

Hi Mike

When we spoke this morning you mentioned that Scottish Government is reviewing the definition of Group Activity for sport and I thought it would be useful to express some of the worries and concerns from the operators of some ice rinks.

Ice rinks generally operate during the winter season from September to April so the businesses are geared to generating revenues during that time and they close for the warmer summer months for maintenance of buildings, plant and equipment. This seasonality increases the pressure and need to be open and generating revenue through sporting activity. The current restrictions at Level 3 allow ice skating but do not allow for curling to take place. This means that ice rinks cannot sustain and remain open unless the definition of "indoor group activity" could be revised. The current limit of 6 adults from 2 households means curling is not viable and forces ice rinks to close for economic reasons. Given the measures described below we suggest that physically distanced curling in bubbles of 8 (2 teams) should be allowed in Protection Level 3.

I have learned today that 3 ice rinks have already decided to end their season now, so not open before **October 2021**. Only Lockerbie have made this news public but the others will follow in the coming weeks and if current restrictions remain in place in January then many more will likely follow. If that restriction could be removed for indoor non-contact sport where 2m distancing is respected, it would possibly save ice rinks from permanently closing.

The other factor that is a massive concern for a few rinks is the local authority travel restriction, two most affected are Kinross and Greenacres. Kinross is in the Perth&Kinross LA but draws half of its members from Fife which includes Dunfermline, Cowdenbeath, Auchtermuchty and even Dollar in Clacks, all of which are within 20 miles, whereas Killin is in the same local authority but driving via Perth is 71 miles away. The Greenacres Ice Rink is in the hills above Howwood in Renfrewshire but draws most members from Glasgow as well as East Renfrewshire, North Ayrshire and Inverclyde. What would really help those facilities is an allowance for their members within say 20 miles to be allowed to continue

The facilities have invested in measures to make them covid safe:

- creating one way systems and wearing face coverings off-ice
- adapting rules to maintain 2m distancing and just 1 sweeper during curling games
- reduced number of sessions per day to allow sanitisation of venue and equipment
- use of bubble system to avoid contact between groups
- physical distancing signage on and off the ice
- increased ventilation and air filtration
- bookings through clubs in advance for all sessions, avoiding cash handling
- having trained covid officers at every facility and every club

If you would like any further information please let me know and I am sure we could be of assistance to you.

Best wishes

Bruce