



*At the heart of life*





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## Foreword

Mark Bayley-Smyth,  
Chair of the Board of Directors



It gives me great pleasure to introduce our latest business plan which has been developed by the board and senior leadership team in collaboration with our Shareholder, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

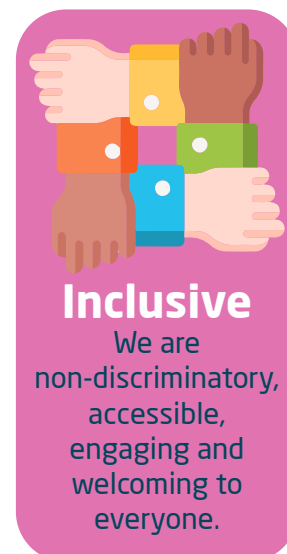
Now entering our 12th year, we are one of the longest-established and most renowned Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCo) in the field of leisure, health and wellbeing. We have learnt a great deal during the last 11 years and the sector continues to adapt and evolve through the challenges we all face, including the Covid-19 pandemic and more recently the cost of living crisis and wider inflationary pressures.

During 2022/23 we have continued to grow our business; our membership levels have increased; the number of children we are teaching to swim has risen; we have supported more people than ever before to improve their health and wellbeing through lifestyle changes in terms of physical activity, weight management, stopping smoking and falls prevention and our Entertainment offer has had its most successful pantomime season on record.

These achievements are a testament to our wonderful people and the way in which they advertise and actively promote our brand; the exceptional customer service they provide and their approach to ensuring the safety and welfare of everyone who engages in the wide-ranging services we offer.

As the recently appointed new Chair for the company, alongside our newly appointed Managing Director, I look forward to working as one with Cheshire West and Chester Council to ensure we deliver against our shared vision for leisure, health and wellbeing services:

**“To deliver accessible, affordable leisure, health and wellbeing services, tailored to each locality to support and improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.”**



I was, and remain, extremely proud and privileged to have been appointed Managing Director for Brio Leisure in October 2022.

The leisure sector faces some significant challenges over the coming years, and therefore we felt it vital that our Business Plan was developed for a 3-year period as we continue on our journey to pivot away from being seen as a traditional leisure provider. With our ever widening services, we want to strengthen our position as a key deliverer of health and wellbeing services, supporting the Council in their quest to improve the health of the local population whilst reducing health inequalities. At the same time, we recognise the need to remain commercially driven to ensure the



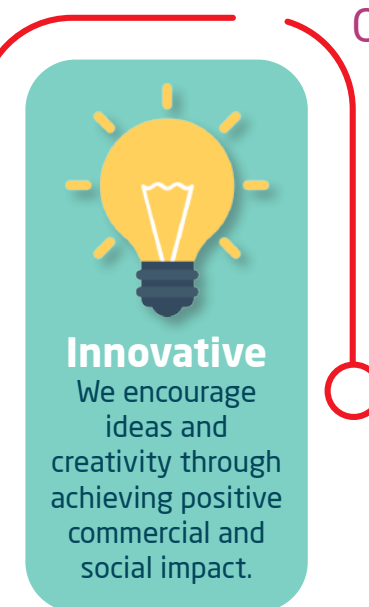
## Introduction

Matthew Parker,  
Managing Director

financial sustainability of these vital services alongside our role in caring more about our local environment.

This 3-year plan clearly articulates our aims and objectives, the strategic enablers we need to have in place to achieve these and how we will measure and report our success. However, we know none of this will be possible without our dedicated staff, loyal customers and supportive Shareholder and client. That is why I would like to share with you our newly developed company values, which will be embedded across the organisation over the coming months and will be integral to delivering our ambitious vision.

## Our Values







## About Us

Brio Leisure is a Community Interest Company established in May 2011. We're wholly owned by Cheshire West and Chester Council (Shareholder), and a company limited by guarantee.

As the largest provider of leisure and wellbeing services across the borough, we have a shared vision with our shareholder to make leisure accessible, affordable and attractive to the people of Cheshire West and Chester with the ultimate aim of supporting health and wellbeing improvements for residents and communities across our borough.

We do this through a hub and spoke model of delivery which maximises the use of the facilities we manage. Our hub sites are strategically located across the borough and we have 4 primary hub sites and 3 secondary hub sites. A primary hub site offers a full range of

activities such as gym, swimming, fitness, room hire and a café. A secondary hub site offers some of the activities provided from primary hub sites and/or on a smaller scale.

Our spoke delivery offers targeted activities and services in areas where people may be less active and will encourage new customers to access services and support provided by Brio and other agencies.

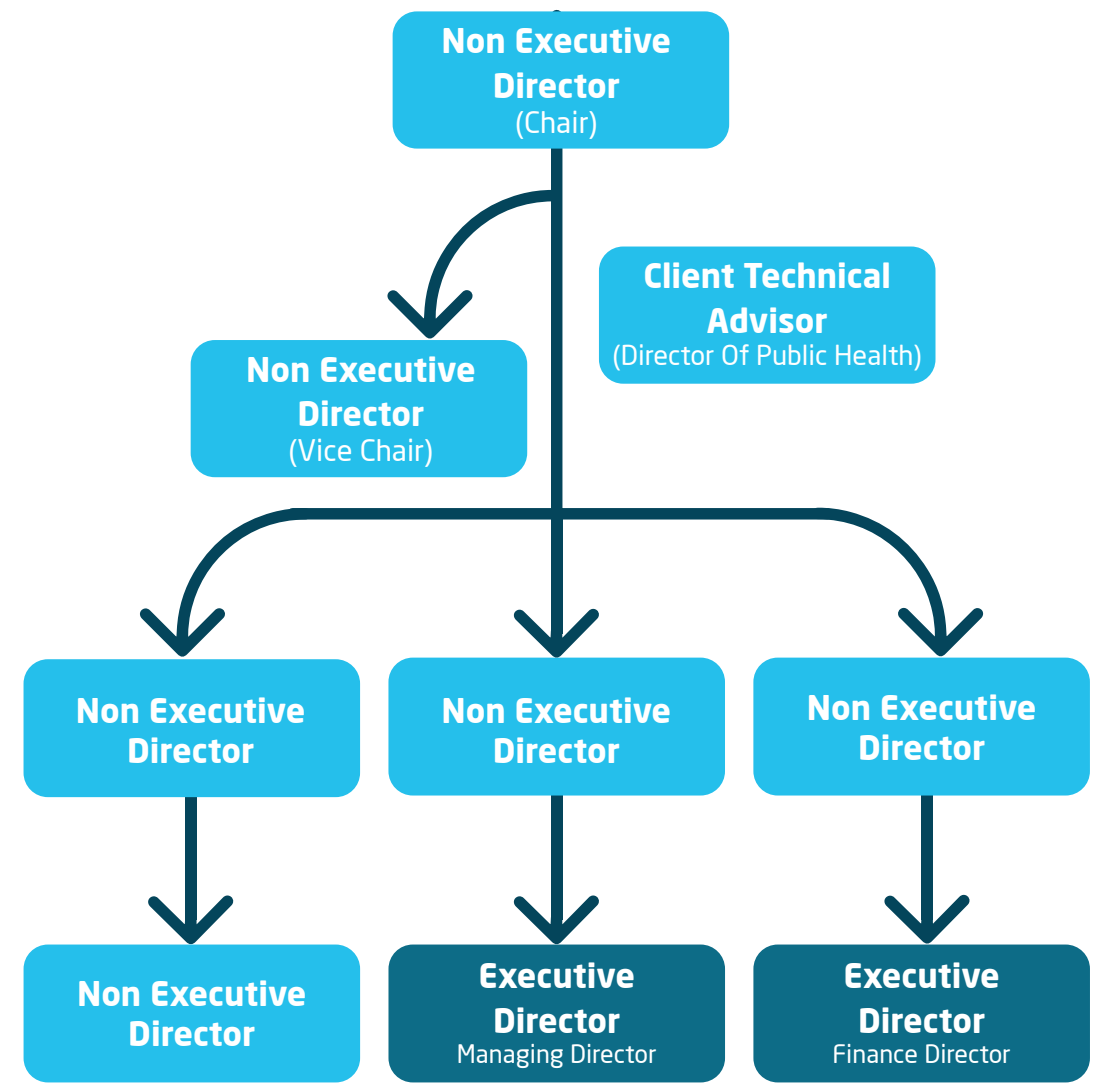
In addition to the spoke delivery, we also deliver a wide range of integrated wellness programmes, including weight management, falls prevention physical activity and smoking cessation under the auspice of the Cheshire Change Hub.





# Governance

## Board Structure



Brio is governed by a Board of Directors who are responsible for ensuring that the company meets all statutory and regulatory obligations. Led by the Chair they provide expertise and guidance, advise on strategy and scrutinise decisions where necessary. The Board is supported by an Advisor, nominated by the Shareholder as the client, to provide technical or specialist advice.

The Board meet quarterly as do three of the five sub-committees. The Audit and Remuneration

committee meetings take place as and when required, typically once a year.

The sub-committees are in place to scrutinise specific business matters in further detail, ensuring key strategic items are escalated to Board. Each sub-committee is made up of, and chaired by members of the Board of Directors, supported by subject matter experts from the Senior Leadership Team.

# Sub-Committees



As a wholly owned Council company, we also have an extremely close working relationship with our shareholder and client. There are various formal and informal mechanisms to ensure regular communication is in place between our Board and Senior Leadership Team with relevant senior officers and members for CW&C. The focus of the formal structures is to ensure performance is closely monitored, that the shareholder is kept informed of health and safety issues and matters of strategic risk, to deal efficiently with reserved matters and to ensure we are contributing to the Council's strategic priorities.

# Formal Shareholder Engagement

## Formal Shareholder Engagement

Shareholder Board (Quarterly)

Contract Meeting (Monthly)

Joint Transformation Board (Monthly)

Cabinet Member Workshops (Bi-annual)

## 2022 / 2023 Performance Highlights

The social value generated during the 12 months to October 2022 was in excess of **£13million**

### Leisure

Launched the first ever **Stay Active 4 Less** campaign.

Provided swimming lessons to **5,300** children.

Achieved **94%** in our an external Health and Safety audit

Achieved our 2022/23 target of **19,500 MEMBERS**

Black Friday revenue increased **39%** compared to 2021



Friday Night Youth Zone at Winsford Lifestyle Centre to support the mental wellbeing of local teenagers

Supported **104** Schools to deliver Key Stage Two Swimming Lessons



Offered a low-cost Kids Swim Pass for the summer holiday period, with **1,622** young people taking up the offer



### Wellbeing



**60 PEOPLE** have completed the Long COVID recovery programme.

Delivered **250** community NHS Health Checks

Awarded the **Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership Award** for Social Value



Supported over **50 PEOPLE** living with neurological conditions to be more active through the Access to Exercise Neurotherapy project



T2 Adult Weight Management was shortlisted as a finalist in the **UKACTIVE AWARDS 2022** in the Activation Award category

### Workforce

Released a People Plan, Wellbeing Policy & Recruitment strategy



Employed 7 local people through our **apprenticeship scheme**

**4,257** training hours completed (average of 11 hours per employee)

Supporting **employee wellbeing** with new policies on **menopause, pregnancy loss, and domestic abuse.**

Pledged to be an **age friendly employer** and to support Women in the Workplace, with Motherwell & Ageing Better.



### Entertainment

**BEST PANTO SEASON EVER!**  
Surpassing all income targets



As part of the Holiday Activity and Food Programme initiative we were able to provide

**770** panto tickets & **450** snack packs to families in need and local youth groups

Northwich Memorial Court Pantomime, in association with Anton Benson Productions, nominated for the **best script** at the **National Pantomime Awards**



### Customer Service

Organisational Net Promoter score of **48**, **4% HIGHER** than the industry average.

Achieved **'Very Good'** Quest Accreditation Scores across our facilities



"The professionalism of the centre's staff was first class. I could not find fault with any of them. They were highly focussed on delivering a high standard of service."



## Data & Insight & Our Social Value

We recognise that data and the insights it lends Brio are critical to help us create better, more impactful experiences for our members and make smarter, more informed business decisions.

Therefore, we are currently developing a Brio Data & Insight Plan to ensure we are collecting the right data, at the right time and using it effectively for business insights that inform our strategy and action.

Ensuring all Brio systems are fit for purpose to ensure that our data is captured, validated, accurate and reported will be fundamental to this Data & Insight Plan's success and will help us to build a culture of continuous improvement regarding our data quality. A Brio Social Value Plan will sit within the framework of our new Data & Insight work.

Social Value is the good that we can achieve within our communities across Cheshire West and Chester. It showcases the value and impact our leisure estate and services have in the community.

A Social Value Plan will help us to measure the social value we provide in a quantifiable way which in turn will help us better articulate the value of our work, help us to tender for new contracts with key intelligence on what community and healthcare savings can be generated, and inform our strategic decisions about where time, effort and money are best invested to benefit local communities and the audiences most in need of our help.

Our latest Social Value calculation (based over 12 months from November 2021 to October 2022) is over £13million.

Brio contributes  
in excess of  
**£13 million**  
of social value  
per annum

This assessment is based on the activity of all our members and pay as you go users and has been undertaken aligned to the Datahub\* Social Value Calculator, which uses a calculation formula of frequency of visits per week and longevity of that visit to place a social value figure to that.

Moving forward, we plan to measure our social value under 4 overarching themes - Social, Economic, Environment and Innovation. These themes align with the National Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) framework and Social Value Calculator outcomes which Cheshire West and Chester Council have adopted for their Social Value Policy. Brio will also link these themes and specific objectives to the Council's Plan and Recovery Plan priorities.

The 'good' that Brio delivers can be equated to an estimated financial value. This will be calculated, for all outcomes using a number of evaluation sources. Most importantly, the calculation will reflect the benefit above what might happen without the intervention or service. In addition to this financial metric, it will be important for us to 'tell the story' of our Social Value through supporting narrative and images which bring the outcomes to life.

It will take time to develop, embed and measure our social value. This plan will be the starting point. Ongoing buy-in, investment, monitoring and resources will be needed to maintain the momentum.

\*Datahub is Sport England's recognised tool to measure Social Value. It uses evidence based academic research, undertaken by Sheffield Hallam Sports Industry Research Centre and funded by DCMS and Sport England.

## Smoking Cessation Case Study

It is proven that effective smoking cessation programmes help to reduce the number of:

- ✓ Smoking related hospital admissions
- ✓ People being treated in primary care services for smoking related illnesses
- ✓ Smoking related fires
- ✓ Street litter waste

In 2021/2022, Brio supported 424 people to become smokefree, leading to huge financial savings to the borough. For every person Brio supported to quit smoking, we estimate to have saved the Cheshire West and Chester borough £3,289 in community, health and social care costs; a cumulative total financial saving of £1,394,880!

Between June - August 2022, one of our smoking cessation practitioners successfully supported three individuals from one family to become smokefree. The family members (mother, father and son) were each smoking 20 cigarettes per day prior to engaging with the service, a combined total of 420 cigarettes per week.

Following the success of the 3 family members quitting smoking, a fourth member of the family (Son's partner) quit thanks to the support from the family, who applied the techniques learnt in the Brio Smoking Cessation programme.

When clients are supported in the Go Smokefree service, Brio can quantify the savings to the borough. However, not everyone chooses to join Brio's GoSmokefree service, and clients often tell our smoking cessation practitioners that their friends and family members have become smokefree on their own.

This highlights additional social value the programme generates and suggests that Brio's financial savings to the borough are underestimated.



# Purpose

To support more people in making a difference in their lives

## Our Strategy

# Vision

To inspire everyone to lead a happier and healthier lifestyle





## Strategic Enablers

We have a number of foundational strategic enablers that are integral to our success – these are the critical skills and capabilities needed to be in place to drive the business forward.

### Brand and Reputation

Brio has a positive brand reputation; we have a loyal customer base that we are committed to retaining. Customer retention and loyalty are closely linked to profitability. We recognise it always costs more to acquire a new customer than it does to retain one. By further developing our brand and reputation we can look to grow our customer base, supporting our aspirations for business growth.

### Digital Technology

The use of technology and data to meet raised consumer expectations and drive innovation, actionable insights and value across our business is absolutely essential to our success. Our current use of digital is poor, reflecting limited investment in recent years. Investment in this area will allow us to better meet the demands of customers, transform our ability to use data and insight to inform our decisions and help become more efficient.

### Financial Stability

The last 3 years have been extremely turbulent, specifically due to the financial implications caused by Covid-19 and more recently the soaring cost of energy alongside inflation. Brio's cost base has continue to rise at a rate that exceeds income growth. By working with our shareholder, and developing this 3 year Business Plan, we aim to move towards a more sustainable footing. Fundamental to this is income growth, predicated on the planned refurbishment of Northgate Arena which is anticipated to be undertaken and completed within the 3-year Business Plan period.

### Organisational Values and Alignment

Our organisational values lay the foundation for all that we do. They need to be embedded across all areas of our business and feed into our everyday approach. Building on our shareholder principles of co-production, we are committed to giving our customers and our employees a voice, as demonstrated through our newly developed Workforce Engagement Panel.

## National Context

Leisure facilities, especially those with swimming pools, are disproportionately affected by rising energy costs, given their high energy intensiveness. Ukactive reported in November 2022 that 40% of council areas are at risk of losing their leisure centres and swimming pools – or seeing services rationalised – due to the sector's growing energy crisis. Alongside this, slower than anticipated recovery post-Covid; wider inflationary pressures resulting in increased costs of supplies and services and staff pay means leisure operators are facing a period of unprecedented challenge.

In December 2022 Sport England released the Future of Public Sector Leisure report looking at how the sector can best progress amidst an energy and cost-of-living crisis. The report highlighted the need for the sector to evolve from a traditional leisure service into one that is more focused on active wellbeing built upon four pillars: leisure, physical health, mental health and social care; provision that is local and place-based; strong sector leadership and low carbon provision.

## Local Context

The energy and cost-of-living crisis is not unique to leisure, it is placing huge pressure on the economy across the whole of the UK. Cheshire West & Chester Council consulted with residents during late 2022 and in January 2023 set out proposals for a balanced budget for 2023-24 and 2024-25, alongside a capital programme for 2023-27.

In an environment of inflationary cost pressures on council services, pressures on the social care system, strict limits on central government funding, and continued high demand, it has been described as the most the challenging budget in the Council's history. The budget set out expectations as to how the £90.2 million funding gap (over 2 financial years) would be addressed, which included reducing the amount of financial support CW&C provide to Brio.

Despite the financial challenges, CW&C remain committed to providing the key services for local people which impact on everyone's lives and futures. Their strategic objectives are clearly outlined in the 'Play your Part Council Plan 2020 – 24' and the 'Cheshire West Place Plan', jointly developed with the local NHS.

The Council Plan sets out how CW&C want to build greener, fairer and stronger communities. It is the basis upon which decisions, resources and actions are determined. The Place Plan, which is also the borough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, sets out the vision to improve the health and wellbeing of residents living in our borough.

Both these strategic documents have been carefully considered when developing our Business Plan.

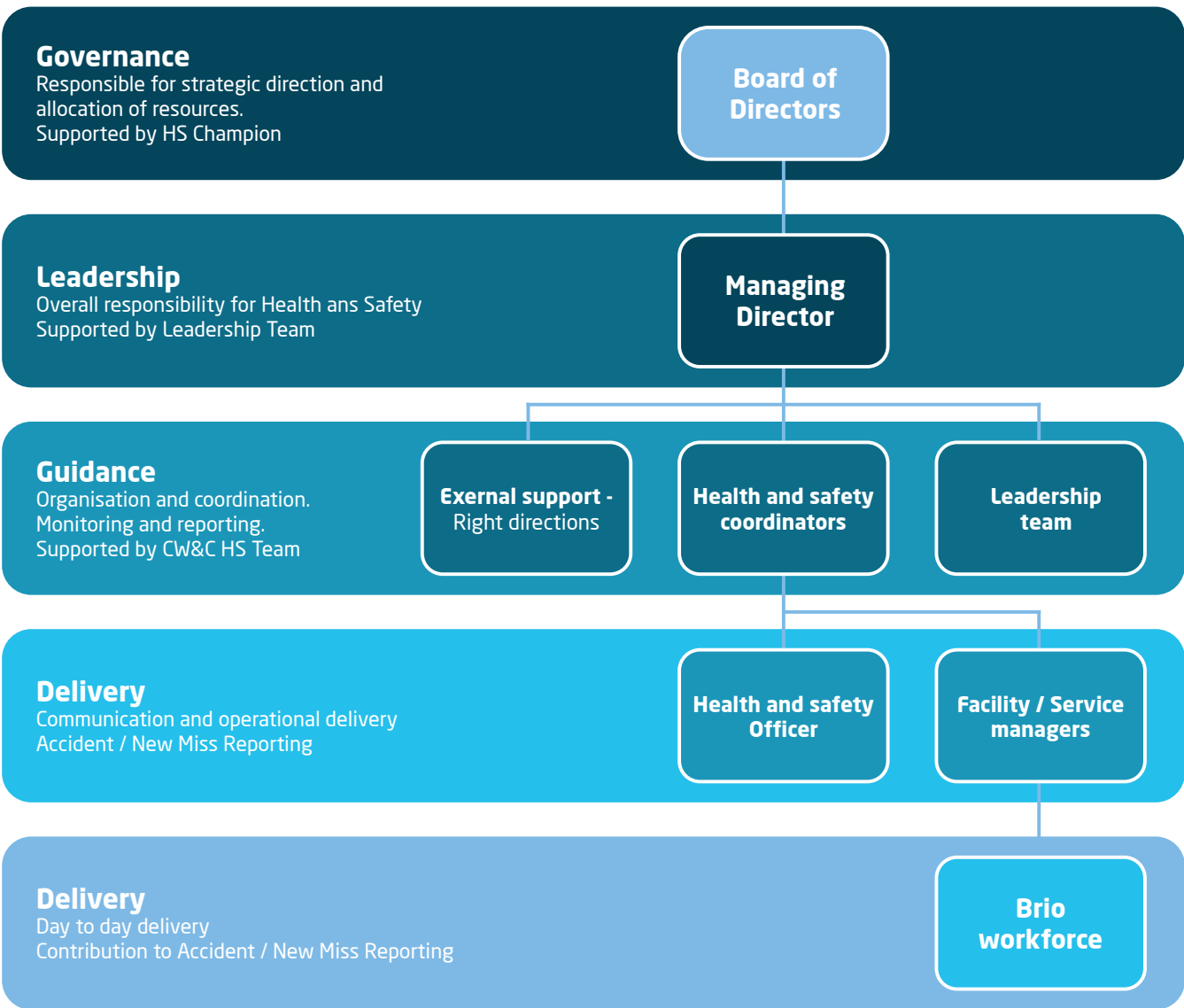
# Health & Safety

Brio Leisure is committed to the continuous improvement of our health and safety management and to providing a safe and healthy environment for our workforce, customers, contractors and suppliers.

Our Health and Safety Strategy outlines our approach which centres across four key themes:

1. A positive safety culture
2. Coherent policies, plans and procedures
3. Compliance with all statutory requirements
4. Zero harm

The chart below shows the established organisational structure with regard to health and safety management. The structure is supported by working groups which bring together elements of the structure to enable a collaborative approach. These include the Health and Safety Improvement Team, an internal Health and Safety Forum, our Workforce Engagement Panel and the CW&C Health and Safety Forum.



# Strategic Risk Management

All risks are tracked and monitored within the Corporate Risk Register, which is regularly reviewed and reported to the Board every quarter. The current key strategic risks facing Brio are outlined below:

## Competition risk

The current, and ever-increasing level of competition within the leisure industry particularly from budget gyms, places further challenges with regard to customer recruitment and retention along with sensitivity in terms of pricing policy and ability to grow income in line with inflation.

## Contractual risk

Due to financial pressures, and the need to drive efficiencies which could lead to reduced resources and/or lack of investment in critical areas of the business, there is a risk that Brio are unable to deliver against contract specifications. It is therefore essential that available resource is directed at the strategic priorities set out in this Business Plan.

## Financial risk

Increasing costs in relation to pay, general price inflation and the energy crisis are creating major issues in relation to the Company's expenditure. Whilst customer numbers have broadly recovered to pre-Covid, additional income generated is required to meet the increased cost base. With further cost increases likely during the Business Plan period, this financial risk will remain, despite plans to drive commercial activity and deliver efficiencies.

## Staffing resource risk

Post covid, and with a competitive labour market, there is risk in the ability to recruit sufficiently skilled and experienced personnel to Brio.

## Whole lifecycle sustainability of assets risk

Brio currently manage a mixed portfolio of assets. With some assets already identified by Brio and CW&C as requiring re-purposing, it is essential that these progress. Similarly a number of older buildings do, or will need investment but with no planned investment scheduled throughout the remainder of the contract term this presents significant risk. Condition surveys of assets has been commissioned with completed reports due in March 2023. This will provide an up to date picture of maintenance liabilities and will be used as a basis on which to inform any available investment.

In addition to this Northgate Arena is scheduled for large scale refurbishment during 2023 - 24, which will bring the facility up to regulatory standards, increase its lifespan and enhance the customer experience. The Northgate Arena project is a fundamental part of our Business Plan over the next 3 years.



 **/brioleisure**

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 **brioleisure.org**

Designed and produced by Brio Leisure  
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2023 - 2026