

Shropshire Council

Much Wenlock Leisure Centre Proposal

Period: 11 December 2024 - 05 February 2025

Summary of the proposal

Shropshire Council operates and manages Much Wenlock Leisure Centre at William Brookes School on behalf of 3-18 Education Trust to provide community use when the facility is not in use for education purposes. This arrangement has been in place since 2010 when the facility re-opened following a school rebuild. The council's operational budget for this facility in 2024/25 is £280,040.

Shropshire Council proposes to give 12 months' notice to 3-18 Education Trust, to cease to operate Much Wenlock Leisure Centre and withdraw subsidy for community use. This will contribute to leisure savings identified in the council's midterm financial strategy.

The council serving notice and withdrawing management services and funding would not automatically result in the removal of community use. The decision would rest with the William Brookes Academy and their parent trust, 3-18 Education Trust.

William Brookes School/Academy Trust is keen to explore continuing to provide community use of the leisure centre should Shropshire Council cease operating at the end of a 12-month notice period.

The notice period would enable the school/academy to explore suitable operating models and investigate the potential for acquiring funding to support community use of the centre and capital investment to improve the facility.

Options:

The council is now undertaking a consultation process on the following proposed options under consideration:

Option 1: Shropshire Council ceases operating Much Wenlock Leisure Centre for community use:

- This could result in the reduction of community use of the centre when operations become the responsibility of William Brookes School
- Savings achieved

Option 2: Do nothing:

- No savings achieved
- Additional savings would need to be found elsewhere

For transparency, the council's recommended option is Option 1. However, feedback received from this consultation will be fully considered before any final proposals are brought forward for approval.

The consultation will run for 8 weeks, opening on 11 December 2024 and closing on 5 February 2025. Please take time to consider the options and complete the consultation survey, which you can access by clicking on the 'How to Get involved' tab at the top of the page.

The results of this consultation will be analysed and compiled before returning to cabinet in March 2025 for a decision on whether to adopt the proposals.

Has an equalities impact assessment been completed?

We have drawn up an initial equalities and social inclusion health impact assessment (ESHIA), focusing on the proposals identified in the consultation. Once the consultation has closed and responses reviewed, the ESHIA will be updated.

Our initial assessment identified that:

- A service change is likely to have a negative impact on climate change if community use is reduced as current users travel to other facilities
- A reduction in community use is likely to have a low to medium negative impact on the wider community
- A service change is likely to have a low negative impact on the local economy