

## CONCEPT DESIGN - STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

### SUMMARY

The consultation for the Halifax Leisure Centre project ran from June to August 2019. The public consultation ran from 16th July to 13<sup>th</sup> August.

The aim of the initial stage of engagement was to promote the project and the investment in the leisure centre, highlighting how the project will have positive benefits for the area. The engagement also encouraged feedback about the future of the leisure centre, helping to shape the project as it progresses.

The findings of the survey and the feedback that was received will be used to inform the detailed design for the project, ensuring that this major investment project delivers the right benefits for all users.

### ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Ward Councillors and Council leaders were engaged prior to the public campaign. Members were emailed in early July to explain the details of the project to date and the engagement approach.

Stakeholder engagement to date has included meetings and emails with the following key stakeholders:

- Ward Councillors and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategy
- Calderdale Tough Times Reference Group
- Trinity and Rastrick Schools (Calderdale Sixth Form Centre)
- Officers (Better Living Manager, Community Policy and Projects Manager, Acting Head of Service Commissioning & Partnerships)
- Third sector (Next Step Trust, Lead the Way, Cloverleaf Advocacy, Calderdale Disability Partnership, Third Sector Chief Officers Forum)
- User groups (tang sou dao karate, synchronised swimming, swimming club)

Overall, engagement has been positive, with enthusiastic support from ward councillors and the team from Trinity and Rastrick schools. The meetings and emails have included discussions about the facilities in the leisure centre and how these can support the local community and users.

Based on stakeholder feedback, the CMBC team need to consider the overall benefits and the feasibility of the suggestions listed in **Appendix A – Stakeholder feedback**.

As well as facilities, discussions have also considered how stakeholders can be engaged going forward, with suggestions from several stakeholders, including the Third Sector Chief Officers Forum, around more in depth discussions regarding the accessibility and equality requirements for the leisure centre. At each stakeholder meeting, it was highlighted that consultation with key stakeholders will continue as the project progresses.

### PROMOTION

In order to capture a broad audience for the public engagement, several channels of communication were used, totalling a potential reach of over 131k people.



- **Posters, leaflets and paper surveys** – these were distributed to the six local Council leisure facilities, including Halifax Swimming Pool and North Bridge Leisure Centre.
- **Press release** – an article ran both online and in the Halifax Courier printed edition. The articles promoting the engagement on both the Council news site and the Next Chapter website reached over 600 users.
- **Social media campaign** – messages across Linked In, Facebook, Twitter with over 18k digital impressions.
- **Radio campaign** – One month advert run on Pulse FM, reaching 112k listeners per week.
- **Next Chapter newsletter** – the campaign featured in the August newsletter, which was opened by 1,089 readers.
- **Internal communications** – promotion featured in the Member newsletter, the staff newsletter and an advert was included on staff screensavers.

## SURVEY FEEDBACK

### Exercise

The consultation was popular, with 1,637 responses submitted. Attitudes to exercise are positive, supporting the need and signifying the public interest in a prospective new leisure centre. On a scale of 1 to 5, 90% of respondents thought the importance of exercise was a 3 or above, 70% of respondents regularly exercise and 84% want to exercise more often.

However, 6.4% (104) respondents said that they rarely exercise. From this group, there is a significantly higher proportion of disabled users at 31% compared to the overall sample of respondents at 9%. Of these 104 people, 88 (85%) would like to do more exercise. Of the 16 (12%) respondents who do not want to do more exercise, the average rating about the importance of exercise was 1.6 out of 5.

In the group that rarely exercise 88 respondents (85%) don't use the North Bridge Leisure Centre and the majority of respondents (39%) explained that this is because the facilities aren't good enough. The leisure centre project, therefore, has the potential to encourage these inactive respondents to become active, which helps to support our Active Calderdale campaign and Sport England's ambitions to increase sport participation for those that are currently inactive.

### Existing and future facilities

In relation to North Bridge Leisure Centre (NBLC) and Halifax Swimming Pool, 54% of respondents use the swimming pool and 37% use NBLC. Of those respondents that do use the two facilities, 65% use them from daily to weekly.

When respondents were asked why they don't use these facilities, the majority, 44%, said that the facilities aren't good enough. This was a common theme throughout the questionnaire. Positively, the plans for the new leisure centre already consider the out of date facilities that currently exist, incorporating all-new and easier to access facilities for users.

When thinking about exercise, respondents said that access to good facilities was the most important consideration. Furthermore, when asked what would encourage them to use the new leisure centre, the majority of respondents said improved facilities would strongly encourage them. Other improvements that would strongly encourage respondents to use the new leisure centre



included; changing facilities, parking and a better range of equipment. All of these improvements are being considered for the planning of the leisure centre.

### Themes

Parking was a common theme throughout the questionnaire. Of the respondents that use the swimming pool and NBLC, 80% of those use a private vehicle to access the site. After improved facilities, parking was the second most popular option for respondents to be strongly encouraged to use the leisure centre. When given the opportunity to feedback about the plans overall and anything else that would encourage them to use the future leisure centre, 69 respondents (5%) focused on parking – availability and price. This, therefore, needs to be considered when planning the parking arrangements for the new leisure centre.

### Leisure centre suggestions

When respondents were asked for any other feedback or suggestions about the future of the North Bridge leisure centre, 820 people (59%) responded.

In response to the consultation, the plans will need to give consideration to all of the responses. However, initial analysis has identified key themes that have emerged from the consultation:

- 12% (189 comments) are keen to see a pool that has the facilities for diving and synchronised swimming. 22 responses noted the need for synchronised swimming facilities only, 130 responses noted the need for diving facilities only, and 37 of the 189 responses noted the need for both diving and synchronised swimming.
- 7% of all respondents (114 comments) suggest that the new leisure centre needs a sauna. Many respondents have provided supporting statements that a sauna has both health and cultural benefits.
- 6% of all respondents (95 comments) suggest the need for improved changing facilities; many of these suggest the need for individual changing rooms. 10 of the comments about changing express the need for improved disabled changing facilities.

### ENGAGEMENT NEXT STEPS

The feedback and suggestions received from both users and stakeholders will be considered against the feasibility options as part of the next planning stage for the leisure centre. Following this, highlights of the feedback and a report will be published publicly to evidence how feedback has been used to shape the project.

Due to the high number of written responses that were related to the management of the leisure centre and swimming pool, rather than the project delivery, the 820 written responses will be shared with the Leisure Facilities Management Team to analyse and action where relevant.

The stakeholder engagement plan for the leisure centre will be updated based on the feedback received; this will include the plans for the next stage of user and stakeholder consultation.

The plan will include targeted engagement for groups that are underrepresented in the results of the initial consultation in comparison to Calderdale demographics; this will include tailored engagement with disabled people and disability groups.



**APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK**

- School/teaching support:
  - Supporting BTEC sport - this includes a sports hall, 3G pitch, fitness suite, pool, multi-function rooms, learning pace (for up to 24 students)
  - Support A-level PE – providing flexible/adaptable space, including having sprung studio floors and having high ceilings for trampolining
  - Learning space with classroom facilities (for the Sixth Form Centre this would avoid split site teaching)
  - Exam desks and exam space to rent/ use
- Collocation:
  - Better Living Services team at NBLC or to at least have a permanent presence on site. This would make the service leaner and help to raise their profile. Storage for their resources would also be beneficial.
- Leisure facilities:
  - Rock climbing
  - Trampolining
  - Escape room
  - Laser quest
  - Jacuzzi (preference from synchronised swimming group is to have this on the pool side)
  - Martial arts training and competition space (more than one minimum 10m x 10m gymnasium/ dance space with access to mats)
  - Dedicated martial arts zone
  - Sprung floor studios
  - Mirrored walls
  - Mats to be jigsaw (30mm)
- Pool facilities
  - Warm up room for the pool
  - Wave pool (for surfing and entertainment)
  - Hydrotherapy pool to support disabled users and for physical therapy
  - Slides
  - Bigger pool to be divided into different activities
  - Deep pool for synchronised swimming and diving (3m)
  - No concrete blocks at the end of the pool
  - Ledge in the deep end to be recessed inwards (as to not stick out)
  - Underwater speakers
  - Pool side water fountain
  - Large steps to make it easy to climb in and out
  - Poolside storage
  - Land training space
  - Pace clock
  - Diving blocks
  - Anti-wave ropes
  - Backstroke flags at pool ends
  - Poolside water cooler
  - Holes for water polo nets



- Deep water at both pool ends
- Starting blocks
- Other facilities:
  - Space for a pool welcome table
  - Female only facilities
  - Individual changing rooms
  - Village changing
  - Meeting rooms
  - Child care/kids play
  - Spectator seating (for 250 people)
  - Trophy cabinet
  - Internet access



**APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

**Demographics**

**QUESTION 1 – WHERE'S HOME**

Halifax	57.1%
Brighouse	8.2%
Elland	6.4%
Sowerby Bridge	6.3%
Other	4.0%
Ripponden & the Ryburn Valley	3.3%
Mytholmroyd, Cragg Vale & Luddenden	3.3%
Todmorden & Walsden	3.2%
Bradford	3.2%
Hebden Bridge & Heptonstall	2.7%
Huddersfield	1.5%

**QUESTION 2 - GENDER**

Female	64.3%
Male	33.8%
Prefer not to say	1.8%
Other	0%

**QUESTION 3 – ETHNICITY**

White - British	88%
Prefer not to say	3%
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2.9%
White - Other	2.4%
White - Irish	1.0%
Asian or Asian British - Other	0.6%
Mixed – White & Asian	0.5%
Mixed – Other	0.4%
Mixed – White & Black Caribbean	0.4%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0.2%
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0.1%
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0.1%
Black or Black British – Other	0.1%
Mixed – White & Black African	0.1%
Black or Black British - African	0.1%

**QUESTION 4 – RELIGION**



No religion	38.5%
Christian	47.5%
Prefer not to say	7.4%
Muslim	3.0%
Other	2.7%
Hindu	0.3%
Jewish	0.1%
Sikh	0.0%
Buddhist	0.5%

**QUESTION 5 – WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF AS HAVING A DISABILITY?**

No	87.5%
Yes	9.1%
Prefer not to say	3.4%

**Exercise**

**HOW IMPORTANT IS EXERCISE TO YOU?**

Rate on a scale where 1 is not important and 5 is very important (1395 responses)

5	47.7%
4	27.8%
3	18.9%
2	4.2%
1	1.3%

**HOW ACTIVE ARE YOU?** (1411 responses)

I regularly exercise	54.2%
I exercise occasionally	23.2%
I exercise every day	16.2%
I rarely exercise	6.4%

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO MORE EXERCISE?** (1397 responses)

Yes	83.9%
No	16.1%

**WHAT EXERCISE DO YOU DO?** Tick all relevant options (1412 responses)

Walking	76.0%
Swimming	47.6%



Leisure centre/health club	36.8%
In home – exercise	34.6%
Gardening	31.7%
Jogging/running	23.8%
Cycling	18.4%
Playing sport	16.4%
Work	15.1%
In home – equipment	13.2%
Other (please state)	9.3%
I don't do any	1.4%

**IF YOU USE A LEISURE CENTRE, WHICH DO YOU USE?** (1059 responses)

Halifax Swimming Pool	54%
North Bridge Leisure Centre	37.2%
Sowerby Bridge Pool & Fitness Centre	32%
Brighouse Pool & Fitness Centre	21.6%
Todmorden Pool & Fitness Centre	8.5%
Spring Hall Running Track & Fitness Centre	2.2%
Mixenden Outdoor Activity Centre	1.2%
The Shay Stadium	1%

**IF YOU DON'T USE NORTH BRIDGE LEISURE FACILITIES OR THE SWIMMING POOL CURRENTLY, WHAT'S THE REASON WHY?** (910 responses)

Facilities aren't good enough	43.7%
Happy using other facilities	22.5%
Location	22.4%
Cost of service	12.8%
No motivation to go	11.7%
No free time	11.1%
Prefer outdoor activities	10.3%
No information available	5.7%
Poor health	4.2%

**IF YOU DO USE NORTH BRIDGE LEISURE FACILITIES OR THE SWIMMING POOL CURRENTLY, HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT?** (764 responses)

Less than monthly	24%
Once a week	22.5%
2-3 times per week	21.5%
3-4 times per week	16.5%
More than monthly	6%





Monthly	5.3%
Every day	4.1%

**IF YOU CURRENTLY USE THE NORTH BRIDGE LEISURE FACILITIES, HOW DO YOU GET THERE?** (660 responses)

Private car	80.1%
On foot	17%
Public transport	14.5%
Bicycle	1.8%
Other	0.2%
Coaches	0.0%

**WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU WHEN THINKING ABOUT EXERCISE?**

	Not important	Neutral	Important	Most important
Availability of transport	522	382	410	120
Amount of free time	158	221	800	304
Availability of classes/activities	178	238	686	419
Disability/impairments	657	396	159	93
Fees/charges	174	284	707	379
Clothing cost	505	554	234	53
Access to good facilities	88	87	658	676
Personal motivation/goals	79	257	720	366
Support from peers	328	468	424	152
Cultural/religion	943	296	49	39

**WHAT WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE THE NEW NORTH BRIDGE LEISURE CENTRE?**

	Discouraged	Not relevant	Encouraged	Strongly encouraged
More information	20	355	714	306
Lower prices	19	368	644	434
Better transport access	27	811	346	187
Child care facilities	87	924	197	146



Better programme of classes	31	338	640	439
Improved facilities	28	114	577	769
Cycle access	91	856	243	129
Parking	43	283	577	560
Changing facilities	31	241	630	525
Café	72	546	545	270
Restaurant	128	770	314	137

