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**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

13th December, 2019

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

As previously notified to you, I enclose a copy of the report for the following item to be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 am on Tuesday, 17th December, 2019.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

9. Operational Issues

- (f) Minutes of the Meeting of the Active Belfast Ltd. Board (Pages 1 - 22)

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ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

Monday, 9th December, 2019

MEETING OF ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

(Held in Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre)

Attendees

- Directors:** Mr. J. McGuigan (Chairperson)
Councillor Carson
Councillor Corr
Councillor McLaughlin
Councillor Newton
Mr. K. Ellison
Mr. J. Higgins
Mr. C. Kirkwood and
Mrs. K. McCullough.
- Officers:** Mrs. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Mr. N. Munnis, Partnership Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.
- GLL:** Mr. G. Kirk, Regional Director;
Mr. R. McKenna, Regional Community Sports Manager;
Ms. S. Owens, Regional Marketing and Communications
Manager; and
Ms. J. Pope, Head of Service.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Mr. K. O'Doherty, Mr. R. Stewart and Mr. G. Walls.

Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. K. Ellison, who had replaced Mr. M. Keenan as UNITE's representative on the Board, to the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 7th October were approved.

Matters Arising

Schedule of Charges 2020/21

The Board noted that a report would be submitted to its next meeting, in response to the Council's decision of 4th November to reject the 2% - 3% price increase across all product prices for 2020-2021 which had been approved by the Board on 7th October.

Under 16 Registration Scheme

The Board noted that GLL would provide an update on the scheme later in the meeting.

GLL Marketing Plan 2020/21

The Board noted that GLL would present a report on this matter later in the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Director Attendance Statement

The Board noted that there had been no issues to report in terms of the non-attendance of Directors at meetings.

Future Agenda Items

No agenda items were identified by Directors for future meetings.

Annual Accounts 2018 - 2019

(Mr. D. Moan, Advanced Accounting, attended in connection with this item.)

Mr. Moan informed the Board that the annual accounts for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending on 31st March, 2019 had now been completed. He provided a brief overview of the accounts and recommended that the Board approve them for submission to Companies House before the deadline date of 31st December.

The Board approved the annual accounts for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending 31st March, 2019.

The accounts were thereupon signed by Mr. McGuigan, the Chairperson of the Board, and by Mr. Kirkwood, in the absence of Mr. Walls, the Treasurer.

Advance Discussion on Agenda Items

The Board agreed to seek from GLL clarification on elements of the reports relating to Tier 2 Performance – Group Exercise Programme and GLL’s Marketing Plan for 2020/21.

(The GLL representatives were admitted to the meeting at this point)

Performance and Contract Compliance

Mr. Kirk reminded the Board that the current service contract required GLL to provide the Board with written service performance reports on a quarterly basis. Accordingly, he submitted for its consideration the Key Performance Indicators and supporting narrative, for the overall service and on a centre-by-centre basis, for the second quarter of 2019/20, under the four themes of Business, Innovation and Learning, Customer and Operations.

He drew the Board's attention to the following notable information/achievements for the period:

- the new Brook and Lisnasharragh Leisure centres had now opened and had generated in excess of 5,000 entry swipes and around 1,300 new pre-paid membership sales in the first few days of operation;
- GLL had created fifty new posts, including those of Manager, Recreation Assistant, Supervisor, Fitness Instructor, Concierge and Café operative;
- GLL had gained recognition at a number of events, including the Social Enterprise NI, the Social Enterprise UK and the UK Business awards;
- applications for support under GLL's Sports Foundation initiative would open on 20th December and close 20th February; and
- a £128k community fund would be developed early in 2020.

In relation to the under-16 registration membership scheme, Mr. Kirk reported that it had now been signed off by the Leisure Transformation Board and that work had commenced to appoint a person to progress the initiative. The scheme, which it was anticipated would be presented to the Board in January, would be accompanied by an extensive communications plan and would link into organisations such as the Education Authority. He added that he anticipated that the scheme would apply also to those under-16s from outside the Council area who were currently attending schools in Belfast.

Mr. Kirk concluded by confirming that, following a national restructure by GLL, his remit had been expanded to incorporate the north of England and that a review of the Belfast Regional Leadership Team (BRT) structure was being undertaken. He assured the Board that neither his new role nor any future BRT restructuring would impact upon GLL's current service delivery and contract compliance requirements, in terms of those facilities which it operated in Belfast.

After discussion, the Board acknowledged receipt of the Performance and Contract Compliance report for the second quarter of 2019/20 and noted the information which had been provided.

Tier 2 Performance – Group Exercise Programme

The Board considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Board on the year-to-date group exercise performance and programme developments.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Board is requested to note:

- Q1 and Q2 performance (April - September 2019);
- that performance monitoring is in place both locally and nationally;
- new Studios coming into Belfast at Andersonstown, Brook and Lisnasharragh and Andersonstown; and
- the recruitment of a Health and Fitness Class Lead for the City.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Introduction:

3.1.1 Fitness class access is included as part of the better membership package

3.1.2 Approximately 240 group exercise classes are delivered every week across the city.

3.1.3 There are now 26 health focused class sessions held per week comprising Cardiac Rehab (11), Healthwise (9) and Move More (6)

3.1.4 Citywide studio provision has increased from 11 in 2015 to 17 in 2018. By December 2019 an additional 4 studios will be added to the estate.

3.1.5 Group exercise classes are recognised as a key tool in attracting and retaining members/customers.

3.1.6 Group exercise classes are particularly popular with female users, with females representing 3 in every 4 attendees.

3.1.7 Industry wide, group exercise classes are a key tool in increasing female participation. Considerably more females engage in group exercise as a core activity at 76% compared to 24% for males (Active Leisure Trends Report 2019).

3.1.8 The current citywide group exercise programme continues to evolve and change to increase usage figures, provide choice for the consumer and ensure quality across all centres

3.1.9 We currently offer 54 virtual classes in Belfast with 34 at Better Gym Belfast and 20 virtual classes offered in Better Gym Connswater.

3.1.10 A summary of additional studio provision planned within Phase 1B of the LTP for Andersonstown, Brook and Lisnasharragh has been circulated to the Board.

3.2 Performance Update

3.2.1 The overall strategic aim remains to get More People More Active More Often through an effective citywide group exercise programme

3.2.2 Attendance figures are

3.2.2.1 Overall attendance; 76,630 for Q1/Q2

3.2.2.1.1 Q 1 Attendance: 38,711

3.2.2.1.2 Q 2 Attendance: 36,336

3.2.2.2 Attendance remained steady across Q1 and Q2, with a slight decrease reported in Q2 attributed to the anticipated summer drop off across the industry and some seasonal reduction in class programmes

3.2.2.3 Better Gym Connswater remains the highest attendance for a single centre with an average of 10,901 per quarter

3.2.2.4 Issues have emerged in terms of reporting accuracy for Fitness Classes, with booking/reporting review underway in preparation for the upcoming January period to ensure accuracy and consistency

3.2.3 In Q1 and Q2, the average attendance of classes has been 10 per class over both quarters, this represents a slight drop off from Q4 of 12 per class

3.2.4 The top 3 most popular classes for Q1 and Q2 were:

- **Group Cycle- 25% of bookings**
- **Total Body Conditioning- 12% of bookings**
- **Yoga- 12% of bookings**

3.2.5 As with Q3 and Q4 the most popular classes are led by Fitness Manager/Instructors in centre

3.2.6 There are now 26 health focused class sessions held per week comprising Cardiac Rehab (11), Healthwise (10) and Move More (6)

3.2.7 Specific conditioned classes such as walking groups, Lower back rehab and Knee rehab class (partnership with the Mater physio department), Best Back class (partnership with the Royal physio department) and pulmonary rehab (partnership with Chest, Heart and Stroke Association). As well as introducing the first Move More Yoga class for cancer rehabilitation

- 3.4.3.4 Centre support, including training and development for instructors and centre management
- 3.4.3.5 Support the activation of new programmes for LTP and provide guidance on future Studio design and specification
- 3.4.3.6 Monthly reporting to Regional Product Manager- includes the improvement of a consistent report structure across the city for both GLL and ABL KPIs

3.5 Training and Development

- 3.5.1 Fitness Training to enhance the programme has been organised for all Fitness Teams over the upcoming 2 months as highlighted in table A below
- 3.5.2 The New Health and Fitness Class Lead is due to shadow a GLL Master Trainer in the delivery of the courses due to be completed on 27-29th November

Table A

Course	Month
Teen Gym Fit	3—31st October
Total Body Conditioning	27th November
Lets Target (Gym Floor Classes)	28th November
Boxfit	29th November
Advanced Group Cycle	5th December
New Product Training	December (various)

3.6 New Staffing

- 3.6.1 Recruitment has been undertaken for the new Brook and Lisnasharragh with the following Fitness positions being filled. Fitness Manager (x 2) and Fitness Instructor (x3)
- 3.6.2 New staff have come into the business, with the recruitment of four new FM positions at Better Gym Belfast (3) and 1 due to begin Better Gym Connswater
- 3.6.3 Monthly Fitness workshops are also continue to be in place to allow fitness staff across the city to workshop new class ideas and structures, led by the new Health and Fitness Class Lead”

Ms. Pope outlined the key elements of the report and highlighted the role to be played by the Health and Fitness Class Lead in addressing issues which had been raised by Directors, particularly around under-provision and timings.

After discussion, the Board noted the contents of the report.

Tier 2 Performance – Olympia Leisure Centre USP Spa

Mr. Kirk submitted for the Board’s consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the Board on year-to-date performance of the Spa Experience at the Olympia Leisure Centre.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Board is requested to note the update on the performance of the Olympia Spa.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Introduction

Summary Of Key Facts	
Opening Hours	Mon – Fri 11.00 am – 8.00 pm Sat and Sun 10.00 am – 5.00 pm.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three treatment rooms • Sauna and Steam Room • Jacuzzi • Ice Room & Sanarium • 6 x Hamann heated beds
Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Olympia Spa Experience opened in late January 2017 and is staffed by locally recruited GLL team members. • The Thermal Suite is available as an all inclusive membership option for £53.00 per month. Thermal suite sessions are booked in advance and last for up to 3 hours. • The Spa is available to guests on a bookable basis and offers beauty and massage treatments. • Promotional offers are scheduled throughout the year targeting different treatments and client groups.
Pricing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban pricing range • Thermal Suite half day ticket £15 full or £12.50 concession rate. • Thermal Suite off peak half day ticket £10 full or £7.50 concession rate

Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Spa generated £93,293 income during quarters 1 & 2 2019/20. This figure has risen from £75,291 during quarters 1 & 2 2018/19. Total expenditure for quarters 1 & 2 2019/20 was recorded at £102,275 which is a modest increase against the quarters 1 & 2 expenditure of £98,809 in 2018/19. The increase in expenditure is reflective of additional laundry costs to support increased usage.
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3.2 Product and Pricing Overview

3.2.1 Income Areas

- **Thermal Suite - Thermal suite allows for access to the thermal area only for up to 3 hours use and is priced at £15 although a range of concession and off peak options are available.;**
- **Spa Membership - The spa memberships are based upon the £53.00 (Belfast resident) or £55.50 (non resident) direct debit rates and include daily access to the thermal suite. Membership also entitles the members to unlimited access to the gym, pool and classes in all fourteen Better centres. There was 78 live prepaid Spa memberships (as at 31st Oct 2019);**
- **Spa Treatments – There are a number of treatments available ranging from £15 - £90 and experience journeys for £140. Treatments are tailored for male and female and the team also provide pre-natal massage and treatments for cancer patients. The product range used is Elemis. The three top Spa Treatment is once again the Elemis Wellbeing Massage, Freestyle Deep Tissue Massage and the Hot stone Massage. The combination of massages on offer contributed to over 400 of the 2000 treatments provided during quarters 1 and 2;**
- **Product Goods For Resale (GFR) – To help drive income generation and in line with standard industry practice the Better Spa Experience team sell Elemis, La Sultane De Saba and their own in house product called ‘Signature’.**

3.2.2 Performance Analysis

People - Three full time equivalent staff employed in the spa and are supported by casual colleagues.

Training – Two of the therapists recently completed training to deliver specialised treatments to clients with cancer.

Promotion - Olympia Spa enjoyed a positive second full year in 2018/19 and maintained a strong client base with the majority of clients booking repeat treatments. As such, further growth has been evident during 2019/20.

Internal awareness has been strengthened with window vinyl advertising for directional and promotional purposes and leaflets and promotional material displayed at front desk. A similar external vinyl has recently been signed off by partners and artwork for completion has been agreed after long negotiations with Windsor to allow this addition to the building.

Performance - £93,293 income was generated by Better Spa Experience in quarters 1 & 2 2019/20. This is inclusive of Spa DD membership payments. Expenditure for quarters 1 and 2 2019/20 was recorded at £102,275 which resulted in an overall deficit of £8,982. Quarter 3 & 4 are traditionally busier periods within the spa industry and as such the expected upturn in business will result in the year end estimated position being reached.

Usage - 6 month usage (1st April 2019- 30th Sept 2019) was 7016 including a range of treatments and thermal Spa usage. This shows an increase of 777 from quarters 3 and 4 2018/19.

3.2.3 Expenditure Areas:

- Staffing: Three full time equivalent staff employed in the spa and are supported by casual colleagues**
- Operations costs: These include repairs and maintenance (R&M), service contracts, equipment purchase and utilities.**
- Repairs and Maintenance – As a new facility, a small budget has been allocated for repairs and maintenance.**
- Service contracts – the laundry provision, including supply and cleaning of towels, robes and flip flops**
- Utilities – the spa is housed within the main leisure centre and consumption calculations were calculated on 20% of the total annual Olympia utility expenditure**
- Publicity / Marketing – campaigns and advertising are used to maximise awareness. This was also profiled in accordance with peak months in the spa industry.**

3.2.4 Expenditure Analysis

Financial position 2017-2020:

Year	Income	Expenditure	Variance
2017-18	£139,483	£180,438	-£40,955
2018-19	£174,869	£195,586	-£20,719
2019-20 (actual and estimated)	£192,548	£198,124	-£5,576

The overall financial position is forecast to improve by £15K in 2019/20 and to move towards a surplus in 2020/21.

3.3 Business Development:

Following completion of the boulevard in June 2018 the business development opportunities of Spa Experience are being enhanced and capitalised upon with plans for external vinyl to be installed onto the Spa windows to support the already installed vinyl installed onto the internal office windows. Partner permissions have recently been secured to support the installation completion.

A number of targeted marketing campaigns promoted by social media and online awareness are focused on increasing income remain ongoing. These will focus on the popular quarterly promotions which are presently in place and include 'Treat Tuesday' which was launched to increase business on the traditionally quietest day of the week for Spa Experience.

Recruitment of additional therapists is challenging and ongoing."

The Board noted the contents of the report.

GLL Marketing Plan 2020/21

Ms. Owens submitted for the Board's consideration the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Item deferred from Board meeting of 7th October 2019.
- 1.2 To update the Board on the GLL Belfast partnership marketing plan for 2020.

Recommendation

- 2.1 The Board is requested to note the content of the marketing plan below and the topline annual marketing plan (2020) which has been circulated.

- 3.0 Main Report**
- 3.1 Purpose of marketing the leisure centres in Belfast was as follows:**
 - 3.1.1 To attract more people to use gyms, swimming pools and participate in physical activities**
 - 3.1.2 To share our Social Enterprise brand message that we are reinvesting back in to Belfast**
 - 3.1.3 To remind people of our Core values and community interests.**
- 3.2 Recap of marketing approach (previously presented).**
 - 3.2.1 Previous marketing campaigns were focused on increasing revenue by driving membership sales from selling product features and benefits and appealing to prospective members and non members first.**
- 3.3 A New Marketing Approach for 2020**
 - 3.3.1 To understand the business value of our customer groups**
 - 3.3.2 To target non users by offering a range of products and services**
 - 3.3.3 To focus on retaining members and users**
 - 3.3.4 To maximise the positive story around LTP**
- 3.4 The Core Customer Groups**
 - 3.4.1 Adults - Student, pre-paid health and fitness members, casual users**
 - 3.4.2 Juniors – swimming, sports, lessons and courses**
- 3.5 Marketing Strategy**
 - 3.5.1 Marketing campaigns will be executed across the year following strategic themes**
- 3.6 More Than A Gym – Jan – May**
 - 3.6.1 The brand focus will be ‘The Feel Good Place’**
 - 3.6.2 Adult focus will be around Health and Fitness**
 - 3.6.3 Junior focus will be around Half Terms, Lessons and Easter Holidays**

- 3.7 Summer/Olympics – Jun – Aug**
- 3.7.1 The brand focus will be ‘Family Summer’**
- 3.7.2 Casual and Pay & Play offers**
- 3.7.3 Junior Health and Fitness focus**
- 3.8 Local Hero – Sept – Dec**
- 3.8.1 The brand focus will be ‘Stand For Better’**
- 3.8.2 Adult focus will be around Health and Fitness**
- 3.8.3 Junior focus will be around Half Terms, Lessons and Christmas Holidays**
- 3.9 Each centre will contribute a marketing budget to amplify these messages using a media mix including outdoor advertising, local commercial radio and digital media**
- 3.10 Local Marketing Campaigns**
- 3.10.1 Throughout the year, GLL will produce and execute awareness campaigns for city-wide memberships for Health and Fitness to help build the Better brand.**
- 3.10.2 Launch marketing campaigns will be executed for the opening of the three new centres as part of the next phase of Leisure Transformation Programme**
- 3.10.3 Throughout the year, GLL will produce and execute awareness campaigns for Better Swim School to help increase members across all Swim School sites in the city in line with the Belfast Aquatics Strategy**
- 3.10.4 Throughout the year, GLL will engage with target groups to increase physical participation across the city with particular focus on socially disadvantaged children, women, seniors and those with limiting physical and mental health through the Healthwise Scheme, MacMillan Move More and Employment Partnerships. These initiatives will include;**
- Club Games (over 55s Sporting Event)**
 - Ladies Only Bootcamps/Physical Activity Course (in partnership with WISPA)**
 - Summer Sports Day – Try Sport Event to celebrate Summer Scheme participation**

3.11 Business As Usual (BAU)

3.11.1 Paid Search (PPC) and Social Media

3.11.2 Content to stimulate interest

3.11.3 Engaging Social Media Posts

3.11.4 Videos

3.11.5 PR

3.11.6 Community Messaging

3.12 Annual Marketing Plan 2020 – Anticipated Outcomes

3.12.1 The marketing plan should support the delivery of all main KPIs based the table below with a YOY increase in the local marketing budget.

3.12.2 KPI's for 2020

KPI	2018	2019	2020
Usage	2001426	2021440	2490000
H&F Prepaid Members	11492	12500	15390
Swim School (Pupils)	3438	3800	5010

3.12.3 H and F marketing campaigns will focus on key driver months of Jan, Feb, April, May, Sept, Oct

3.12.4 Usage targets will utilise retention campaigns (mostly digital) and will be ongoing across 2020

3.12.5 Lessons will focus on March and September and will support the delivery of the Aquatics Strategy for Belfast.

3.12.6 Junior H and F will focus on the Summer months/Summer Holidays

3.13 Brand Awareness

3.13.1 Two Consumer Surveys will be commissioned to record brand awareness levels of 'Better' in Belfast amongst on street consumers. These will be undertaken by a media supplier

3.13.2 Increased involvement with key sponsorship platforms citywide to increase brand awareness

3.13.3 Agreed calendar of involvement in business networks including awards submissions, sponsorship, PR and events.

3.14 LTP Engagement

3.14.1 A number of Community Engagement initiatives have been agreed to support the opening of the 3 new leisure centres in 2020. Each initiative will include marketing support to deliver targets based around:

3.14.1 Junior H and F offering

3.14.2 Citywide participation in outdoor sports

3.14.3 Adult Health Assessments

3.14.4 Belfast School children incentives

3.14.5 60+ participation”

Ms. Owens provided an overview of GLL'S Marketing Plan for 2020/21 and, in response to a Director who had highlighted the need to maximise the use of social media in the marketing/advertising process, confirmed that GLL was planning to develop a Belfast-wide Instagram presence. The Partnership Manager pointed out that there was a requirement for GLL's operating policies and procedures to be aligned to those of the Council and that this would extend to protocols and operating controls in relation to social media activity.

After discussion, the Board noted GLL's marketing plan for 2020/21 and agreed:

- i. given its contribution to local communities, that Council officers examine the potential for including GLL in the community planning process, at both a strategic and an operational level; and
- ii. that the Council's policy governing the use of social media be submitted to a future meeting.

(The GLL representatives left the meeting at this point.)

ABL Strategic Plan 2020-25/Strategic Planning Workshop 2019

The Partnership Manager drew the Board's attention to the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the draft ABL 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan for approval.

1.2 To review the 2019 ABL annual strategic planning workshop.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Board is requested to approve the draft ABL 2020 – 2025 Strategic plan and note the review of the 2019 annual strategic planning workshop.

2.2 Members are requested to approve the actions arising from the strategic planning workshop set out below at 3.9 (a) to 3.9 (j).

3.0 **Main Report**

3.1 The 2019 annual strategic planning workshop was held in the BCC offices at 9 Adelaide Street on Wednesday 13th November.

3.2 The workshop ran from 1.00 pm – 8.30 pm and was attended by nine ABL company directors plus two officers from BCC. The workshop was facilitated by Nuala McKinley (Blueprint Development Consultancy)

3.3 As previously agreed the workshop agenda was built almost entirely around the development of the 2020 – 2025 ABL Strategic Plan. The workshop agenda has been circulated.

3.4 The early part of the workshop focused on the strategic and operational context in which ABL operates. Members then considered the ABL governance arrangements. It was subsequently agreed that:

- The timing and number of board meetings was broadly appropriate;
- The contract compliance and realignment arrangements were appropriate; and
- The current reporting calendar and planning was working well but recognised the need to revisit the schedule of reports on an annual basis to ensure alignment with changing priorities

3.5 Members felt that consideration should be given to the appointment of a Deputy Chair to assist and deputise for the Chair. It was agreed that this appointment would add value to the current governance arrangements. It was further agreed that consideration should be given to the deputy chair appointment being restricted to independent volunteer directors as this same restriction applies to the appointment of the Chair.

3.6 The vision and values were agreed as follows:

Aligned to the Belfast Agenda and the four key themes of ‘Growing the Economy’, ‘Living Here’, ‘City Development’ and ‘Working and Learning’, the ABL 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan is built on the belief that everyone in the city should be able to enjoy the many benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle. We want to ensure delivery of a high quality, value-for-money leisure service for Belfast. We recognise the need

to work with our partners, and other stakeholders to invest in facilities, services and programmes to improve the health and quality of life for citizens across the city. Consequently the company vision for the future will:

- Focus on the needs of customers and potential customers to maximise centre occupancy and participation;
- Foster a 'can-do' culture and challenge and support GLL to be innovative problem solvers;
- Provide equality of access to affordable high quality facilities, services and programmes;
- Ensure that the services and programmes offer more than just sport;
- Value the pursuit and development of partnerships and pathways;
- Provide value for money and continually innovate to improve services;
- Promote respect, fairness and equality and good relations;
- Ensure that sustainability is considered in all key decisions;
- Ensure the highest standards of health and safety; and
- Support the creation of opportunities for work, and continuing professional development.

3.7 Within discussion relating to board and Director development:

- a) Members agreed that there was a need for a review of ABL in the context of the emerging wider strategic position and the emergence of new structures and stakeholders (e.g. Belfast Agenda) which might have some overlaps with the role of ABL. It was agreed that the review would focus on role, function and remit of ABL.
- b) The notion of planning for one to two open forum meetings per year to allow for broad discussion outside of the formal board meeting structure was discussed. Such meetings would be deliberately planned to provide a more relaxed environment in which to explore issues more thoroughly without the time pressure resulting from the presentation of reports required under the agreed contract compliance calendar.

- c) There is a need to establish an appraisal process for the Directors of ABL. This appraisal would also consider the development needs of individual directors to build capacity and add value to the board. It was further agreed that the Chair should take the lead in delivering the appraisal process.
- d) The Directors induction process should be updated on a regular basis.
- e) Consideration needs to be given to succession planning which coincides with the end of director's terms of office.

3.8 The remainder of the workshop was spent considering the Action Plan element of the Strategic Plan 2020 -2025, with specific focus on themes, actions and potential resources under the 11 themes as set out in Section 4 (Outputs and Priorities) of the draft strategic plan. Namely;

- a) More people, more active, more often
- b) Health benefits
- c) Community engagement
- d) Partnerships and pathways
- e) New users/markets
- f) Deficit controls
- g) Sports development strategic approach
- h) Aquatics strategy delivery
- i) Equality, diversity and good relations
- j) Programming
- k) Pricing

3.9 Key actions in relation to finalising the ABL 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan and the outcomes from the workshop are as follows:

- a) Partnership Manager agreed to edit v6 draft strategic plan to reflect agreements reached at the workshop. An updated draft is to be presented for consideration by the board on 9th December 2019;
- b) It was agreed that the final Strategic Plan should be presented for Council approval no later than 31st March 2020;
- c) It was further agreed that the development of an action plan to support the strategic plan would be the first priority following BCC approval. An action plan could be developed by the end of February 2020 and presented for board approval on 9th March 2020;
- d) It was agreed that KPI's should continue to be presented on a centre by centre basis.

The Partnership Manager agreed to develop performance report options based on the existing 3 tier approach but with the view reducing the overall number of reports while increasing focus on agreed priorities. This task should necessarily be undertaken alongside the action plan development process;

- e) The election of a Deputy Chair is to be included in the agenda for the Board meeting on 9th December;
- f) The Partnership Manager is to arrange for an additional Board meeting in February 2020. This additional meeting is specifically to provide an open forum for general discussion and strategic 'thinking time'. As such, no formal board papers will be presented. The agenda for this meeting is to be agreed at the board meeting on 20th January 2020;
- g) It was further agreed that the report schedule, as currently set out in the annual contract compliance calendar, should be revised with the intention to reduce the number of reports flowing into the board. If the reduction in the volume of reports clears sufficient time to allow for all reports to be presented in seven of the eight scheduled board meeting, consideration should be given to allocating one meeting to an addition 'open forum' meeting to sit alongside the one outlined in 3.9.6. On review it appears that this would be practical and that the meeting scheduled for September would be an appropriate date to target for this second report free meeting. September would appear to be an obvious target date as, following the BCC July recess, the board meets in August, September and October. A second open forum meeting in September would be roughly six months apart from the planned February date. Capacity to deliver on this outcome would ultimately be subject to the workload and report schedule required to service the new action plan for 2020 – 2025;
- h) The agenda for meetings described in 3.9.6 and 3.9.7 would be open for discussion and may or may not require GLL and/or others to attend. This would be subject to the agreed discussion areas and is likely to differ for each meeting;
- i) The Partnership Manager is to prepare a succession planning forecast for Board membership and recruitment to be presented at a future board meeting; and

- j) An annual Director appraisal process is to be included in the proposed action plan. Director appraisals are to be delivered by the Chair with a completion schedule set up within the annual business calendar.”**

After discussion, the Board adopted the recommendations and:

- i. agreed that the strategic planning process should link into the work being undertaken by other Council sections, such as the Sports Development Unit;
- ii. agreed that the Partnership Manager should proceed with the actions set out in points a) to j) in paragraph 3.9 of the report; and
- iii. granted approval for the Partnership Manager to seek in advance of its meeting on 20th January expressions of interest from independent Board members wishing to be considered for appointment to the post of Deputy Chairperson.

Aquatics Strategy Action Plan

The Partnership Manager reminded the Board that the Aquatics Strategy, which sought to increase participation in aquatic activity across Belfast, had been launched on 21st August.

He explained that, following the launch, the Board had agreed that an action plan should be developed, with a view to defining outcomes and timelines for the purpose of tracking achievements and reporting on outcomes. The Board had, at its meeting on 9th September, in recognising that the plan would be primarily operational in nature, granted approval for the Partnership Manager to work with in close consultation with GLL to formulate a draft action plan for consideration.

He reported that the resulting draft document had been circulated to the Board in November and that, following feedback, it had been amended to reflect the lead role adopted by Active Belfast Limited in establishing the working group tasked with developing the aquatic strategy, convening meetings and reporting on progress. Accordingly, he recommended that the Board approve the revised Aquatics Strategy Action Plan.

The Board adopted the recommendation.

Schedule of Meetings 2020

The Board approved the following schedule of meetings for 2020 and agreed that it should continue to meet at 4.30 p.m.:

- Monday, 20th January;
- Monday, 9th March;
- Monday, 20th April;
- Monday, 8th June;

- Monday, 10th August;
- Monday, 21st September;
- Monday, 12th October; and
- Monday, 14th December.

Early Opening Hours Pilot Initiative – Brook Leisure Centre

The Partnership Manager submitted for the Board's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To retrospectively advise directors of a pilot programme to test amended early opening hours at the new Brook Leisure Centre**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is requested to note the details of the pilot programme and associated estimate of additional costs.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 The new Brook Leisure Centre opened to the public on 4th December, 2019. The ‘soft opening’ will operate on full opening hours but with a slightly reduced activity programme until full opening on 2nd January 2020.**

- 3.2 The GLL contract and subsequent business plan and financial projections for Brook was based on the new centre operating the same opening hours as the old facility. Namely opening at 9.00 am Monday – Friday plus standard weekend hours.**

- 3.3 In consideration of the substantially improved facility mix and service offering in the new centre together with a greatly enhanced marketing potential, it is felt that the new centre would be better placed to maximise throughput, community provision, membership sales and overall income if the morning opening time is extended to align with the citywide standard. Consequently, a pilot will operate with effect from the soft opening on 4th December under which the centre will open at 7.00 am Monday – Friday.**

- 3.4 The pilot will run for a period of six months until the end of June 2020 (Six months from the full opening on 2nd January)**

- 3.5 The extended opening hours will increase weekly availability from 72 hours to 82 hours. Significantly, it will make fitness activities in the gym, studio and pool accessible to early morning users.**

3.6 The additional 10 hours per week will impact on projected expenditure resulting in a projected net deficit overspend of circa £62k per year. This estimated figure comprises:

a) Additional utility costs	£30k
b) Additional staff costs	£39k
c) Additional sundries/consumables	£5k
d) Total	£74k
e) Estimated additional income	-£12k
f) Additional net deficit projection	£62K

3.7 Based on the above full year projections, the six month pilot would be anticipated to cost approximately £30k (additional net deficit) if not continued beyond the end of June 2020.

3.8 Additional expenditure has been estimated from existing centre data and known fixed costs.

3.9 Income projections are more subjective as the new centre is so different from the old centre and demand is impossible to assess without a meaningful pilot. The above additional income estimate of £12k is believed to be conservative.

3.10 Business performance at the new Brook LC will be closely monitored in line with existing KPI reports presented to ABL.

3.11 Actual performance will be monitored and analysed on a monthly basis throughout the pilot. On completion of the pilot period a detailed report will be presented to the board outlining actual expenditure, income, key membership sales and user data and year to date net deficit analysis compared to similar centres within the BCC leisure estate.”

The Board noted the contents of the report.

Other Business

No additional items of business were raised.

Date of Next Meeting

The Board noted that its next meeting would take place on Monday, 20th January at 4.30 p.m.

Chairperson