

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

|    |                     |                                      |
|----|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | <b>Meeting:</b>     | Cabinet                              |
| 2. | <b>Date:</b>        | 1 <sup>st</sup> December, 2010       |
| 3. | <b>Title:</b>       | Outdoor Learning                     |
| 4. | <b>Directorate:</b> | Children and Young People's Services |

### 5. Summary:

This report summarises the attached Business Plan for Outdoor Education, which reviews the current responsibilities and functioning of the provision and proposes measures to improve and secure future provision.

The Outdoor Learning Business Development Plan also provides an overview of outdoor education provision provided by RMBC together with the associated expenditure, budget and level of usage.

### 6. Recommendations:

- **That the proposed pricing restructure is introduced for the use of the Outdoor Learning facilities.**
- **Agreement to undertake a marketing / advertising exercise.**
- **That discussion be had with Headteachers around the proposal to charge for the Statutory function of monitoring and approving educational visits.**

## **7. Proposals and Details:**

Rotherham MBC Outdoor Learning Team has three key roles:

- Activity/centre provision at Crowden, Ulley and at Habershon
- Running of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) Licence on behalf of the local authority.
- Fulfils the statutory duty of monitoring and approving educational visits under the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Children Act (2004) across the authority (including schools).

Over the past few years the base budgets for the Crowden, Habershon and Ulley have been reduced/removed and income targets set.

The purpose of the Business Plan is to review current provision, where appropriate make change to ensure best value and effectiveness and secure this very important service and opportunity for future children and young people of Rotherham. The Plan makes three key proposals:

1. Implementation of a revised pricing structure:
  - The pricing structure has been reviewed for Habershon House, with the proposal being to remove the subsidy for transport completely and increase the in house charge from £33.60 to £35.50 (per person per night), and the external price from £36 to £38 (per person by night), for the main season and setting challenging usage targets.
  - New proposed pricing structure for Ulley is to raise the price from £180 to £225 per full session/day (6 hours) and from £90 to £150 for a half day.
  - In relation to Crowden a full review of costs and charges is currently being undertaken in conjunction with the YHA.
2. Implementation of marketing plan to increase awareness and useage.
3. Introduction of a charge for EVOLVE and related advice and guidance. The proposal is to introduce a £0.8134 charge per pupil for the use of EVOLVE and related advice and guidance to all schools in Rotherham. The level of this charge would need to be reviewed on an annual basis.

## **8. Finance:**

The recommendations within the review are self financing however there are some risk and uncertainties.

Crowden Outdoor Education Centre is leased from United Utilities and RMBC is obligated to this for the next 15 years, as such there no possible capital gain from the building.

Habershon House is owned by RMBC and the sale of this could bring a one off payment. Habershon was valued at £500K in February 2010.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties:**

If usage targets are not met this will lead to an over-spend. The budget will be profiled and monitored regularly.

EVOLVE and the role undertaken by designated Outdoor Education Advisor fulfils the statutory duty of monitoring and approving educational visits under the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Children Act (2004). Charging for this may result in a reduction of educational visits if schools decide not to pay for this legal requirement. It may also place the authority in a vulnerable position if schools decide to continue to undertake educational visits without the approval of the Local Authority.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:**

There are a number of outcomes that young people achieve by participating in outdoor activities which relate to and support the Four Big Things within the Children and Young Peoples Plan and the Every Child Matters outcomes:

1. **Enjoyment:** Young people enjoy participating in outdoor activities and adopt a positive attitude to challenge and adventure.
2. **Confidence:** Young people gain personal confidence and self-esteem through taking on challenges and achieving success.
3. **Social awareness:** Young people develop their self-awareness and social skills, and their appreciation of the contributions and achievements of themselves and of others.
4. **Environmental awareness:** Young people become alive to the natural environment and understand the importance of conservation and sustainable development.
5. **Activity skills:** Young people acquire and develop a range of skills in outdoor activities, expeditions and exploration.
6. **Person qualities:** Young people have increased initiative, self-reliance, responsibility, perseverance and commitment.
7. **Key skills:** Young people develop and extend their key skills of communication, problem solving, leadership and teamwork.
8. **Health and fitness:** Young people learn to appreciate the benefits of physical fitness and the lifelong value in healthy leisure activities.
9. **Increased motivation and appetite for learning:** Young people display an increased motivation and appetite for learning which contributes to raising levels of attainment in other aspects of their education.
10. **Broadened horizons:** Young people broaden their horizons and become open to the wider range of employment opportunities and life chances.

**11. Background Papers and Consultation:**

Outdoor Learning Business Development Plan 2010

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