

REPORT TO: Policy and Resources Committee – 14 March 2016
REPORT ON: Outdoor Learning Service - Transfer to Leisure & Culture Dundee
REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Culture
REPORT NO: 78-2016

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek the Committee's approval to the proposed transfer of the Outdoor Learning Service to Leisure & Culture Dundee, subject to the approval of the Leisure & Culture Dundee Board.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to approve the City Council Management Team's recommendations that:

- 2.1 the Outdoor Learning Service transfer to Leisure & Culture Dundee on 1 April 2016;
- 2.2 Council officials agree a suitable arrangement with Leisure & Culture Dundee in order to provide an agreed budget for the service transferring.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Outdoor Learning Service has a net budget allocation of £164,305 for 2016/17, pre pay award and National Insurance adjustment, which it is proposed will be added to the services fee paid to Leisure & Culture Dundee.

An annual non-domestic rates saving of approximately £20,000 will be achieved following the transfer of the Outdoor Learning Service to Leisure & Culture Dundee due to its status as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This will contribute towards 2016/17 savings targets.

There is an EVR application currently under consideration. Approval would require some service re-profiling and discussions are on-going with Trade Unions and staff to achieve savings and transfer the service with a balanced budget.

If there is a deficit at the end of the first year, Dundee City Council will cover this to ensure no detriment to Leisure & Culture Dundee.

4.0 BACKGROUND

Following the Council restructuring, a number of areas of service were identified for review in relation to their future alignment.

An option appraisal for three potential locations for the future management support of Outdoor Learning was considered. These were as follows:

- as part of the new Children and Families Service;
- as part of the Leisure & Culture Dundee SCIO;
- as part of the new Neighbourhood Services.

In each case, the intention was to maintain the service as currently configured, to maximise efficiencies, and to continue to deliver for community groups, for schools, and for the general public who wish Outdoor Learning experiences (Appendix 1).

This appraisal concluded that the Outdoor Learning Service would be best integrated as part of Leisure & Culture Dundee.

The main benefit derived from the proposal to transfer the Outdoor Learning Service to Leisure & Culture Dundee is the creation of greater opportunities to grow and develop the service utilising Leisure and Culture Dundee's network of sporting and physical activity agencies, governing bodies and local and national groups as well as its 3,000,000 annual visitors. The profile of the service will be significantly increased and its status preserved by being part of an organisation specialising in the provision of leisure, cultural and sporting experiences for people in Dundee.

It will be valued as part of a managed service which provides a lifelong pathway for engagement in physical activity and health and well-being pursuits.

Existing work-streams will be honoured. These include:

- support for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award;
- the SLA with Dundee City Council Children's Services;
- CLD Diversionary Youth Work Provision (Local Action Fund);
- support for Adult/Community Groups from disadvantaged areas (Community Regeneration Fund);
- lead role in supporting the delivery of the Outdoor Learning Strategy;
- Outdoor Learning Health and Safety Regulations, Risk Assessments, Technical Support, Service Level Agreements with Third Parties, Trip Approvals;
- Dundee Outdoor Learning Forum Website.

Employees will transfer on their existing terms and conditions to Leisure & Culture Dundee, i.e. pay, pension, annual leave entitlement, etc. will be preserved. The TUPE regulations will apply and the staff transfer would be on the same basis as other former Dundee City council staff who transferred to Leisure & Culture Dundee.

The permanent full time staff posts affected by the transfer are:

- Outdoor Learning Manager
- Senior Outdoor Learning Worker
- Storeperson
- Steward/Storeperson
- Stores Assistant
- Clerical Assistant

Additionally, 2 part-time posts will also be included in the staff transfer list:

- Clerical Assistant (P/T 15 hours)
- Clerical Assistant (P/T 16 hours)

The Outdoor Learning Service's staff have been consulted on the transfer and senior staff from Leisure and Culture Dundee have met with them to provide information on the organisation and to answer queries. No significant issues have been raised.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainable Development, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Chief Executive, Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted. The Board of Leisure and Culture Dundee has also been advised and agreed in principle to this proposal. Trade Unions have been consulted separately.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Stewart Murdoch, Director, Leisure and Culture
2 March 2016



OPTION APPRAISAL

OUTDOOR LEARNING SERVICE

Date: 13 October 2015



1. Background

It was agreed that a review of the current organisation of the Outdoor Learning Service and Ancrum Outdoor Centre be undertaken as part of the restructuring of Dundee City Council's service areas. This report highlights the service's main functions and priorities, linked to performance outcomes, and a benefits and challenges option appraisal for future of this service. This option appraisal follows consultation with other local authority outdoor learning services.

2. Outdoor Learning Service

Dundee City Council's Outdoor learning Service is a dedicated team with the aim of creating opportunity, developing resources, removing barriers and supporting growth, participation and learning in the outdoors for all people in Dundee. The contracted and associate sessional staff of the service are recognised for their skills to deliver the experience.

The majority of the work undertaken by the service is working with children, young people and families in Dundee by delivering adventure activity experiences to promote positive development of their personal, social and educational development.

The Outdoor Learning Service employs five full time contracted Outdoor Learning Workers and a Manager who hold National Governing Body awards which enable delivery of a wide range of adventure activities throughout the year to individuals, schools, community groups, third sector organisations and the public at large. This provision is complemented by a programme of school holiday programmes and public courses which forms part of the income generating capacity of the service.

The qualifications held by the instructional team are subject to continuous professional development, NGB memberships and updates and are essential to deliver in-scope activities which include caving, trekking, climbing and water sports activities in their broadest terms as defined and required by Health and Safety laws, including the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 which is governed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Service.

The instructional team undertake adventure activity technical advisors roles, which is vital to all publicly funded groups who wish to participate in adventurous activities, including Duke of Edinburgh award which supports the over 1,000 young people in the City who are registered on the award programme, and over 40 (teachers and volunteers) who require to be trained, moderated and assessed by Ancrum's mountaineering technical advisers on the expedition section of the Award.

These specialist qualifications are necessary to validate all adventurous activity accreditation for Council staff and volunteers and appointed external providers.

The Outdoor Learning management team hold and maintain an AALA licence and oversee compliance. This includes management of all adventure trip approvals both domestic and overseas, staff qualifications database of approximately 110 staff and Service Level Agreements with over 50 external adventure activity providers.

This work ensures that all adventure safety management standard operating procedures set for the Council are met and are in alignment with 'Going Out There' the Scottish Government framework for safe practice in off-site visits.

Service Functions:

- Deliver high quality teaching and instruction in outdoor education to schools, community groups, partners and other agencies in and around Dundee.
- Provision of high quality facilities, equipment and transportation for adventure sessions and training courses
- Curriculum support, training and expertise in outdoor and residential outdoor education, including Health and Safety during off-site visits.
- Advise and monitor residential and foreign visits that include participation in adventurous activities.
- Co-ordination for all out of Council area visits for schools, colleges, youth and Duke of Edinburgh Award adventure groups.
- Advise and monitor all In-scope and out of scope outdoor adventurous activities and manage all local accreditation safety management processes.
- Contribute to the City wide sport and physical activity strategy and SOA outcomes.

Outdoor learning Service priorities are:

- Provide improved opportunities in academic learning in outdoor education.
- Increase volunteer training opportunities through outdoor learning.
- Identify and deliver appropriate training courses to support partners' delivery of outdoor learning opportunities.
- Improve opportunities for practical learning approaches in outdoor learning across the 3-18 curriculum.
- Increase outdoor learning opportunities for children facing inequalities.
- Increase targeted provision of outdoor learning through partnership approach with agencies.
- Increase the range and access to outdoor learning activities across the City by delivering the new Outdoor Learning Strategy.
- Increase number of people from community regeneration areas participating in outdoor learning.
- Develop outdoor learning partnership and forum network.
- Increase income generation through hire and maintenance services provided by the service.
- Increase collaborative approach with partner agencies to deliver targeted outdoor learning provision to deliver more outdoor learning training opportunities in Community Regeneration Areas.

The link to the Ancrum Outdoor Centre Annual Report 2014/15 can be found here:
<http://www.dundee.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/aoc2015.pdf>

3. Dundee Intermediate Strategic Outcomes

The Outdoor Learning Service currently contributes to the following intermediate outcomes for the Council/Dundee Partnership.

- 2b) The confidence and skills of the population is increased.
- 2c) We have reduced inequalities through learning.
- 3c) Children have raised attainment and achievement and are supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community.
- 3e) Children have opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, at school and in the community.
- 3h) Children have help to overcome social, educational, physical and economical inequalities and are accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.
- 4a) People living in community regeneration areas have improved health.
- 4c) We have improved health for at risk groups.
- 5a) People in Dundee will have more healthy and active lifestyles.

4. Option Appraisal

Options considered available for the future management and support of the Outdoor Learning Service:

1. Children and Families;
2. Leisure & Culture Dundee SCIO;
3. Neighbourhood Services.

OPTION 1- CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Benefits

- Being more closely aligned with all education establishments and could strengthen the contribution of outdoor learning within the curriculum.
- Core targeted provision of outdoor learning is well established and may be strengthened by being part of the same service area.
- More centralised adventure safety management processes for schools and DofE units who are the major user group within our Local Authority.

Challenges

- Less external facing service would potentially reduce income generating focus.
- Possible re-targeting of resource to schools would be at expense of wider community provision.
- Would not integrate provision with the city's wider leisure and sport provision..
- No rates savings.

OPTION 2 –LEISURE & CULTURE DUNDEE SCIO

Benefits

- The Outdoor Learning team share similar leisure and education charitable objectives to the leisure and sport sector of the SCIO which may enhance an integrated approach to sport and outdoor learning provision within the City.
- Possibility for SCIO to access external funding streams to invest in the outdoor learning service as a justification to invest to save and grow.
- Rates saving on Ancrum Building.

Challenges

- Adventure Safety Protocols have been designed as an internal Council function with software support by DCC IT Dept. Arrangements would have to be put in place to ensure that being in the SCIO did not weaken current practice.
- Securing external funding to support service delivery and development will take time and will always be hard to secure.
- It will be essential that the schools Service Level Agreement is maintained. This is a key component of the Ancrum business plan.
- Finally, if a move to Leisure & Culture Dundee is agreed the SCIO Board will require to agree to the proposal.

OPTION 3 - NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Benefits

- Potential for closer alignment with environmental services including Countryside Ranger Service.
- Continuity of joint delivery with youth work division.
- Well established links with local community engagement structures to promote outdoor learning for all.

Challenges

- Outdoor Learning is not a good fit with the new Neighbourhood Services function.
- No rates savings.

5. Summary

Dundee City Council's Outdoor Learning Service has in recent years moved from strength to strength.

Part of the core provision is delivering positive outdoor learning experiences through safe and challenging adventure activities to targeted young people in Secondary schools and off-site units. This is delivered and is governed through a well established Service Level Agreement. Core provision within schools is critical to the current achievement of educational outcomes regardless of future placing of the service.

A move to Leisure & Culture Dundee SCIO would provide opportunities to develop the service across the City and may attract investment through additional funding streams. It will allow the service to be more closely aligned to other leisure services to meet local and national outcomes and provide a more joined up approach between sport and outdoor learning.

Core provision to schools and adventure safety adviser duties will remain a priority for the service, therefore, service agreements would be required to ensure continuity of current provision.

A move to Leisure & Culture Dundee is the only option which delivers a savings (or non domestic rates) regardless of other service changes.

The successful development of outdoor learning requires corporate commitment.

6. Recommendations

While there are arguments in favour of each option, it is recommended that the best future location for the Outdoor Learning Team is under Leisure & Culture Dundee.

It is recommended that the change take effect from 1 April 2016.