

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

DATE: 8 SEPTEMBER 2009

RE: BRYNTYSILIO WORKING GROUP

Purpose

To consider and approve the terms of reference for the Bryntysilio Working Group.

Report

At its meeting on 14 July 2009 the Community Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel resolved to appoint a working group to consider the Councils use of the Bryntysilio Outdoor Education Centre.

A meeting of the working group took place on 6 August 2009 to consider and draft its terms of reference. A copy of the draft terms of reference is attached at appendix 1 to this report for the approval of the full Panel.

The working group intend to undertake a site visit to Bryntysilio shortly. Those Members of the Panel not on the working group will be welcome to attend the visit.

Recommendations

That, subject to any comments Members may wish to make, the terms of reference for the Bryntysilio Working Group be approved.

Author

Councillor Louise Harrison

Chair, Community Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel

Lead Member, Bryntysilio Working Group

HarrisonL@walsall.gov.uk

Walsall Council Scrutiny and Performance Panel Work Group
Initiation Document

Work Group Name:	Bryntysilio Review
Panel:	Community Services
Municipal Year:	2009/10
Lead Member:	Councillor L Harrison
Lead Officer:	Ben Percival
Support Officer:	Craig Goodall
Membership:	Councillor I Shires Councillor C Creaney Councillor K Aftab Councillor P Bott

1.	Context
	<p>Bryntysilio was identified for scrutiny following the 2009/10 budget process during which it was identified as a possible saving – reflecting the current high cost of the service. Key drivers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The limited capacity means that more than half of Walsall Children cannot go to Bryntysilio. • Walsall Council currently spends approximately £500,000 p.a. on the service. • The anticipated public spending restrictions make the sustainability of this level of funding doubtful. • To continue the current operation at Bryntysilio Council funding would actually have to increase (we are currently accumulating a significant maintenance backlog). • Our lease on Bryntysilio has expired – the new lease proposed by the landlord is 9 years long with break options at 3 year periods. • There are a range of alternative options for the provision of residential outdoor education either at Bryntysilio or elsewhere.
2.	Objectives
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To investigate options to evolve the delivery of residential outdoor education by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. agreeing a new lease for the Bryntysilio centre b. withdrawing from the centre and investigate options to provide residential outdoor education by other means 2. To investigate the value for money that <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the current service provides b. an alternative service provider would provide 2. To consider options in relation to the outstanding maintenance liabilities. 3. Develop a recommendation of a preferred option for the provision of residential outdoor education

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3.	Scope what's involved and what's not involved
	<p>This review should focus on the provision of residential outdoor education for Walsall schools – the purpose for which Walsall Council currently leases Bryntysilio. Alternative provision should also be considered.</p> <p>This review should exclude the holiday activities delivered by the Bryntysilio Camp Trust – the Council does not fund nor control these activities.</p>
6.	Equalities Implications
	<p>We do not anticipate any equality implications there are suitable adaptations made for disability access..</p> <p>Demographic information can be provided on the children using Bryntysilio.</p>
4.	Who else will you want to take part?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principle stakeholders in the service are Walsall schools (primary, secondary and special). We would need to ensure their views are considered especially in relation to proposals to amend delivery at Bryntysilio or procure alternative provision. • A key partner is the Bryntysilio Camp Trust the owners of the premises. Their views on any proposals to change the service at Bryntysilio should be considered and they would need to approve any significant departures from the existing delivery (based on the existing expired lease). • Officers from Property Services should also be consulted in relation to both maintenance liabilities and also any potential changes of use to buildings. • The Portfolio Holder should be invited to give evidence at an appropriate stage in the review. • Serco and Children's Services are responsible for the schools which utilise this facility. • Active groups and those people who have already involved should be consulted.
5.	Timescales & Reporting Schedule
	<p>Given the profile and sensitivity of the subject we should provide progress updates to each Community Services Scrutiny Panel meeting. In order for any recommendations to inform the 2010/11 budget setting process, recommendations would need to be made to Cabinet in December.</p> <p>The working group wish to undertake a site visit as soon as possible to allow it to inform their review.</p>
6.	Risk factors

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Consultation with schools may be challenging within the timescale outlined – especially given they will be largely unavailable until the second week in September.
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<p>A risk of the service review is redundancy costs.</p>
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