



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 11 AUGUST 2021**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: SPORT AND LEISURE RECOVERY
UPDATE**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Committee with an update in relation to the recovery of the Sport and Leisure Service from the Covid-19 pandemic since re-opening in late April.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this Committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY OF APPENDIX TO REPORT

- 2.1 The appendix to this report contains information relating to financial or business affairs of any particular person(s).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since March 2020 several briefing papers have been submitted to the Recovery and Renewal Management Team containing Covid updates relating to the Sport and Leisure Service. This information report provides Committee with the latest update.
- 3.2 The Sport and Leisure Facilities across Moray re-opened for a second time due to the Covid pandemic during the last week in April 2021. However, significant restrictions have been placed on these facilities since re-opening which has negatively impacted the admission levels, income generated and the number of community groups permitted back. The impact of this will be an ongoing operational concern for a number of years before full recovery is achieved.

3.3 Restrictions due to social distancing requirements has meant capping the number of participants in our pools, gyms and sports halls. Restrictions on the type of activities operating have meant most community groups/clubs have been unable to resume their sessions until we have moved into Level 2, 1 or 0 of the Scottish Government Strategic Framework. Due to the closure of our facilities for lengthy periods in 2020 and 2021, and due to the impact that Covid has had on many of our residents in Moray, many Fit Life Members have had to cancel their memberships as a result of lack of finance or limitations in regards to the activities and facilities available.

3.4 Information on admission levels, membership levels and income generated over recent months across Moray Council (MC) facilities is provided below and information for Moray Leisure Centre (MLC) is provided in the confidential appendix. Comparator figures from pre-Covid are also shown to reflect the impact that the pandemic and current restrictions are having on the Service however please be advised that an exact comparison of figures should not be taken due to the Service changing significantly between these two time periods.

3.5 Admissions

Moray Council (MC) Admissions (Pools, Gyms, Community Centres)	2019	2021
April (5 days)	11,679	3,973
May	54,487	24,299
June	52,049	25,722
TOTAL	118,215	53,994
currently operating at 45% of pre-covid admission levels.		

3.6 Fit Life Membership

MC Memberships	Pre-Covid	Sept 2020	June 2021
Primary Cardholders	4,303	3,314	2,946
Currently operating at 68% of pre-covid membership levels			

3.7 Income Generated

MC Income	2019	2021
Apr-June period	£424,975	£200,475
Currently operating at 47% of pre-lockdown income against a continued 100% expenditure cost requirement		

3.8 School Lets Service

In February 2021 a briefing paper was considered in regards to the School Lets Service as historic community lets using Primary School facilities and community lets in non-sporting areas of Secondary School facilities were paused due to the Covid pandemic. The lets were stopped due to a variety of

reasons but in the main due to national guidance restrictions, the enhanced cleaning requirements in education settings and the lack of resource to enable sufficient cleaning to enable multiple users in these facilities. A decision on these school lets was deferred in February until greater clarity on the future of the pandemic was known. Contact is currently being made with the community lets that have not been able to restart since April 2020 to identify their intentions after the summer. Once this is known, Sport and Leisure, Caretaking and Cleaning Services will meet to identify what measures/options can be put in place to accommodate these lets restarting and identify the financial implications of these measures (if any).

- 3.9 It is of note that despite facilities re-opening since April there are still major challenges in the operation of these facilities and a significant loss of income has been experienced. It is clearly evident from the above information that for 2021/22 the income and admission targets for Sport and Leisure facilities cannot be met. If Covid restrictions continue for a period of time then these facilities will continue to operate at a significant deficit and full recovery will take a period of time.
- 3.10 Moray Leisure Centre require an available cashflow for meeting all their monthly expenditure and it is hoped that relaxing of restrictions will enable them to minimise any requirement for further financial support from Moray Council to enable their continued operation, however, this is a very challenging time. MLC are currently liaising with their accountants and bank to ensure they have the best possible financial arrangements in place to meet their needs.
- 3.11 Despite the above operational challenges that this Service continues to face both MLC and MC are developing new programmes and opportunities to best serve our Moray community. MLC are set to launch some new programmes and MC are preparing to launch the Les Mills programme across multiple sites at the start of September, as well as an exercise referral programme.
- 3.12 The Business and Tourism Fit Life Membership promotion (which was set to be launched just prior to Covid) has been delayed until after the launches of these new programmes as, due to the current capacity restrictions, the service is not in a position to introduce a new promotion at a time when it has limited capacity and therefore would be unable to meet additional demand.
- 3.13 As Level 0 has now been reached, this will enable adult indoor contact sport sessions and beginner swimming lessons to be restarted. Now that social distancing restrictions have reduced to 1m then this will also enable an increase in capacity numbers within the pools, gyms and exercise classes, however national guidance on this is awaited before implementing. At Level 0 facilities will still be operating at significantly lower capacity levels compared to pre-Covid levels.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

In relation to the LOIP, this report supports the healthier children focus within the Moray priority to build a better future for our children and

young people in Moray. It also supports the improving life chances and development of stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities focus within the Moray priority for empowering and connecting communities.

In relation to the Corporate Plan, this report contributes to ensuring our communities are caring and healthy and working towards a financially stable Council that provides valued services to our communities.

(b) Policy and Legal

Local Authorities have a legal duty to ensure adequate provision of facilities for recreational, sporting, cultural and social activities. Improving the health and wellbeing of the Moray community through sport, leisure and recreation is not only an integral part of the local vision, but it is also a national priority. In particular, the report aims to fulfil the aspirations of everyone having access to a network of quality places where you can get involved in sport, as identified as a key objective in sportsotland's Corporate Strategy "Sport for Life". The report also links to the Scottish Government's Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, which aims to improve our active infrastructure – people and places.

(c) Financial implications

This report highlights the ongoing financial challenges in the delivery of sport and leisure services across Moray as a result of the Covid related restrictions on service provision.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications directly arising from this report. However if ongoing Covid restrictions continue to be applied to the Sport and Leisure Service then there is a financial risk connected to the sustainability of this Service.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property

The property implications are set out in this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equality implications arising from this report.

(h) Consultations

In preparing this report, consultations have been undertaken with the Head of Education Resources and Communities, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer whose comments have been incorporated in the report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Council considers and notes the update information contained in this report relating to the recovery of the Sport and Leisure Service.

Author of Report:
Background Papers:
Ref:

Kim Paterson, (Acting) Educational Resources Manager

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