

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.

<b>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</b>	<b>Discontinuation of sports and recreation services at St Mary’s Leisure Centre (SMLC)</b>
<b>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</b>	
<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 Leisure Strategy.</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><b>Background</b></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 from 01/01/2022.</p> <p>Alongside its primary purpose as an academic sports facility, since 2010, SMLC has</p>	

provided 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 restricted to particular community groups who may not feel comfortable undertaking such activity in a group with 'open' access, such as Muslim women-only exercise sessions.

### 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 <sup>th</sup> 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: usage 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, due largely to the ceasing of the original contract between SCC and SU which aligned with SU opening their new leisure facility at East Park Terrace. East Park Terrace is situated approximately 0.2 miles from SMLC and caters for SU's sports-related programme and associated users, which 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.

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.

Closing SMLC may therefore reduce access to leisure facilities in the immediate area for all age groups.

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.

These impacts and issues may be offset through the usage of a variety of alternative leisure venues in the area as listed in Current Sports Halls Providing Community Use contained as Appendix A (“Appendix A”). At the time of drafting this ESIA, the Council is also working with SU to establish the level of public use which may be made available at East Park Terrace.

**Potential Positive Impacts**

There will be an ongoing revenue saving of £147,000 per annum.

Day-to-day repairs and maintenance costs (depending on the level of investment made – see below) are estimated to be £60,000 per annum.

A conditions survey has indicated £382,000 of investment would be required to maintain the building due to the poor condition of the building. 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.

<b>Responsible Service Manager</b>	Katie Renouard
<b>Date</b>	22 October 2021
<b>Approved by Senior Manager</b>	Paul Paskins
<b>Date</b>	22 October 2021

**Potential Impact**

<b>Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Details of Impact</b>	<b>Possible Solutions &amp; Mitigating Actions</b>
<b>Age</b>	<p>Negative impact on children and young people.</p> <p>Fitrah Southampton Islamic Primary and Secondary (Sips) school uses the facility 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</p>	<p>Alternative facilities are listed in Appendix A.</p> <p>SCC to signpost other pay as you go gyms within the city centre and work with Firah school to consider alternative options.</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	<p>limited facilities in the local area.</p> <p>Older generations would have limited access to similar facilities in the local area.</p>	
<b>Disability</b>	<p>Negative impact as the wheelchair basketball and rugby teams were using the centre. They moved to the new SU complex, but this venue is no longer available to the general public.</p>	<p>SCC to discuss with providers whether they are willing to provide facilities to minority groups (disabled group sessions in sports halls).</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	<p>No significant impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	<p>No significant impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<p>No significant impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<b>Race</b>	<p>Negative impact for the 273 users that transferred to the Solent University complex which is no longer available to the general public. This included single sex classes for women, favoured by some Muslim women.</p> <p>These classes are not currently available at the new SU complex.</p>	<p>SCC to discuss with providers whether they are willing to provide facilities to minority groups.</p>
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<p>Negative impact for the 273 users that transferred to the SU complex which is no longer available to the general public. This included single sex classes favoured by some Muslim women.</p> <p>These classes are not currently available at the new SU complex.</p>	<p>SCC to discuss with providers whether they are willing to provide facilities to minority groups (Muslim women only exercise classes).</p>
<b>Sex</b>	<p>Negative impact for 273 users that transferred to the SU complex which is no longer available to the general public. This included single sex classes for women.</p> <p>These classes are not currently available at the new SU complex.</p>	<p>Signpost users to alternative facilities offering 'women only' sessions.</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<p>No significant impact.</p>	
<b>Community Safety</b>	<p>Lack of facilities in the local area could have an impact on anti-social behaviour which is above city-wide average figures.</p>	<p>Signpost and promote other youth activities in the local area</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
<b>Poverty</b>	Families in low-income households may not have the means to travel to other sites.	Review travel policies and options for reduced travel costs.
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	Negative impact on all age groups within the community who will need to travel to access similar facilities. Specifically, could impact on obesity rates, especially among school age children that attend the site for PE lessons.	Alternative facilities are listed in Appendix A.  Provide signposts to pay as you go gyms within the city centre.
<b>Other Significant Impacts</b>		

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### Appendix A: Current Sports Halls Providing Community Use

Name of Site	Area	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Site Built	Year	Age of facility	Site Refurbished	Year	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Bitterne Centre	Leisure	Main	2.7 miles	4	1984	36	New provided 2016	roof	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 School	Park	Main	2.6 miles	4	2000	21	2019		Community School	Sports hall, outdoor hard courts-evening and weekends	Sport Club
Cantell School		Main	3.5 miles	4	1998	23	2008		Community School	Sports hall, badminton, gym outdoor hard courts	Sports Club

Name of Site	Area	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Site Year Built	Age of facility	Site Year Refurbished	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Chamberlayne Leisure Centre	Main	3.0 miles	4	2000	21	2009	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
David Lloyd Club (Southampton)	Main	5.9 miles	4	2001	20	N/A	Private Club	Gym, swimming pool, exercise classes, tennis courts	Registered Membership
Itchen College Sports Centre	Main	2.9 miles	4	1997	24	2006	Further Education	Sports hall- aerobics studio, gym	Sports Club
King Edward VI	Main	2.2	5	1990	31	N/A	Independent	Swimming pool, sports	Private Use



Name of Site	Area	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Site Year Built	Age of facility	Site Year Refurbished	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
School		miles					School	field	
Oasis Academy Lords Hill (Upper School)	Main	5.5 miles	4	1983	38	N/A	Education Academy	Sports hall, Sports Club gym, dance studio	
Oasis Academy Mayfield	Main	3.4 miles	4	2005	16	2011	Education Academy	Sports hall, Sports Club badminton courts, outdoor hard courts, Gym	
Oasis Academy Sholing	Main	3.1 miles	4	1998	23	N/A	Community School	Gym, outdoor Sports Club astro turf football pitches	
Redbridge	Main	4.2	4	2003	18	N/A	Community	Sports hall, Sports Club	

Name of Site	Area	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Site Year Built	Age of facility	Site Year Refurbished	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Community School		miles					School	outdoor astro turf and grass pitches	
Richard Taunton College	Main	2.5 miles	4	1992	29	N/A	Further Education	Sports hall, Sports Club hard courts, grass pitches	
Southampton Solent University (East Park Terrace)	Main	0.6 miles	4	1989	32	2014	Higher Education	Sports hall, Registered gym, exercise studios Membership	
Southampton Solent University (Solent	Main	0.7 miles	4	2019	1	N/A	Higher Education	Sports hall, Pay and Play gym, exercise studios	

Name of Site	Area	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Site Year Built	Age of facility	Site Year Refurbished	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
Sports Complex)									
Testlands Hub	Main	4.9 miles	4	1999	22	N/A	Community School	Sports hall, badminton court, studio, gym, outdoor grass and hard courts	Sports Club
University of Southampton (Jubilee Sports Centre)	Main	2.7 miles	8	2004	17	N/A	Higher Education	Gym, swimming pool, sports hall, squash courts, exercise studios, bouldering wall	Sports Club
University of Southampton	Main	2.7 miles	4	1960	61	N/A	Higher Education		Sports Club

Name of Site	Area	Distance from SMLC	No of courts	Site Built	Year	Age of facility	Site Refurbished	Year	Ownership	Facilities provided	Participation
(Jubilee Sports Centre)											
Woodlands Community College	Main	3.6 miles	4	2003		18	2013		Community School	Gym for Sports Club badminton and basketball, sports hall, outdoor hard courts and grass football pitches	

*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.*