

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

14th December 2021

UPDATE ON THE OUTDOOR EDUCATION OFFER IN CARMARTHENSHIRE

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To update members on the position with regards the Outdoor Education offer, following previous scrutiny and site visit, noting:

1. Current operational position
2. Future options

Reasons:

- The need to clarify the purpose and remit of the asset.
- Venue has been subject to budgetary scrutiny over several years
- To update on plans and future opportunities.

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: - Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths, Culture, Sport & Tourism.

Directorate: Communities
Department

Jake Morgan

Name of Head of Service: Ian
Jones

Report Author: Neil Thomas

Designations:

Head of Leisure

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee 14th December 2021

Update on the Outdoor Education offer in Carmarthenshire

1. The purpose of this report is to update on Carmarthenshire County Council's current and post-covid Outdoor Education offer and to explore options for the short, medium, and long, term strategic direction for a re-modelled service within existing resources.
2. The report provides a background to the current offer, including a review of assets, financial resources staffing, activity and purpose. It also highlights the impact and challenges of dealing with Covid-19 and how the service will need to re-model and evolve both in the short to medium and medium to long term.
3. The report highlights consultation work undertaken to date which has led to the following re-defined purpose for the service:
 - To deliver **high quality, challenging, outdoor education opportunities**, primarily to Carmarthenshire pupils, aligned to the new Donaldson education curriculum.
 - To provide a **range of residential opportunities** for children to develop their social and emotional intelligence skill whilst experiencing being away from home.
 - To **deliver high quality outdoor education opportunities at a range of outdoor recreation sites and settings**, including at schools.
 - To consider wider, possibly **commercial opportunities** that will help grow and sustain the Outdoor Education offer across the County of Carmarthenshire.
4. The report moves on to consider future options and models of delivery for comment and feedback from members, before outlining an interim operating model as the service recovers from the crippling impacts of covid and how we can re-build confidence in the education sector.
5. Finally, the report concludes by summarising some of the key issues and risks for the future, and a list of key recommendations and next steps, again for consideration and comment, including a need to progress with a long-term asset management plan for the service.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

Yes

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **Ian Jones**

Head of Leisure

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	YES

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

An Integrated Impact Assessment will be required to consider any impact if the service is re-purposed or managed differently in future.

Finance

Site currently operates with net controllable budget of circa £188k. Potential for improved efficiency with a new re-modelled service.

Physical Assets

The poor condition of the buildings at POEC is well documented, with estimates provided at circa £5-6m to re-furbish the accommodation cabins and main hall / cafeteria. Investment is needed in the both the short, medium, and long term for residential opportunities to continue. Recognising that it is unlikely that the local authority will be able to commit significant capital in this challenging financial climate, the report considers some potential options for future service provision

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Ian Jones

Head of Leisure

1. Scrutiny Committee

Site visits and updates provided to Community Scrutiny members on a regular basis over recent years.

2. Local Member(s)

County wide service, but the POEC site specifically is in Cllr Jane Tremlett's ward.

3. Community / Town Council

County Wide service, but members of Pendine Community Council are kept updated on POEC site specifically.

4. Relevant Partners

N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Trade Unions being kept updated of position and will be formally consulted as report / options are developed fully.

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection