



## Leisure Facilities Strategy - Summary for Consultation

Shropshire Council  
2019-2038

August 2020

## Contents

|                                                       |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>1. Introduction and Context</b>                    | <b>1</b> |
| Local Context                                         | 2        |
| The Local Plan Context                                | 2        |
| Key Factors in Shropshire affecting Leisure provision | 3        |
| Demographics                                          | 3        |
| Rising Numbers of Older People                        | 4        |
| Ageing Well                                           | 5        |
| Population Growth                                     | 5        |
| Long Term Health Conditions                           | 5        |
| Younger People                                        | 6        |
| Starting well and developing well                     | 6        |
| Analysis of Need                                      | 7        |
| Strategy Delivery                                     | 8        |
| Strategic Priorities                                  | 13       |
| How will we Deliver the Strategy?                     | 16       |
| What will Delivery look like?                         | 17       |
| Action Plan                                           | 17       |
| <br>Disclaimer                                        | <br>19   |

## 1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1. In 2018 Shropshire Council (SC) developed an Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy 2018-2023 (the Strategy) the focus of which was to set out a hierarchy of leisure facility provision across Shropshire Council leisure facilities based on an assessment of need. It provided clarity on Shropshire Council's obligations at a time of competing interests and was developed to support a sustainable, affordable and future proofed leisure provision portfolio.
- 1.2. The Council has delivered on a number of actions identified within the Strategy but in light of changing needs and service provision opportunities now considers that the strategy needs to be developed further by focussing on community needs and aspirations, delivery of services in partnership and in conjunction with the development of a new Rural and Community Strategy, Corporate Plan and a Place-based approach to service delivery.
- 1.3. This updated Strategy will deliver on the broader remit of sport and physical activity, will be an ever- evolving document and will be the basis on which Shropshire Council will take forward its Sport and Physical Activity and Leisure Services with partners and stakeholders. The Strategy is about facilities needed to facilitate engagement in physical activity which also contribute to place-making and the identity of a locality.
- 1.4. This updated strategy seeks to remove the Tier system of investment in facilities i.e. the Tier1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 system which would have resulted in the closure of a number of facilities and replaces it with a strategy based on community needs, aspirations, partnership, sustainability and resilience whilst enabling a more commercial approach to service delivery. The impact of removing some of the sport and physical activity services in specific areas where other services are also reducing could severely impact on communities and will result in increased spend in the areas of health and social care.
- 1.5. The updated strategy also focusses on partnership working alongside shared services and investment based on community priorities. It will ensure that the Council's services provide value for money to the local community taxpayers by working to reduce the overall subsidy across the whole of the leisure facilities portfolio through providing a mixed economy of provision and activity.
- 1.6. In some instances, a commercial approach will be appropriate to service delivery; other areas of Shropshire will require a more community based health and wellbeing service based approach focussing on increasing activity and interaction whilst other areas will require a mixed economy of provision. This approach should secure a more sustainable offer across the whole of Shropshire.
- 1.7. Rather than focussing on reducing specific services or buildings **our new approach is to consider the needs of communities in the context of place-making**. There are areas of Shropshire where the simple geography of rural life requires that in order to maintain certain provision there will be a need for a more flexible approach to service delivery which is not as prevalent in more urban areas. Our leisure facility offer needs to be flexible to meet local need and not be based on a one size fits all approach.

## Local Context

- 1.8. This Strategy focusses on the facilities provided by SC; however, the contribution of all other leisure facilities and providers to local place-making is recognised. The Strategy covers the geographical area covered by the new Local Plan.
- 1.9. This Strategy has been developed in parallel with the Shropshire Council Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS); to provide an evidence base for the Local Plan Review and underpin future priorities for provision. Appendix 1 sets out the detailed analysis of need informing the Strategy.
- 1.10. This Strategy is linked into the period of the Local Plan 2019-2038; however, the Strategy will be reviewed and refreshed on a 5 year basis, or at the next review of the Local Plan, whichever is the sooner, to ensure it is kept up to date. Over and above this, there should be on-going monitoring of this Strategy through its implementation. On-going monitoring should include partnership working with neighbouring local authorities to keep aware of facility changes and developments.
- 1.11. The study has been developed in line with the objectives of the Local Plan Review, the developing Rural and Community Strategy and the Shropshire Place-making Context.
- 1.12. The Sub-areas referenced in this Strategy are the amalgamated Place Plan Areas proposed in the Playing Pitch Strategy, as follows:
- **Oswestry and Ellesmere**
  - **Shrewsbury, Minsterley and Pontesbury**
  - **Ludlow, Church Stretton, Craven Arms and Bishop's Castle**
  - **Market Drayton, Whitchurch and Wem**
  - **Much Wenlock, Shifnal, Albrighton and Broseley**
  - **Bridgnorth, Highley and Cleobury Mortimer**

## The Local Plan Context

- 1.13. The Shropshire Local Plan currently comprises the Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and the Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (adopted 2015), together with the adopted Neighbourhood Plans for Much Wenlock and Shifnal. These documents set out proposals for the use of land and policies to guide future development in order to help to deliver sustainable growth in Shropshire for the period up to 2026.
- 1.14. Shropshire Council is currently undertaking a Local Plan Review (LPR). This will:
- **Allow for the consideration of updated information on development needs within the county;**
  - **Reflect changes to national policy and local strategies;**

- **Extend the Plan period to 2038; and**
- **Provide a plan which will help to support growth and maintain local control over planning decisions.**

- 1.15. Maintaining an up to date Local Plan will support local growth by generating certainty for investment in local development and infrastructure through a policy framework that establishes an up to date and objective assessment of development needs and supports sustainable development in Shropshire during the period 2016 to 2038.
- 1.16. The Strategy will ensure that existing facilities are the most appropriate in terms of quantity, quality and location and consider how best to meet the additional needs generated by the planned housing and economic growth. Infrastructure priorities for the LPR are identified through the Local Plan Implementation Plan and its associated Place Plans. The Place Plans support the Implementation Plan by listing all the priorities, needs and aspirations on a place by place basis for Shropshire's communities.
- 1.17. The LPR identifies a requirement for an additional 30,800 houses between 2016 and 2038. Around two thirds of these are already built or are committed (including those allocated in the previous Local Plan - SAMDev). The majority of new dwellings will be in Shropshire's towns, with Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Oswestry, Market Drayton and Whitchurch having more houses than smaller urban centres such as Ellesmere, Highley or Wem. A limited number of houses will be built in 39 rural settlements, known as Community Hubs. Section 5 sets out the number of houses proposed for each settlement.

## Key Factors in Shropshire affecting Leisure provision

### Demographics

- 1.18. Shropshire is a large, rural and sparsely populated county, covering a land area of 319,736 hectares, which is approximately ten times that of all the inner London Boroughs put together (31,929 hectares). With a population estimated at 317,500<sup>1</sup>, this gives a density of only 0.98 persons per hectare.
- 1.19. Around 39% of Shropshire's population lives in villages, hamlets and dwellings dispersed throughout the countryside. The remainder live in one of the 17 market towns and key centres of varying size, including Ludlow in the south and Oswestry in the north, or in Shrewsbury, the central county town.

<sup>1</sup> Source: ONS mid-year estimates, 2017

**Figure 3.1: Shropshire**



1.20. There are some key factors influencing what Shropshire will look like in the future:

### Rising Numbers of Older People

- Shropshire has an older population than England; 24% of its population aged 65 or over and 1.2% aged 90 or over, in comparison to 18% and 0.9% in England.
  - The 65+ population set to raise by 48% from 75,600 to 112,100 – this projection will mean this age group will increase from 24% to 33% of Shropshire's total population.
  - 26% of the female population are aged 65 or over, compared to 22% of men.
- 
- In the same period, the 85 and over population will raise by 135% from 10,000 to 23,500, taking it from 3% of Shropshire's population to 7% in 2037. 6,407 of those over 85 are women (64%).
  - The 65 and over population increase between 2017 and 2037 is similar for men (51%) and women (45%), but the change between 2017 and 2037 for 85's and over is greater for males (169%) than females (114%).
  - Shropshire's 65 and over population will increase more than the West Midlands, and the over 85 population will increase above the West Midlands and also England. <sup>2</sup>
  - Amongst West Midlands local authorities, Shropshire has the second highest percentage of its population that is aged 65 or over, and of all England authorities, Shropshire has the thirteenth highest.
  - The Place Plan areas with the highest percentage of those aged 65+ are Bridgnorth (9.1%), South Shrewsbury (9%), North- East Shrewsbury (7.2%), Ludlow (6.6%), Market Drayton (6.5%) and rural Shrewsbury area (6.2%).
  - Of the 9,978 people that are aged 85 and over, the place plans with the highest percentage are South Shrewsbury (10.3%), Bridgnorth (8.8%), West & Central Shrewsbury (7.9%), Ludlow (7.6%) and North East Shrewsbury (6.2%). In contrast, Highley (1%), Broseley (1.3%) and Much Wenlock (1.4%) have a smaller percentage of the 85 and over population.

---

<sup>2</sup> Reference JSNA Older people's needs assessment 2019

### Ageing Well

Ageing is inevitable but suffering ill health in later life is not. It's never too late to adopt a healthier lifestyle and take steps to prevent ill health. It's just as important for people in older age to have a balanced diet, remain physically active, not smoke and maintain a positive attitude. By doing this older people are more likely to avoid health problems and may be able to manage existing problems more effectively. <sup>3</sup>

### Population Growth

Shropshire's overall population is projected to grow from 313,700 in 2017 to 337,300 by 2037.

### Long Term Health Conditions

The ageing demographic across Shropshire has rising health and care costs. Older people in Shrewsbury and the wider County suffer from:

- **rising dementia (Dementia recorded prevalence (aged 65+) – Based on 6-monthly returns, Shropshire was similar to England in April 2017, but by September 2017, Shropshire was significantly higher at 4.51% compared to England at 4.33% <sup>4</sup>;**
- **a high level of hypertension (16.2%), higher than the West Midlands and England (JSNA Older people's needs assessment 2019);**
- **rising levels of depression (9.9%), significantly higher than either England or the West Midlands <sup>5</sup>; and**
- **increasing levels of obesity (9.8%), significantly higher than England but lower than the West Midlands.**

---

<sup>3</sup> JSNA Older people's needs assessment 2019

<sup>4</sup>JSNA Older people's needs assessment 2019

<sup>5</sup> JSNA Older people's needs assessment 2019

### Younger People

Younger people in Shropshire suffer from high levels of childhood obesity, mental ill-health issues and, where found, severe child poverty. More accessible, better quality physical activity provision could contribute to improved quality of life to help combat these challenges.

### Starting well and developing well

Ensuring that children have the best start in life is vital for reducing health inequalities. Much of a person's future health and wellbeing is determined by early years development.

1.21. Other key influences on future leisure provision include:

The current level of participation in physical activity in Shropshire is 63.8% (Active People April 2020). 12% of the population is fairly active and 24.2% i.e. nearly a quarter of the population is inactive.

Levels of deprivation in the County are relatively low, but where there is deprivation it is significant. Rural deprivation is a key issue, relating to poor access, isolation and loneliness.

**Scale and Rurality-** the size of Shropshire and the fact that the County is so rural means that public transport is limited, journeys can take longer, and access is impacted. There are fewer large urban areas and more smaller communities which means services and infrastructure provide for a wider area.

Car Ownership- 14.9% of Shropshire residents do not have access to a car

The most important and effective health interventions are those which address inequalities and health behaviours in a child's early years.<sup>6</sup>

There is a need to increase sport and physical activity across Shropshire to enable communities to reap the benefits it brings by raising aspirations, improving physical and mental health, growing the economy, reducing inequality and supporting social interaction and strong and resilient communities is at the heart of this revised Strategy. It will be delivered in the context, and in support, of the Council's interlinked Corporate priorities (Innovate to Thrive :

- 1. More people in a suitable home**
- 2. Care for those in need at any age**
- 3. A good place to do business**
- 4. A healthy environment**
- 5. Sustainable places and communities**
- 6. Embrace our rurality**

## Analysis of Need

- 1.22. The identification of need reflects the analysis in the separate Evidence Base the two separate Facility Planning Model (FPM) reports and consultation feedback. (The Evidence Base and FPM reports are separate appendices to the Leisure Facility strategy).
- 1.23. The future need for facilities and investment is clearly linked to a number of factors:
- **Housing and population growth in specific areas e.g. Shrewsbury**
  - **The age and condition of the facility itself**
  - **The existing facility mix**
  - **The target of carbon neutrality by 2030**
  - **Accessibility**
  - **Changes brought about by Covid 19 and its aftermath**

---

<sup>6</sup> JSNA Young people's needs assessment 2019

1.24. The key challenges with the existing facilities are:

- **Their age and condition**
- **The need for investment in the older buildings – in the short term The Quarry, Whitchurch Sports Centre, Church Stretton Pool, Market Drayton Leisure Centre and SpArC are priorities. Investment is needed to make the operation of the buildings more sustainable, and to improve the user environment.**
- **In the medium to longer term there will also be a need for investment in the other facilities e.g. Sports Village (fitness, potentially swimming facilities, café, outdoor grass and all weather pitches),**
- **The opportunity to improve existing provision to generate increased income e.g. extended fitness at Oswestry Leisure Centre and Ludlow Leisure Centre, and the development of new fitness facilities at Market Drayton Leisure Centre**
- **The rurality of the County and the fact that some facilities serve smaller communities and others larger towns**
- **The fact that ‘one size will not fit all’ across Shropshire, but that there is a need for a common Vision and principles for provision**
- **Ensuring the right partnerships are in place to ensure physical activity provision is at the heart of place-making**
- **Identifying the appropriate governance model for each locality, so that communities have a role in their local physical activity offer**

1.25. The conclusions regarding existing facilities are summarised in Table 1:

**Table 1: Summary Conclusions by Facility Type**

| <b>Facility Type</b> | <b>Summary Conclusions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sports Halls</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The resident population of Shropshire generates a demand for 84.4 badminton courts in the weekly peak period. This compares to a supply of 140.20 badminton courts which are available for community use in the weekly peak period. So, the Shropshire supply exceeds the Shropshire demand by 55.8 badminton courts.</li><li>• From the Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM), which is only one element of the needs assessment, the simplistic analysis of supply versus demand in relation to sports halls within Shropshire has identified there are sufficient sports halls across the County to meet both current and future demand.</li><li>• Based on the SFC analysis there is a need for a further 6.33 badminton courts by 2036 to meet increased demand from the population</li></ul> |

| Facility Type         | Summary Conclusions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                       | <p>growth of 23,600 across the county. This need can be met within the existing supply of sports halls across the county through a range of partnership and delivery arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is significant existing sports hall provision across Shropshire and importantly all identified spatial zones have access to a strategic-sized sports hall which is either protected for community use through a formal community use agreement, or is part of one of the three major community leisure facilities, located in Ludlow, Shrewsbury and Oswestry.</li> <li>• Given the need to ensure all communities have access to a strategic-sized sports hall, there will be a need to consider future arrangements in the Market Drayton, Whitchurch and Wem area. This is because there is no SC operated community leisure centre in this area and the halls which provide community access are not all part of a formal community use agreement. Even where there is a formal community use agreement, these are all, with the exception of Much Wenlock, time limited. The sports hall at Bridgnorth Leisure Centre is open for community use; this is dependent on the continued operation of facilities by Halo Leisure. A new long-term contract is likely to be signed between the Academy and Halo to continue operation of facilities at the site.</li> </ul> <p>The three main SC community leisure facilities provide a strategic-sized sports hall, and given that SC has limited future funding for non-statutory provision, there is a need to ensure a mechanism is in place to protect and continue community access to sports hall provision across Shropshire, but especially in the Market Drayton, Whitchurch and Wem area where all existing formal community use arrangements for access to sports halls ended in 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As SC withdraws from funding/supporting existing community use agreements in the short to medium term, it is critical that the partnerships for the future provision of sports hall facilities continue to provide community accessible facilities. Without this, there will be a significant deficit in community accessible sports halls across Shropshire.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Swimming Pools</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All three of Shropshire's main market towns – Ludlow, Oswestry and Shrewsbury provide a main swimming pool, or the equivalent of this (minimum 25m x 6 lane) and a learner pool or a learner function. All communities in Shropshire are within 30 minutes of one of these facilities, with the exception of the communities in the north.</li> <li>• Currently, swimming pools in Market Drayton and Whitchurch address this gap in accessibility. The Market Drayton facility also provides a learner pool.</li> <li>• Swimming pools are costly facilities to operate and maintain; there is a need for SC, given the funding context for non-statutory provision, to invest in sustainable, fit for purpose and efficient swimming pools, which deliver a quality experience. Swimming pools are most sustainable in the areas with highest population; it is in these communities that there is likely to be highest school use, daytime usage and peak time usage.</li> <li>• SC needs to ensure that any investment in non-statutory provision represents the best possible value in the long term; therefore,</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| Facility Type | Summary Conclusions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               | <p>continued provision of all SC swimming pools does need to be carefully considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is critical that opportunities for swimming are provided given it is an important life skill for young people, but it may not be necessary for SC to be the direct deliverer of the number of pools currently provided across Shropshire.</li> <li>• Similar to the analysis undertaken for sports halls, there may be a case for less, but better quality, more flexible provision, strategically located. This is of particular importance in Shrewsbury where there is significant new housing development to the south of the town.</li> <li>• The quality of existing swimming pool provision is of greatest concern in Church Stretton, Bishops Castle, Whitchurch and Shrewsbury.</li> <li>• There is significant existing swimming pool provision across Shropshire and importantly all identified localities have access to a strategic –sized swimming pool which is either protected for community use through a formal community use agreement, or is part of one of the three major community leisure facilities, located in Ludlow, Shrewsbury and Oswestry.</li> <li>• Given the need to facilitate all communities having access to a quality strategic size, swimming pool, there will be a need to consider future arrangements for all swimming pools not provided through the three main community leisure centres. SC has gradually been withdrawing from funding and community use agreements at many small, education-based pools.</li> <li>• The three main SC community leisure facilities provide a strategic–sized swimming pool, plus learn to swim opportunities, and given that SC has limited future funding for non-statutory provision, there is some need to ensure a mechanism is in place to protect and continue community access to other pools across Shropshire,</li> <li>• As SC withdraws from funding/supporting existing community use agreements in the short to medium term, it is important that the partnerships for the future provision of swimming pools continue to provide community accessible facilities. Under provision of swimming pools would only result if all pools closed, or if only the three main SC facilities remained open. There is therefore an opportunity to consider some rationalisation of swimming pools moving forward.</li> <li>• From the FPM, which is only one element of the overall assessment of swimming pools in Shropshire, it is clear that there is an over-supply of swimming pools. The FPM only assess strategic size pools; across Shropshire there are other smaller pools which also have the potential to provide at least some community access (28 pools in Shropshire have not been included in the FPM analysis as these are smaller than 20m); whilst these may not have secured community access in the long term, this is an issue which may be possible to address through further partnership working, and/or alternative delivery arrangements.</li> </ul> |

| Facility Type                                              | Summary Conclusions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2019 the resident population of Shropshire generated a demand for 3,111 sq. metres of water. The supply available for community use is 4,121 sq. metres of water, in the weekly peak period. So, there is a positive balance of supply exceeding demand by 1,010 sq. metres of water in 2019.</li> <li>Future need for swimming pools (based on the Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC)) equates to 234.34 sq. m to meet the needs of the 23,600 population growth in the county, much of which will be in and around Shrewsbury. Existing community accessible provision equates to 4,121 sqm. Therefore, even taking into account future demand by 2037, there would remain an over-supply of water space of 775.66 sqm (<math>4,121 - (3,111 + 234.34 \text{ sqm})</math>). This is roughly equivalent to 3 x 25m x 4 lane pools (225 sqm). Whilst reducing the amount of water space could be an option, this needs serious consideration in a large rural area, given the challenges of accessibility. This situation does, however, provide the opportunity to think differently about the provision of swimming pool facilities, particularly in Shrewsbury because the Quarry pool needs to be replaced, and consider the option of two facilities, potentially one in the town centre and one outside the town centre to improve accessibility, and provide more flexibly. At the moment a significant proportion of the county's swimming pool provision is on one building i.e. the Quarry.</li> <li>There is a need to consider the age, condition and quality of the existing pools in Shropshire as the quality of some facilities is poor. This is predominantly due to age and condition. The facilities which need to be considered in terms of quality are the Quarry, Church Stretton and SpArC; the long term future of Whitchurch also needs to be considered. Older pools, in poor condition have high investment needs and operational costs. However, there is some potential to consider investment in those which are strategically located, and in particular provide at a very local level, to enable development of community capacity and financial resilience to operate the facility, even if for reduced hours.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Health and Fitness<br/>(Fitness Suites and Studios)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the 15+ population there is a demand from the 2020 population for 362 fitness stations; existing supply of community accessible fitness stations is 511. Therefore, there is surplus of 149 fitness stations across the county.</li> <li>By 2038 the population will have increased by 23,600. Much of this growth will be in and around Shrewsbury. Demand for fitness stations by 2038 will increase to 388; based on a supply of 511 community accessible fitness stations there will still be a surplus of provision, but this will reduce to 123 fitness stations.</li> <li>There is sufficient current provision of fitness stations across Shropshire to meet both current and future demand, based on 2019 population estimates. There is a need to ensure a sufficient supply of community accessible fitness stations in Shrewsbury because most of the provision in the main county town is made through the commercial sector.</li> <li>Across the rest of Shropshire, there is sufficient provision to meet demand; identified community accessible provision is complemented by provision made through the education, voluntary and commercial sectors, all of which has different limitations on accessibility. Overall, the majority of communities in Shropshire have access to a pay and play (community accessible) fitness suite within 20-30 minutes drivetime.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

| Facility Type        | Summary Conclusions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Squash Courts</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No need for additional squash courts has been identified in the Borough by England Squash and Racketball.</li><li>• There is a need to maintain the quality of existing provision, to ensure existing participation levels are retained as a minimum, and where possible, grow.</li></ul>                                                      |
| <b>Indoor Tennis</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No need has been identified for more indoor courts in the Borough.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Indoor Bowls</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No need for additional indoor bowls facilities has been identified at this stage, but the current level of provision is below that recommended by EIBA per 1000 population; although the bowling clubs have not identified the need for additional provision, this should be regularly reviewed, given the growing older population.</li></ul> |

## Strategy Delivery

1.26. Our Vision is that:

**Shropshire will be a county where healthier, active lifestyles are encouraged, supported and facilitated for everyone**

1.27. Three core **principles** underpin the delivery of our vision:

- **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; and**
- **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.**

\* including existing leisure operators (independent trusts, schools), Town / Parish Councils, voluntary sector, etc.

1.28. The Strategy has been developed in parallel with the Shropshire Council Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS); to provide an evidence base for the Local Plan Review and underpin future priorities for provision

1.29. The identified facility needs, based on the analysis of need, are set out in Table 1.1. Overall, the issue is qualitative, as opposed to quantitative.

**Table 1.1: Identified Facility Needs**

| Facility           | Identified Needs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Location   |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Sports Halls       | No need for additional provision.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Countywide |
|                    | Investment in facilities built pre 2000.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |            |
| Swimming Pools     | Replacement of swimming facilities in Shrewsbury (the Quarry and possibly Sports Village)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Shrewsbury |
|                    | Investment in/Replacement of swimming facilities in Whitchurch                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Whitchurch |
| Fitness Facilities | Ongoing investment to maintain quality of offer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Countywide |
|                    | Extension of provision in Oswestry Sports Centre                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |            |
|                    | Development of a new fitness offer as part of new provision at the Quarry                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |            |
|                    | Remodelled fitness provision at the Sports Village                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |            |
|                    | Investment in pay and play fitness in Shrewsbury; there is sufficient current provision of fitness stations across Shropshire to meet both current and future demand, based on mid-2012 and mid 2019 population estimates. There is an under supply of community accessible fitness stations in Shrewsbury because most of the provision in the main county town is made through the commercial sector. |            |
| Indoor Bowls       | Review demand for provision on an ongoing basis                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Shrewsbury |
| Squash Courts      | Maintain the quality of existing provision                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Countywide |

1.30. In taking forward our vision and core principles our **strategic priorities** are:

## Strategic Priorities

**Table 1.2: Strategic Priorities**

| Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Priorities |                                                                                                                                                                                  | Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Links to Corporate Plan Priorities |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Strategic Priority 1                            | To work with partners to support the people of Shropshire to live longer, healthier and quality lives through sport and physical activity with a focus on young and older people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will encourage and support the inactive to be more active</li> <li>We will work to achieve, sustainable, positive health outcomes for older people living in Shropshire through targeted activities.</li> <li>We will work with partners to promote social connections and reduce social isolation by bringing people together to participate in sport and physical activity in their community</li> <li>We will work with Adult Social Care and Health, Public Health, CCG's and voluntary organisations to improve quality of life and social outcomes in communities in line with local strategy and Place Plans</li> <li>We will work with partners to promote targeted health and exercise referral programmes to address priority health issues across Shropshire e.g. obesity, diabetes, hypertension, dementia and mental health issues</li> <li>We will ensure strong links to Children and Young People's services and the C &amp; YP Plan</li> <li>Through sport and physical activity we will help children and young people to obtain a broad range of skills and capabilities to achieve and succeed</li> <li>We will improve opportunities to participate, progress and achieve in sport</li> </ul> | Yes - all                          |
| Strategic Priority 2                            | To support the resilience of local communities and the development of Place by strengthening local communities through sport and physical activity.                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will utilise technology to engage with communities</li> <li>We will support local community groups to grow and sustain their sport and physical activity provision</li> <li>We will help to provide job opportunities and relevant training for local people</li> <li>We will support positive activity programmes with local sports clubs, voluntary organisations and specifically local housing associations</li> <li>We will work with local health providers to coordinate delivery of appropriate sport and physical activities in rural areas</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Yes - all                          |

| Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Priorities |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Links to Corporate Plan Priorities |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work with schools to support the delivery of the School Sport and Activity Action Plan</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                    |
| Strategic Priority 3                            | To support economic growth by developing opportunities for people to reach their full potential by providing employment, volunteering and tourism opportunities                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work with education providers where appropriate to support provision of sport and physical activities on joint use sites. We will support volunteering, modern apprenticeships, accredited learning and other initiatives to support people into work. We will work with local Town and Parish Councils and forums of interest to support the local area</li> <li>We will work with partners and community groups to provide local opportunities in rural areas for training and work</li> <li>We will work with partners and community groups to provide local opportunities for volunteers to get involved in activities, and developing local initiatives</li> <li>We will work with Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly to coordinate volunteer support across Shropshire</li> <li>We will support the tourism and cultural offer of Shropshire by providing activities and infrastructure to attract visitors to the area</li> <li>We will work with local Town and Parish Councils and forums of interest to support the local area</li> </ul> | Yes - all                          |
| Strategic Priority 4                            | To take a cross county Place based approach to the delivery of high quality leisure facilities through targeted investment, partnership opportunities, community empowerment and commercial acumen in order to reduce levels of subsidy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work with education providers where appropriate to support provision of sport and physical activities on joint use sites.</li> <li>We will work with partners and stakeholders to attract external funding</li> <li>We will explore opportunities for the provision of shared services and coterminous sites through potential 'hubs' within communities</li> <li>We will enhance opportunities through better use of existing provision</li> <li>We will commit to continuous improvement by ensuring we regularly monitor our performance</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Yes - all                          |

| Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Priorities |                                                                                                                                                                         | Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Links to Corporate Plan Priorities |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will regularly benchmark our services with best practice providers</li> <li>We will manage our centres effectively in order to significantly reduce subsidy across the service over the next five years</li> <li>We will protect the right opportunities in the right places</li> <li>We will regularly review our services based on local need and financial considerations</li> <li>We will undertake regular customer feedback consultations</li> <li>We will seek to provide ease of access to our services through both physical and electronic means</li> <li>We will ensure sport and physical activity are included in corporate consultations and stakeholder events when appropriate</li> </ul> |                                    |
| <b>Strategic Priority 5</b>                     | <b>To aim to reduce our carbon footprint in line with the commitment of Shropshire Council to the declaration of Climate emergency to become carbon neutral by 2030</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work towards ensuring our leisure centres are as energy efficient as they can possibly be</li> <li>We will endeavour to reduce energy consumption as a key consideration in the development of our leisure centres</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Yes - all</b>                   |

### How will we Deliver the Strategy?

- **By developing a commercial approach to service delivery where appropriate in order to reduce overall subsidy to the service**
- **By working in partnership with our communities and stakeholders**
- **By focussing our limited resources to support the delivery of services our communities, where possible, to support future need**
- **By taking an overarching commercial approach to investment whereby larger and more sustainable facilities subsidise smaller and more rural facilities where there is a clear identified need**

- **By putting physical activity at the heart of place-making**
- **Through co-location of facilities, services and voluntary sector/community delivery as part of a locality offer**

### What will Delivery look like?

- 1.31. Our delivery model concept is a community focussed hub -type service this could be a co-located hub combining physical activity and a range of other community services e.g. a library, a community centre etc, or it could be a stand-alone building as part of a linked hub offer. Co-located buildings and services will be the aim, wherever possible. However, the model will be driven by the needs of the locality, because every community in Shropshire is different.
- 1.32. Our leisure facilities will be managed through a range of models, again driven by locality. However, operational sustainability will also be key in identifying how best facilities are managed. The models are currently under review and will be determined by the end of 2020. Facilities will aim to have a User Forum; some of these are already established and will continue to exist. What will change is their governance role. All User Forums will have the opportunity to influence the service provided at local level, put forward ideas, and raise issues of concern. It will be the management of each facility who responds to these, meeting with the User Forum on a monthly basis. The User Forum will have a key role in raising funding, promoting services and activities and networking at community level, to support their local facility.

### Action Plan

| Strategic priority                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Actions                                                                                                                                                        | Partners                                                                                       | Timescale              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Strategic Priority 1:</b><br><b>To work with partners to support the people of Shropshire to live longer, healthier and quality lives through sport and physical activity with a focus on young and older people</b> | To ensure physical activity is at the heart of placemaking across Shropshire                                                                                   | Shropshire Council, Place-making leads, Parish and Town Councils, Energize, facility operators | Ongoing                |
| <b>Strategic Priority 2:</b><br><b>To support the resilience of local communities and the development of Place by strengthening local communities through sport and physical activity</b>                               | To consider investment in identified facility needs across Shropshire and specifically in Shrewsbury, Whitchurch, Oswestry, Church Stretton and Bishops Castle | Shropshire Council, Place-making leads, Parish and Town Councils, facility operators           | Short Term (1-5 years) |

Shropshire Council  
**Leisure Facilities Strategy Summary**

| Strategic priority                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Partners                                                                                     | Timescale              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Strategic Priority 3:</b><br>To support economic growth by developing opportunities for people to reach their full potential by providing employment, volunteering and tourism opportunities                                                                         | Develop the role of 'Friends of' Groups to support leisure facility development at the heart of place-making                                                                                                                          | Shropshire Council, Place-making leads, Parish and Town Councils,                            | Ongoing                |
| <b>Strategic Priority 4:</b><br>To take a cross county Place based approach to the delivery of high quality leisure facilities through targeted investment, partnership opportunities, community empowerment and commercial acumen in order to reduce levels of subsidy | To consider investment, where possible, in identified facility needs across Shropshire and specifically in Shrewsbury, Whitchurch, Oswestry, Church Stretton and Bishops Castle                                                       | Shropshire Council, Place-making leads, Parish and Town Councils, Energize, external funders | Short Term (1-5 years) |
| <b>Strategic Priority 5:</b><br>To aim to reduce our carbon footprint in line with the commitment of Shropshire Council to the declaration of Climate emergency to become carbon neutral by 2030                                                                        | Secure external funding and investment in facilities (as part of overall capital investment) to ensure more energy efficient operations<br><br>Undertake building energy efficiency surveys to establish high priority and quick wins | Shropshire Council, Place-making leads, Parish and Town Councils, facility operators         | Short Term (1-5 years) |

## Disclaimer

Forecasts and recommendation in any proposal, report or letter are made in good faith and on the basis of the information before the Company at the time. Their achievement must depend, among other things, on effective co-operation of the Client and the Client's staff. In any consequence, no statement in any proposal, report or letter is to be deemed to be in any circumstances a representation, undertaking, warranty or contractual condition.

**© 2020 Strategic Leisure Limited  
All rights reserved**