

## **ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD**

**Monday, 9th August, 2021**

### **MEETING OF ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD**

**(Held remotely via Microsoft Teams)**

#### **Attendees**

- Directors:** Mr. J. McGuigan (Chairperson)  
Councillor Carson  
Councillor Corr  
Councillor McLaughlin  
Councillor Newton  
Mr. P. Boyle  
Mr. K. Ellison and  
Mrs. K. McCullough.
- Officers:** Mr. N. Munnis, Partnership Manager; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.
- GLL:** Mr. J. Michael, Business Manager; and  
Ms. J. Pope, Head of Service.

#### **Apologies**

An apology was reported on behalf of Mr. K. O'Doherty.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 7th June were approved, with no matters arising.

#### **Director Attendance Statement**

The Partnership Manager informed the Board that he had been informed by a Director that he had been unable to attend a number of recent meetings due to injury and difficulties in accessing IT equipment. He confirmed that the Director had stated that he intended to remain on the Board and that work was underway to ensure that he could participate in future meetings.

The Board noted the information which had been provided.

#### **Future Board Meeting Agenda Items**

The Board noted that it would, later in the meeting, be required to decide, in the context of the forthcoming review of the leisure operating model/governance

arrangements, if it wished to proceed with the open forum session which was planned for 6th September.

### **Director Resignations/Review of Active Belfast Limited Companies House Returns**

The Partnership Manager reported that Mr. Conrad Kirkwood had resigned from the Board on 19th July and that the Chairperson had forwarded to him a letter acknowledging the receipt of his resignation and recognising the contribution which he had made since his appointment in December, 2016. Companies House had been informed of his resignation and all submissions relating to the Active Belfast Limited Board were up to date at that time.

He reported further that he had, on 8th August, been informed by Mr. Gerard Walls that he too would be resigning from the Board, with immediate effect. Companies House would, in due course, be informed of his resignation.

He pointed out that the aforementioned resignations had reduced the number of active Directors to nine and informed the Board that it would, later in the meeting, be presented with a report on the forthcoming review of the leisure operating model/governance arrangements, which would include a recommendation that a previously agreed recruitment campaign to appoint what would now be up to a maximum of six new Directors be delayed until such time as the review had been completed.

The Board formally accepted Mr. Kirkwood's and Mr. Walls' resignations and noted that the Chairperson would write to Mr. Walls to thank him for the contribution which he had made since being appointed in December, 2015.

### **Review of Leisure Operating Model/Governance Arrangements**

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

#### **"1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update the Board on the review of the leisure operating model, as communicated on 7th June.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Board considers and makes comment to the draft terms of reference as detailed within this report;**
- 2.2 That the board notes that the final terms of reference will be subject to consideration and agreement by the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee;**
- 2.3 That the board further delays the planned director recruitment campaign until the review has been concluded.**

### **3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1** On 11th January, the Partnership Manager reported that the Council had approved a review of the operating model including the membership and governance arrangements of the ABL board. The update to the Board stated that:

*‘the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 20th November, had agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting setting out the terms of reference for a review of the Council’s governance arrangements, in relation to the delivery of its leisure service’*

The minute from the SP and R Committee meeting of 20th November states that:

*‘The Committee noted the motion and agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting setting out the terms of reference for a review of the Active Belfast Limited Board, including its membership and governance arrangements.’*

- 3.2** It was further reported on 7th June that, subject to Council approval, the terms of reference and review timeline would be reported to the ABL board on 9th August.

### **3.3 Draft Terms of Reference**

#### **Introduction / Purpose**

Belfast City Council intends to conduct a review of the tri-partite operating model currently in place to govern the delivery of its leisure service with particular reference to the role, membership and governance arrangements of the Active Belfast Ltd board.

Specifically, the objective of the exercise is to:

- a) undertake a review of the overall performance of the ABL board against the Council’s original objectives.
- b) review the ABL governance arrangements including the board’s role in monitoring contract compliance and the performance of the strategic operating partner (GLL).
- c) review the level of control delegated to the ABL Board.
- d) Provide a commentary on the overall status of the partnership and governance, between the three parties to the contract.

- e) Make recommendations in terms of how governance arrangements could be amended/improved going forward.

It is recommended that the work undertaken will include the following:

- f) Review the existing tri-partite contractual arrangements. Any review of contractual arrangements will also need to take into consideration input and advice from legal services.
- g) High level assessment of the ABL governance arrangements including a review of performance.
- h) Review membership of the ABL Board.
- i) Engage with members of the ABL Board for their views – including Council Officers, GLL, current Board members, and where possible previous Board members (up to 3-year period of notification of termination of membership).
- j) Review the level of added value provided by ABL within the current tri-partite Arrangements.
- k) Consideration of how contractual and governance arrangements could be improved based on review findings and engagement with Board members.
- l) Regular progress meetings with, and reports to, the agreed project manager or management team.
- m) Presentation of a final report with recommendations to the committee.

#### **Expected Outcomes**

Based on the above activities, the following outcomes are expected:

- n) A report on the membership and governance arrangements of the ABL Board.
- o) An options paper with recommendations for how governance arrangements for the Council's leisure service should operate in the future.

### 3.4 Proposed Timeline

Agree Terms of Reference	CMT Active Belfast Ltd SP and R	June 2021 9th August 2021 20th August 2021
Appointment of independent contractor	CNS	October 2021
Commence review		October/November 2021
Draft report and findings	CMT SP and R Active Belfast Ltd	January/February 2022

- 3.5 As the planned review will include membership of the Board, the ongoing delay continues to impact on the ABL Director recruitment programme previously scheduled for 2020/21. Subject to the outcome of the review process, it is anticipated that the recruitment campaign could commence early in 2022.”

After discussion, the Board agreed:

- i that Directors should forward any comments on the draft Terms of Reference to the Partnership Manager by 12 noon on Friday, 13th August;
- ii that the recruitment campaign to appoint up to a maximum of six new Directors be delayed until the review of the leisure operating model/governance arrangements had concluded; and
- iii that, in light of the ongoing review of the leisure operating model/governance arrangements, the open forum session which had been due to take place on Monday, 6th September be cancelled.

(Mr. Michael and Ms. Pope and were admitted to the meeting at this point.)

### **Covid-19 Restrictions – Service Update**

The Board noted the contents of a report which provided information on the immediate actions which had been taken by GLL in response to the three Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020 and on income generation, sales/usage and business recovery.

### **Pricing of New Products**

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Board approval for new product pricing for a range of new products to reflect services changes in place or due to be introduced following recent Covid-19 lockdowns and the reopening of the centres.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Board is requested to approve the pricing proposal set out below.**

**3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 An annual pricing review proposal is normally presented to the Board for approval in October with implementation intended to apply from the following April. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the pricing review was delayed until December 2020, at which point the proposed increases were rejected resulting in prices being frozen for the 2021/22 financial year. This decision was subsequently noted by the SP and R committee and by the full Council.**

- 3.2 When new products are launched ‘in year’ and after approval of the annual pricing schedule, pricing for the new products requires Board approval.**

- 3.3 Three amendments to new product pricing are proposed, namely:**

- Hurling Wall**
- Aqua Splash**
- Sensory Pool**

- 3.4 The proposed pricing and rationale for the above products is as follows:**

**NEW PRODUCT PRICING PROPOSAL**

**1.0 Introduction**

**GLL along with Belfast City Council Leisure Services follow pricing for memberships, activities and courses, as laid out in the schedule of charges and pricing matrix. As Better continue to offer a greater variety of leisure services coming out of the pandemic it becomes apparent that certain prices have not been included within the schedule of charges as either an oversight from GLL and Belfast City Council or through the evolving nature of products in response to Covid conditions.**

**The following paper highlights the current gaps in the schedule of charges and GLL requests that these be approved**

in order to operate these service during the summer months. All prices would then be included in the next review of pricing when presented in October.

## 1.0 Hurling Wall

Brook Leisure Centre's outdoor sports provision includes a hurling wall which can now open for the first time. Currently, no price exists for the hurling wall for either individual or group bookings. GLL proposes that the prices for the hurling wall follow those currently approved for racket sports and handball, namely:

Handball/Squash/Racquetball non resident / non member	Per person	£6.40
Handball/Squash/Racquetball resident / pay and play member	Per person	£4.95
Concession: Handball/Squash/Racquetball resident	Per person	£2.45
Badminton non resident / non member	Per person	£6.40
Badminton resident / pay and play member	Per person	£4.95
Concession: Badminton resident	Per person	£2.45

In addition to individual use, the hurling wall can be utilised by groups/clubs as part of their training. This feature of the wall would then make the space comparable to half of a 'baseline' four court multi sports hall. Sports halls are currently charged on a four-court hall baseline of £45.50 per hour with hall size variations charged on a pro rata basis. GLL would therefore propose that the hurling wall is charged at £20 per hour for group bookings, just below half of the baseline multi sports hall rate.

## 2.1 Aqua Splash

Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre is set to launch a wet inflatable product known as 'Aqua Splash'. This product can be set up in multiple formats with a slide that extends from the 3m diving board in the diving pool and an obstacle course in the main pool utilizing between four and eight swimming lanes depending on the combination of sections.

A list of prices is currently in place for this product within the schedule of charges and a distinction in price has been made between the product in its full format (H + slide) and reduced format (I). Please see below:

Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (includes slide) Adult – Non member / non resident		£10.40
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (includes slide) Adult – Member / resident		£8.00

Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (includes slide) Junior – Non member / non resident		£6.50
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (includes slide) Junior – Member / resident		£5.00
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (includes slide) Family Pass – Non member / non resident	Additional child £5.10. U5's free	£31.20
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (includes slide) Family Pass – Member / resident	Additional child £5.10. U5's free	£24.00
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (includes slide) Group Pass	10 participants. Add adult/child £8.00/£5.00	£60.00
Aqua Splash 'I' Set up (excludes slide) Adult - Non member / non resident		£5.20
Aqua Splash 'I' Set up (excludes slide) Adult - Member / resident		£4.00
Aqua Splash 'I' Set up (excludes slide) Junior - Non member / non resident		£3.25
Aqua Splash 'I' Set up (excludes slide) Junior - Member / resident		£2.50
Aqua Splash 'I' Set up (excludes slide) Family Pass - Non member / non resident	Additional child £2.55. U5's free	£15.60
Aqua Splash 'I' Set up (excludes slide) Family Pass - Member / resident	Additional child £2.55. U5's free	£12.00
Aqua Splash 'I' Set up (excludes slide) Group Pass	10 participants. Add adult/child £4.00/£2.50	£30.00

**Pool programming in Lisnasharragh is a challenge for the centre team in managing the requirements of members, the general public and swimming / water polo clubs along with offering swimming lessons and aqua aerobics classes. In programming the Aqua Splash product the centre team have identified that the ability to sell the H structure without the slide option would free space in the diving pool to facilitate other programming but also provide a Swim for All or Swim for Fitness space for those participants that do not wish to use the Aqua Splash product. GLL are therefore proposing an addition to the schedule of charges for this product which is as follows:**



Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (excludes slide) Adult – Non member / non resident		£9.00
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (excludes slide) Adult – Member / resident		£7.00
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (excludes slide) Junior – Non member / non resident		£5.70
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (excludes slide) Junior – Member / resident		£4.40
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (excludes slide) Family Pass – Non member / non resident	Additional child £4.45. U5's free	£27.30
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (excludes slide) Family Pass – Member / resident	Additional child £4.45. U5's free	£21.00
Aqua Splash 'H' Set up (excludes slide) Group Pass	10 participants. Add adult/child £7.00/£4.40	£52.50

## **2.2 Sensory Pool**

**Brook Leisure Centre has been able to re-open the pool in July 2021 and can now welcome back participants to sensory sessions. These sessions are particularly used by children with learning disabilities and autism. Current pricing for this session is linked to a general family price for a swim which is £10.40 for non-members/non-residents and £8.00 for members/residents. This price covers two adults and two children.**

**Participants who use the sensory sessions are more typically one adult and one child and, if another adult attends they would be a carer. GLL is, therefore, proposing a £5.20 for non-members/non-residents and £4.00 for members/residents price for sensory sessions only to accommodate this demand for one adult and one child.**

After discussion, the Board approved the pricing proposals for the hurling wall and the sensory pool at Brook Leisure Centre and the Aqua Splash at Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre and agreed that the prices be reviewed six months after being introduced.

### **Healthwise and Physical Activity Referral Scheme – Six-Monthly Update**

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide the Board with a six-monthly progress update on the exercise and health referral programmes managed by GLL in Belfast.**

## **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Board is requested to note the information provided below.**

## **3.0 Main Report**

### **3.1 Background**

- 1. GLL currently delivers the following health related contracts and services:**

#### **Healthwise/PARS**

**A 12-week exercise referral programme – Commissioned by Public Health Agency via Belfast City Council. Annual rolling contract value of £80K (£80,648.34)**

#### **Cardiac Rehabilitation**

**A 12-week cardiac rehab programme – Commissioned by Belfast Health Development Unit via Belfast City Council. Annual contract value of £35K (£35,273.33)**

#### **Cancer Rehabilitation**

**A 12-week cancer rehab programme – Commissioned by Belfast Health Development Unit via Belfast City Council. Annual contract value of £20K (£20,716.66)**

**\*Normal amount of £149,069. Total from BHDU £137,568.33 taking account furlough payments for staff between March to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020. 2020/21 contract ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Contract has been extended for 2021-2022 back to full funding amount of £149,069.**

#### **Move More Belfast**

**Commissioned by MacMillan Cancer. Three-year contract value of £118K. Two-year extension £56K from MacMillan, supported by GLL will come to an end December 2021**

- 2. Programmes provide a 12-week physical activity programme, which adheres to regional standards and guidelines.**
- 3. A team of dedicated health related exercise professionals delivers the above programmes. All staff are qualified to a minimum of Level III exercise referral. GLL currently employs eight dedicated Health staff including the Health Referral Manager who is directly managed the by the Regional Business Manager.**

4. All chronic conditions (cardiac and cancer) pathways are delivered by dedicated staff qualified to Level IV in the relevant chronic condition.
5. The aim is to promote and increase long-term adherence to physical activity and lifestyle changes designed to improve the physical and mental health of clients who are inactive or sedentary and who are otherwise healthy or who have an existing health condition or other risk factors for disease.
6. Staff supports clients in meeting the Chief Medical Officer physical activity recommendations for adults and older people.
7. Strategic partnerships and working groups established around chronic conditions pathways to ensure collaboration with key organisations such as Public Health Agency, Belfast Health & Social Care Trust and charitable partners.
8. Due to Covid-19 full funding for the 2021-2020 contract was issued due to the work carried out by GLL's Health team. This included establishing the hybrid model with the Public Health Agency and the interactions recorded for each referral. This year 2021-22 the regional model was to be target based with payments for service delivery and contractual compliance. The payment per client was confirmed by the Public Health Agency as £130 per client completed for PARS. For cardiac rehabilitation the payment was £150 per client completed and cancer rehabilitation as £150 per client completed.
9. All GLL centres were closed from 25th December 2020 until 30th April. GLL re-instated their re opening plan, until the health team were able to go back into the centres they offered the hybrid model approach offering virtual/remote delivery. The health team started face to face appointments on the 30th April 2021.

YTD update on all targets, referrals, progress and completions

3.2 Table 1 Healthwise KPIs 20/21 – 21/22

PROGRAMME	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVE	ANNUAL TARGET	PROGRESS TO DATE				Total
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	
			20-21	21-22			
Healthwise (Physical Activity referral scheme)	Total number of patients completing the programme (12-week programme)	677 *interactions recorded for referrals during covid	2402*	55			

3.2.1. The support and work carried out by GLL to referrals during Q4 of the 2020-21 contract has been welcomed by BHDU and they have agreed to release the final quarter fund. As mentioned above it was based on interactions are recorded as telephone call, motivational text message, email, home workout and video classes/sessions.

**3.3 Table 2 Cardiac Rehabilitation KPIs 2020/21 – 2021/22**

PROGRAMME	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVE	ANNUAL TARGET	PROGRESS TO DATE				Total
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	
			20-21	2021-22			
Cardiac rehab Level IV	Delivery of Cardiac Rehabilitation Phase IV for clients (12-week programme) completing the programme	256 *interactions recorded for referrals during covid	1615*	1523*			

3.3.1 Due to the pandemic, cardiac nurses have been redeployed in the health service resulting in the phase III rehabilitation referrals been suspended since March 2020. Similar to PARs the work carried out by GLL to existing referrals has been welcomed by the BHDU and the agreed to release the final quarter payment for the contract. Based on the interactions that are recorded as telephone call, motivational text message, email, home workout and video classes/sessions.

3.3.2 For the 2021-22 contracts, it has been agreed by GLL and BHDU to keep the target the same as last year for cardiac. However, allowing GLL to top up the target achieved with referrals that complete the Covid-19 intervention pilot. This pilot is in partnership with GLL, Active Belfast and the Belfast Trust. Referrals that complete this programme will be added to GLLs total at the end of the contractual year.

3.3.3 Due to Covid-19 and restrictions, the cardiac programme started their face-to-face classes and appointments from 24th May 2021.

**3.4 Table 3 Cancer Rehabilitation KPIs 20/21 – 2021/22**

PROGRAMME	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVE	ANNUAL TARGET	PROGRESS TO DATE				Total
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	
			20-21	2021-22			
Cancer rehab Level IV	Delivery of Cancer Rehabilitation Phase IV for clients (12-week programme) completing the programme	150 *interactions recorded for referrals during covid	696*	N/A in Q1			

- 3.4.1** The cancer rehab programme referrals are made through the Move More Belfast pathway to the cancer rehab physical activity programme. The support and work carried out by GLL to referrals during the last quarter months justifies the release of funds from BHDU. 2021-2022 contract referral target of 150 remains the same as previous years.
- 3.4.2** Due to Covid-19 and restrictions, GLL's cancer rehab programme started back face to face on the 24th May 2021. With group exercise classes resuming 21st June 2021.
- 3.4.3** GLL is in partnership with the South Eastern Trust delivering a pilot pre-habilitation programme for 3 tumour sites. This is a pilot scheme running for the 2021-2022 contract year where referrals will be counted towards the existing KPI of 150 and referrals will be made through the Move More Belfast pathway.

**3.5 Table 4 'Move More' Belfast KPIs 2020/21 – 2021/22**

PROGRAMME	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVE	ANNUAL TARGET	PROGRESS TO DATE				Total
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	
			20-21	2021-22			
'Move More' Belfast MacMillan Cancer	Total number of patients completing the programme including brief intervention	125 *interactions recorded for referrals during covid	23 *number of interactions – 2,578	31 * number of interactions – 2,921			

**3.6 Year-end projections**

- The Covid-19 pandemic is still having a significant affect on the ability to deliver on the KPIs that have been set for 2021-22. Especially with restrictions not easing fully in Northern Ireland and the increased self isolations due to the track and trace app.
- It is still affecting the number of referrals that are coming onto the programme from GPs/health care professionals etc. which can have a delayed impact to deliver the KPIs that have been set. The reason for lower number of referrals coming onto the programme is as followed:
  - Phase III nurses being redeployed into other areas
  - Cancer treatments being suspended
  - Less people going to GPs to not overwhelm the NHS (as broadcasted on news outlets)
  - GPs main concern at present is rolling out the Covid-19 vaccines

- **Monthly review and performance management meetings are in place to ensure that performance is closely monitored and the required outputs delivered.**
- **As per contract compliance, monthly and quarterly returns are completed for all commissioners.**

### **3.7 Regional Model**

- **Public Health Agency has developed a new regional exercise referral model for Level III Healthwise programmes. Emphasis remains on shift to providing group based classes, to increase volume and social interaction.**
- **Currently, GLL has programmed 32 health referral specific classes across the city including a mixture of virtual, walking and centre based classes. As well as a menu of step down options for referrals post 12 weeks. These classes include low intensity circuits, swimming, walking, yoga and Boccia.**

### **3.8 Issues impacting on delivery/performance**

- **Currently all contracts commissioned by Belfast Health Development Unit are based on one year rolling contracts. This creates challenges around staff recruitment and retention. It is anticipated that this will be addressed in the new regional model with longer-term contracts providing improved job security and stability of service.**
- **Redeployment of cardiac phase III nurses and the phase III rehabilitation classes that are currently not being delivered. Therefore, no new referrals for phase IV programme.**
- **Waiting list due to honouring referrals membership when lockdown commenced and delay in hybrid model creation.**
- **Ongoing Covid-19 restrictions.”**

Mr. Michael provided a brief overview of the report and pointed out, in response to a suggestion which had been made at a previous meeting, that GLL had been involved in the delivery of a pilot rehabilitation programme for those people affected by long Covid. The Belfast Health Development Unit was now examining the potential for rolling out funding for the programme in the longer term.

During discussion, it was suggested that GLL should discuss with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Education Authority the potential for making the sensory pool at Brook Leisure Centre available for young people with special needs, particularly during school term, when it was being underutilised. It was suggested also

that the views of Marie Curie, Action Cancer and other related charities be sought on the effectiveness of the Cancer Rehabilitation and Move More Belfast programmes, in the context of their experiences/requirements, and that GLL should seek to identify ways to encourage those nurses, doctors etc. who had been at the forefront of the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic to avail of its facilities.

In response, Mr. Michael confirmed that GLL would engage with local special needs schools around the use of the sensory pool at Brook Leisure Centre and highlighted the fact that the Swimming Buddies group, which worked with young people with autism, had been using the pool prior to the first lockdown. He undertook to raise the additional suggestions which had been made with the Healthwise team.

The Board noted the contents of the report.

### **3G Pitch Utilisation and Business Performance – Six-Monthly Update**

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide the Board with a Q4 2020/21 progress update on the 3G pitch utilisation and business performance managed by GLL in Belfast, since last reported on 5th August 2019. Q1 2021/22 will follow in the next Board meeting, as this information is being currently collated.**

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Board is requested to note the information provided in this report.**

#### **3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 There is no information to provide on occupancy and income figures for each individual centre 3G pitch managed by GLL in Belfast, as all facilities were closed due to the pandemic in the period of January to March 2021.**
- 3.2 Peak/Off peak flows – learning for Q1 2021/2022**
  - 3.2.1 The restrictions during the pandemic have resulted in reduced capacities for participants and also a reduction in certain types of activity. This has resulted in a reduction in occupancy uptake and income.**
  - 3.2.2 3G pitch utilisation is seasonal based on demands from sports clubs.**
  - 3.2.3 Association Football is the main sport utilising 3G pitch services, through clubs, leagues, schools and casual usage. Gaelic Sports and Rugby are also played on 3G pitches but not with the same demand as Association Football.**

**3.2.4 Peak usage is from 6 - 9pm across all pitches.**

**3.2.5 Daytime usage is dependent on centre location as well as school and business links and proximity.**

**3.3 User Groups – learning for Q1 2021/2022**

**Our user groups are represented through the following categories:**

- **Sports Clubs**
- **Leagues**
- **National Governing Bodies**
- **Casual**
- **Schools (including the Football Management Company)**
- **Community groups**
- **Casuals**
- **Belfast City Council**

**3.4 Action to maximise occupancy - Q1 2021/2022**

**3.4.1 All centres have built their 2021 and 2022 budget books and have developed action and outreach plans, to drive utilisation and income.**

**3.4.2 Regular meetings with the Irish Football Association have been ongoing since February 2018. This summer this has resulted in Summer Camps at Olympia and Ballysillan, Futsal usage at Shankill and girls only sessions delivered at Brook, Ballysillan, Lisnasharragh and Olympia. Coach education programmes have also been delivered in centres. Further progress will be made with the anticipated opening of Avoniel in the Autumn of 2021.**

**3.4.3 Although meetings have not been possible throughout the pandemic, GLL is represented on Belfast City Council and Irish Football Association Stadium benefits working group linked to the National Stadium at Windsor Park.**

**3.4.4 Targets for each centre have been developed to increase occupancy and income in line with 2021 business planning process.**

**3.4.5 Target markets include local schools and businesses to drive daytime occupancy and off-peak usage. This will become more possible from September 2021 onwards.**

**3.4.6 Adult casual participation leagues (5 and 7 a side) have been successfully delivered in other partnerships operated by GLL through 'Play Football' who run and manage the leagues through an agreed contract. Now that restrictions are lifted on**



casual use a similar model and business plan is to be explored for Belfast in line with the Leisure Transformation programme.

- 3.4.7 Further development meetings with other NGB's such as GAA and Ulster Rugby to develop partnership programmes."**

The Board noted the contents of the report.

### **Underrepresented Target Groups – Six-Monthly Update**

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

**"1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide the Board with a progress update on the participation of underrepresented target groups in centres managed by GLL in Belfast.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Board is requested to consider and formally record receipt of the information presented below.**

**3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 GLL is a leading social enterprise. One of the core priorities of GLL is to ensure full access for all members of the community and encourage regular participation amongst under-represented target groups.**

- 3.2 GLL have employed a Regional Business Manager, whose key focus is to drive participation and usage, ensuring more people from every background are regularly and meaningfully engaged and taking part in sport and physical activity. To continue on progress made, GLL have a team of three that focus on participation and another staff member with a focus on group exercise.**

- 3.3 Before the pandemic, GLL had set targets for centres to increase usage by 2% per year. As more normal operation becomes possible in time these targets will be reinstated. GLL continue to report on usage figures and utilisation to ABL and BCC.**

- 3.4 The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in leisure facilities across Belfast being closed for periods between March and July 2020 and December 2020 to April 2021. These closures and subsequent restrictions to participation have resulted in a decrease in programme opportunities in the past six to twelve months. This is something GLL will seek to further develop as we come out of restrictions and more normal operating practices can resume.**

- 3.5 GLL is committed to support community access offering varied opportunities delivered in centres that are accessible, affordable and not inhibiting.
- 3.6 GLL re-invests through the GLL Foundations (Sport and Communities) that provide and sustain support for community cohesion and talented individuals.
- 3.7 GLL sustain a positive contribution to the local economy through investment in a workforce that is diverse, passionate, trained and skilled operating in well-managed, maintained and resourced centres.
- 3.8 53% of Belfast GLL members benefit from concessionary charges thereby helping to remove affordability as a barrier to participation.
- 3.9 People with disabilities
- GLL continues to partner with ‘Menshed’ by offering Girdwood Community Hub and Whiterock where the focus is on improving mental health for men.
  - GLL Healthy Living Manager has recently submitted a funding application to deliver a mental health programme in partnership with Action Mental Health with the aim of having a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of 50 programme participants across the city.
  - GLL has supported the social enterprise NOW group in the delivery of a ‘Lets Get Fit Now’ programme which has taken place in Falls Leisure Centre over 10 weeks. Offering participants with a learning disability to participate in tailored fitness classes and gym inductions.
  - GLL has maintained a working relationships with focus groups and organisations that support disabled access and provision in NI throughout the pandemic. The Disability Hub is still available at Girdwood Community Hub.
  - This dedicated disability sports hub caters for a range of wheelchair-based sports and activities including Wheelchair Basketball, Powerchair Football, Boccia and New Age Curling
  - The GLL Sport Foundation in Belfast currently supports 3 disabled and Paralympic athletes. Athletes benefit from financial awards of up to £1,250 which will contribute to their individual coaching, travel, competition and equipment costs

- In recent years, the GSF programme has supported athletes that have competed at Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games. Paralympic middle-distance athlete Dr. Michael McKillop is the Ambassador of the programme in Northern Ireland. Michael has successfully won four Paralympic Gold medals and is a role model to all our locally supported athletes.
- Brook Leisure Centre has a swimming pool specifically designed to cater for those with sensory needs and those with wide range of disabilities. The centre pool has reopened again in July and runs weekly quiet swims currently attracting approximately 20 to 30 participants in each session.
- GLL has a partnership with Swim Buddies to deliver swimming lessons to those with Autism but it has not been possible to deliver these sessions during the pandemic due to the requirement for coaches to be in the water with participants

### **3.10 Women and Girls**

- 47.4% of current Belfast members are female (15,065)
- GLL has developed working relationships with Female Sport Forum and Women in Sport & Physical Activity and organisations that support female access and participation.
- In partnership with Irish FA, GLL provides female only football sessions at four centre sites across the city through the Shooting Stars Programme
- Brook, Girdwood and Olympia have supported Netball NI in the delivery of holiday camps Staff during the Halloween and Summer periods.
- GLL supports 88 female athletes through the GSF programme (58.3%) to enable them to compete at national and international level in their respective sports

### **3.11 Older People**

- 16.2% of all current Belfast members are aged 60+
- Free access for over 60's before 11am Monday to Friday.

- GLL is delivering the annual Club Games Festival for Belfast in October
- GLL has a daily programme of activity targeted at and suitable for older people
- GLL delivers chronic disease (Cancer and Cardiac) rehabilitation programmes, whilst also supporting and hosting Diabetes and Strength & Balance programmes. Many of the referrals for these interventions are older people.
- GLL is planning a launch of 'lite' physical activity programming designed to target referrals coming off the rehabilitation programmes and is also suitable for all members for a lower level/low impact workout. In addition to this walking groups have become part of the mainstream group exercise offering so can be accessed by the wider membership and not just those on PARS.
- Strategic partnerships and working groups established around chronic conditions pathways to ensure collaboration with key organisations such as Public Health Agency, Belfast Health & Social Care Trust and charitable partners.
- 30 people aged 60+ were referred to and supported by Move More Belfast following a cancer diagnosis in 2020. (compared to 60 in 2019, lower number reflects fewer overall referrals received in 2020 due to Covid)

### 3.12 Families

- GLL has created a balanced programme of activities across all centres allowing families to participate. Junior group exercise class are still to return but will be reintroduced to the programme in August 2021.
- New junior and family products has been launched in the past six months – water slides, Surf Belfast and the Aqua Play at Andersonstown, Air Venture at Brook and Aqua Splash at Lisnasharragh. These products a meeting the demands of families, particularly over the summer months as more stay at home in 2021.
- Although GLL has not been able to offer a summer scheme this year they have still been able to offer a varied programme during school holidays to engage and support families. This includes the new products mentioned above along with supporting NGB holiday camps with Irish FA, Ulster Boxing and NI Netball. Community and youth group initiatives have also been

supported at Girdwood. In addition to this GLL have delivered a 6 week tennis camp at Ozone, a four week multi sports camp at Grove and introductory sports sessions at Olympia throughout the summer.

- Birthday parties have been restricted throughout the pandemic but GLL is now permitted to offer a wide range of provision for birthday parties including bouncy castles, climbing wall, sports (indoor and outdoor) along with the new products mentioned above.
- GLL piloted 'Family membership' at Olympia in 2019 and is now in position to relaunch this offer for all centres in August 2021. It is proposed that this membership will be piloted for a six month period to test popularity and utilisation.

After discussion, the Board noted the contents of the report and agreed that it should, in future, include information on areas of multiple deprivation, including trends, given that some of those displayed the worst health outcomes within the City. It agreed also that GLL would submit to its next meeting a report providing a breakdown of admissions to each leisure centre, in terms of:

- i. Prepaid Memberships;
- ii. Pay and Play (both junior and senior); and
- iii. Non-residents.

(Mr. Michael and Ms. Pope left the meeting at this point.)

### **Review of Aquatics Strategy Action Plan**

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

#### **"1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present the annual review of progress in relation to the Aquatics Strategy action plan.

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Board is requested to note the update on the action plan.

#### **3.0 Main Report**

- 3.1 'An Aquatics Strategy for Belfast 2019-2030' was officially launched in August 2019. Following the launch, the Board developed and approved an action plan to track strategic outputs and development progress. The action plan was approved by the board on 9th December 2019.

- 3.2** Within the strategic document, under ‘what we want to achieve’ the development of an action plan is referenced. Specifically, that the partners should: ‘Develop a detailed action plan within three months of the launch of our strategy’ and ‘Ensure that the action plan includes annual performance reports and key strategic review points.
- 3.3** The action plan is structured in line with the four themes set out in the strategic document under ‘Strategic objectives and priorities’ (Pages 8 – 11), namely:
- What we want to do;
  - How we want to do things;
  - Who we want to do it for, and;
  - What we want to achieve
- 3.4** Within the four themes above, the action plan identifies 12 key objectives each with a set of more focused outputs.
- 3.5** The first annual review of the strategy was due to be considered in April 2020 but, due to Covid-19 restrictions, Board meetings were suspended after the meeting of 11th March and did not resume until 9th November 2020. Further restrictions resulted in Board meetings again being suspended between January 2021 and June 2021.
- 3.6** Delivery of the aquatics strategy was similarly impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions. All leisure centres were closed throughout April, May and June 2020 with only partial opening allowed from mid-July followed by the re-opening of some swimming pools in August 2020.
- 3.7** Since August 2020, most Council pools have remained open. Although they have remained open, pools have been required to operate under very different and restricted ‘Covid safe’ operating protocols. Club and group aquatics activities were only permitted to resume in June 2021.
- 3.8** All BCC leisure centres (except Loughside RC), including pools, are now operating on normal pre Covid opening hours but with ongoing operating restrictions.
- 3.9** Given the exceptional operating conditions imposed since March 2020 there is limited value in reviewing specifics outputs as set out in the action plan at this point. However, the Aquatics Strategy is very much a ‘live document’ influencing decisions and operations relating to LTP capital delivery, pool programming, customer communications and pricing reviews. In particular:
- The application of a citywide approach to local pool availability for different activities and user groups.

This has been useful in ensuring that convenient options are available, on an area basis, to serve the needs of different user groups.

- Planning for the integration of new pool products into the service and related pricing proposals. Examples include; competitive swimming and water polo at Lisnasharragh, leisure water (at Andersonstown), surf air, aqua splash and diving.
- The development of consistent operating protocols and related customer communications.
- The development of fair and equitable programming principles to serve the needs of a large number of user groups with varying demands. This has been particularly challenging in recent months as we have moved steadily towards a return to normal service delivery. With renewed public demand for pool space from numerous and diverse user groups, the Aquatics Strategy has been invaluable in providing a reference point for operational decisions.
- New centres at Andersonstown, Brook and Lisnasharragh are now open. The significant increase in pool space now available has made it possible to apply the principles embedded with the Aquatics Strategy. Citywide we are now delivering the area-based programming strategy in North, South and West Belfast. Challenges in East Belfast, with unprecedented demand at Lisnasharragh, remain as programming options are constrained due the fact that we only have one wet centre. Work at Templemore is on schedule for the centre to reopen in the Autumn of 2022. This will provide two more pools in inner East. The introduction of nine additional programmable lanes in East Belfast will alleviate some of the pressures on Lisnasharragh and enable us to implement the Aquatics Strategy equitably across the whole city.
- The development of a pricing matrix to sit alongside the approved annual schedule of charges. The matrix is designed to serve as a much needed reference document for centre managers and front line staff in the application of approved pricing.
- Planning for the programming of pools at Lisnasharragh within the context of the City's main centre for competitive aquatic sports and activities.
- Liaison with Swim Ulster and affiliated aquatics clubs

3.10 There may be some cause for optimism around a return towards 'normal service' throughout the remainder of 2021.

**The next annual aquatics strategy action plan review will be presented August 2022 at which time, subject to service conditions between now and then, a more detailed progress report on each specific action plan output will be presented.”**

The Board noted the contents of the report.

### **Other Business**

The Partnership Manager agreed, at the request of a Director, to submit to the Board meeting on 25th October a report on the future plans for Loughside Recreation Centre.

Chairperson