



**Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon**
Borough Council

Leisure Transformation Programme

Staff Engagement

Update from the 'Leisure Transformation Project Team

29th October 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.

GO LIVE INDOOR LEISURE TRANSFORMATION MONDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2021

We "Go Live" with Indoor Leisure Transformation on 1st Monday November 2021 at all sites.

All staff should have received confirmation letters from the HR Dept. in relation to your role, rate of pay and any enhancements due to be paid. For any reason that you have not, received your letter, or if you feel the information is incorrect or unclear in any way, please send your queries to your Duty Manager who will pass the information to Caroline Brennan who will clarify the details.

The customers/members at any site where opening hours are changing on Monday are being informed via local social media/Legend – specifically Orchard LC and Banbridge LC will now open at 6am Monday to Friday and with new and identical opening hours at weekends.

The Transformation Team are still working on options for "Shift Leads" - once these arrangements have been agreed you will be communicated with. In the meantime so that transformation is progressed, legacy arrangements (acting up) will remain in place in order that we continue to deliver the service, until new arrangements are communicated.

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LEISURE AMENITIES UPDATE

Throughout the pandemic the Leisure Services team at Council has prioritised the health and safety of customers, ensuring that everyone has a safe and enjoyable experience when using or visiting all leisure and recreational facilities. This focus will remain the same as the transition into the final stages of the relaxation of restrictions takes place, and the current guidance from the Northern Ireland Executive is implemented.

As a reminder these changes were introduced in our facilities on Monday 18 October as follows:

Conference and Activity Room Bookings

- All conference and activity room bookings will no longer require a risk assessment if the booking is for 15 people or under (with the exception of team sports).
- Bookings of 15 or more will require a risk assessment with social distancing guidance of 1 metre in place.

Gym Changes

- Advanced booking will no longer be required, enabling open access to all customers subject to availability.
- Social distancing will be reduced from 2 metres to 1.5 metres to increase capacity within gym and access to equipment.
- Customers will be required to wipe down equipment before and after use and regularly sanitise hands, as the requirement for additional cleaning throughout the day will be removed in line with guidance and to increase customer capacity. Normal cleaning protocols will apply.
- Customers are still advised to come gym ready where possible, to limit the number of customers using changing facilities, particularly at busy periods.

Pool Changes

- Advanced booking will no longer be required.
- It is each customers responsibility to social distance, and hand sanitise, whilst inside centres.



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- Customers are advised to check the following links in relation to pool timetables and public access to pool facilities:

www.getactiveabc.com/facility/south-lake-leisure-centre/#timetables

www.getactiveabc.com/facility/banbridge-leisure-centre/#timetables

www.getactiveabc.com/facility/orchard-leisure-centre/#timetables

- Customers are advised to check with their local facility in advance of arrival to check capacity and access to avoid disappointment on arrival.
- During busy periods customers may be asked to wait for a short period of time before gaining access to the pool, due to a high volume of users.

Please note:

- The wearing of face coverings is mandatory in public areas when in all leisure facilities, particularly when moving around the building (exceptions apply).
- “Track and trace” is still required for visits to all centers – systems may vary at each site so you should report to reception at each site as a general rule and/or follow local signage instruction.
- One-way systems may no longer apply in some facilities where adequate space is available for safe customer movement.
- As services return to a more normalised approach we ask customers for understanding as service delivery adjusts to the new operational practices being implemented.

The pandemic hasn't been easy for our staff or the public using our facilities, but with each positive step forward we can begin to reflect on the exceptional journey we have travelled together over the past twenty months and acknowledge just how far we have come.

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Triathlon Ireland

Recently launched a boost regional training hubs which is aimed at 12-17 year olds.

The Ulster training session is open to all junior with a Triathlon Ireland Membership; this will take place at SLLC on the 14th November 2021 at 10am

The aim of the hub is to learn triathlon skills in an open and encouraging ways to boost confidence levels and to education our young aspiring athletes. Go to bit.ly/TriathlonirelandHubs for information and to register.



Over 50 SLLC Senior Social Circle

We are launching 'South Lake Senior Social Circle 50+' at South Lake Leisure Centre.

We want the 50+ age group to have a healthy lifestyle, staying active and exercising regularly, which is not just a young person's game. There will be opportunities for learning, staying active and having fun is vital for both mental and physical health.

The Club open to everyone, it is low cost and is all about getting social, meeting new people and trying a range of new activities, from dance and boccia to arts and craft, lake walks to board games and everything in between, including plenty of chat over a tea or coffee.

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The six-week programme runs on Wednesdays 10.15am -12 noon and costs £2.60 per session, starting 3rd November and running until 8th December.

The Senior Social Circle is free to South Lake Leisure Centre members.

So if you know of anyone who would benefit just send them along.

For more details go to getactiveabc.com/events/south-lake-senior-social-circle-50

Positive Ageing events

We recently celebrated #positive ageing month on Wednesday 20 October.

A number of venues ran free taster sessions:

Dromore Community Centre – Hosted a free 30 minute Pilates and exercise classes

Orchard Leisure Centre - Hosted a one hour free yoga class

Tandagree Recreation Centre – hosted a 30 min cardio cycle and Aerobic class

Richill Recreation Centre one hour Tai-Chi and 30 buff bones classes in addition to a free on hour activity session on Tuesday 19th October and 30 min fitsteps FAB and 1 hour free Pilates classes.

These venues along with **Banbridge Leisure Centre and Rathfriland Community Centre** , conducted tours of the buildings throughout the day and chatted to those who attended about the range of activity sessions that we have available for seniors.

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Inclusive programmes

We have a new range of inclusive programmes for children with disabilities which have recently started in our indoor facilities; if you know of a customer or any child that would benefit from taking part the details are:

ABC Autism and Sport Programme

We have a new inclusive programme for children with autism to develop their fundamental sports skills in an environment that suits their needs

The session will take place at **Richill Recreation Centre** on Wednesdays from 4.15- 5pm starting 20th October

To register contact Colleen Connolly on colleenconnolly@dsni.co.uk or 07769250885

Wheelie Active Club – Craigavon

This is an inclusive programme for children with a physical disability to try out a range of multi-sports alongside siblings and friends.

The session will take place at SLLC Tuesdays 4.15pm to 5pm starting 19th October 2021

To register contact Colleen Connolly on colleenconnolly@dsni.co.uk or 07769250885



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New Poolpod at Banbridge Leisure Centre

Banbridge Leisure Centre is helping swimmers thanks to the Poolpod facility, a pioneering platform lift system transforming access to swimming pools for people with disabilities and restricted mobility.

Poolpod offer quick and simple access enabling the centre to provide inclusive swimming for all abilities and encourage everyone to Get Moving!



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/coronaviruscovid-19-face-coverings>.

Thank you for your continued co-operation.



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- **FIRST DOSE VACCINATIONS ARE STILL AVAILABLE ARE YOU STILL LOOKING TO GET YOUR FIRST DOSE OF THE COVID 19 VACCINATION?**

More than 130 local community pharmacies are now offering the Moderna vaccine to anyone aged 18 and over who is not yet vaccinated. If you get your first dose now, you will still have enough time to get your second dose before Christmas and you can enjoy the festive season with the added and vital protection that vaccination gives - both for you and the people close to you.

To book an appointment, find a pharmacy convenient to you:

<http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/130-pharmacies-board-deliver-covid-vaccine-doses>



WE'RE ONE STEP CLOSER TO UK CITY OF CULTURE 2025

Last Friday the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) officially released the names of those cities longlisted to compete for the coveted title of UK City of Culture 2025, with Armagh City and its surrounding borough making the list. From a record twenty cities competing, we have made it to the last eight going forward to compete to be the future winner.

The competition for the 2025 title was unprecedented with bids received from every nation in the UK. The seven other longlisted locations remaining in the race to secure the title are; Bradford, Cornwall, County Durham, Derby, Southampton, Stirling and Wrexham County Borough.

Coventry is the current UK City of Culture 2021, while Derry/Londonderry secured the title in 2013. Both cities are huge ambassadors for the competition process showcasing the tangible



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positive impacts the bidding journey had within their cities and nationally, and importantly the legacy opportunities it provides. To find out more and how to get involved go to <https://armagh2025.com/>



The Lord Mayor, representatives from Council, Southern Regional College and the Arts, Culture and Creative industries from across the borough at the longlist announcement event in the Market Place Theatre.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION UPDATE

As an organisation with a ‘one council approach’ we are committed to ensuring all our decisions are evidence based, taking into account the views and opinions of the communities we serve and all relevant stakeholders.

Public consultation is the process by which we seek views and opinions to inform our decision-making and continually improve service delivery. Listening to what people have to say about certain policies or proposals on the services we provide and about what they want to see happen in the borough will lead to better, more responsive services and ultimately an improved quality of life for all.

To allow us to achieve these goals effectively, we have developed a new Public Consultation Policy which will enable us to co-ordinate and promote best practice to those involved in

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conducting and reporting on public consultation and help improve the services and operations of the Council by understanding the views of all those who are affected by our decisions.

The Public Consultation Policy can be found in the Policies section of the staff intranet or on the council website at <https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/council/policies>
Training for relevant staff on the delivery of consultation best practice will be made available in due course, however if you have any queries regarding the policy, or any aspect of the consultation process, please contact [e performance@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](mailto:performance@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH'S QUALITY SERVICE RECOGNISED

At the beginning of September our Environmental Health Department successfully retained their ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems accreditation. The department underwent an in depth recertification audit by the international certification body NQA.

The department was assessed against a number of quality management principles including customer focus, the motivation of top management, the process approach and continual improvement to ensure that local businesses and the community get consistent, good-quality services.

Olga Murtagh (Strategic Director, Community and Growth) commented: "It's a real credit to Gillian Topping and the entire Environmental Health team to retain this mark of quality service. Dealing with approximately 2000 service requests each month alongside the wide range of statutory functions of the department during the Covid pandemic has brought many challenges. Retaining the ISO 9001 accreditation is apt recognition of the good work of the department.

Well done to everyone involved

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NEW 'E-LEARN ABC' IS GETTING READY TO LAUNCH

Our HR-Learning & Development Team has been busy behind the scenes developing, and preparing to launch, a new and exciting e-learning system. Over the past year we have learned from the experience of the pandemic that there is an increased need for online learning. This has led to developing a new e-learning system, called E-Learn ABC.

Within this on-line system you will find e-learning modules and resources that you can access from any computer or smart phone, either at work or at home, anytime you need it. The modules will include both mandatory and personal development topics, examples include:

- Fire Safety Awareness
- Stress Awareness
- Equality & Diversity in the Workplace
- Fraud Prevention

How E-Learn ABC will benefit you:

1. It provides anytime, anyplace learning, giving greater flexibility to suit everyone;
2. It allows permanent access to information so you can refer back to modules and materials to refresh yourself on the topics as and when required; and
3. It ensures everyone receives consistent training messages at all times.

You don't need to be I.T savvy to complete your training, the system is designed to be user friendly to enable all employees, regardless of IT knowledge or experience, to engage in the learning modules provided through a series of simple steps that are clearly outlined.

Pilot exercise

To make sure the system is suitable for everyone's needs and is easily navigated, a number of colleagues across the council piloted the various modules. We have now incorporated their feedback and E-Learn ABC will be made available to all employees with a council e-mail address initially. The team will continue to look at how to provide access to the remainder of staff.



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When will it be available and how do you get started?

So now the countdown is on.....we are excited to be launching E-Learn ABC in the coming weeks and we hope you will find it user friendly and engaging. You will receive a welcome email which will confirm our log on details and set out how to access the e-learning system.

IRISH FOOD AWARDS SUCCESS



The borough's food producers have once again been hailed as the crème de la crème by picking up a fabulous 16 coveted Irish Food Awards (Blas na hÉireann) which were announced on Saturday 2 October 2021.

A total of nine local producers were hailed for their high quality products at the awards, which are often dubbed the Oscars of Irish food!

Full story at w <https://bit.ly/3lkhliFa>

HEALTH INFORMATION AND TRAINING SESSIONS

Various staff health information and training sessions have been delivered previously and we will continue to offer health and wellbeing related sessions. Look out for details on the staff intranet for any upcoming events.

Some examples of sessions recently delivered include:

- Care in the sun
- Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing
- Hearing loss
- Dementia awareness
- Mindfulness
- Emergency Life Support Awareness sessions as part of the "Restart a Heart" Campaign

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MENTAL HEALTH



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You may have recently read on the Intranet our council has signed up to the Equality Commission's "Mental Health Charter". This is a voluntary commitment by the council to look after and acknowledge the mental health and wellbeing of its employees.

A number of Mental Health Champions, comprised of the HR Absence Team and a number of trade union representatives, will act as a point of contact to any employee experiencing a mental health issue. Our Mental Health Champions, listed below, are trained to raise awareness, normalise and encourage conversations about mental health and signpost employees to support services.

- Fidelma McQuade, HR
- Aisling Knipe, HR
- Diane Connolly, HR
- Brenda Snowden, HR
- Lorraine Purdy, HR
- Kieran McParland, - GMB
- Sarah McMenamin – NIPSA
- Catherine McNeill - NIPSA
- David Mayers - NIPSA
- Gemma Winters - GMB
- Stephen Sloan - GMB

A number of other mental health related activities have taken place or are planned for the future:

- We recently arranged a webinar for a number of managers on Managing Mental Health in the Workplace.
- Council is developing a Mental Health Arrangements document. This will outline to staff current arrangements in place, and proposed future arrangements, in relation to those with mental health issues.
- A number of HR staff and Trade Unions representatives attended Suicide Awareness Training.
- HR is represented on the Local Government Mental Health and Well-Being Regional Group and Events Sub-Group – this allows us to hear about best practice and to share ideas, information and resources in relation to events and initiatives that should be marked by Councils in line with the Local Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The May Billion Steps Challenge we participated in was an example of this.

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INSPIRE COUNSELLING SERVICE

Our council works closely with Inspire Workplaces to provide a counselling service for staff. This service is free for you to use. You can call them confidentially anytime, 365 days a year. For free, confidential and immediate support call: 0800 389 5362.