as a result of the recent restrictions. Staff who are not required in these facilities or services will be redeployed to another area of need. You will be redeployed on your full contracted hours, and those who do not undertake the redeployment that is being offered will be required to use annual leave or unpaid leave.

For those employees who may be impacted as a result of the school closures, outside of the Halloween break, options are as follows; depending upon operational needs your manager may be able to permit you to alter when you work your contracted hours, or if you are not able to work your full contracted hours, then you can avail of 3 days Covid-19 related special leave (**if not already taken during the last lock down period**), annual leave, or unpaid leave including a request for unpaid parental leave.

This is an evolving situation and I ask for your support as we navigate through this once again, and I will bring you further updates in due course. The rapid increase in transmission of Covid-19 across Northern Ireland is very concerning, and it is up to us all individually, and as



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representatives of this council, to abide by the regulations to protect each other, reduce the level of hospitalisations and ultimately save lives.

Together we can help stop the spread of this virus in our community.

**Please Note: It has been agreed that all staff working in South Lake Leisure Centre or Dromore Recreation Centre will not be considered for redeployment during this current restriction period.**

## **Training**

Training continues with staff at SLLC; this week there was a good turnout of staff who attended and took part in

- Manager & OPS: Briefing on direction of travel.
- Staff EMS14001 training.
- Staff fire and building training.
- Staff engagement workshops.
- Staff taking part in water sports/cycling/ walking activity.
- Staff taking the lead on shaping the customer journey.
- Staff taking the lead on customer relationship / good service delivery.
- Debriefing from Mike & Paul.

Thank you to staff for taking part and getting involved in this really important piece of work.

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## **Update from the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team'**

The 'Leisure Transformation Project Team' would like to give information regarding some of the projects that we have been working in relation to indoor leisure across the Borough;

### **Covid restriction implications for indoor leisure**

As you are all aware the NI Executive announced additional restrictions due to an increase in Coronavirus (COVID-19)

These new restrictions are being put in place to help reduce the spread of coronavirus and to help manage the pressures on our health and social care system.

The restrictions will be introduced from 6.00pm on 16 October 2020 and will be in place for four weeks.

Everyone has their part to play to stopping the spread of the virus in the community by limiting your contact with others; regular handwashing, wearing of [face coverings](#) and good social distancing.

#### **The new restrictions state:**

- No indoor sport of any kind or organised contact sport involving household mixing other than at elite level.
- No mass events involving more than 15 people (except for allowed outdoor sporting events where the relevant number for that will continue to apply).
- Gyms may remain open but for individual training only with local enforcement in place.

All Council Leisure/recreation Centres will remain open to the public with the following activities on offer until further notice:

- Individual lane swimming.
- Individual gym sessions.

These activities must be pre-booked on-line

**All restrictions will be kept under review in line with Northern Ireland Executive regulations, and Public Health Agency guidelines.**

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## **The Wearing of Face Masks**

Face masks have become our new and required accessory in public, and whether we like it or not, this trend is probably not disappearing anytime soon. Given the sobering reality of the increasing rise in Coronavirus cases across Northern Ireland, it has become increasingly more important that everyone takes individual responsibility for wearing a face mask in areas where we come into contact with people from outside of our family bubble.

As part of our campaign to #StopTheSpread we are asking all our staff to lead by example and wear a face mask in all public and communal areas within all our facilities, when sharing vehicles, and in council vehicles. This is to protect you, your colleagues, your families, loved ones and our community in the weeks and months ahead, as it is widely acknowledged that this virus rapidly spreads through community transmission. We believe that taking this step will reinforce a culture of Covid alertness within the workplace, by heightening our social awareness around interactions with our colleagues and members of the public.

But to make things a little more interesting we are launching a staff competition to see who can come up with the most interesting face mask to cheer us all up. So get creative and submit a photograph of you wearing your face mask in work to [communications@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:communications@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk), by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October to be in with a chance to win a Fit Bit Inspire. The winning entry will be picked by Roger Wilson, Chief Executive.

## **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](mailto:joanne.grattan@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk) with the detail.

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