

COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19TH DECEMBER, 2022

SUBJECT:
**AN ALTERNATIVE OUTDOOR EDUCATION OFFER FOR
CARMARTHENSHIRE**

Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to review Carmarthenshire County Council's current Outdoor Education offer and to explore options for an alternative delivery model within existing resources.

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:-

Review and assess the information contained in the summary report and provide any recommendations, comments, or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Director prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet on the following:

- Retaining and improving an outdoor education offer.
- A new purpose for the service.
- Diversifying the outdoor education offer across the County.
- Delivering a more efficient service, reducing net expenditure over the next 3 years
- Working to a timeline of delivering an alternative offer from Sept 2024

Reasons:

To formulate views for submission to the Cabinet / Council for consideration

- The current outdoor education facilities at Pendine have reached the end of their life.
- It is recognised that there is no County Council Capital funding available to replace the existing provision.
- The need to deliver more efficient services with reducing revenue resources

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. G. John (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism)

Directorate:
Communities

Designations:

Email address:

**Name of Head of Service/
Report Author:**
Ian Jones

Head of Leisure

IJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AN ALTERNATIVE OUTDOOR EDUCATION OFFER FOR CARMARTHENSHIRE

Executive Summary

The current outdoor education offer at Pendine must be re-considered as the built facilities there have reached the end of their life. It is recognised that there is no County Council Capital funding available to replace the existing provision.

The current service operates with an annual net controllable budget of £181k, with proposals to deliver efficiency savings over the next 3 years.

Following consultation with Education colleagues, Carmarthenshire Schools, and previous Scrutiny Committees, it has been established that there continues to be value in the service and thus **a new purpose has been proposed redefined as follows:**

- To deliver **high quality, challenging, outdoor education opportunities**, primarily to Carmarthenshire pupils, aligned to the new 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.

A range of alternative options are being explored and considered, including:

- **Making best use of alternative resources / facilities / providers**
- **An online, mobile, and fixed base offer**
- **Combining an education offer with a commercial offer to maximise usage year-round, and to reduce net costs**

Alternative option:

Cease providing the service. Potential revenue saving of £181k, set against loss of residential outdoor activity for young people across Carmarthenshire, where for some of these children this is their first and possibly only opportunity to stay away from home.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED**No****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

1. Policy

- Not a statutory requirement to provide the service, however, new curriculum supports outdoor learning and proposed model / outcomes

3. Finance

- Capital: Potential capital receipt from disposal or re-purposing of current assets, which could be re-invested back into re-modelled service. Any additional capital funding would need to be sourced via external grant funding or via Invest to Save bids.
- Revenue: Re-modelling has to be based on a more sustainable operating model reducing net costs and delivering efficiencies.

7. Physical Assets

- The poor condition of the buildings at POEC is well documented, with estimates (pre-covid) provided at circa £5-6m to re-furbish the accommodation cabins and main hall / cafeteria – these costs are more likely to be £7-8m by now.

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

Include any observations here

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

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