

Letter From Cornwall Councillors about Saltash Leisure Centre:

Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor.

We understand concerns are being voiced around the future of Saltash Leisure Centre. We are writing to give some background, to give a little reassurance and to ask Saltash Town Council to write to Sheryll Murray MP to ask her to use her influence to enable Saltash Leisure Centre to reopen as soon as possible.

The management of all Leisure Centres owned by Cornwall Council, including Saltash Leisure Centre, is contracted out to GLL, which is a non-profit charitable social enterprise that operates in various places across the UK. The loss of income while these leisure centres have been in enforced hibernation, together with the financial impact of changes that need to be made to adapt to our Covid world, have resulted in a total loss for GLL of around £5 million in Cornwall alone. As a social enterprise, GLL has not qualified for any government financial support.

Cornwall Council has been actively lobbying central government to provide funding to GLL, and on 28th August joined with local authorities across the South West in calling on government to approve a funding submission. Here is a link to the media release on 28th August:

https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news-room/media-releases/news-from-2020/news-from-august-2020/south-west-councils-make-urgent-call-for-leisure-centres-funding/?fbclid=IwAR1Ld4jAU85ocQd59D7ykadH-S-kbe-ZkvPdMbPABdXKZ7j6-0iafpH_bCM

Saltash Leisure Centre needs to reopen as soon as possible:

- * It has long played an important role at the very heart of our community
- * Leisure Centres are part of the answer to the Covid-19 public health crisis because being physically active boosts the immune system and is a good defence against the virus. Physical activity also helps prevent obesity and boosts mental wellbeing.
- * Saltash has elite swimmers, members of swimming clubs and primary school children who are not able to train - a situation which is exacerbated with the ongoing closure of the Life Centre in Plymouth.
- * GLL provides employment for Saltash residents
- * Leisure centres offer self-employed fitness instructors venues to hold classes

For all these reasons, it is of great importance for Saltash Leisure Centre to reopen. Having said that, it is looking like the impact of Covid will leave Cornwall Council having to make an additional £20 million of savings in 2021/22, so it will be extremely difficult to find £5 million to passport over to GLL. Cornwall Council's Cabinet confirmed on Monday 14th September that they are looking to finalise discussions with GLL by the end of next week, and that their priority is to get the closed centres reopened as soon as possible.

Sport England has been leading cross-sector lobbying on the challenges facing local authority leisure provision. Central Government has helped fund leisure centres in parts of England where they are directly managed by local authorities, but there has been no government funding for leisure centres in Cornwall. We sincerely hope that

Saltash Town Council will write to Sheryll Murray MP ask her to use her influence to enable GLL to be adequately funded by central government so that Saltash Leisure Centre can reopen as soon as possible.

Thank you.