

Title of Report:	Recovery Plan for Sport & Wellbeing Facilities
Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	20 th October 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, healthy & engaged communities
Outcome	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health
Lead Officer	Head of Sport and Wellbeing

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the progression of the resumption of services in Sport & Wellbeing as per the timeframe set out in the August report presented on 4th August to Full Council

The option adopted at Full Council was the 'Reduced Service Resumption' with the reopening of all Major/Minor Leisure Centres and Community Centres from the 17th August 2020.

This option aligns services with affordability and maximises the permanent staff complement across all facilities, in conjunction with reduced opening hours for activities which best reflect peak demand periods, and compliance with current Covid-19 restrictions.

This paper provides the most up to date position for the following facilities;

- Major Leisure Centres;
- Minor Leisure Centres;
- 18 Community Centres;
- Outdoor facilities

2. Background

Council closed Leisure/Sport/Community Centres on Tuesday 17th March. This was followed shortly thereafter with "lockdown" across the region and the focus moving towards Community Support initiatives.

As the country started to move out of the full lockdown the NI Executive published its Coronavirus Recovery Plan which set out guidance on the phasing of a post Covid recovery.

Linked to this plan was the guidance issued by Sport NI which set the framework to be followed by sporting organisations and by association local government and private sector sport & leisure facilities. That framework phased the return of sport and physical recreation under the following categories;

- Outdoor Recreation
- Water-sports
- Non-contact sports
- Contact sports (Lower risk)
- Contact sports (Higher risk)

Extract from "A Framework to guide progression towards a resumption of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland"

As the lifting of Covid - 19 restrictions gathered momentum, the NI Executive announced that indoor gyms could reopen on the 10th July, with Leisure Centre's following on the 24th July (revised). No further specific guidance was issued by the NI Executive in relation to how these facilities can reopen, as such Council Officers considered various sources of advice:

- NI Executive/DfC, Guidance on the Safe Phased Return of Sport, Leisure and Recreation in Northern Ireland;
- UK Government/DCMS “Working Safely during Coronavirus: Providers of grassroots sport and gym/leisure facilities”;
- Sport NI “A Framework to guide progression towards a resumption of sport and physical activity in Northern Ireland”;
- UK Active “COVID-19 - A framework for the re-opening of gym, leisure centre and wider fitness industry during social distancing”;
- UK Active “COVID-19 Impact Report: The Fitness and Leisure Sector’s Path to Recovery”;
- CIMSPA – “Social distancing in the sport and physical activity sector”;
- CIMSPA – “Guidance on outdoor training and coaching in Northern Ireland”;
- EMD UK – “Guidance and Support for UK Group Exercise Instructors”; and
- QLM Health & Safety Industry Experts.

3. Service resumption

The following timetable highlights the programme for a safe return to sport & physical recreation plus community space.

Facility	Stage for Opening	Opening Date – information relevant to current Covid 19 guidelines
Golf	1	Open - operating in line with Departmental guidance. Seasonal ticket holders and casual pay as you go.
Tennis	1	Open - operating in line with Departmental guidance. Casual and training purposes only, no match play.
Bowling	1	Open - operating in line with Departmental guidance. Training purposes only, no match play.
Synthetic Pitches	2	Week commencing 12th July – operating in line with Departmental guidance - for training purposes and competitive match play.
Grass Pitches	3	Competitive play from 17th July - pre-season grounds maintenance programme to be commenced. Operating in line with Departmental guidance.
Playparks	3	Week commencing 12th July (15 th July) subject to erection of guidance signs etc.
MUGA's	3	Week commencing 12th July (15 th July) subject to erection of guidance signs etc.
Major Leisure Centres	4	Week commencing 17th August subject to Departmental guidance (actual date following completion of H&S requirements - week commencing 24 th August).
Minor Leisure Centres	4	Week commencing 17th August subject to Departmental guidance (actual date following completion of H&S requirements - week commencing 24 th August).
Community Centres	4	Week commencing 24 th August to facilitate child care services.

Indoor service resumption

The recovery phase for indoor facilities, in particular Major and Minor Leisure Centres, is seen as a short term interim measure requiring no permanent changes to structure or staffing requirements. The planning assumptions for next year are to be kept under review and Council advised accordingly.

As per the report presented in August, an exact timeframe cannot be projected for how each phase of the recovery plan for indoor services progresses. The timeframe between phases may be short, but will ultimately be driven by the lifting of restrictions (avoiding local 'lock downs' / possible second wave), governing body/club evidence of compliance and the facilities and staffing capacities to manage potential increased footfall and adhere to Covid-19 operating procedures.

Critically, management require the flexibility to increase or reduce the level of service according to local demands and facility constraints. The phased re-opening operates on differing timescales for each leisure centre, sports centre and community centre.

The Proposed Phased Recovery for indoor usage is summarised in the following Table:

FACILITIES	NO SERVICE	REDUCED SERVICE: 1 SEPTEMBER - 31 MARCH			FULL SERVICE	
		PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3		
		→	→	→		
1. Leisure/Sports Centres	Tier 1 & 2 closed	Tier 1 & 2 Open			Tier 1 & 2 Open	
Leisure facilities:						
Reception	All facilities currently closed. Deep cleaning and essential maintenance ongoing. Opportunity for physical adaptations to spaces / staff training / member comms etc....	Opened with reliance on Legend MIS	Opened with reliance on Legend MIS	Opened with reliance on Legend MIS	All facilities returned to 'normal use' subject to ongoing review against Covid-19 restrictions	
Gym		Booked sessions with limited numbers	Booked sessions with limited numbers	Booked sessions with limited numbers		
Studios/Classes		Limited class offering	Return of Exercise Referral Classes	Return of wider class offering		
Main Hall		Re-purposing of space for gyms	Use of space for Gym training/classes	Club usage subject to governing body		
Minor Hall		Re-purposing of space for gyms	Use of space for Gym training/classes	Club usage subject to governing body		
Dry Changing		Closed initially	Opened for changing and no showers	Full usage of changing		
Main Pool		Lane swimming and club usage	Swimming lessons and family swims	Full use of pool		
Minor Pool		Closed initially	Swimming lessons and family swims	Water slides / childrens parties		
Health Suite		Closed initially	Booked sessions with limited numbers	Full use of health suite		
Wet Changing		Swimmers come 'beach-ready'	Opened for changing and no showers	Full usage of changing		
Soft Play		Closed initially	Booked sessions with limited numbers	Full usage of soft play / childrens parties		
Café		Consulting with leaseholders				
Leisure Opening Hours:						
Leisure Centres	Closed	Mon-Fri: 6:30-21:00 / Sat: 8:00-16:30 / Sun: 11:00-16:00 (intermittent closure for cleaning and staff updates)			Normal Hours	
Sport Centres	Closed	Mon-Fri: 15:00:21:00 / Sat: 8:00-16:30 / Sun: closed (intermittent closure for cleaning and staff updates)			Normal Hours	
2. Community Centres	Closed	Covid-19 response/support services	Wellbeing Services: exercise/childcare	Full use of hall space	Normal Use	
3. Changing Pavilions	Closed	Site specific reopening based on demand and risk assessment of compliance with Covid-19 guidance			Normal Use	

4. Progress to date

With reference to the above table, Phase 1 is complete and appropriate elements of Phase 2 have been opened / reinstated.

- Reception – open as above.
- Gym – booked sessions with limited numbers.
- Studio/classes – booked sessions with limited number, increased timetable. Return of exercise referral programme, subject to PHA guidance.
- Main & Minor Halls – repurposed of spaces for gyms and exercise classes, limited Club usage return.
- Dry Changing- remains closed.
- Main & Minor Pools- booked sessions for lane swimming, club usage and Family swim sessions. Swimming lessons currently being scoped subject to affordability and current or new Covid-19 restrictions.
- Health Suite – remains closed.
- Wet changing – quick change zone post swim (no showers).
- Soft play – remains closed.
- Café – remains closed.
- Community centres – child care provision and block bookings.
- Changing pavilions – toilet access only, no changing.
- Opening hours – as per August report, no plans to revise until confidence in the sector increases.

5. Next Steps

On-going reports will be presented to the L&D committee, to include a financial update following the production of Period 6 management accounts.

Given the growing concerns over the increase in level of Covid-19 infection and the potential for the reinstatement of tighter restrictions SWB awaits any further decisions taken at Executive level and the resulting implications for its service area before progressing any further through Phase 2 and 3 of the recovery plan.