

**Appendix 3: ESHIA for Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre  
Shropshire Council  
Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)  
Second Screening, following consultation August 2022**

**A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions**

<b>Name of proposed service change</b>
Whitchurch Swimming Centre Feasibility Study

<b>Name of lead officer carrying out the screening</b>
Clare Featherstone, Head of Culture, Leisure and Tourism

<b>Decision, review, and monitoring</b>
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<b>Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Initial (part one) ESHIA Only?	x	
Proceed to Full ESHIA or HIA (part two) Report?		x

*If completion of an initial or Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes above. If a Full or Part Two report is required, please move on to full report stage once you have completed this initial screening assessment as a record of the considerations which you have given to this matter.*

<b>Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations</b>
<p>The proposal is for a replacement swimming centre in Whitchurch, which is a large market town in Shropshire, and for which there has been no direct swimming provision since 2020, due to maintenance and structural issues with the existing pool.</p> <p>The Shropshire Council priorities for sport and physical activity, as set out in the Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 - 38 are identified as follows:</p> <p><i>Our Vision is that:</i></p> <p><b><i>Shropshire will be a county where healthier, active lifestyles are encouraged, supported and facilitated for everyone</i></b></p> <p>Three core principles underpin the delivery of our vision:</p>

- Support for the creation of a high quality and sustainable indoor leisure facility mix, which provides accessible and inclusive activities for all Shropshire residents leading to increased participation and active lifestyles, thereby meeting community need
- Recognising the importance of leisure facilities as relevant community spaces, accessible to all and offering opportunities for the delivery of a wide range of activities, services, support and entertainment to local communities and people
- A commitment to work with a wide range of partner organisations and individuals as co-creators and co-deliverers of leisure facilities so that they best reflect the differing needs of local communities.

The equality and health and well-being impacts across Protected Characteristic groupings in Shropshire, and within Whitchurch in particular, are anticipated to be positive. This is in line with the above, and with consideration for Shropshire as a large and sparsely populated rural county in which market towns provide a sense of place and belonging as well as an access point for facilities and services, including leisure facilities. There are also positive impacts anticipated in relation to our tenth grouping in Shropshire, around social inclusion, provide that efforts are made to consider the needs of people in low-income households with regard to pricing structures.

There is further potential for additional benefits for grouping such as those undergoing gender reassignment, and those for whom single sex swimming opportunities are necessary in order to ensure compatibility with and respect for the requirements of their faith. This may be maximised through attention to changing room configurations, and swim time opportunities.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

Community engagement has included:

- Emails and letters provided as part of the public consultation exercise.
- Survey responses gathered between 6th June and the 31st July 2022.
- Feedback from 7 engagement workshops and meetings (including Whitchurch Town Council, local businesses, schools and local sports and leisure groups).

The survey resulted in 274 responses and 12 written consultation responses were received. Important additional feedback was provided through workshops and meetings (all of which were written up to ensure key issues and feedback has been captured and will be considered in the next stage of work). Overall, the combination of these methods has provided a lot of information to help Shropshire Council better understand priority issues and common themes.

Summary below.

The full report is available as Appendix 1 to the Cabinet Report, 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022.

# Summary

The responses consultation were very helpful and despite some concerns, very described and communicated, most comments were positive and optimistic about the prospect of swimming facilities returning to Whitchurch.



**Engagement:** Feedback was provided from 274 survey respondents, 12 written consultation responses and 7 stakeholder meetings and workshops.



**Location:** 89% of survey respondents agree with the proposed location covering the existing site and closed Enterprise North-East Youth Centre. The stakeholder meetings and workshops included some suggestions for a larger out of town site.



**Ecology:** 7 of the 12 written responses and 9 of the 274 survey respondents highlighted significant concerns over the impact the build could have on water voles living in the brook on the site. These concerns were reflected in conversations with stakeholders.



**Travel:** Survey respondents' preferred method of travel to the location is the car (48%) followed by walking at 37%. Cycle use was the third top preferred method of travel (9%). Active Travel was commented on throughout the engagement with stakeholders highlighting opportunities to improve cycling facilities on site and throughout the local area. Parking facilities were also commonly mentioned.



**Facility mix:** Feedback calls for a learner/child pool, large pool, private changing, family changing and child/youth facilities as priorities. There are mixed views on the gym and café.



**Health:** The main barrier to physical activity highlighted by 52% of all the survey respondents was a lack of easy access to facilities and inconvenience. 38% of survey respondents cited cost, followed by insufficient time (24%). The feedback included a wide range of suggestions for facilities and activities to address health and wellbeing.



**Community:** There was strong support for new opportunities to encourage wider community use of the new centre. Exercise on prescription, social prescribing community groups, sessions designed for older people and consideration of use by schools and young people were all highlighted within the suggestions from the survey and at stakeholder workshops.



**Accessibility:** 70 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of accessibility. Comments covered wheelchair access, pool and changing access, non-slip surfaces, lifts, hoists moveable floors etc. Other comments covered noise issues including design for people with hearing impairment and quiet sessions design for sensory needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.



**Environment:** 80 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of sustainability and minimising climate impact. Suggestions covered energy efficiency, solar power, heat pumps, green walls, recycling, natural planning and low impact methods to clean the water and centre, and healthy/local food provision.



**Overall views:** 82% of survey respondents were satisfied with the proposals and additional support was voiced by stakeholders. The feedback overall was very positive.

**Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations**

The current facility does not provide facilities such as an accessible reception counter, and accessible toilet facilities for female customers and access throughout the building for wheelchair users is extremely limited. Doors are manually operated and heavy, and manoeuvrability around toilet provision is impeded. An 'AccessAble' report was recently completed and makes several observations on areas for improving access that will be used to inform the feasibility study and how improvements can be made development for the future provision of the facility.

There is also a need to ensure that provision (services, activities and facilities) is relevant and sustainable.

At the moment, residents and visitors to Whitchurch, and those who work there, are being disadvantaged in equality terms as follows:

- The swimming centre remains closed which reduces the opportunities for the Whitchurch community to be physically active which impacts on long term health and social issues.
- To access pay as you play swimming facilities Whitchurch residents will have to travel some distance, this can have a negative impact on the Council's climate change agenda and carbon reduction targets. Residents without access to a car are disadvantaged as public transport routes to other facilities mean lengthy travel times.
- Visits by Whitchurch residents to other facilities adds pressure to already busy centres.
- There is a negative impact from young children not being able to learn to swim which is an important life skill.
- Primary schools have a statutory duty to provide swimming lessons for children up to Key Stage 2 Level which they will struggle to fulfil.
- Does not provide any opportunity to impact positively on the Council's Organisational Principles.

Proceeding with the development of a new facility would mitigate these current negative impacts and promote social inclusion as well as physical and mental health and well-being.

It will be necessary to continue to work closely with the SC elected councillors for the area, as community leaders, as well as with all relevant stakeholders. This should include engagement with adults with special needs, and young people, as part of the broader public.

### **Associated ESHIAs**

An initial ESHIA was attached to the Cabinet Report on 27<sup>th</sup> April. This can be found [here](#).

Other relevant ESHIAs include:

- A Vibrant Shropshire: Cultural Strategy 2021-2031
- Leisure Indoor Facilities Strategy 2020-2038
- Libraries Strategy 2018-2023
- Shropshire Great Outdoors Strategy 2018-2028

**Actions to mitigate negative impact, enhance positive impact, and review and monitor overall impacts in terms of any other considerations. This includes climate change considerations**

In response to the consultation and engagement, the following will be incorporated into the development going forward:

- Protection of water vole habitat- a preliminary ecological appraisal of the site was undertaken in December 2021 as part of the initial feasibility study. Shropshire Council officers will continue to take appropriate expert advice and ensure more detailed surveys are undertaken during subsequent stages of the project, with the aim of proceeding sensitively to take full consideration of the need to safeguard the water voles inhabiting the brook.
- Environmental and carbon impacts will be addressed as an integral part of design and construction, as discussed below.

A sustainability strategy for the project was developed with the Council's Climate Change Team. The sustainability requirements for the project are set out below:

**Carbon Offsetting or Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation**

Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and in 2020 adopted its Strategy for achieving net zero on carbon emissions by 2030. In line with this, this project will explore the potential for passive design principles and ensure that the Council can track the lifetime carbon performance of the building. This will include the provision of an audit trail, including quantitative performance measures, including Sport England Sustainability Target Metrics, that provide documentary evidence on a design stage by stage approach to minimising the carbon footprint of the facilities and climate change impact. The lifetime carbon performance study will be used to demonstrate how the design and materials used have taken account of the carbon reduction and climate change agenda and that the performance of the building is operating within the design Parameters. The design will incorporate Sport England design guidance on sustainable facilities. This will have a positive effect.

**Energy and Fuel Consumption**

Building to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and a DEC A rating. Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the life cycle of the project. This will include the provision of a report to compare the

sustainability performance of the existing facility with the new development with the aim that this demonstrates a net improvement. This will have a positive effect, with early investment in the structure of the building consistent with passivhaus principles helping to significantly reduce energy revenue costs over the lifetime of the building.

### Renewable Energy Generation

The Design will take account of the opportunity to be serviced by air or ground water source heat pumps and on-site renewable energy generation such as Photo Voltaic Cells. This will have a positive effect.

The feasibility study contains initial information on how the above aspects will be developed as the design progresses. See sustainability section pages 26 – 27, carbon reduction section pages 35 – 36 and building efficiency section pages 38 - 39.

### Carbon offsetting or mitigation

Opportunities to capture carbon as part of the landscaping for the redevelopment will be considered as the design progresses. This could include tree planting and other measures.

### Climate change adaptation

The new development means that measures can be taken within the design process that will help ensure the building is adapted for more extreme weather and improve resilience to increased risks to the health and wellbeing of Shropshire's residents

### **Health and well being**

There is a collective priority (Shropshire Council, Health and Wellbeing Board, Energize Active Partnership) and agenda to improve community health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activities are integral to this, with a focus on older and young people and families.

Redevelopment of a new larger facility, subject to agreement by Council, has the potential to offer an increased range of facilities which will:

- Encourage increased participation in physical activity
- Deliver increased health benefits (physical and mental) to more people as a result of taking part in physical activity
- Contribute to a more active environment at local level
- Be more cost-effective and efficient to operate through co location of appropriate other services
- Improve service provision and accessibility to individuals and groups in the community.

In response to the consultation and engagement, the following will be incorporated into the development going forward:

- The facility mix will be reviewed in light of the feedback to accommodate views where these are possible within the footprint of the site and the budget
- There is further potential for additional benefits for grouping such as those undergoing gender reassignment, and those for whom single sex swimming opportunities are necessary in order to ensure compatibility with and respect for the requirements of their faith. This may be maximised through attention to changing room configurations, and swim time opportunities.
- Once the facility is completed, sessions that encourage health and wellbeing can be encouraged, including Exercise on Prescription, school use and activities for young people
- The design will consider those people with mobility issues and other impairments, enabling key improvements compared to the existing facility

### **Economic and societal/ wider community**

The Cabinet report has been written in the context of the Council's medium term financial strategy and on the assumption that the Council wishes to support the continuing availability of public swimming in Whitchurch for the benefit of the community, but that given financial constraints, it must be provided and operated as efficiently and effectively as possible.

**Regeneration and town centre investment**, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure; acquire and regenerate brownfield sites; invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction; and bring public services and safe, accessible community spaces into town and city centres.

**Cultural investment** maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing existing cultural, creative, heritage and sporting assets, or creating new assets that serve those purposes including theatres, museums, galleries, production facilities, libraries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces), sports and athletics facilities, heritage buildings and sites, and assets that support the visitor economy

In response to the consultation and engagement, the following will be incorporated into the development going forward:

- Opportunities to improve active travel options will be considered

### **Shropshire Plan**

The new Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre will help achieve the priorities set out in the Shropshire Plan 2022-25. These include:

Healthy people

- We'll tackle inequalities, including rural inequalities, and poverty in all its forms, providing early support and interventions that reduce risk and

enable children, young people, adults and families to achieve their full potential and enjoy life.

- We'll support Shropshire residents to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, choosing healthy lifestyles and preventing ill-health, reducing the need for long-term or hospital care.

#### Healthy Economy

- We'll develop Shropshire as a vibrant destination that attracts people to live in, work in, learn in and visit.
- We'll deliver excellent connectivity and infrastructure, and increasing access to social contact, employment, education, services and leisure opportunities.


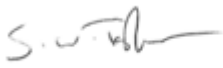
#### Healthy Environment

- We'll deliver the council's Corporate Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, promoting the means to tackle climate change and reduce our carbon footprint, including the adoption of low-carbon energy for our assets and for communities.

#### Healthy Organisation

- We will communicate clearly and transparently about what Shropshire Council delivers, signposting to the right places for services and support, and listen to what communities say about their place and what they need.
- We'll put our resources in the right place using accurate data, insights, and evidence to support the delivery of the organisation's priorities and balance the books.

### Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Clare Featherstone</i>		18 <sup>th</sup> August 2022
<i>Amanda Cheeseman Public Health Development Officer</i>	<i>Amanda Cheeseman</i>	19 <sup>th</sup> August 2022
<i>Any external support** Steve Taylor</i>		19 <sup>th</sup> August 2022



Performance and Research Manager		
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*\*This refers to other officers within the service area*

*\*\*This refers to support external to the service but within the Council, e.g., the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, the Feedback and Insight Team, performance data specialists, Climate Change specialists, and Public Health colleagues*

### **Sign off at Part One screening stage**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Signatures</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Accountable officer's name</i> Clare Featherstone, Head of Culture, Leisure and Tourism	<i>Clare Featherstone</i>	18 <sup>th</sup> August 2022

*\*This may either be the Head of Service or the lead officer*

### **B. Detailed Screening Assessment**

#### **Aims of the service change and description**

Built in 1972, Whitchurch Swimming Centre comprises a 25m x 5 lane pool and changing facilities.

The report prepared for Cabinet for 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022, for which this is the second screening ESHIA, provides feedback on the consultation and engagement, and sets out a business case for the new development.

The centre has been closed since March 2020, initially due to the national lockdown as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and further to that as a result of the structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of a leak from the pool tank which include underpinning issues and deterioration in the fabric of the building.

Property Services Group has commissioned investigation work to identify the immediate, medium and, longer term maintenance requirements and costs associated with these to be able to re-open the existing facility and maintain it to an acceptable standard. Further structural investigation work has also taken place which has resulted in the structural engineer stating that due to structural issues repairs will not provide good value for money and will not provide a sustainable facility for the future.

Alongside the maintenance investigation works an outline feasibility study was commissioned to review the business case for investment in a new facility to be able to compare this option with carrying out the necessary repairs on the existing facility.

Full details of the feasibility study are contained in Appendix 3 to the Cabinet report for 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022.

Cabinet is to consider feedback from the consultation and engagement, and the business cases, as set out in the report, and is being recommended to:

- I. The business case for the project, as set out in the paper, be presented to Council with a recommendation that the development of the Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre be included in the capital programme with a budget of £12.1m.
- II. There is a recommendation that Council delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, to procure, negotiate and agree the terms of any agreements/contracts necessary for the delivery of the project including, but not limited to:
  - Agreeing the procurement strategy
  - Design Team procurement and appointment
  - Site Surveys and Investigations and relevant reports
  - Planning permissions
  - Tendering activities
  - Main contractor procurement and contract sign-off
  - Construction
  - Hand over

#### **Intended audiences and target groups for the service change**

All those who live in, work in or visit Whitchurch  
Energize  
Local MPs  
Government Departments and Agencies  
Schools  
Shropshire Council Councillors for the area  
Sport England  
Whitchurch Town Council  
Other stakeholders involved in leisure facility provision and library provision

This list is not exhaustive and will be added to

#### **Evidence used for screening of the service change**

Feasibility Study for Whitchurch Swimming Centre  
Shropshire Council – A Vibrant Shropshire Cultural Strategy 2021 -2031  
Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 – 2038  
JSNA (Health and Well Being Board Shropshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016-2021)  
Energize Shropshire Telford and Wrekin - Actively Improving Lives 2022

### **Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change**

#### Consultation and Engagement

Community engagement has included:

- An initial key stakeholder exercise was carried out during March and April 2022.
- Emails and letters provided as part of the public consultation exercise.
- Survey responses gathered between 6th June and the 31st July 2022.
- Feedback from 7 engagement workshops and meetings (including Whitchurch Town Council, local businesses, schools and local sports and leisure groups).

The survey resulted in 274 responses and 12 written consultation responses were received. Important additional feedback was provided through workshops and meetings (all of which were written up to ensure key issues and feedback has been captured and will be considered in the next stage of work). Overall, the combination of these methods has provided a lot of information to help Shropshire Council better understand priority issues and common themes.

The full report is available as appendix 1, attached to the Cabinet Report, 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2022.

Information about respondent characteristics was collected for the survey (allowing anonymous responses) but was not appropriate for the other forms of information gathering. Understanding the characteristics of survey respondents is helpful

and can determine whether feedback is representative of the wider community or limited to people who share similar characteristics or backgrounds. Core questions are asked (these are all optional). The results highlighted that 80% of survey respondents were members of the public and only 15 surveys were completed by people representing businesses, voluntary and community sector groups and organisations and other bodies.

Those who gave their group or organisation name included a range of local community groups and sports groups.

Overall, 70% of feedback was from females and the comments highlighted that not only did more women describe the needs of their children but they also had more concerns about changing facilities, privacy and opening times (some commented on school holidays and sessions after school). There were also comments relating to children learning to swim and the needs of women with babies/ children in prams and pushchairs.

The survey was responded to by people from a range of age groups but the largest group was 40-44 year olds (34%). There was also a very good response from 45– 59 year olds (31%) and 60-84 year olds (22%). Often the age group of survey respondents for Shropshire Council surveys is slightly older, on average, so this may again reflect the response from parents who wished to feedback for the whole family. All age groups were represented, and it was encouraging to see responses from younger people. 38 of the survey respondents chose not to answer the question.

The survey respondents were asked about their ethnic background and the results show that the response was not representative of a wide range of backgrounds. 92% were from White British backgrounds. However, 92% is representative of the community based on the last available data. 2011 census 94.7% were classed as White British.

There was a helpful comment included from someone conscious of the different needs people may have depending on religion and belief. The comment made suggested women only swimming sessions and highlighted the importance of culturally sensitive sessions

including hair products. This is something that could be explored further in future engagement as work progresses. Comments like this are helpful and sometimes more informal feedback methods or trial sessions may be planned to test demand once facilities are open.

Comments referred to the following:

Gender needs and changing facilities

- Single sex changing facilities
- Baby changing facilities in male changing rooms as well as in female
- Family change areas.
- Women only classes.

Survey respondents were also asked 'Do you have any long-standing illness or disability that limits your daily activity?' 13% of the survey respondents answered 'yes'. Representation from people with different levels of mobility is particularly important within a consultation of this nature. Specific questions were included about accessibility but positively it was a theme that was included within earlier comments without prompting. The results suggested widespread community support for design that will meet a wide range of needs.

Comments referred to the following:

Physical and sensory needs

- Provisions for accessibility for sensory processing and over stimulation individuals
- Include all children in sensory sessions.
- Include space for children

- Different sections dependant on level of experience and fitness
- Consult local adults with learning disabilities directly

Within the comments there were survey respondents who also mentioned suggestions to meet the needs of dependents, relatives and friends.

Other equality comments included:

Parking arrangements and lockers should be easily usable by everyone. Cash can be an issue for younger people, cash-free for older people




Location of respondents





The survey respondents predominantly live within driving distance of Whitchurch. Of the 214 survey respondents who provided a postcode, 167 (78%) live in the SY13 postcode area




**Initial equality impact assessment by grouping (Initial health impact assessment is included below)**

*Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through stating this in the relevant column.*

*Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.*

<b>Protected Characteristic groupings and other groupings in Shropshire</b>	<b>High negative impact</b> <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	<b>High positive impact</b> <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	<b>Medium positive or negative impact</b> <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	<b>Low positive, negative, or neutral impact (please specify)</b> <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
<u>Age</u> (please include children, young people, young people leaving care, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g., a child or young person for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g., an older person with disability)				
<u>Disability</u> (please include mental health conditions and syndromes; hidden disabilities including autism and Crohn's disease; physical and sensory disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; and HIV)				
<u>Gender re-assignment</u> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			 Provided that changing room	

			configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
<b><u>Marriage and Civil Partnership</u></b> (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				
<b><u>Pregnancy and Maternity</u></b> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
<b><u>Race</u></b> (please include ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, Gypsy, Traveller)			 Provided that changing room configurations and other priorities reflect the needs of this grouping	
<b><u>Religion and belief</u></b> (please include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Nonconformists; Rastafarianism; Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	

<p><b>Sex</b> (this can also be viewed as relating to gender. Please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)</p>			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
<p><b>Sexual Orientation</b> (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)</p>				
<p><b>Other: Social Inclusion</b> (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; households in poverty; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable; people with health inequalities; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; veterans and serving members of the armed forces and their families)</p>				

**Initial health and wellbeing impact assessment by category**

*Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have with regard to health and wellbeing, through stating this in the relevant column.*

*Please state if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact) and add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.*

<b>Health and wellbeing: individuals and communities in Shropshire</b>	<b>High negative impact</b> <i>Part Two HIA required</i>	<b>High positive impact</b>	<b>Medium positive or negative impact</b>	<b>Low positive negative or neutral impact (please specify)</b>
<b>Will the proposal have a <i>direct impact</i> on an individual's health, mental health and wellbeing?</b>		Improved fitness and weight maintenance; Regular physical		

<p>For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>activity; Regular social activity; Reduce risk of non-communicable diseases (obesity, diabetes (T2), CVD); Increased social interaction, social ties and networks; Reduce the risk of developing mental health illnesses; Therapeutic benefits for treating physical and mental illnesses including type 2 diabetes, depression, age related cognitive and physical decline</p>		
<p><b>Will the proposal indirectly impact an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</b></p> <p>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>Healthy ageing and independence (mental and physical); Healthy childhood development: swimming is important skill to learn from a young age; Community involvement (volunteering)</p>		



		<p>Develop life skills of young people via interactions with peers, parents and coaches;  Health equity: community leisure services are accessible for all population groups;  Association with health promoting activities and choices;  Young ages active play helps develop healthy habits, enjoyment of physical activity and physical literacy skills</p>		
<p><b>Will the policy have a <i>direct impact</i> on the community - social, economic and environmental living conditions that would impact health?</b></p> <p>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, employment opportunities, availability of green space or climate change mitigation?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>Safe play area for children and young people;  Building healthy social and cultural norms;  Healthy Communities and sense of belonging;  Neighbourhood pride and improved aesthetics;  Inclusivity of under-represented groups;  Increased levels of</p>	<p>Medium positive:  Reduction in loss of productivity from absenteeism or lower productivity due to ill health;  Increases in skills and academic performance for young people;  Employment and training opportunities</p>	

		perceived safety; Positive effect on educational outcomes, including psychological and cognitive benefits	Identifying talent and future athletes	
<b>Will there be a likely change in <i>demand</i> for or access to health and social care services?</b>  For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health, Local Authority services including Social Services?  .		Reduced burden on health care services and savings from improved mental and physical health; Free up health resources to deal with non-preventable problems;		

**Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations including climate change and economic or societal impacts**

**Climate Change Appraisal**

*Energy consumption.* Retaining the existing facility will not have a positive impact on energy consumption. The development of a new facility will be significantly more energy efficient than the current pool due to the ability to introduce new technology and sustainability practices.

*Renewable Energy Generation.* There will be opportunities for renewable energy generation as part of the new building.

*Carbon offsetting or mitigation.* There may be an opportunity for tree planting within a landscaping scheme for a new facility

A commitment to quantifying carbon performance as part of any detailed design for a new facility will be included in a design brief should this option be decided upon.

***Health and well being***

The development of the Swimming and Fitness project in Whitchurch can support priorities around healthy people, healthy economy, and healthy environment. It also support the Shropshire Plan, as set out above.

It also supports the vision of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy:  
“For Shropshire people to be healthy and fulfilled’ and key priorities and focus areas be added - improving population health, building strong and vibrant communities, reduce health inequalities, CYP, mental health, healthy weight and physical activity”

The Feasibility Study provides detailed evidence and insight on the opportunities and risks of developing a new swimming and fitness centre in Whitchurch. The study shows that a new development can be accommodated on the site and that the proposed facility mix improves the business case compared to the old facility. As Whitchurch has been without the provision of a swimming pool for a lengthy period it is recommended that the development be given high priority

#### *Environmental impacts*

A preliminary ecology survey has been carried out as part of the feasibility study. Further survey work will take place during the next design phases. Investigations to minimise the habitat for water voles will be a particular focus.

## **Guidance Notes**

### **1. Legal Context**

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. By way of illustration, some local authorities focus more overtly upon human rights; some include safeguarding. It is about what is considered to be needed in a local authority’s area, in line with local factors such as demography and strategic objectives as well as with the national legislative imperatives.

Carrying out these impact assessments helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes.

These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

These screening assessments for any proposed service change go to Cabinet as part of the committee report, or occasionally direct to Full Council, unless they are ones to do with Licensing, in which case they go to Strategic Licensing Committee.

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of

a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

These screening assessments are recommended to be undertaken at timely points in the development and implementation of the proposed service change.

For example, an ESHIA would be a recommended course of action before a consultation. This would draw upon the evidence available at that time, and identify the target audiences, and assess at that initial stage what the likely impact of the service change could be across the Protected Characteristic groupings and our tenth category of Social Inclusion. This ESHIA would set out intended actions to engage with the groupings, particularly those who are historically less likely to engage in public consultation e.g. young people, as otherwise we would not know their specific needs.

A second ESHIA would then be carried out after the consultation, to say what the feedback was, to set out changes proposed as a result of the feedback, and to say where responses were low and what the plans are to engage with groupings who did not really respond. This ESHIA would also draw more upon actions to review impacts in order to mitigate the negative and accentuate the positive. Examples of this approach include the Great Outdoors Strategy, and the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021

Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty through carrying out these ESHIAs is very much about using them as an opportunity to demonstrate ongoing engagement across groupings and to thus visibly show we are taking what is called due regard of the needs of people in protected characteristic groupings

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

In practice, Part Two or Full Screening Assessments have only been recommended twice since 2014, as the ongoing mitigation of negative equality impacts should serve to keep them below the threshold for triggering a Full Screening Assessment. The expectation is that Full Screening Assessments in regard to Health Impacts may occasionally need to be undertaken, but this would be very much the exception rather than the rule.

## **2. Council Wide and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality, Social Inclusion and Health**

This involves taking an equality and social inclusion approach in planning changes to services, policies, or procedures, including those that may be required by Government.

The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts

on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision-making processes.

This is where Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessments (ESHIA) come in. Where you carry out an ESHIA in your service area, this provides an opportunity to show:

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet.
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date.
- What actions you will take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to review the impact of your planned service change.

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand-alone for a member of the public to read. The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions, or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people or households that we may describe as vulnerable.

Examples could be households on low incomes or people for whom there are safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, e.g., Age. Another specific vulnerable grouping is veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces, who face particular challenges with regard to access to Health, to Education, and to Housing.

We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging, or delivering services.

When you are not carrying out an ESHIA, you still need to demonstrate and record that you have considered equality in your decision-making processes. It is up to you what format you choose.–You could use a checklist, an explanatory note, or a document setting out our expectations of standards of behaviour, for contractors to read and sign. It may well not be something that is in the public domain like an ESHIA, but you should still be ready for it to be made available.

**Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council. Help and guidance is also available via the Commissioning Support Team, either for data, or for**

**policy advice from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist. Here are some examples to get you thinking.**

*Carry out an ESHIA:*

- If you are building or reconfiguring a building.
- If you are planning to reduce or remove a service.
- If you are consulting on a policy or a strategy.
- If you are bringing in a change to a process or procedure that involves other stakeholders and the wider community as well as particular groupings

For example, there may be a planned change to a leisure facility. This gives you the chance to look at things like flexible changing room provision, which will maximise positive impacts for everyone. A specific grouping that would benefit would be people undergoing gender reassignment

*Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:*

- If you are setting out how you expect a contractor to behave with regard to equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them.
- If you are setting out the standards of behaviour that we expect from people who work with vulnerable groupings, such as taxi drivers that we license.
- If you are planning consultation and engagement activity, where we need to collect equality data in ways that will be proportionate and non-intrusive as well as meaningful for the purposes of the consultation itself.
- If you are looking at services provided by others that help the community, where we need to demonstrate a community leadership approach

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes. Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

### **3. Council wide and service area policy and practice on health and wellbeing**

This is a relatively new area to record within our overall assessments of impacts, for individual and for communities, and as such we are asking service area leads to consider health and wellbeing impacts, much as they have been doing during 2020-2021, and to look at these in the context of direct and indirect impacts for individuals and for communities. A better understanding across the Council of these impacts will also better enable the Public Health colleagues to prioritise activities to reduce health inequalities in ways that are evidence based and that link effectively with equality impact considerations and climate change mitigation.

## Health in All Policies – Health Impact Assessment

Health in All Policies is an upstream approach for health and wellbeing promotion and prevention, and to reduce health inequalities. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the supporting mechanism

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the technical name for a common-sense idea. It is a process that considers the wider effects of local policies, strategies and initiatives and how they, in turn, may affect people's health and wellbeing.
- Health Impact Assessment is a means of assessing both the positive and negative health impacts of a policy. It is also a means of developing good evidence-based policy and strategy using a structured process to review the impact.
- A Health Impact Assessment seeks to determine how to maximise health benefits and reduce health inequalities. It identifies any unintended health consequences. These consequences may support policy and strategy or may lead to suggestions for improvements.
- An agreed framework will set out a clear pathway through which a policy or strategy can be assessed and impacts with outcomes identified. It also sets out the support mechanisms for maximising health benefits.

The embedding of a Health in All Policies approach will support Shropshire Council through evidence-based practice and a whole systems approach, in achieving our corporate and partnership strategic priorities. This will assist the Council and partners in promoting, enabling and sustaining the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities whilst reducing health inequalities.

### Individuals

#### **Will the proposal have a *direct impact* on health, mental health and wellbeing?**

For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?

Will the proposal directly affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to be physically active e.g., being able to use a cycle route; to access food more easily; to change lifestyle in ways that are of positive impact for their health.

An example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g., green highways), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage. and

increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve lives.

**Will the proposal *indirectly impact* an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?**

This could include the following: their ability to access local facilities e.g., to access food more easily, or to access a means of mobility to local services and amenities? (e.g. change to bus route)

Similarly to the above, an example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g. pedestrianisation of town centres), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage, and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve their health and well being.

**Communities**

Will the proposal directly or indirectly affect the physical health, mental health, and wellbeing of the wider community?

A *direct impact* could include either the causing of ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation, or the promotion of better health.

An example of this could be that safer walking and cycling routes could help the wider community, as more people across groupings may be encouraged to walk more, and as there will be reductions in emission leading to better air quality.

An *indirect impact* could mean that a service change could indirectly affect living and working conditions and therefore the health and well being of the wider community.

An example of this could be: an increase in the availability of warm homes would improve the quality of the housing offer in Shropshire and reduce the costs for households of having a warm home in Shropshire. Often a health promoting approach also supports our agenda to reduce the level of Carbon Dioxide emissions and to reduce the impact of climate change.

Please record whether at this stage you consider the proposed service change to have a direct or an indirect impact upon communities.

**Demand**

**Will there be a change in demand for or access to health, local authority and social care services?**

For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?



An example of this could be: a new housing development in an area would affect demand for primary care and local authority facilities and services in that location and surrounding areas. If the housing development does not factor in consideration of availability of green space and safety within the public realm, further down the line there could be an increased demand upon health and social care services as a result of the lack of opportunities for physical recreation, and reluctance of some groupings to venture outside if they do not perceive it to be safe.

***For further information on the use of ESHIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist and Council policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 258528, or email [lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk).***

***For further guidance on public health policy considerations: please contact Amanda Cheeseman Development Officer in Public Health, via telephone 01743 253164 or email [amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.cheeseman@shropshire.gov.uk)***