

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Equalities Impact Assessment

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1. Management of the EqIA

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Timescales

Completed April 2016

2. Identification of policy aims, objectives and purpose

Adult Social Care services based within the Resource Centre are going through a process of review. The review of the specialist gym addresses accessibility to mainstream facilities in addition to improving the choice and quality of services to customers and to evidence value for money.

The aim of this EqIA is to identify the equality impacts that result from the proposal to close the specialist gym based at the Community Resource Centre. It will identify mitigations to lessen and reduce the overall impact of the proposed closure and ensure that where potential negative impacts are identified, they do not unfairly impact on service users from protected equality groups.

What was recommended and why:

It is recommended that the Mayor in consultation with Cabinet is asked to:

1. Agree to the proposal to close the specialist gym based at the Community Resource Centre
2. Agree to the proposal that all customers of the specialist gym will be supported to access mainstream health and fitness opportunities

A consultation exercise was undertaken on behalf of Adult Social Care by Strategic Policy and Research in winter 2015. This involved contacting all LBN

customers of the gym to provide an understanding of how the specialist gym is used and understand the views of customers on the proposal to close the gym.

Having received the feedback and listened to customers, there has been ongoing dialogue with mainstream leisure service provision to address concerns raised by customers. Work is underway and plans in place to address and alleviate all of the concerns raised. Section 5 of this document outlines the outcomes of these discussions and the plans moving forward if the recommendations are agreed. As such, it is felt that disabled customers can have their needs met in mainstream provision.

A recent costing exercise evidenced that the gym's daily rate was more expensive for what was being offered when compared to mainstream services. Equipment is nearing the end of its usable life and will need replacing with an estimated replacement cost of £80,000.

The gym costs the Council £18 per hour per user or £40 for half-day sessions per user (inclusive of specialist support). Mainstream, unlimited access gym and swimming provision for disabled people can be purchased at a cost of £19.99 a month with a carer going free. If customers require additional support, personal budgets could be used to purchase individualised, needs-led support.

The specialist gym is not cost effective and is not sustainable.

The objectives of this EqlA will include:

- This Equality Impact Assessment (EqlA) has been carried out to address the obligations under the Equalities Act 2010. This EqlA will assess if there is an impact in individuals as a result of closing the gym.
- The EqlA will give due regard to each of the eight protected characteristics. The duty to have due regard to **socio-economic inequality (or class)** when making strategic decisions has been removed from the Equality Act by the Government but, Newham Council has decided to retain it locally because of the high levels of deprivation experienced by many of our residents and the inequalities of outcome this creates. A spreadsheet was collated with unique information on each customer relating to protected characteristics
- Each customer's individual needs and circumstances were considered when carrying out this assessment, with the manager of the service supplying current data.

3. Scope / focus of the EqlA

The three main gym user groups:

1. People who use the gym that attend Cumberland Unit Day Centre
2. People who use the gym as part of health clinical sessions
3. People who use the gym using their personal budgets or other arrangements

The following are the number of users within each user group:

- 31 - from Cumberland Unit which has since reduced to 20
- The numbers of Health users fluctuate. Their sessions are run by Health clinicians for duration of 3 months for each user. Patients' sessions will conclude before the changes are fully implemented and therefore no current users would be affected.
- 28 - Personal budgets or other arrangements

Of the 59 users of the service, 45 responded to consultation. The evidence below relates to the 45 respondents which make up 80% of the users.

Protected Characteristic	Assessment of relevance High, Medium, Low	Reason for this assessment
Age	High	Respondents tended to be older, with 23 over the age of 65 (which is over half of respondents). Ten respondents were aged 55-64, 6 were 45-54 and 4 were under 45 years.
Disability	High	98% of respondents reported having a disability, which is expected from this group. The most common disabilities or impairments were mobility impairment (31 respondents) or a physical impairment (30 respondents). Around a fifth of respondents had a visual impairment (10 respondents).
Transgender	Low	No evidence to analyse, as there is no data collected on gender status
Pregnancy and maternity	Low	Specialist gym service is not provided for this group.
Race	Low	A third of respondents were Asian (13 respondents), with 5 respondents Asian Indian. Twelve respondents were White, with 10 White British, and 12 respondents were Black, with 5 Black British and 4 Black African.
Religion / belief	Low	Half of respondents were Christian (22 respondents), 10 respondents were Muslim and 6 respondents did not want to disclose their religion. There were 2 respondents who were Hindu, and 1 respondent was Sikh, 1 was Atheist and 1 had no religion.
Sexual orientation	Low	No specific issues relating to sexual orientation from this proposed change. The proposed recommendation will benefit all

		customers as individual support plans are agreed based on assessed needs, not on the disadvantaged background
Gender	Medium	24 respondents were female and 20 were male.
Class or socio-economic disadvantage	High	The proposed recommendation will benefit all customers as individual support plans are agreed based on assessed needs, not on the disadvantaged background

4. Research and consultation

Consultation

The questionnaire was completed by 45 respondents, which is a response rate of 80%. The consultation found that the gym is well used, with 43 respondents using the gym at least once a week. 19 respondents visit the specialist gym as part of a day visit to the Cumberland Centre and 23 only attend the specialist gym. Respondents take part in a variety of exercises however the most popular piece of equipment was the Thera med bike, which is a specialist piece of equipment that is not available in mainstream gyms.

There was a high level of opposition towards the proposal to close the specialist gym: 35 respondents opposed the proposal and 38 reported that they would be impacted if the proposal went ahead. The main reason for this opposition was that the specialist gym is a unique facility, offering a safe and supportive environment for older and disabled people to exercise in. Respondents outlined how important exercising at the gym is to their physical and mental health, and many felt they would be unable to continue with this exercise if the specialist gym was to close.

Twenty-four respondents would not be able to use a mainstream gym if the specialist gym was closed, and the main reason for this was that mainstream gyms were thought to be unsuitable for people with disabilities. Specialist, one to one support to exercise was seen as very important to aid exercise. When asked what support Newham council should offer, one to one support was the most common suggestion, followed by support to find and access a mainstream gym.

There appears to be some interest in organised group activities for older and disabled people, which would not have to take place at the specialist gym. However this is balanced by a strong interest in keeping the specialist gym open, with dedicated one to one support.

Research

Most mainstream services have good public transport links. Customers who use the specialist gym attend by a variety of means, including using personalised use of transport, so there will be no impact. Indeed, there are more mainstream gyms and opportunities for improving health and fitness around the borough, so it likely that most customers would be able to have their needs met nearer to where they live.

Accessing health and fitness is an issue for disabled people in Newham¹. People with a physical disability can achieve important health benefits by being as physically active as possible.

Whether individuals have a short-term or long-term disability, or are experiencing mobility issues for any reason, physical activity can:

- Give them an enhanced sense of control.
- Allow them to focus on their physical abilities, not their disability or mobility issue.
- Give them more energy and strength to do things on their own.

Participants in activity groups for people with disabilities report that these programs:

- Help them to feel they're not alone when working towards fitness or health goals.
- Provide a social outlet where people can discuss common experiences, talk about solutions to various challenges and just have fun together².

Exercising in a social environment also increases customers' motivation to participate in physical activities. As people participate more, they'll be inspired to keep at it!

Physical activity can also improve mental health, by improving customers' sense of physical fitness and by providing opportunities for social interaction. Depression rates are higher among people with disabilities. 80 per cent of people with multiple sclerosis experience depression at some point³. Physical activity can be a practical tool to help people fight depression, improve their mood and reduce anxiety and stress⁴.

Some other benefits of physical activity:

- Improves cardiovascular fitness and endurance
- Helps develop and maintain joint flexibility, muscular strength, and balance
- Reduces the risk of diabetes and some cancers
- Helps control weight
- Improves bone density

¹ 2014, Chargeable Lane Specialist Gym Review

² <http://www.healthyalberta.com/626.htm>

³ <http://www.healthyalberta.com/626.htm>

⁴ <http://www.healthyalberta.com/626.htm>

Physical activity can help people with arthritis to decrease their pain and weakness from arthritis and improve their overall health. For older adults, physical activity programs can help individuals to continue living at home, independently⁵.

Customer data

The statistical information gathered captures the profile of the majority of customers (80%) and provides valuable information on the outcomes achieved by using the gym. The key findings from the consultation are as follows:

Q2: What equipment do you use when you go to the gym?

	Number	%
Thera Med Bike	31	69%
Treadmill	17	38%
Stairs	15	33%
Sci Fit	15	33%
Leg press	14	31%
Cable machine	10	22%
Weights	9	20%
Tilt table	9	20%
Multigym	9	20%
Crosstrainer	5	11%

Q21: Are you...?

	Number	%
Male	20	45%
Female	24	55%
Prefer not to say	0	0%

Q23: What age group are you in?

	Number	%
Under 18	0	0%
18-24	0	0%
25-34	1	2%
35-44	3	7%
45-54	6	14%
55-65	10	23%
65-74	15	34%
75-84	5	11%

⁵ <http://www.healthyalberta.com/626.htm>

85+	3	7%
Prefer not to say	1	2%

Q26: How would you describe your ethnicity?		
Number	%	
White		
1- British	10	25%
2- Irish	1	3%
3- Polish	0	0%
4- Lithuanian	0	0%
5- Romanian	0	0%
6- Other Eastern European	1	3%
7- Another other white background	0	0%
8- Other	Italian	
Mixed		
1- White and Black Caribbean	0	0%
2- White and Black African	1	3%
3- White and Asian	0	0%
4- Any other mixed background	0	0%
5- Other	0	0%
Asian		
1- British	3	8%
2- Indian	5	13%
3- Pakistani	2	5%
4- Bangladeshi	3	8%
5- Sri Lankan Tamil	0	0%
6- Any other Asian background	0	0%
7- Other	Filipino	
Black		
1- British	5	13%
2- African	4	10%
3- Caribbean	2	5%
4- Nigerian	0	0%
5- Somalian	0	0%

6- Ghanaian	1	3%
7- Any other Black background	0	0%
8- Other	0	0%
Chinese		
1- British	0	0%
2- Chinese	0	0%
3- Other	0	0%
Other ethnic origin		
1- Irish Traveller	0	0%
2- Roma Gypsy / Traveller	0	0%
3- Other	0	0%
4- Prefer not to say	2	5%

Q25: If you are disabled, which of the following best describes your impairment(s) or disability?		
Number	%	
Physical impairment	30	67%
Hearing impairment	3	7%
Learning disability	5	11%
Learning difficulties	6	13%
Mental illness	4	9%
Mobility impairment	31	69%
Visual impairment	10	22%
Deaf BSL user	0	0%
A health condition e.g. HIV, multiple sclerosis, cancer	6	13%
Prefer not to say	1	2%

5. Assessment of Impact and outcomes

Protected characteristics	Issues taken from evidence	Judgement (positive / negative)	Recommendations
Age	A higher proportion of the gym users are between 61-85.	Positive	We will ensure that there is appropriate support for older people who are eligible for social care input, and who can evidence through their support plans that attendance at a gym meets their assessed needs
Disability	The specialist gym service is specifically aimed at this group.	Positive	<p>We will work with mainstream providers to improve accessibility in accordance with customers' wishes. We will ensure disability awareness training for staff in mainstream services is offered.</p> <p>For customers who wish to remain at the Resource Centre there are a selection of activities available at the centre – many of which address the assessed health and fitness needs of customers. These include yoga, dancing, garden activities, physical games, wi fit, Tai Chi and bowling. The centre is always willing to introduce new activities at customer's requests.</p> <p>If existing gym customers have current support needs with transport, this will continue with any new arrangements. There are several gyms in various locations around the Borough.</p> <p>There are a number of accessible gyms in the Borough. The Atherton leisure centre is fully accessible with full disabled access including a "Changing Places" changing room. All rooms in the building are wheelchair accessible. There are two changing rooms with overhead hoists.</p>
Gender	24/44 respondents to the consultation	Positive	The proposed recommendation will benefit all customers as individual support plans are agreed based on assessed needs, not on the gender.

	were Female		
Class or socio-economic disadvantage		Positive	<p>The proposed recommendation will benefit all customers as individual support plans are agreed based on assessed needs, not on class or socio-economic disadvantaged background</p> <p>The cost of the specialist gym is either £18 an hour or £40 for half a day with access to the day centre, by appointment only (Mon – Fri 10-3). Mainstream gym membership is from £19.99 a month with a carer going free. Unlimited access 7 days a week. Access to swimming pool included.</p>
All groups			<p>For the users that wanted to use the Thera Med bikes, activeNewham have advised that they will purchase a “Thera Med” bike.</p> <p>Every customer will be supported to review their current arrangements. If one to support is required, this can be provided. This will include support to find a mainstream gym. If requested, this can include looking at organised activity for older and disabled people.</p> <p>For customers that may find mainstream gyms too crowded or noisy, customers will be advised of the times that gyms are quieter and less busy. If there is demand, activeNewham have said they will operate set times when the noise levels will be kept lower. There are also a number of studios separate to the main gym. If there is demand, sessions can be planned in the studios. For customers who don’t want to be looked at (in a mainstream gym) there are a number of studios separate to the main gym. If there is demand, sessions can be planned in the studios.</p> <p>The following are examples of what will be offered at the Atherton Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A negotiated reduced rate for

			<p>Newham residents who come through the GP referral scheme - of £15 a month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the swimming pool – with plans in place for specialist sessions for disabled people – pool has moveable hoist and platform • There is a small amount of funding to buy some new equipment (according to need within reason) The centre has already purchased a sci-fit bike • Modern and fully accessible environment • 4 gym suites that could be closed off for people who don't feel comfortable using larger, communal areas • 2 fully accessible changing rooms with full ceiling hoists and moveable beds • 6 accessible gym stations with moveable benches • Synergie gym – fully accessible <p>Café area</p>
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6. Formal agreement

- a. *Director of Adult Social Care*
- b. *Interim Head of Contracts & Commissioning*

7. Publication of results

- a. *Date EqIA published on Council website (full or summary version)*

8. Monitoring and review

- a. *This EqIA is a working document. The document will be reviewed and updated during the course of the project.*

Appendix 2 – Costs of the gym

1.0 Cost comparisons for customers

- 1.1 Local gym providers in the borough offer a set monthly rate with free access for carers. activeNewham offers off peak membership (with swimming) of £24 a month and also offer some free gym sessions for disabled people. If customers required a personal trainer to access mainstream gyms, Direct Payments could be used if there was an assessed eligible need. activeNewham offers personal trainers from £25 - £45 per hour for 1:1 support. They can be used for as short or as long a period as required. The personal trainer can work to support the customer - and if they have ongoing eligible support needs, they could train a personal assistant or support worker (which would be paid from their Direct Payments of £11.75, inclusive of on costs).
- 1.2 A further alternative is for the current Specialist Gym Instructor to work with customers and a personal assistant or support worker to train their personal assistant to provide ongoing support to the customer. This cost would be met as part of the current costs of the specialist gym.
- 1.3 Customers could choose to pool their Direct Payments to change the staffing ratio (customers are currently supported anything from 1:1 – 1:5).
If a customer wanted their own 1:1 support for 1 hour a week, the cost of the weekly Direct Payment (£11.75.25 x4) and the minimum monthly membership (£19.99) would be a minimum of £66.99 a month, paid for from the Adult Social Care budget. Current use of the specialist gym at £18 an hour equates to £72 a month.
If a customer wanted their own 1:1 support for 2 hours a week the cost of the weekly Direct Payment (£11.75 x8) and the minimum monthly membership (£19.99) would be a minimum of £113.99 a month, paid for from the Adult Social Care budget. Current use of the specialist gym at £18 an hour equates to £144 a month.
If 2 customers pooled their resource to buy a staffing ratio of 1:2 (£11.75 divide 2 = £5.88) and bought 2 hours a week, the cost would be £67.03 a month each compared to use of the specialist gym at £144 a month (as costs do not change according to staffing ratio in the specialist gym).

2.0 Cost to LBN to manage the specialist gym

- 2.1 Estimated costs to LBN for currently operating the gym are £53,852. This can be broken down in to the rental value of the room occupied by the gym and staffing costs. Staffing costs will differ as the additional care staff supporting customers in the gym differs, depending on need. Figures quoted are taken from a typical current week of support.
Rental value of the room last year was £25,800 a year. Sample staffing costs, including gym instructor's fees and care staff from the Good Support Company equate to £28,052 (total £53,852).
This does not include any budget for purchasing, maintaining and repairing equipment.

Appendix 3 – Details of accessible venues and activity offered by activeNewham

1.0 Below are details of services offered by activeNewham that are an alternative offer for customers that use the specialist gym.

1.1 Newham Leisure Centre

There are 15 dedicated disabled parking bays. Accessible access via lift to the upstairs fitness suite and exercise studios where there is a variety of adaptable machinery to suit anyone with disabilities. There are accessible showers and toilets available in all main changing rooms as well as 6 designated accessible changing rooms in both Newham Leisure Centre and Newham Multi Sports Centre. In the main female and male changing rooms there is a mobility hoist for assistance. Access to the pool is gained via steps or disability lift.

There are Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) ⁶ sessions run in the gym twice per week. There are disability multisport activities run weekly in the main Sports hall/ Newham Multi-Sports Centre. There is a disability swimming session run on a Saturday.

1.2 East Ham Leisure Centre.

There are 4 dedicated parking bays allowing parking for cars and mini buses. The sports hall and swimming pools are fully accessible. The first floor fitness area has lift access with a variety of machines adaptable to suit people with disabilities.

There is access to the exercise studio and health suite via an additional lift. The health suite is fully accessible including separate shower and toilet facilities.

The swimming pool has a hoist which is serviced by 3 accessible chairs. There are 3 accessible toilets with an additional 2 changing rooms with hoists and toilets.

10 sports wheelchairs are available in the sports hall.

Inclusive programmes are delivered on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons covering, tennis, badminton and basketball.

There are 3 x 90 minute disability swimming sessions on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

1.3 Atherton Leisure Centre

The Atherton Leisure Centre is fully accessible with full disabled access including a “Changing Places” changing room (specialist changing rooms). All rooms in the building are wheelchair accessible.

As a minimum, at the Atherton centre, there will be the same offer of accessible equipment as is currently offered at the specialist gym.

⁶ The Inclusive Fitness Initiative has been established for over 10 years, supporting leisure centres to become more welcoming and accessible environments to disabled people. Achieving the ‘IFI Mark’ gym accreditation is key in addressing inequality in physical activity as it enables leisure facilities to reach inactive populations and raise awareness of the benefits of exercise to get more disabled people physically active.

There is a negotiated reduced rate for Newham residents who come through the GP referral scheme - of £15 a month.

There is full access to the swimming pool – with plans in place for specialist sessions for disabled people – pool has moveable hoist and platform.

There is a small amount of funding to buy some new equipment. The centre has already purchased a sci-fit bike.

The environment is modern and fully accessible.

There are 4 gym suites that could be closed off for people who don't feel comfortable using larger, communal areas.

There are 2 fully accessible changing rooms with full ceiling hoists and moveable beds.

There are 6 accessible gym stations with moveable benches.

There is a "Synergie Gym" – a fully accessible piece of equipment that can exercise the whole body.

1.4 Manor Park Health and Fitness

The centre is fully accessible with a dedicated changing room for disabled users. There are 4 IFI accredited pieces of equipment within the gym including a Synergy Blue Sky Unit which allows for a wide range of training activity.

Manor Park Health and Fitness Centre is based on a budget gym model with lower staff numbers. Therefore there are no dedicated sessions for disabled users.

1.5 Balaam Leisure Centre

Due to the building layout within Balaam Leisure Centre, wheelchair access to the gym is restricted. There are 2 recumbent bikes within the gym that are IFI accredited. The swimming pool is on the ground floor with a pool hoist.

Due to the limited accessibility to the centre there are no programmed sessions for disabled users.

1.6 Community Activation Team

The Community Activation Team delivers a range of inclusive sports and activity sessions which include: wheelchair basketball and table tennis for adults and young people at Newham Leisure Centre, circuit classes for adults with mobility impairments or long term conditions and a range of inclusive athletics sessions within leisure centres and local parks. In addition to these specific sessions, all activity sessions delivered by the team are inclusive where the facility allows them to be.

The Newham Volunteers Programme is an inclusive programme. As part of equality and fairness they aim to find suitable roles for all volunteers, including those with special needs or learning support. They assess the role for suitability pre booking, followed by ensuring staff support is available or volunteers attend with their carers/support worker.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Specialist Gym at Chargeable Lane Resource Centre Consultation

Research Report

Public Policy and Research

January 2016

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Executive summary

The London Borough of Newham is proposing to close the specialist gym at the Chargeable Lane Resource Centre and support current service users to use alternative services, as part of the council's drive to ensure that disabled and older people have access to community facilities. If the proposal is accepted, users will have their needs assessed and alternative services will be accessed, which may include service users using mainstream gyms.

This consultation of current users aims to provide an understanding of how the specialist gym is currently used and to understand the views of service users on the proposal.

Results

The questionnaire was completed by 45 respondents, which is a response rate of 80%. The consultation found that the gym is well used, with 43 respondents using the gym at least once a week. Nineteen respondents visit the specialist gym as part of a day visit to the Cumberland Centre and 23 only attend the specialist gym. Respondents take part in a variety of exercises however the most popular piece of equipment was the Thera med bike, which is a specialist piece of equipment that is not available in mainstream gyms.

There was a high level of opposition towards the proposal to close the specialist gym: 35 respondents opposed the proposal and 38 reported that they would be impacted if the proposal went ahead. The main reason for this opposition was that the specialist gym is a unique facility, offering a safe and supportive environment for older and disabled people to exercise in. Respondents outlined how important exercising at the gym is to their physical and mental health, and many felt they would be unable to continue with this exercise if the specialist gym was to close.

Twenty-four respondents would not be able to use a mainstream gym if the specialist gym was closed, and the main reason for this was that mainstream gyms were thought to be unsuitable for people with disabilities. Specialist, one to one support to exercise was seen as very important to aid exercise. When asked what support Newham council should offer, one to one support was the most common suggestion, followed by support to find and access a mainstream gym.

There appears to be some interest in organised group activities for older and disabled people, which would not have to take place at the specialist gym. However this is balanced by a strong interest in keeping the specialist gym open, with dedicated one to one support.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

A specialist gym has been provided at Chargeable Lane Resource Centre since 2011 and is used by older people as well as people with physical and learning disabilities.

The London Borough of Newham is proposing to close the gym and support current service users to use alternative services. This is being proposed as part of the council's drive to ensure that disabled and older people have access to community facilities including mainstream gym provision. Reviewing the specialist gym will mean that customers have their needs reviewed to ensure that the support offered is personalised, improves their resilience and meets their health and fitness needs.

The gym is used by three groups of people:

- People who use the gym who attend Cumberland Care, and use the gym as part of their day visit
- People who use the gym as part of a health funded, clinical session (NHS patients who use the gym for a duration of 3 months)
- People who use the gym outside of these arrangements – via a social care budget or other arrangement. Three people access the gym for free in return for volunteering at the Cumberland Centre.

If the proposal to close the gym is accepted, services will be accessed differently depending on the user group. Customers who attend Cumberland Care will be reviewed and offered improved fitness and exercise sessions through the Cumberland Centre. Alternatively if this would not meet their needs the review would determine how best to support the customer, such as accessing a mainstream gym.

Customers who access the specialist gym using Direct Payments or where a residential service pays on their behalf, may choose to access mainstream provision at a lower cost. Membership at a mainstream gym can cost from £19.99 per month. Customers are currently charged a flat rate of £18 per hour to use the specialist gym.

If demand is identified the council would explore options for arranging group sessions in mainstream services so service users could share either a personal assistant or gym instructor to support their exercise.

NHS customers would not be affected as the NHS would be required to provide their rehabilitation clinical training sessions in another way. The council would not provide alternatives for service users who currently access the gym for free in return for volunteering.

If the proposal is not accepted, the gym equipment would need to be replaced, costing an estimated £80,000.

The purpose of the consultation was to better understand the views of customers who are currently using the gym, and any potential impact that closing the gym would have.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

- To understand current use of the Specialist Gym including why clients choose to use the gym and what equipment they use
- To understand the views of customers and NHS customers on the options proposed
- To understand any impact of the proposals and customers' concerns relating to impact
- To seek customers' suggestions about how the council could support them to access gym services

1.3 Methods and Communications

The consultation took place between 23rd November 2015 and 22nd December 2015.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed (see appendix 1) and posted to all current users of the gym, except NHS patients and those who access the gym for free in return for volunteering. The questionnaire was directly targeted at users to ensure all users, who would potentially be impacted by the gym closing, had the chance to contribute to the consultation.

To further ensure that all users had the opportunity to contribute, a research agency was contracted to operate a Freephone telephone line and proactively contact users that had not returned their questionnaire within 10 days. The agency called customers to establish if they would like to take part in the consultation and to offer face to face assistance to complete the questionnaire if needed. The agency also called customers who had not yet returned their questionnaire but had expressed that they planned to do so two days before the postal deadline to remind them to post back their questionnaires.

Communications

This consultation was designed for users of the specialist gym only. Posters were put up in the gym, highlighting that users would receive a questionnaire in the post.

2.0 Findings

45 responses were received which is a response rate of 80%.

2.1 Profile of Questionnaire Respondents

Gender

24 respondents were female and 20 were male.

Age

Respondents tended to be older, with 23 over the age of 65 (which is over half of respondents). Ten respondents were aged 55-64, 6 were 45-54 and 4 were under 45 years.

Disability

98% of respondents reported having a disability, which is expected from this group. The most common disabilities or impairments were mobility impairment (31 respondents) or a physical impairment (30 respondents). Around a fifth of respondents had a visual impairment (10 respondents).

Six respondents reported having learning difficulties, and 5 reported having a learning disability. Four respondents had a mental illness and 3 had a hearing impairment.

Respondents were asked to outline any other disabilities or impairments they had. There were 4 responses to this, with 2 respondents outlining they had suffered a stroke, one suffering from asthma and one with severe arthritis.

When analysing responses it was not possible to distinguish many differences in the views of respondents with different disabilities. This may be due to the small numbers of respondents in each of the disability categories.

Ethnicity

A third of respondents were Asian (13 respondents), with 5 respondents Asian Indian. Twelve respondents were White, with 10 White British, and 12 respondents were Black, with 5 Black British and 4 Black African.

Religion

Half of respondents were Christian (22 respondents), 10 respondents were Muslim and 6 respondents did not want to disclose their religion. There were 2 respondents who were Hindu, and 1 respondent was Sikh, 1 was Atheist and 1 had no religion.

2.2 Current use of the gym

Visiting the gym

The gym is used frequently, with 26 respondents using the gym 2 times a week or more and 17 using the gym once a week.

Nineteen respondents visit the specialist gym as part of a day visit to the Cumberland Centre and 23 only attend the specialist gym. Respondents under the age of 65 were more likely to only attend the gym: of the 18 respondents under the age of 65, 12 attended the gym only. Respondents who have a mobility impairment were more likely to attend the gym only (17

respondents with a disability attended the gym only, compared to 11 who also attended the Cumberland Centre).

Thirteen respondents noted that they take part in exercises at the Cumberland Centre, other than using the specialist gym.

When asked to outline these exercises the most common exercise noted was walking around the garden. More specific exercises were also mentioned: chair based exercises, swimming, circuits around the centre, ball throwing and rope pulling as well as massage. A small number of respondents also noted socialising and talking to other people in the centre. One respondent noted that they would feel uncomfortable walking outside as it would be too cold and they would not like people watching them. Another noted that the gym is the only opportunity they have to exercise.

Gym equipment

The Thera Med bike, Sci-Fit and tilt table are specialist pieces of equipment that are not available in mainstream gyms. The Thera Med bike is the most popular piece of equipment in the specialist gym, used by 31 respondents. The Sci Fit is used by 15 respondents and the tilt table is used by 9 respondents. Respondents with a mobility impairment appear to be the most likely to use the tilt table, as 6 of the 9 users have this type of disability.

The other equipment in the gym is standard equipment that is available in most mainstream gyms and this equipment is also well used, with 17 respondents using the treadmill, 15 using the stairs and 14 using the leg press. Nine respondents make use of the weights and multi-gym, respectively, and 5 respondents use the cross-trainer.

There are some differences in equipment use when we compare respondents who attend the gym as part of their day visit to the Cumberland Centre and those who only attend the gym. The tilt table was used by 6 respondents who attend the gym only, compared to 3 respondents who attend the Cumberland Centre. Respondents who only attend the gym also use the cable machine more (7 respondents attending the gym only compared to 3 who attend the Cumberland Centre). However, the treadmill is used more by respondents who attend the Cumberland Centre (9 respondents compared to 6 respondents who only use the gym), as is the leg press (8 respondents compared to 6 respondents who only use the gym).

Respondents were also given the opportunity to outline any other equipment they use at the specialist gym. Other equipment or exercises highlighted were a ball for hand stretches, a standing frame, specialised weighing scales, banana board, hoist, foot exercises and walking.

Exercises

The most common exercise for respondents was stretching (27 respondents) followed by hand exercises (26 respondents) and chair-based exercises (25 respondents). Half of respondents completed arm exercises (22 respondents), 16 practised walking, 14 took part in cardio and 10 completed sit to stand exercises.

Respondents who only attend the gym were more likely to take part in most of the exercises. The exceptions were hand exercises (equal numbers of respondents who attend the gym only and those who attend the Cumberland Centre took part in this) and sit to stand (more respondents who attend the Cumberland Centre took part in this).

Again respondents could outline any other exercises they do at the specialist gym. Some respondents used this space to reiterate exercises already listed, such as stretching and using gym equipment. Other types of exercise outlined were chest exercises, circuit training, finger exercises and breathing exercises. One respondent also noted the importance of the social aspect of using the gym.

New activities

Respondents were asked to look at a list of activities and choose any that they would be interested in taking part in. The most popular activities were low impact exercises: 27 respondents were interested in chair based exercises and 24 were interested in using chair based cycling pedals. 18 were interested in flexible exercises and breathing exercises / yoga / Tai Chi / Tai Bo, respectively, and 15 were interested in walking round the garden.

Exercise classes were of interest to 13 respondents and ball/ bat/ floor based games were of interest to 7. Five respondents were interested in electronic exercise games and 4 were interested in dance sessions. The only activity that was not of interest to any respondents was Zumba.

Respondents over the age of 65 were more interested in breathing exercises/yoga than those under 65 years (12 respondents aged 65 and over compared to 5 respondents aged 25-64) and were also more interested in ball/ bat/ floor based games (5 respondents aged 65 and over compared to 2 respondents aged 25-64).

Respondents were asked to outline any other activities they would like to take part in. Three respondents noted that they are wheelchair users and so would like to do exercises that are adapted for wheelchair users. Additionally, five respondents noted that they would like to be able to walk, with two specifically mentioning electronic lifts or motors to help with this. Other activities mentioned were acupuncture, boxing, swimming and dancing. Some respondents used this opportunity to highlight the importance of the specialist gym, noting the specialist equipment and support they receive here.

2.3 Views and impact of the proposed changes

Support and opposition to the proposal

Thirty-five respondents oppose the proposal (78%), with 29 strongly opposed. Six respondents neither support nor oppose the proposal.

Three respondents supported the proposal, however, when looking at their reasons for agreeing it appears that 2 respondents may have misunderstood the question, as they go on to discuss how good the gym is, especially how helpful the staff are. Therefore we should use caution when interpreting this support.

There were differences when looking at opposition by how respondents access the gym. Respondents who access the gym only were more likely to oppose the proposal: 21 out of 23 respondents compared to 13 out of 19 respondents who also access the Cumberland Centre.

Younger respondents were also more likely to oppose the proposal: 19 respondents aged 25-64 compared to 14 respondents aged 65 and over. Respondents aged 65 and over were more likely to be undecided compared to respondents under 65, with 4 respondents selecting

'neither support nor oppose' and 3 respondents choosing 'don't know'. No respondents under 65 chose either of these answers.

Two respondents who neither support nor oppose the proposal gave reasons for this view, with one stating that they would find it difficult to increase their mobility. The other noted that they would need to have the same level of support they currently receive, but if this "specialist, hands on support" was available elsewhere then they would feel OK about the proposal going ahead.

There were a variety of reasons why respondents opposed the proposal.

The most common responses centred on the uniqueness of the specialist gym and the feeling of safety and security when using the gym. Seven respondents stated that the support offered at the gym is very important and is not available elsewhere, and 6 respondents noted that the gym is a unique facility for disabled people. Four respondents said they felt comfortable exercising at the gym because they are around other people with disabilities. Three respondents specifically mentioned that they would feel uncomfortable having to exercise at a mainstream gym, and two respondents noted that mainstream gyms are not equipped for disabled people.

Another reason for opposing the proposal is that the gym helps to keep people active, which is important for overall health and wellbeing (11 respondents). The mental health benefits were also outlined, with 4 respondents saying how they enjoyed going to the gym and one respondent noting that this is the only opportunity they have to meet up with people and could become isolated if the gym was closed.

Four respondents stated that going to the gym was part of their day visit to the Cumberland Centre, with one respondent highlighting that going to a mainstream gym would mean another day out of the house and an additional cost.

Three respondents opposed the proposal because the gym is local to them, and three respondents noted that they are used to going there. One respondent stated that they have transport arrangements in place and another noted that the current set up meets their needs. Two respondents highlighted that they would need another carer if they were to go to a different gym and a change in routine could disrupt other social care plans that are in place.

One respondent noted that the proposal did not appear to support disabled people and another stated that the figure of £80k to keep the gym open is not representative as it is an investment that will last a number of years.

Potential impact

Thirty-eight respondents reported that they would be impacted if the proposal went ahead (86%), with four saying they did not know if they would be impacted and two reporting they would not be impacted.

When asked what this impact would be, many responses centred around no longer being able to exercise and no longer visiting the centre. Sixteen respondents stated they would no longer exercise if they could not do so at the specialist gym. Fourteen respondents outlined how important exercise is for their health and wellbeing, including offering pain relief and helping them to keep mobile. Two respondents highlighted that they are used to the gym and could feel unsettled if it closed.

Three respondents also noted how important the specialist gym is for their mental health, with 7 respondents highlighting this is the only time they leave the house and no longer going to the gym would affect their social life.

Six respondents stated that they would not be able to use a mainstream gym as these are unsuitable, for example not having the right facilities for people in wheelchairs and being too crowded and noisy. Four respondents noted that if the proposal was to go ahead there would be disruption to their social care schedule and they may require another carer, particularly if they were to go to another gym.

Below are some comments that display the concerns of respondents:

"[please] support me to be able to continue to have some independence to continue to live with my family and my own environment"

"I was at my lowest point, life not worth living, under counselling and taking medication for severe depression. Until I joined and went to [the] gym and under Ricky Wells [the trainer] instructions I began to feel me again"

"If I do not have the chance to exercise in a way that benefits me the most this will have a knock on effect for my carers at home, my needs are likely to become greater for the care system and the NHS"

2.4 Views on using a mainstream gym

Twenty-four respondents stated that if the proposal went ahead they would not use a mainstream gym (53%), 8 would use a mainstream gym and 13 did not know.

Younger respondents were less likely to go to a mainstream gym: of the 20 respondents under the age of 65, 15 would not go to a mainstream gym and 5 did not know. In the 65 and over age bracket an equal number of respondents chose each option: 8 would not go to a mainstream gym, 8 would use a mainstream gym and 7 did not know.

Respondents who would not attend a mainstream gym were asked to outline their reasons why. Five respondents felt unable to use a mainstream gym because of their disability, for example, one respondent with a visual impairment stated that gyms are too loud. Five respondents said they would feel uncomfortable using a mainstream gym, mainly because they did not want to exercise around able bodied people.

Four respondents were concerned that mainstream gyms do not have the right equipment and facilities to cater for people with disabilities, such as a tilt table or a hoist in the changing rooms, and so would not meet the needs of disabled people.

Three respondents were concerned about their safety, as they felt there would not be an equivalent level of help and support offered at a mainstream gym. Another three respondents were concerned about how they would travel to the gym, as they currently visit the specialist gym during their visit to the Cumberland Centre. One respondent noted that visiting a mainstream gym would mean another day out of the house which was not possible due to their health. Three respondents were also concerned about the cost of attending a mainstream gym.

Other reasons stated were: not knowing where to go; needing a carer to assist with visits to a mainstream gym, and; feeling like their best interests were not at heart.

Gyms in Newham

Respondents were asked to look at a list of gyms in Newham and choose any that they could attend. The table below shows the percentage of respondents who chose each answer.

Q16: Below is a list of gyms in Newham. Thinking about the locations of these facilities, which gyms would you be able to use?

	Number	%
None of the above	15	33%
Balaam Leisure Centre	9	20%
Atherton Leisure Centre	9	20%
Newham Leisure Centre	8	18%
Manor Park Fitness Centre	6	13%
East Ham Leisure Centre	5	11%
SportsDock at University of East London	4	9%
London Aquatics Centre	3	7%
The Connaught Health & Fitness Centre	2	4%
Copper Box Arena	2	4%
EasyGym	1	2%
Fitness for Less	0	0%

Respondents over the age of 65 were more likely to select Balaam Leisure Centre (6 respondents compared to 3 respondents aged 25-64) and Atherton Leisure Centre (7 respondents compared to 2 respondents aged 25-64). Respondents aged 25-64 were more likely to select Manor Park Fitness Centre (4 respondents compared to 1 aged 65 and over), East Ham Leisure Centre (3 respondents compared to 1 aged 65 and over) or to select ‘none of the above’ (9 respondents compared to 6 aged 65 and over).

A third of respondents ticked the box indicating “none of the above”. The main reasons why respondents could not attend any of these mainstream gyms were the view that these gyms do not have the right equipment or facilities needed (5 respondents), that it would be difficult to travel to and to access these gyms (4 respondents) and a lack of support compared to the specialist gym (5 respondents). Other reasons stated by one respondent each were that it would cost the council more, that these gyms are too crowded and noisy and that an extra carer would be needed.

Potential barriers to using a mainstream gym

To attend a mainstream gym, 32 respondents would need support from a personal assistant/ carer, 29 would need support from a gym instructor and 4 would be able to use the gym themselves. Respondents who attend the gym only were more likely to need assistance from a carer (18 respondents compared to 13 respondents who also attend the Cumberland Centre).

Respondents were asked if there was anything that would make it difficult to use a mainstream gym. The most common response was the need for specialist, one on one

support (9 respondents). Five respondents stated that it would be difficult to travel to the gym, and four respondents would find it difficult to move around instead the gym particularly when it is busy. This seemed to be a particular concern for wheelchair users.

Three respondents were also concerned about there being too many people in the mainstream gym, with some noting they can get confused when it's busy or that they do not want to be looked at. Other reasons noted were; needing a carer or an instructor; lack of appropriate equipment; an unsupportive environment; lack of automatic doors; increased costs, and; language barriers.

2.5 Support needed from Newham council and other ideas

Support from Newham council

When asked what support Newham Council could offer if the specialist gym was to close, six respondents used this opportunity to reiterate that they want to keep the gym open, and five stated that another facility offering the same equipment and support is needed. Respondents who had earlier said they would not be able to use a mainstream gym were most likely to make these suggestions.

However, another six respondents stated the council could provide one to one support to help them use a mainstream gym, such as a carer or gym instructor. This response was evenly spread between respondents who had earlier said they would be able to attend a mainstream gym, those who said they would not and those who did not know.

Three respondents wanted support to find a mainstream gym in their local area and another three wanted the council to provide transport to and from a new gym. Three respondents stated that some of the specialist equipment would need to be available in mainstream gym, such as the tilt table.

Two respondents suggested that there should be dedicated sessions for disabled or older people within mainstream gyms, which would offer more specialised support. Another suggestion from one respondent was for organised activities so people can exercise together in the community.

Other support the council could provide included help with costs, providing a carer for home exercise and motivational support.

Other ideas about improving access to exercise activities

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any suggestions about improving how disabled and older people access exercise activities in Newham. Seven respondents used this opportunity to again ask that the specialist gym remains open, with 2 respondents suggested the gym relocates but provides the same service from another building. Two respondents suggested that the council should save money in other places. It was put forward by 3 respondents that although refurbishing the gym would be an expensive outlay it is worth it for such a good facility.

Looking at the other suggestions, the main theme was ensuring there is the opportunity for older and disabled people to take part in supported exercise. Six respondents suggested having a dedicated facility for older and disabled people as it was felt that this would provide a more comfortable, supportive environment. Four respondents did not refer to a specific

facility, but suggested organised activities specifically for older and disabled people at venues that are easy to access.

Another suggestion (from 4 respondents) was to spend money on improving the gym, bringing in more staff, more equipment and more activities, so that more older and disabled people can make use of the gym. One respondent highlighted that the specialist gym should remain open so that disabled people have a choice about where they go to exercise.

Other suggestions included improving transport options as the Dial-a-bus is not always available; provide proper training for staff in mainstream gyms; offer activities at convenient times of the day, and; provide physiotherapists to support exercising at home.

Respondents who had earlier said they would not be able to use a mainstream gym were more likely to suggest investment in the specialist gym, or setting up another dedicated facility for older and disabled people.

2.6 Additional comments

During the course of the consultation additional comment was received from one service user outlining the importance of the specialist equipment for their health. This comment echoed many of the points raised in other responses, such as the importance of this unique facility and the concern that mainstream gyms may not provide suitable support.

3.0 Conclusions

This consultation has found that current users show very little support for closing the specialist gym at the Chargeable Lane Resource Centre. The gym is highly valued by its users and it plays an important role in their health and wellbeing, including mental health. The gym offers a safe and comfortable environment for older and disabled people to exercise in, with the support of a trained instructor. The specialist equipment available at the gym is also valued, such as the Thera med bike and tilt table.

Gym users are concerned about having to use mainstream facilities, and many feel they would not be able to do so. There are concerns about a lack of access, lack of suitable equipment and a lack of support when exercising. For some users who go to the gym as part of their day visit to the Cumberland Centre, they feel it would be too inconvenient to visit a gym in another location on another day.

There appears to be some interest in organised group activities for older and disabled people, which would not have to take place at the specialist gym. However this is balanced by a strong interest in keeping the specialist gym open, with dedicated one on one support. This difference may be due to the variety of disabilities that respondents have, and the different level of support they need when exercising.