

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Description of Proposal	Discontinuation of indoor sports and recreation services at St Mary’s Leisure Centre (SMLC)
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>It is proposed that sports and recreation services are discontinued at SMLC based on the content of this ESIA and the Council’s emerging citywide strategy in respect of leisure.</p> <p>SMLC, which is situated in the inner-city Bevois Ward (in St Mary’s Road) is currently used for exercise classes, racket sports (including squash) and indoor team sports. The building also houses a gymnasium, but this is not in current use. SMLC also contains a variety of other rooms, some of which are not useable for health and safety or other reasons.</p> <p>Access to SMLC is available on a pay as you go basis to people of all abilities and fitness levels irrespective of their age.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>Solent University (“SU”) initially managed SMLC as a leisure facility under a Service Concession from 01/08/10 to 31/06/19. SU used the facility to deliver a sports-related academic programme. The local community were encouraged to access the facilities, although this access was restricted around the priorities associated with SU’s academic provision.</p> <p>Since July 2019, SMLC has continued to be operated by SU on behalf of the Council with the Council paying SU’s costs and taking the risk on the income. This new arrangement with SU ends on 31/12/2021 meaning that SMLC shall close with effect</p>	

from 01/01/2022. Allowing for the usual Christmas period closure, the final date of operational activities at SMLC shall be 22nd December 2021.

Alongside its primary purpose as an academic sports facility, since 2010, SMLC has provided indoor sports and recreation opportunities for the local community who may not be willing to travel outside of their very immediate surroundings in order to access leisure facilities. It has also provided classes for particular community groups who may not feel comfortable undertaking such activity in a group with 'open' access, such as Muslim women-only exercise sessions, although these sessions have not been provided at SMLC since July 2019.

User figures

During certain periods of 2020 and 2021, SMLC was closed in accordance with the Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2021 and Government guidance. As a result, the usage of SMLC was affected.

Usage in calendar year 2021 to date is as follows:

Month	Users
January (closed in accordance with Coronavirus regulations)	0
February (closed in accordance with Coronavirus regulations)	0
March (closed in accordance with Coronavirus regulations)	0
April (closed in accordance with Coronavirus regulations)	0
May (re-opened on 17 th May in accordance with Coronavirus regulations)	195
June	707
July	1,091
August	1,037
September	1,603

Historical annual usage levels per calendar year were:

Calendar year	Users
2020	16,599
2019	19,660 (Note: user data is estimated for January to May 2019 as a result of the exit of the original agreement with SU affecting reporting during this period).
2018	66,875

Notwithstanding the impact of the COVID pandemic during 2020 and 2021, the data demonstrates that usage of SMLC has decreased over recent years. This is due largely to the ceasing of the original contract between the Council and SU which aligned with SU opening their new academic leisure facility at East Park Terrace and transfer of the academic users from SMLC to this facility.

East Park Terrace is situated approximately 0.2 miles from SMLC and caters for SU's sports-related programme and associated users, which have historically made

up the majority of SMLC users.

Summary of Impact and Issues

Southampton Data Observatory data shows that within the Bevois Ward of Southampton, the population is circa 25,300 based on the most recent data available, which is from 2018.

Data for where users and visitors to SMLC live is not collected by SU and therefore it is difficult to assess what percentage of current users and visitors are from local communities and how many people travel over 1.5 miles.

In 2018 the user profile included 7% children and young people, 1% people with long term conditions/disabilities and 65% people from Minority Ethnic communities.

Data shows that within the Bevois Ward there are higher than average levels of crime, anti-social behaviour, crime affected by alcohol, drug related crime, and violent crime. Statistically there are a disproportionately high number of citizens from minority ethnic communities compared to the city average. The data also shows life expectancy is lower than the city average. The profile confirms the numbers of children from low-income households is higher than the city average.

A consultation was carried out in August 2019 for 12 weeks, regarding a proposal to create a community hub in the building. When asked how to use the space in the future the highest two responses propose usage for sports and wellbeing and for community-driven use. The highest percentage of people completing the survey were from the Bevois area of the City. This consultation informed the Council's approach to service delivery between its completion and the current date.

There are also a limited number of squash courts available within the city, two public pay and play squash courts at SMLC, three squash courts pay and play at University of Southampton Jubilee Sports Centre and three courts at David Lloyd that are offered on a registered membership basis. The Indoor Built Sports Facilities Strategy (IBSFS) commissioned by the Council indicated that the existing squash provision in the city should be retained so the removal of squash provision at SMLC will need to be considered in this context. Increasingly, squash courts are provided through squash clubs/multi-sport clubs, as opposed to local authority facilities. This reflects the fact that participation in the sport has considerably reduced from its significant growth in the 1970's, and there is less demand for community access squash courts.

Impacts may be offset through the usage of a variety of alternative leisure venues in the area as listed in Alternative Sports Facilities contained as Appendix A ("Appendix A").

In addition to the Alternative Sports Facilities, SU currently provide the following community classes at the East Park Terrace academic leisure facility (which is situated approximately 0.2 miles from SMLC) which are open to public use:

- Health4her on Wednesday and Friday mornings (This is a weight loss programme for females only and caters for cultural and religious restrictions, enabling women to experience and enjoy a variety of sports and physical activity).
- Exercise referral diabetic clinic on Monday mornings and evenings and Wednesday evening
- Sports therapy and personal training daily
- Community use of sports hall by Kestrels basketball and Sharks wheelchair rugby
- Discounted gym member rate of £10.99 per month for holders of Smartcities card with other public members paying £13.99. Opening hours to public: 1pm - 8.30pm weekdays and 9.30 - 5pm weekends.

As part of SU's activity to support the community, SU has committed to provide access to facilities at East Park Terrace from 4th January 2022 until at least 1st May 2022 (with the likelihood of this being extending further around SU's academic provision) for the following groups:

- Cricket Wicketz have slots booked for use of sports hall
- 50+ badminton group booked for use of facilities
- Boccia group booked for use of facilities
- City centre football
- Fitrah School has a slot for multi-sports lessons

Additional support has been given to users to access alternative venues as follows:

- Roller Derby group have access to facilities at Chamberlayne Leisure Centre
- Table tennis group have found alternative facilities
- Volleyball groups have been provided with details of alternative provision from Bitterne Leisure Centre.

Potential Positive Impacts

There is an ongoing revenue saving of £147,000 per annum associated with the closure of SMLC.

A conditions survey has indicated £382,309 of investment would be required to maintain the building due to its poor condition. Day-to-day repairs and maintenance costs (depending on the level of investment made) are estimated to be £60,000 per annum. These costs would be avoided.

Due to health and safety considerations certain areas of the building are unusable. There is also limited access to certain areas of the building for disabled users.

The facility is not currently well used and the building continues to deteriorate, disposing of the building may result in a more appropriate use.

Users of St Mary's Leisure Centre will be able to access a variety of alternative leisure venues in the area including Solent University's new Solent Sports Complex,

the Quays Leisure Centre and Bitterne Leisure Centre. Further information can be found in the consultation document and in Appendix A to this document.

Responsible Service Manager	Katie Renouard
Date	24/11/2021
Approved by Senior Manager	Paul Paskins
Date	24/11/2021

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	<p>Impact on children and young people.</p> <p>Fitrah Southampton Islamic Primary and Secondary (Sips) school uses SMLC for PE classes one afternoon per week as they do not have facilities on the school site.</p> <p>Data suggests 24.3% of children live in houses of low income and 22.4% of households are in fuel poverty. Loss of this leisure facility could impact on childhood obesity and anti-social behaviour due to limited facilities in the local area.</p>	<p>Alternative facilities are listed in Appendix A.</p> <p>Fitrah School have been offered a slot at East Park Terrace which it has accepted.</p>
Disability	No impact as the wheelchair rugby teams are already using the sports hall at the East Park Terrace academic leisure facility.	.N/A
Gender Reassignment	No significant impact	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No significant impact	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	No significant impact	N/A
Race	No impact as Health4her sessions are already being provided at the East Park Terrace academic leisure	N/A

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	facility.	
Religion or Belief	No impact as Health4her sessions are already being provided at the East Park Terrace academic leisure facility.	N/A
Sex	No impact as Health4her sessions are already being provided at the East Park Terrace academic leisure facility.	N/A
Sexual Orientation	No significant impact.	N/A
Community Safety	Lack of facilities in the local area could have an impact on anti-social behaviour which is above city-wide average figures.	Signpost and promote other youth activities in the local area.
Poverty	Families in low-income households may not have the means to travel to other sites.	Review travel policies and options for reduced travel costs.
Health & Wellbeing	<p>Negative impact on all age groups within the community who will need to travel to access similar facilities.</p> <p>Specifically, could impact on obesity rates, especially among school age children that attend the site for PE lessons.</p>	<p>Alternative facilities are listed in Appendix A.</p> <p>Provide signposts to pay as you go gyms within the city centre.</p> <p>Fitrah School have been offered a slot at East Park Terrace which it has accepted</p>
Other Significant Impacts	Reducing the number of squash facilities within the city.	<p>Alternative facilities are listed in Appendix A.</p> <p>Provide signposts to pay as you go squash facilities within the city centre.</p>

Appendix A: Alternative Indoor Sports Facilities

Name of Site	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Bitterne Leisure Centre	2.7 miles	4	Local Authority but operated by a third party.	Gym, Pools, Sports hall for football*, basketball*, badminton*, netball*, cricket*, table tennis*, gymnastics**.	*Pay and Play and also block bookings **Block booking only
Bitterne Park School	2.6 miles	4	Community School	Sports hall, outdoor hard courts-evening and weekends	Sport Club
Boulder Shack	0.5 miles		Private facility	Climbing wall, yoga	Pay and play
Cantell School	3.5 miles	4	Community School	Sports hall, badminton, gym outdoor hard courts	Sports Club
Chamberlayne Leisure Centre	3.0 miles	4	Local Authority but operated by a third party.	Gym, Sports hall for football, basketball, badminton, netball, cricket, table tennis, gymnastics.	*Pay and Play and also block bookings **Block booking only
Cherry's Fitness Suite	0.5 miles		Private facility	Pilates and Barre training	
Curves Ladies only fitness centre	2 miles		Private facility	Ladies only gym and dieting advice	Club membership
David Lloyd Club (Southampton)	5.9 miles	4	Private Club	Gym, swimming pool, exercise classes, tennis courts	Registered Membership

Name of Site	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Fit 4 Less	0.3 miles		Private facility	Gym, fitness classes, personal trainers	Pay as you go
Itchen College Sports Centre	2.9 miles	4	Further Education	Sports hall- aerobics studio, gym	Sports Club
King Edward Vi School	2.2 miles	5	Independent School	Swimming pool, sports field	Private Use
Mayflower Gym	0.5 miles		Southampton University	Gym, fitness classes	Membership
Next Generation Martial Arts	1.1 miles		Private facility	Martial arts training	
Oasis Academy Lords Hill (Upper School)	5.5 miles	4	Education Academy	- Sports hall, gym, dance studio	Sports Club
Oasis Academy Mayfield	3.4 miles	4	Education Academy	- Sports hall, badminton courts, outdoor hard courts, Gym	Sports Club
Oasis Academy Sholing	3.1 miles	4	Community School	Gym, outdoor astro turf football pitches	Sports Club
Pound for Pound	0.7 miles		Private facility	Boxing, personal trainers, sauna	

Name of Site	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Pure Gym	0.9 miles		Private facility	Gym, fitness classes, personal trainers	Membership
Redbridge Community School	4.2 miles	4	Community School	Sports hall, outdoor astro turf and grass pitches	Sports Club
Richard Taunton College	2.5 miles	4	Further Education	Sports hall, hard courts, grass pitches	Sports Club
Southampton Solent University (East Park Terrace)	0.2 miles	4	Higher Education	Sports hall, gym, exercise studios	Registered Membership and pay and Play
Spartans Gym	1 mile		Private facility- includes pay as you go	Gym, fitness classes, personal trainers, nutrition programmes	Membership
Testlands Hub	4.9 miles	4	Community School	Sports hall, badminton court, studio, gym, outdoor grass and hard courts	Sports Club
The Gym	0.8 miles		Private facility	Gym, fitness classes, personal trainers	Membership
University of Southampton (Jubilee Sports Centre)	2.7 miles	8	Higher Education	Gym, swimming pool, sports hall, squash courts, exercise studios, bouldering wall	Sports Club-membership and Pay and Play

Name of Site		Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Woodlands College	Community	3.6 miles	4	Community School	Gym for badminton and basketball, sports hall, outdoor hard courts and grass football pitches	Sports Club

**Sport England identifies sports halls as 3 court badminton halls and above and provide facilities for team sports such as netball, volleyball, basketball etc. Activity halls are smaller halls, normally of 1 badminton court size but may not be marked out for badminton but can cater for some sports and physical activity.*