



<b>Subject:</b>	GLL current inclusivity programming and future development plans
<b>Date:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	David Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Noel Munnis, Partnership Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	To provide members with an update on current leisure centre inclusivity programming and future development/expansion plans including a specific update on engagement with Swimming Buddies.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consider and record receipt of the information update provided below.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	At the People and Communities committee on 6 <sup>th</sup> December, Members requested that a report on inclusivity programming and future development initiatives be presented at its April

meeting. Members further requested on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 that an update on the current relationship with 'Swimming Buddies' be brought back at a later date.

3.2 This report seeks to cover both updates and is based on management information provided by GLL.

3.3 GLL is a leading social enterprise. One of their core priorities is to ensure full access for all members of the community and to encourage more people to be more active, more often. CNS officers work closely with GLL to review provision and continue to improve facilities to ensure that our facilities and services are inclusive for all.

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#### Outcomes and proposals

#### **Memberships and customer initiatives**

3.5 GLL offer an inclusive membership for people with a disability. The membership offers access to gyms, swimming pools and fitness classes at a discounted rate. There is currently 327 prepaid members accessing this option within Belfast.

3.6 BCC/GLL grant free of charge admission to centres for all carers when accompanying the person in their care. Carers can then support the person in their care in accessing the gym, pool or group exercise class.

3.7 GLL operates the JAM Card scheme which allows people with a hidden disability or communication barrier to tell others that they need a little extra time and understanding. The scheme was originally developed by and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities but has now expanded to include anyone with a hidden disability or communication barrier. GLL management and concierge staff are trained to operate the scheme within all Belfast centres.

3.8	Most of the new LTP leisure facilities include a 'Changing Places' facilities. These accessible changing/toilets were created to meet the needs of disabled children and adults with complex care needs who require carer support, specialist equipment and more space.
3.9	BCC centres currently provide 'Poolpods' in 8 pools across the city. These pool platform lifts have transformed pool access and are used by customers with a variety of mobility issues to safely access the water.
3.10	GLL in partnership with Belfast City Council provide services at our facilities to meet the physical and communications needs of people with disabilities, including those with impaired hearing.
3.11	GLL work with Technogym to provide accessible gym equipment. Machines such as arm bikes and cable crossovers can be utilised by participants with a variety of mobility and other physical disabilities.
	<p><b>Programming</b></p>
3.12	Girdwood CH in partnership with Disability Sport NI provides a dedicated disability sports hub catering for a range of wheelchair-based sports and activities including Wheelchair Basketball, Powerchair Football, Boccia and New Age Curling.
3.13	Whiterock LC supports disability groups in Upper Springfield by offering sports and fun fitness sessions twice a week.
3.14	GLL supports the social enterprise 'NOW Group' in the delivery of a 'Let's Get Fit Now' programme in Falls LC. The programme offers participants with learning difficulties the opportunity to participate in tailored fitness classes and gym inductions.
3.15	GLL supports the Irish FA in the delivery of inclusive camps during holiday periods. These programmes have been delivered in Avoniel LC, Girdwood CH and Olympia LC. GLL will continue to work in partnership with the national governing body to support the ongoing development of these initiatives.
3.16	Ballysillan LC and Girdwood CH support the Northern Ireland Powerchair Squad in their preparation for participation in the 2023 World Cup in Australia. In January 2022, Ballysillan

	<p>LC hosted the Irish FA Powerchair football All Ireland Championships with over 200 participants in attendance.</p>
3.17	<p>The swimming pool at Brook LC has been specifically designed to cater for those with sensory needs and those with wide range of disabilities. The programme includes specialist teaching sessions (delivered by GLL and independent user groups) alongside weekly 'quiet swims' currently attracting 20 to 30 participants in each session.</p>
3.18	<p>Brook LC also supports the delivery of 'Air Venture' inclusive sessions which are designed to meet the sensory requirements of participants. This provision has expanded to include a number of special needs schools and support their physical education delivery.</p>
3.19	<p>The Indoor Tennis Centre and Ozone Complex supports the delivery of wheelchair user sessions. This is delivered by a group called 'Spokes in Motion' and the centre team have established a long-term relationship with the programme. GLL staff have been trained to meet the specific needs of participants in this programme.</p>
3.20	<p>GLL lessons and courses are all inclusive with staff trained to be able to coach participants with both physical and learning disabilities. In cases of complex conditions participants are encouraged to avail of the one-to-one coaching support provided by GLL.</p>
3.21	<p>GLL's Healthwise team delivers chronic conditions (Cancer &amp; Cardiac) and Musculo-skeletal rehabilitation programmes, whilst also supporting and hosting Diabetes and Strength &amp; Balance programmes. Many of the referrals for these interventions are older people who often extend their initial intervention into ongoing continuation/retention programmes and ultimately on to full leisure centre memberships.</p>
3.22	<p>GLL deliver a number of active aging mornings across the city which include activities such as Danderball, Pickleball, Table Tennis, Boccia and Water Polo. These are being delivered at Avoniel LC, Falls LC, Girdwood CH, Lisnasharragh LC, Olympia LC and Shankill LC. GLL have plans in place to expand the programme in 2023.</p>

## **Staff Training**

- 3.23 Swimming Buddies have provided Autism Awareness training to the team at Brook LC to ensure they have the knowledge and understanding to deliver inclusive sessions in both the sensory pool and Air Venture environments.
- 3.24 GLL are considering a proposal from Swimming Buddies to deliver this CPD accredited training throughout the city. In addition, GLL are considering enrolling some of their swimming teachers onto the Swimming Buddies swimming teacher course with the view of establishing 'all abilities' specific swimming lessons within the current GLL Swim School programme. This could support the development of more inclusive swimming lessons across the city at an affordable price.
- 3.25 All GLL staff will complete online Equality Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Training via the Flex Training portal. Centre management have been tasked with encouraging their teams to complete this training in 2023.

## **Swimming Buddies**

- 3.26 Swimming Buddies is a commercial business that specialises in Autism friendly swimming lessons although this has now expanded to accommodate individuals with 'other abilities'. Sessions are currently being offered at Brook LC and the organisation is keen to expand into other areas of the city including other BCC pools. In addition to existing pool allocations at Brook LC, 30 additional lane hours have been offered at Falls LC, Olympia LC, Shankill LC, Whiterock LC and Templemore Baths. CNS and GLL senior officers are engaged in ongoing discussions with Swimming Buddies to explore opportunities to develop and expand services including, in addition to pool sessions, supported dry activities and staff training.
- 3.27 Andersontown LC have also engaged with Swimming Buddies to explore opportunities for the delivery of inclusive waterslide sessions and will look to add these to the programme in 2023. This will include advice about how to deliver sessions and the delivery of CPD accredited training for GLL staff.
- 3.28 Pool programming is a challenging area of centre management. The service caters for many and varied pool user groups, often with competing demands and priorities. CNS works very closely with GLL to ensure that the principles set out in the Councils Aquatics Strategy are

	<p>observed. Competing priorities include swim for all access (casual swimming), fitness lane swimming, competitive swim clubs, teaching lessons, schools swimming, specialist lessons for those with special needs, water polo, diving, aquarobics, canoeing, sub-aqua, triathlon, and many more.</p> <p><u>Summary</u></p>
3.29	<p>Members are requested to consider and record receipt of the information update provided above.</p> <p><u>Communications &amp; Public Relations</u></p>
3.30	<p>None</p> <p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p>
3.31	<p>None</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.32	<p>None</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	None