



**Armagh City  
Banbridge  
& Craigavon**  
Borough Council

**Leisure Transformation Programme**

**Staff Engagement**

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

**17<sup>th</sup> September 2021**



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## **Staff Engagement**

As you are aware that despite the disruption, the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team' continue to move forward with the Transformation Programme to embed new ways of working and continuous improvement.

Completion of transformation across Indoor Leisure and a re-structure of staffing is necessary to achieve a consistency of resources and approach, for the following reasons:

- Indoor Leisure, as a whole, share;
  - The same objectives and targets – to be an industry leader, and deliver an improved leisure service.
  - The same ABC wide customer membership/charging system.
  - The same need to demonstrate that the “In House Model” can transform and perform.
- Good employee relations - fairness and consistency are necessary in this regard and currently staff have different job descriptions and pay grades for the same roles in many cases.
- Management and staff resources are currently inconsistent from site to site.
- Job roles (new and existing) need to align with SLLC and with best industry practice.
- The need to improve staff flexibility and sharing across all sites.

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



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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 leisure across the Borough;

### Update on Transformation of indoor leisure

The Transformation Team (Management/TU Team) continue to meet on a regular basis to clarify all plans/decisions and processes.

There is a lot of background work going on looking at the fine detail of the different aspects of Transformation – in particular, at this time;

One to one meetings have commenced with Exercise Class Instructors to agree delivery of classes going forward under one ABC system. Exercise class delivery and instructors timetables will also allow us to finalise staff rotas at all centres.

### Awards



### APSE Service Awards 2021

As you are aware Council submitted 5 award applications were to 'The Association for Public Service Excellence (**APSE**)' which is the is owned by its members and, working on their behalf, maintains and develops a network of local government officers, managers and councilors from local authorities across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

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Working on a not-for-profit basis, APSE is dedicated to promoting excellence in the delivery of frontline services to local communities around the UK.

These awards recognise the very best in local government frontline services across the UK and following a rigorous round of judging the finalist councils have now been announced.

In total APSE receive 320 submission from Councils across the UK and out of the 5 applications the Head and Recreation Department submitted we were finalists in each category below;

Category	Area	Service Area
<b>‘Overall Council of the Year in Service Delivery’</b>		
<b>Best Health and Well-being initiative</b>	Girls Active	Sorts Development
<b>Best Service Team of the Year: Parks, Grounds &amp; Horticultural service</b>	Gosford Forest Park	Outdoor Leisure
<b>Best Housing, Regeneration or New Build initiative</b>	SLLC	Indoor Leisure
<b>Best Efficiency and Transformation initiative</b>	SLLC	Indoor Leisure
<b>Best Service Team of the Year: Sports, Leisure and Cultural service</b>	SLLC	Indoor Leisure

The Lord Mayor, Alderman Glenn Barr, Councilors and council staff were in attendance at the awards and we are pleased to announce that Council won one of the awards for;



**‘Best Service Team of the Year: Parks, Grounds & Horticultural Service, for Gosford Forest Park.’**

Speaking of winning the award, the Lord Mayor said, “This is a major achievement for our Health and Recreation Department and the Council as a whole. Picking up the award for Best Service Team for Parks, Grounds and Horticulture is true recognition of the dedicated work the team at Gosford Park undertake to ensure the park remains a superb outdoor attraction for our residents

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and visitors to the Borough. This award highlights a supreme example of teamwork and commitment to their role which benefits all who visit Gosford Forest Park.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to the other sections of the Health and Recreation team who were up for awards in four other categories. Reaching the final shortlist is a superb achievement in itself, one which I personally, and on behalf of the council are extremely proud of.

It's fantastic to see recognition for everyone involved, who work tirelessly to ensure that our local leisure facilities and services are maintained and delivered to an exceptional standard especially in what has been an extremely challenging year."

The Transformation team would like to congratulate the team in Gosford for winning the award for the best service team of the year, what an achievement to be recognised by your peers for the dedication and hard work that this team has put in delivering this service over this last year which has been a challenge and a half.

To be nominated as finalists was in itself an amazing achievement and it is a credit to every member of staff for the hard work that you all put in each day to deliver a top class service to the public.



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## CIPD NI HR AWARDS

We have also progressed to the final stage of the '2021 CIPD NI HR Awards' and the winner will be announced on the 7<sup>th</sup> October... so watch this space for news.....

*Good  
Luck!*

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### **Face masks**

Our main priority is to keep all our employees and customers safe as we transition out of lockdown, and restrictions continue to ease. It is therefore important that all employees continue to wear face coverings in all publicly accessible places. This is mandatory at this time, therefore all employees and the public are required to follow the guidance when in or using council facilities, exemptions do apply. For further information in relation to this guidance, <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-face-coverings>.



**Thank you for your continued co-operation.**

### **Fitness challenge**

Our indoor fitness team are challenging our customers to see how many sets that they can manage and if you want to see how this works please visit the get active abc page.

### **National fitness day 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

With one week to go to National Fitness Day we are encouraging our customers to get involved to help with fitness, we are encouraging them check out our activity programme with lots of option available for everyone; by going to [getactiveabc.com/activities](http://getactiveabc.com/activities)

We are also running a competition on the lead up to this day so if you have any customers that you think would be interested in getting involved please encourage them to keep an eye on our social media for the #competitiongiveaway and our activity programme.

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## **COACH & CLUB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME LAUNCHED**



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Council is offering local sports clubs and coaches a range of specialised training opportunities as part of its just launched [2021-22 Coach Education and Club Development Programme](#).

Delivered in partnership with [Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon \(ABC\) Sports Forum](#), the Programme will include a mixture of online and in-person workshops, covering topics such as safeguarding children and young people, designated officer, emergency first aid and mental health in sport.

Speaking at the launch, Lord Mayor of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, Alderman Glenn Barr said:



**“I am pleased to officially launch our 2021-22 Coach Education and Club Development Programme. As a council, we recognise and value the important role local clubs and coaches play in guiding and inspiring lifelong participation and success in sport.**

**“Through this year’s Programme – which offers both online and face-to-face training opportunities – we are committed to supporting the development of clubs, coaches and volunteers at all levels to ensure the borough’s sporting community continue to excel.”**

With workshops taking place from September 2021 to March 2022, the Programme also offers training opportunities around club development planning, income generation, attracting and retaining club members as well as provides participants with the chance to attend practical-based workshops such as creating great sports environments for children, and disability inclusion training.

Chair of Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum Edith Jamison said:

**“With such a wide range of workshops on offer there is something relevant and innovative for our clubs, coaches and volunteers at all levels to support their ongoing development. I would encourage all clubs, coaches and volunteers throughout the Borough to get involved and benefit from the great programme on offer.”**

Varying per workshop, costs are heavily subsidised and are payable upon registration.

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Affiliated members of ABC Sports Forum can avail of these workshops free of charge and will receive separate booking instructions and voucher codes.

- [To find out more about the content of each workshop or to book your place click here](#) or
- [To download a copy of the brochure click here.](#)

If you know of any local sports clubs and coaches interested in a range of specialised training opportunities please let them know.

For further information, contact Amanda Mogey, Assistant Sports Development Officer at ABC Council on [amanda.mogey@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.mogey@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)

### **Expressions of Interest**

The easing of Covid-19 restrictions has brought with it many challenges for Council, however the safe reopening of facilities and safety of customers will always been paramount. As restrictions have eased Council Leisure facilities are continuing to operate in a complex environment with multiple operational restrictions impacting on service delivery. Social distancing measures, capacity, and staff resourcing due to Covid-19 and self-isolation, contrast with public expectation as demand continues to increase.

Council will continue to stress test facilities and evolve programmes, including the Aquatic programme, to ensure a high quality safe environment for all customers. The next phase of reopening will include the reintroduction of swimming lessons and an increase to capacity in pools and classes as part of the winter programme. In the interim to address demand at South Lake Leisure Centre in particular, additional public morning swims will be introduced week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> September.

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An Expression of Interest (EOI) will open for swimming clubs in October for the forthcoming year. The EOI process will be an open and transparent process based on agreed principles in the Council's Aquatic Strategy.

As the Covid-19 situation continues to evolve our facilities are being adapted to mitigate against service disruption, however this may not always be possible leading to changes in planned programmes.

## **IMPORTANT STAFF INFORMATION**

### **Changes to self-isolation**

From Monday, August 16, 2021, people who are fully vaccinated will no longer need to self-isolate for 10 days if someone they have been in close contact with tests positive for COVID-19.

Instead, they should get a PCR test on day two and day eight of the 10 day period. People who are not fully vaccinated will still need to self-isolate for the 10 days.

This policy change applies to **close contacts only**. Anyone who has symptoms, whether vaccinated or not, should immediately book a PCR test. Anyone who has had a positive PCR test should self-isolate for 10 days.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **What does fully vaccinated mean?**

You are fully vaccinated if it is more than 14 days since you received the second dose of an MHRA approved COVID-19 vaccine; or if you are taking part in, or have taken part in, an approved MHRA clinical trial for a coronavirus vaccine.



### **When does the 10-day self-isolation period begin?**

The 10-day period begins from the onset of symptoms.  
For those who have no symptoms but test positive, it begins when the PCR test was taken.

### **What about children who are close contacts of a person who tests positive?**

Young people aged 5 to 17 who are not fully vaccinated and are identified as a close contact should self-isolate and book a PCR test. If the PCR test result is negative they can end their self-isolation.

Should they develop symptoms they should self-isolate until they have a result from their PCR test? If the PCR test is positive, they should complete a full 10 days of self-isolation. If the PCR test is negative, they can stop isolating.

Children under the age of 5 who are close contacts will be encouraged but not required to take a PCR test. They will not be expected to self-isolate, unless a PCR comes back positive or they develop symptoms.

### **How do you get a PCR test?**

PCR tests can be booked online at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

### **If you have been identified as a close contact but you are fully vaccinated, you have to go for a PCR test on days 2 and 8 - can you do this during work time?**

Attending a PCR test will be treated in a similar manner as attending a Doctor's appointment as per the Leave Entitlement Policy. Under current guidance employees can attend work after attending for a PCR test including before they receive the result.

### **How do the rapid lateral flow tests fit into this?**

Lateral Flow tests produce results quickly. They have an important role in detecting cases where people have no symptoms. You will soon have access to these rapid tests through work; and further information on this will be made available early next week.

If your lateral flow test is positive, you should self-isolate and book a PCR test.

PCRs are the most accurate tests and must be used to (i) confirm a positive Lateral Flow test; (ii) if you have COVID symptoms; and (iii) if you have been identified as a close contact.



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### **If you are fully vaccinated, can you forget about COVID precautions?**

The COVID-19 vaccines significantly reduce our chances of catching and spreading the virus. Crucially, vaccination cuts our risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19 by around 95%.

But they do not make us invincible. No vaccine in history has ever been 100% effective 100% of the time.

So anyone who is fully vaccinated should still take care not to catch or pass on COVID. Keep following public health advice and be aware of key risks – like crowded indoor settings with poor ventilation.

Following the public health guidance on hand washing, wearing a face covering and maintaining social distancing is important to minimise risks.

You should also minimise contact for 10 days with individuals known to be at higher risk from COVID-19, e.g. those who are in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) group.

### **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)

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### **Lateral Flow Testing Now Available**

Testing has been and remains really important especially as restrictions continue to relax, and this is why Lateral Flow

Testing is now available at work for employees.

Employees can pick up the rapid flow tests at Civic Centre receptions from Monday to Friday, and frontline employees will have test kits distributed to them by Line Managers regularly.

If anyone has any queries please contact your Line Manager who will be able to provide more information.

The Chief Executive Briefing issued last week contained useful information in relation to the testing process and is available to view here: <https://vimeo.com/586506521/a9a01269ac>. There is also a practical guide for employees on self-isolation available on the Intranet <https://bit.ly/3D3vb1C>

### **Council Marks Borough 100-Year-Olds for NI Centenary**

To celebrate Northern Ireland's centenary year, Lord Mayor Alderman Glenn Barr will present one-off civic gifts to local residents who turn 100 in 2021.

Also forming part of the 'Our People, Our Place, Our Story' campaign to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland, the initiative aims to recognise and highlight some of the remarkable people that make the borough such a special place.



In celebration of this major milestone during Northern Ireland's historic year, Lord Mayor, Alderman Glenn Barr will present each local centenarian with a congratulatory certificate and a beautifully bespoke Belfast Crystal award.

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If you have a friend, relative or neighbour who has or will be turning 100 this year, we're encouraging you to get in touch and let us know. To make a nomination, please contact the Lord Mayor's Office on

e [lordmayor@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:lordmayor@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk) or  
p **028 3752 9633** and provide:

- Recipient's name and date of birth
- Contact telephone number and email address.

### **Next blood donation sessions is the borough.**

#### **Armagh City Hotel**

- Wednesday 8 September and Thursday 9 September 2021
- 1pm – 4pm and 5pm – 8pm

***Note that donation sessions are now by appointment only; to book an appointment, please call 08085 534 653 between 10am and 4.30pm.***



### **Contacting Reception**

Due to the installation of a new telephone system, we have changed our reception extension numbers to:

- Armagh 1397
- Banbridge 1396
- Craigavon 1398

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