



**FAQ. What is the financial viability of the 2 options for investment?**

**A.** Options 1 and 2 were developed after completing the various RIBA design stages outlined in the background document and are being presented for consultation based on them being financially viable. It is the Council's role as owner of the facility and the organisation that is principally liable for the ongoing operation and sustainability of the centre, to complete the appropriate level of due diligence on proposals before they were released for public consultation. The Council is now seeking the views of the public on these options specifically and not whether people feel they are financially viable where investment is being proposed or not.

**FAQ. What is the decision-making process following the consultation period?**

**A.** Comments received via the consultation process will be fully considered before final recommendations are put forward to The Executive as outlined on the website where the consultation information is hosted. It is anticipated that the Executive will review this in March/April 2025.

**FAQ. Is the Energy Efficiency Project included in all 3 options?**

**A.** The energy efficiency project has already been formally approved and is therefore not something we are consulting on as part of this process. A board summarising this project is on display at the centre and was also used during the drop-in session to enable people to visualise what this plan involves and to ask questions about them. The project is in the process of being mobilised and will be completed within the first half of 2025.

**FAQ. Has consideration been given to the community group's proposal for the leisure centre?**

**A.** The proposal and designs provided by the community group have been received by the Council and considerations have been given to the elements included. A full, detailed response in relation to these will be issued as an FAQ in the New Year.

**FAQ. Why is the gym being expanded?**

**A.** The existing gym space is small when considering the current membership level and will not accommodate further growth. Although other providers exist in the marketplace, it is our intention to ensure the offering at MyActive New Mills remains competitive with other providers in the same way that they will ensure their offering remains competitive with MyActive New Mills

and other competitors. If this does not happen, usage will reduce, and the ongoing viability of the centre will reduce with it.

**FAQ. What is wrong with the existing space available for classes?**

**A.** The new large studio that is proposed in both designs, will enable a number of classes to move into a dedicated space, including a significant number that currently take place in the sports hall. This will free up a significant number of hours (approx. 13) of sports hall availability for other sports and activities to expand.

Also, a larger space will enable the introduction of new classes targeting different demographic groups including young people and families, for example. The current studios and squash court occasionally used for classes are small and do not cater for any kind of expansion.

**FAQ. Could other squash initiatives be incorporated to increase usage of the court?**

**A.** We are aware of a number of alternative forms of the game that have been designed to increase the amount a squash court can be used outside of traditional bookings. Despite trialling various different initiatives similar to these over the years, usage of the squash court has not substantially increased, nor has the income it generates. A vast number of time slots remain empty (more than 50%) and we do not have the confidence that introducing similar initiatives again will fundamentally improve and sustain usage of the court and associated income.

**FAQ. Could the swimming pool viewing area be developed to improve the leisure centre offer?**

**A.** Options 1 and 2 that we are consulting on currently include converting the existing swimming pool viewing area into a social space with improved seating and food/beverage offering. We believe this would develop a more inclusive and welcoming feel to the space.

**FAQ. Could a better food/ beverage offer be provided, given the proximity to Sett Valley Trail, health providers and users of the centre?**

**A.** As described above, the development of an improved food and beverage offering with cafe seating is included in both options by enhancing the current swimming pool viewing area and improving the availability of items from reception.

**FAQ. Why is there so much emphasis on Exercise by Referral?**

**A.** The exercise by referral programme is just one aspect of developing a broader health and wellbeing focus for the services provided from the centre. Additional pathways will be developed to expand the offering, engage new people and provide first class interventions and support that will improve health and wellbeing outcomes for those people needing the most support.

**FAQ. How will MyActive New Mills ensure that those referred on the exercise by referral pathway do not ‘drop-off’, upon completion of the 12-week programme?**

**A.** We can confirm that work is underway to review this programme across the whole of the High Peak. This review includes exploring ways to improve the range of services on offer to residents, improving the referral pathways, enhance the user experience and improve engagement and retention. We see this work as business as usual and part of our commitment to reducing health inequalities across the Borough.

**FAQ. Can investment be made into the sports hall to enable it to be used more flexibly?**

**A.** Our professional team of experts who have a proven track record of developing leisure and wellbeing facilities throughout the UK have helped form the view that alternative ways to modify the sports hall will not solve the fundamental issues that are summarised in the background document released with the consultation exercise.

**FAQ. Is the improvement to cycle parking facilities part of either investment option?**

**A.** The Council is already working to improve cycle parking facilities at MyActive New Mills as we recognise that current facilities are not appropriate.

**FAQ. How will the total cost of either investment option be financed?**

**A.** For both options where a financial investment is required, the Council will access the respective level of capital funding via a Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan. This is a specific lending facility operated by the UK Debt Management Office on behalf of HM Treasury and provides loans to local authorities and other specified bodies for capital projects and is the usual approach taken by local authorities across the country when funding projects of this nature. The loan will be repaid by the increase in participation/ income generated by the proposed investments.

**FAQ. What marketing has been done to promote the facilities available at the centre?**

**A.** A broad range of marketing activities is used to promote all, including website, social media and paid for advertising.

**FAQ. Will there be a Q&A session available for this project?**

**A.** The in-person drop-in session held on the 3rd of December gave an opportunity for people to speak directly to officers/ councillors about the proposals included in the consultation exercise. Therefore, there will not be any further in-person sessions, however the FAQ process via the website will remain open until the consultation ends on Friday the 10th of January.