

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

27 March 2018

Subject: Review of Outdoor Education provision in Wiltshire

Cabinet member: Councillor Laura Mayes – Children, Education and Skills

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary

Wiltshire Council operates outdoor education centres at Braeside, Devizes with 90 beds and Oxenwood near Marlborough, with 38 beds. Both sites offer a range of outdoor education activities, residential courses and some off-site sessions.

Outdoor education is a non-statutory function and given ongoing losses, high maintenance and capital costs of the sites combined with increasing competition from commercial outdoor education providers and recruitment difficulties a review of the Council's outdoor education provision has been undertaken.

The benefits of outdoor education are well documented and include physical benefits, social skills such as teamwork and leadership, and improvements in educational attainment. Nationally access to outdoor education has become more widely available from the commercial sector, with both small independent operators and larger international providers offering outdoor education and adventure activity opportunities. Many Wiltshire schools already access these commercially provided services.

Historically many local authorities have owned and operated their own outdoor activity centres to provide for the benefits of outdoor education; but increasing funding pressures and the changing relationship between schools and the local authority are resulting in councils having to consider alternatives to and savings from non-statutory functions such as outdoor education.

The outdoor education review has considered the impact and benefits of the council run services and whether they are necessary to ensure positive outcomes for children in Wiltshire. Given the significant budget pressures the Council face we also need to mitigate future capital risk for the Council which will be potentially over £1.412m to keep these centres open. Given the need to make investments for some of our most vulnerable residents in statutory settings the recommendations identified within this review are required to ensure we are focusing the council's limited resources into areas of most need.

Proposals

It is proposed that Wiltshire Council –

- I. Cabinet notes the outcomes of the outdoor education review and key decisions required at this stage.
- II. Cabinet resolves to close both Braeside and Oxenwood outdoor education sites from the 31st August 2018.
- III. Commence consultation with staff in line with the Councils HR Policies.
- IV. Engage with Wiltshire Schools and key stakeholders on the development of a sustainable plan for the Councils future role in outdoor education in Wiltshire.
- V. Continues to support the broader benefits of outdoor education, and supports schools to access appropriate services.

Reason for Proposals

A review of the Councils two outdoor education sites, Braeside and Oxenwood has been considering the impact and benefits of Outdoor Education for local children and whether the council run services that are non-statutory are necessary to ensure positive outcomes for children in Wiltshire.

Terence Herbert – Corporate Director, Children and Education

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

27 March 2018

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Cabinet member: Councillor Laura Mayes – Children, Education and Skills

Key Decision: Yes

Purpose of Report

1. To:
 - I. Inform Cabinet of the outcomes of the outdoor education review and key decisions required at this stage.
 - II. Seek a Cabinet decision on whether to close both Braeside and Oxenwood outdoor education sites from the 31st August 2018.
 - III. Commence consultation with effected staff in line with the Councils HR Policy.
 - IV. Engage with Wiltshire schools and key stakeholders on the development of a sustainable plan for the Councils future role in outdoor education in Wiltshire.
 - V. Continue support of the benefits of outdoor education, and support schools to access appropriate services.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The proposals are relevant to the Council's priorities and objectives as laid down in the Business Plan, specifically the proposal supports the following outcomes:
 - Strong communities and particularly the ambition of communities where everyone can achieve their part.
 - Protecting the vulnerable and schools that help all pupils achieve.

Background

- 3.1 The Council currently own and operate two outdoor education centres; Braeside and Oxenwood. Both offer a similar range of activities and courses on a residential and non-residential basis. The centres are mainly used by Wiltshire schools, predominantly primary schools, with additional business generated from youth groups and a small number of schools outside of Wiltshire.
- 3.2 The centres do not provide statutory services but are available to schools on a fully traded basis, charging for services and competing in an open market. Schools may choose to buy council services or opt to use alternative commercial providers for residential trips and outdoor education. There is a well-established and competitively priced commercial outdoor education market in Wiltshire and the surrounding areas that many Wiltshire schools use.

Braeside Education and Conference Centre

- 3.3 Braeside is a 4.5-acre site located in Devizes offering a range of outdoor education activities, with 90 beds for residential courses. Conference facilities are also available and used by Wiltshire Council staff.
- 3.4 In addition to general outdoor activities for children the centre provides courses for Able, Gifted, Talented and Enrichment (AGT&E) students. These courses are used by 104 (17/18) Wiltshire schools and delivered as bi-annual programmes, from April to August and October to March each year.

Oxenwood Outdoor Education Centre

- 3.4 Oxenwood is a 1.4-acre site in Oxenwood, near Marlborough. The centre is significantly smaller in acreage, with only 38 beds and offers a similar range of outdoor activities to Braeside. There are no conference facilities at this site, but additional income has been generated through off-site themed and activity days hosted at schools.

4. Main Considerations for the Council

- 4.1 The review of outdoor education to date has explored the following.
 - Use of the centres and customer experience.
 - The income and expenditure of both centres.
 - Capital costs to maintain the buildings.
 - Impacts on children and educational attainment.
 - Alternative delivery options and configurations to ensure commercial sustainability.

Centre Use

- 4.2 The centres offer a range of activities from short course to residential programmes, both are predominantly used by primary schools but each differ slightly in their customer base. Braeside attracts more non-Wiltshire schools, and Oxenwood has a smaller customer base but delivers more themed and activity days at the centre and off-site at schools. The highest sales at both centres are for 3 days and 2 night programmes. A breakdown of centre use is included at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 Braeside was used by 51 Wiltshire schools in 2016/17 and 52 schools in 17/18 for residential courses. For non-residential activities, this was 88 in 2016/17 and 70 in 2017/18. During the same period Oxenwood was used by 25 Wiltshire schools for residential programmes and 11 for non-residential programmes. Some schools use centres for both residential and day courses and will be included in both sets of figures.
- 4.4 The highest return is from residential sales and these have been calculated as occupancy rates, calculated on the number of times a bed has been occupied over a 48-week period, for 5 days per week, to provide a baseline. On this basis occupancy rates for 2017/2018 were on average 29% for Braeside and 14.7% for Oxenwood. It should be noted that the context for the average occupancy rates is that the use of the sites is very seasonal with peak use over the summer months and very limited use over the autumn and winter.
- 4.5 There are site operational restrictions that impact on income and attendances levels. For example, at Oxenwood, due to space restrictions it is not possible to have single day use combined with residential activities. At the larger capacity Braeside ensuring appropriate segregation of the sexes potentially limits total capacity. Bookings at the centres are also impacted by their location, with Braeside being in the centre of the County and Oxenwood on the extremity.
- 4.6 The most notable difference in services offered by the two sites is the Able, Gifted and Talented (AG&T) programme run by Braeside. In 2016/17 112 Wiltshire schools accessed 1060 places on these courses, in 2017/18 this was 104 schools with 981 children attending. AG&T courses are curriculum based and are delivered by external tutors, and enrichment courses are mostly facilitated by Braeside staff and largely focused on outdoor activities such as off-road biking, wood crafts and water sports. Courses are generally half day or full day sessions with a small number of residential courses.

Income & Expenditure (Revenue)

- 4.7 The outturn figures for the last two years based on actual figures for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, show deficits after the application of corporate support recharges. Please also note the comments regarding property maintenance costs and potential capital requirements. A breakdown of outturn figures for 2017/2018 is included at Appendix 2.

Property Considerations

- 4.8 The revenue operating costs for the centres are significant. The age, type and general conditions of both properties means that aspects such as reactive repairs and maintenance, energy performance and utilities, cleaning etc. all cost more when compared to more modern and fit-for-purpose buildings. On average over the last 3 years, the operating costs for each site are; Braeside £85k and Oxenwood £60k.
- 4.9 A condition survey was carried out on both properties by CIPFA in 2012. The surveys identified capital works required to maintain the buildings in the short, medium and long term, up to a 25-year period. All the works identified are required to maintain the buildings to the current required standards. No consideration was given to improving or upgrading the facilities or the service offer. The works are simply to keep the buildings functioning and safe in their current make-up, to continue in operation.
- 4.10 The outstanding work required between now and 2022 and estimates of the costs is attached Appendix 3. The advice of the Strategic Asset and Facilities Management team is that given the age and condition of both the buildings the repair figure of £1.412m across both sites should be viewed as the minimum spend required.
- 4.11 Both outdoor education sites require significant capital investment to continue operation. However, to make the sites attractive and turn them into viable commercial propositions, additional capital monies above the minimum £1.412m identified costs would need to be dedicated to significant modernisation of the buildings to improve the service offer. Private sector operators are offering significantly better accommodation standards and a far superior range of facilities than users currently experience at both sites.
- 4.12 It is not possible to give an estimate of the cost of modernising each site to provide for a commercially competitive service offer. Again, due to the age and type of the buildings, significant refurbishments will attract additional cost as the works would be more extensive and complex than similar works on a more modern building. A specification for improved service facilities has not been developed and therefore prohibits an assessment of cost.
- 4.13 Estimates of property values are not included in this paper. Each site requires significant due diligence to ascertain the council's options in terms of disposal, re-use or sale. If Members resolve to terminate the service at these sites, work will be undertaken to establish the conditions under which the sites were acquired, the legal implications of covenants and other potential restrictions, and the planning potential for future use or development. Following this work an estimate of value can be obtained and will be used in consideration to decide the most appropriate disposal option for each site and how this could potentially contribute to the Council's Business Plan.

Staffing and specialist activities

- 4.14 The outdoor education centres experience significant issues with recruitment of suitably qualified instructors. The seasonal nature of the demand and the availability of instructors with specialist skills, contracted on zero hours to minimise costs potentially limits the range of activities that can be provided and consequently impacting income generation. This combined with the site restrictions and equipment available is presenting considerable operational problems for the centre management and is impacting on sales. This is particularly the case at the less used and smaller Oxenwood site.
- 4.15 In comparison to the larger private sector operators the range of activities provided by Oxenwood and Braeside can look limited. Due to space restrictions at Oxenwood they are unable to provide some of the more adventurous activities such as 'zip' wires, etc. The current offer at both sites is more curriculum focussed and tailored to the needs of the individual school.
- 4.16 Currently the sites have no dedicated marketing resource or identified marketing budget. To develop sales and the range of activities additional staffing time will need to be factored into any increased marketing and consequent usage.

Impacts on Children

- 4.17 The benefits of outdoor learning and activities for children are well documented. In addition to the contribution they can make to a healthy lifestyle, evidence suggests developments in social skills, team building and relationships can be derived from outdoor education and activities.
- 4.18 Research indicates that Ofsted recognises the importance of 'learning outside the classroom' and studies into the impacts of high quality residential courses report improvements in educational attainment. A positive experience of a residential trip in school can be a child's most remembered experience.

A review of the market place has been carried out to identify what similar services are available in the south west region and to understand the options for schools booking outdoor education courses and residential trips.

- 4.19 There are a significant number of outdoor education centres in the counties surrounding Wiltshire and on the south west coast. These range from council owned centres, single centre organisations operated commercially or not-for-profit, and centres that are part of a national or international chain. Research has identified several outdoor education centres in surrounding counties Dorset (9), Somerset (5), Gloucestershire (4), Oxfordshire (1), Berkshire (1), Hampshire (9).
- 4.20 Outdoor education provision is also made from the Wiltshire Outdoor Learning Team (WOLT) who are a not for profit organisation that run non-

residential outdoor education courses on multiple sites across Wiltshire to suit customer needs.

- 4.21 In addition, PGL a well-established commercial provider of outdoor education with 24 sites across the UK, France and Spain run a centre in Liddington, Swindon, with a capacity for up to 1000 children on a 150-acre site. This venue offers high quality accommodation and a very wide range of activities at a competitive price.
- 4.22 The Able, Gifted and Talented (AG&T) Programme is a service valued by schools. The programme is currently delivered at Braeside Education and Conference Centre by external facilitators. Alternative providers of this type of service are available in the region. The off-site services offered by Oxenwood and AG&T style activities could potentially be managed from an alternative Council venue.

Alternative delivery options

- 4.23 The review has considered a range of alternative delivery models and structures for outdoor education. These are covered in more detail with costing where appropriate at Appendix 5. Other Local Authorities have moved outdoor education into Trusts or Community Interest Companies; this has the benefit of allowing applications for external grant funding but does leave the underlying issue of asset ownership, maintenance and associated capital investment needs potentially remaining with the local authority.
- 4.24 Initial discussions have been held with a small number of private sector organisations to explore the possibility of sale or partnership. Feedback to date has indicated that due to the limited bed capacity at both sites private sector companies view both Oxenwood and Braeside as not commercially viable.
- 4.25 Discussions have also been held with charitable organisations regarding the possibilities of these organisations taking on the sites. Community First is the only organisation to have expressed an interest in the Oxenwood site only. Community First have written to the Council with an expression of interest for this site to be a potential Community Asset Transfer. However, they are not prepared to take on the capital and maintenance costs associated with the site and to date there has been no business case submitted. On this basis, the outline proposal is not considered viable.

Commercial viability

- 4.26 The review has considered the commercial options, opportunities and threats associated with outdoor education. The key to maintaining a commercially viable service is funding the repairs and ensuring the sustainability of the sites in the longer term.
- 4.27 To fund repairs to the buildings, and ensure both centres are generating sufficient income to cover all costs, potential price increases have been

calculated, based on residential programmes of 3 days and 2 nights, these being the most popular courses, representing the highest sales. To ensure full cost recovery, prices would need to be increased by 27% at Braeside and 41% at Oxenwood. The impacts of this have been analysed and are included at Appendix 5.

- 4.28 Based on research into prices for similar services in the southwest region a price increase of this nature would place Wiltshire Council services in the top quartile of the most expensive outdoor education facilities.
- 4.29 An alternative to increasing prices is to increase occupancy levels, providing sufficient growth in the number of places sold each year to cover all costs. Details of the required increase in sales are included at Appendix 5, highlighting the need to increase occupancy levels by sales of an additional 1661 nights per annum at Braeside and 542 nights per annum at Oxenwood.
- 4.30 An alternative approach to recovering the costs of capital would be to cap price increases at 10% and recover the remainder through increased occupancy. This requires Braeside to increase nights occupied by 15% and Oxenwood by 5%, combined with a £7.20 and £6.60 per night price increase for each site respectively.
- 4.31 Increased sales to recover costs have been explored. As previously mentioned this has highlighted a requirement for additional expenditure at both centres to enhance facilities and provide a competitively viable standard of accommodation. Requirements include improved shower and toilet facilities, sleeping accommodation, equipment for activities. Added to this would be the costs for additional marketing and staffing to realise the increased occupancy.
- 4.32 Whilst potential for increased sales at Braeside exist the site at Oxenwood is significantly constricted and unable to develop activities due the lack of space. The centre uses 1.4 acres and has access to additional outdoor spaces via an understanding with a local landowner who allows use of woods nearby for outdoor activities. This is a key issue, restricting the development of activities and income generation. In addition, the inability at Oxenwood to combine day and residential activities further limits commercial development.
- 4.33 In addition to the above property costs, provision of a replacement mini bus for the Oxenwood site will have to be factored into longer term planning on the operation.

5. Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

- 5.1 Two rapid scrutiny exercises on Traded Services and Outdoor Education were conducted on 13th September and 18th October 2017, following which a Traded Services for Schools task group was established.

- 5.2 The task group met on 7th February 2018 to consider outdoor education and subsequently carried out site visits to Oxenwood and Braeside on 27th February 2018. A report from the Task Group is included at Appendix 6.

Safeguarding Considerations

6. The outdoor education centres provide outdoor education for all children including those in vulnerable groups. However, a decision for the Council to cease all or some of its outdoor education services will have no safeguarding impact.

Public Health Implications

7. The outdoor education centres provide outdoor activities for children, contributing to a healthy lifestyle. Access to these activities will remain available through the various facilities within Wiltshire and in neighbouring counties.

Procurement Implications

8. There are no procurement implications.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

9. A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed. Closure of one or both sites will result in limiting access to Council owned outdoor education facilities and activities across the county. This may have a particularly detrimental effect for disadvantaged communities and ethnic minorities who may not get the chance to experience outdoor education benefits.

10. Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

- 10.1 There are no environmental or climate change impacts.

11. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

11. Outdoor education, particularly residential trips, is important to the social and educational attainment of children. Opportunities and risks of this report have been considered in some detail.
1. If the decision is to continue provision of outdoor education sites then funding for capital costs identified in Appendix 3, would be required. Failure to invest in the repairs required at one or both the sites may result in unsafe services, unplanned closure and an inability to satisfy bookings.
 2. Funding for immediate property repairs identified would be required.

3. The new pricing and occupancy model's necessary to recover costs would potentially make the centres uncompetitive and financially non-viable presenting a financial risk to the authority.

12. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

| | Risk | Action to mitigate the risk |
|----|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Negative feedback from customers | Engagement and consultation with all major stakeholders through established routes. |
| 2. | Inability to honour future bookings | Providing plenty of warning to schools so that they can arrange alternative provision and potential negotiation with other providers to transfer any existing bookings/provide support for local schools. |
| 3. | Redundancy risks to staff | Opportunities to transfer into new roles to be fully explored. |

13. Financial Implications

- 13.1 This report presents the financial position of the council's outdoor education centres including projected capital spend, and the impact on the financial viability of the centres. The options are outlined in the paper and appendices.
- 13.2 The services are currently operated as traded services and are required to deliver a balanced budget including a contribution to corporate support costs. As outlined in the report these corporate support costs are estimates and do not reflect the true total cost of running the services, particularly in relation to property maintenance costs. Outturn figures for 2015-16 and 2016-17 and projected position for 2017/18 (Appendix 2) show that centres made a small revenue loss in the first two years and a small surplus at Braeside in 2017/18 in each year against the agreed budget meaning that the Council is subsidising the services from its revenue budget. That subsidy is greater when the true cost of maintaining the facilities is taken in to account (see paragraph 4.8).
- 13.3 The main customers for the centres are Wiltshire schools and trips are paid for from school delegated budgets and/or contributions from parents. This financing of the school's trips and experiences would continue regardless of the provider of outdoor education services.
- 13.4 Required capital investment has been estimated at £1.412m.
- 13.5 It has been assumed in the model that capital and financing costs would need to be fully repaid by the services over a 10-year period. To meet the

costs of capital work and to remain financially viable the services would need to significantly increase prices to schools and other groups and/or increase occupancy levels above those current experienced. Increasing occupancy will require additional investment in staffing and other facilities over and above the costs shown here.

- 13.6 Although capital costs can be avoided through the proposal to close the centres, there are costs associated with the proposed action as there will be redundancy costs if the centres are closed.

Redundancy and pension strain costs estimates are available if required. This risk is identified in the report and actions have been proposed to minimise the numbers and costs of redundancies through redeployment etc.

14. Legal Implications

- 14.1 As the service provided is a non-statutory (discretionary) service then there is no legal prohibition on closure of one or both sites. However, if closure of the service is the preferred option then this will need to be carefully managed as there likely to be redundancy issues to consider.
- 14.2 Similarly, there may be a public concern at the loss of a local service/employment opportunities that may need to be managed. Subsequent work regarding property disposal will need to consider restrictive covenants and potential options of transfer including possible referral to the Secretary of State.

16. Conclusions

- 16.1 In conclusion, the review so far has identified the benefits of outdoor education, recognising its contribution to educational attainment and development of social skills. Given the alternative options available, it is not necessary for the Council to deliver these services.
- 16.3 It should be noted that both sites are part of local communities and outdoor education experiences engender a considerable emotional attachment; parents with children at school now attended these facilities and now their children are visiting the centres. For many local children, a visit to Braeside or Oxenwood was their first experience of outdoor activities and being away from their parents for the first time.
- 16.4 However, in view of the non-statutory nature of the service alongside the ongoing revenue risks and very significant capital funding requirements of £1.412m the review recommends closure of the Braeside and Oxenwood centres. This action will avoid ongoing loss of revenue resources and avoid significant capital expenditure. Following the Cabinet decision an exit plan based on a closure date of August 31st, 2018 will be developed.

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March 2018

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:
'None'

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Centre Use
- Appendix 2 Income and Expenditure
- Appendix 3 Property Costs
- Appendix 4 Benchmark Data
- Appendix 5 Options and associated costs considered
- Appendix 6 Scrutiny task force report

Appendix 1

CENTRE USE

Braeside

| 2017/18 | Residential | Non-residential |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|
| Wiltshire primary school /Academies | 52 | 70 |
| Non- Wiltshire Primary School /Academies | 28 | 11 |
| Wiltshire secondary schools / Academies | 0 | 1 |
| Non-Wiltshire Secondary Schools/Academies | 0 | 0 |
| Youth Organisations | 0 | 4 |
| Colleges | 0 | 0 |
| Private Hire Groups | 1 | 4 |
| Coast & Countryside Leader | 0 | 2 |

| Residential Use (Bed Occupancy) 2017/2018 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| 2 Days 1 Night | | 30 | 21 | 70 | | | | | | | | 45 |
| 3 Days 2 night | 206 | | 430 | 270 | | 217 | 282 | 224 | 39 | 84 | 134 | 426 |
| 4 Days 3 Night | | | | | 25 | 54 | | | 22 | | 27 | |
| 5 Days 4 Night | | | | | 15 | | | 41 | | | | |
| One day medical needs | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | 2 | 2 | |
| Superstrings day pupils | | | | | 25 | | | | | | | |
| 14 night RSY group | | | | | 90 | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 209 | 453 | 452 | 340 | 155 | 272 | 282 | 266 | 61 | 86 | 163 | 471 |

| Day Use (Headcount) 2017/2018 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| AGT&E | 27 | 108 | 158 | 198 | 0 | | 17 | 111 | 34 | 172 | 156 | 0 |
| 1 Day Courses | 90 | | 173 | 62 | 0 | 88 | 61 | 29 | | | | 90 |
| TOTAL | 117 | 108 | 331 | 260 | 0 | 88 | 78 | 140 | 34 | 172 | 156 | 90 |

| Conference & Room Bookings (Headcount) 2017/2018 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| Catered | 41 | 88 | 77 | 0 | 0 | 48 | 107 | 248 | 39 | 86 | 115 | 130 |
| Room Only | 110 | 41 | 72 | 203 | 0 | 39 | 93 | 93 | 40 | 86 | 93 | 150 |

Oxenwood

| Oxenwood - Customers Using Centre 2017/2018 | | |
|--|--------------------|------------------------|
| | Residential | Non-Residential |
| Wiltshire Primary Schools/Academies | 24 | 8 |
| Non-Wiltshire Primary Schools/Academies | 9 | 10 |
| Wiltshire Secondary Schools/Academies | 1 | 3 |
| Non-Wiltshire Secondary Schools/Academies | 2 | 1 |
| Youth Organisations | 14 | 14 |
| Colleges | 0 | 1 |
| Private Hire Groups | 3 | 4 |

| Oxenwood Residential Use (Bed Occupancy) 2017/2018 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| 2 Days 1 Night | 178 | 174 | 57 | 0 | 0 | 86 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26 | 88 |
| 3 Days 2 Night | 142 | 302 | 566 | 196 | 0 | 188 | 170 | 370 | 66 | 50 | 144 | 158 |
| 4 Days 3 Night | 0 | 0 | 57 | 84 | 0 | 0 | 54 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 Days 4 Night | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 84 | 0 | 0 | 92 | 80 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 320 | 476 | 680 | 280 | 0 | 358 | 224 | 370 | 158 | 130 | 170 | 246 |

| Oxenwood Day Use (Headcount) 2017/2018 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| Theme days | 7 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holiday groups | 27 | | | | 95 | | | | | | 21 | |
| Summer School | | | | 162 | 54 | | | | | | | |
| Birthday Parties | 12 | | | 20 | | | 13 | | | | | |
| Inspire NEETs | 19 | 24 | 15 | | | | 5 | 3 | 6 | | 12 | 10 |
| Tuition Service | 9 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 9 | 6 |
| Youth Activities | 16 | 64 | 6 | 51 | 22 | 46 | | 32 | | | | |
| Themed Days | | | 58 | 440 | | 28 | 38 | 120 | | 90 | | 116 |
| Activity days | | 54 | 292 | | | | 196 | | | 48 | | 18 |
| Teacher Training | | | | | | | | | | | 11 | 8 |
| TOTAL | 90 | 148 | 373 | 673 | 171 | 76 | 254 | 157 | 8 | 147 | 53 | 158 |

INCOME & EXPENDITURE (REVENUE)

| | 2015 / 2016 Outturn Deficit | 2016 / 2017 Outturn Deficit | 2017/18 Outturn Deficit |
|----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Braeside | 27,003 | 26,562 | -2,226 |
| Oxenwood | 1,459 | 9,617 | 26,112 |

Braeside Budget Actuals (Outturn) 2017/2018

| Income and Expenditure Statement - Braeside | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| Braeside | | | |
| Budget 2017-18 | | Forecasted actuals 2017-18 | |
| | £ | | £ |
| Expenditure | | Expenditure | |
| Pay | 311,400 | Pay | 302,726 |
| Non Pay | 107,330 | Non Pay | 93,775 |
| Total Direct Expenditure | 418,730 | Total Direct Expenditure | 396,501 |
| Income | 0 | Income | 0 |
| Subscription (Right Choice, Wiltshire Learning Trust, etc) | 0 | Subscription (Right Choice, Wiltshire Learning Trust, etc) | 0 |
| Pay as you go income | -468,600 | Pay as you go income | -513,257 |
| Other income relating to traded activities | 0 | Other income relating to traded activities | |
| Total Traded Income | -468,600 | Total Traded Income | -513,257 |
| Net Surplus/Deficit before CSR | -49,870 | Net Surplus/Deficit before CSR | -116,756 |
| Corporate Support Overheads | 114,530 | Corporate Support Overheads | 114,530 |
| Net Surplus/Deficit | 64,660 | Net Surplus/Deficit | -2,226 |

Oxenwood Budget Actuals (Outturn) 2017/2018

| Income and Expenditure Statement - Oxenwood | | | |
|---|----------------|---|---------------|
| | | | |
| Oxenwood | | | |
| | | | |
| Budget 2017-18 | | Forecasted actuals 2017-18 | |
| | £ | | £ |
| | | | |
| Expenditure | | Expenditure | |
| Pay | 134,500 | Pay | 157,880 |
| Non Pay | 36,500 | Non Pay | 23,293 |
| Total Direct Expenditure | 171,000 | Total Direct Expenditure | 181,173 |
| | | | |
| Income | | Income | |
| Subscription (Right Choice, Wiltshire Learning Trust, etc | | Subscription (Right Choice, Wiltshire Learning Trust, etc | |
| Pay as you go income | -221,200 | Pay as you go income | - 187,311 |
| Other income relating to traded activities | | Other income relating to traded activities | |
| total Traded Income | -221,200 | total Traded Income | - 187,311 |
| | | | |
| Net Surplus/Deficit before CSR | -50,200 | Net Surplus/Deficit before CSR | -6,138 |
| | | | |
| Corporate Support Overheads | 32,250 | Corporate Support Overheads | 32,250 |
| | | | |
| Net Surplus/Deficit | -17,950 | Net Surplus/Deficit | 26,112 |

PROPERTY COSTS (CAPITAL)

Estimated costs based on Condition Survey (2012) – outstanding works to be completed by 2022

Braeside

| Works | Estimated Costs | Totals |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Roof Replacement* | 450,000 | |
| Electrical | 108,000 | |
| Mechanical | 137,000 | |
| Sanitary Services | 38,000 | |
| Ceilings | 16,000 | |
| External Areas | 10,000 | |
| External walls, windows and doors | 89,000 | |
| Fixed Furniture | 23,000 | |
| Floors and stairs | 133,000 | |
| Internal walls and doors | 58,000 | |
| Redecorations | 25,000 | |
| Total | | 1,087,000 |

Oxenwood

| Works | Estimated Costs | Totals |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Replace Pratten building | 90,000 | |
| Electrical | 22,000 | |
| Mechanical | 36,000 | |
| Sanitary Services | 24,000 | |
| Ceilings | 7,000 | |
| External Areas | 9,000 | |
| External walls, windows and doors | 50,000 | |
| Fixed Furniture | 6,000 | |
| Floors and stairs | 35,000 | |
| Internal walls and doors | 26,000 | |
| Redecorations | 20,000 | |
| Total | | 325,000 |

BENCHMARK DATA

| Site | Acres | Beds | Camping | Costs based on 12 children and 2 adults | | | | |
|--|-------|---------|---------|---|----------|------------------------|----------|-------------|
| | | | | Jul: 3 days & 2 nights | | Oct: 3 days & 2 nights | | Jul: 5 days |
| | | | | Weekend | Weekdays | Weekend | Weekdays | |
| Braeside | 4.5 | 90 | | £138 | £144 | £138 | £144 | £256 |
| Oxenwood | 1.5 | 38 | | £132 | £132 | £132 | £132 | £233 |
| Mill on the Brue, Somerset | 25 | 87 | 45 | n/a | £189 | £156 | £156 | £351 |
| Plas Pencilli, Brecon Beacons | 17 | 100 | | £172 | £172 | £172 | £172 | £328 |
| Dean Field Study Centre, Forest of Dean (*1) | | 72 | | n/a | £148 | n/a | £148 | £242 |
| Carey Outdoor Education Centre, Dorset (*2) | 14 | 25 | 130 | n/a | £95 | n/a | £95 | £150 |
| Kilve Court, Somerset | 40 | 114 | | £149 | £149 | £149 | £149 | £294 |
| The Outdoor Centre, Somerset | | 76 | | £147 | £147 | £147 | £147 | £235 |
| Charterhouse Centre, Somerset (*3) | | 63 | | £156 | £156 | £156 | £156 | £240 |
| Great Wood, Somerset | | 74 | | £140 | £140 | £140 | £140 | £235 |
| PGL, Liddington – Wiltshire (*4) | 150 | 1000 | | £79 | £249 | £119 | £149 | £339 |
| JCA, Shropshire & Hampshire (*4) | | 500/540 | | £114 | £104 | £114 | £104 | £177 |

(*1) Small site using surroundings for activities.

(*2) Weekends used for Duke of Edinburgh.

(*3) Small site using 70-acre nature reserve adjacent. Higher risk activities / more staff required so higher costs.

(*4) Prices exclude VAT.

Research based on 2017 prices.

Options and alternative delivery configurations

The review has considered the options for the sites and the alternative delivery configurations for outdoor education, including costs where appropriate or available.

Option 1: Retain and operate

- 15.2 Retention of the centres will require significant capital investment in the properties as outlined in the report, Capital repairs will be in the region of £1.412m. The Council could choose to make this investment at nil return but given the financial pressures this is not considered to be a viable option. Consequently, this option would require increases to prices and/or occupancy rates to finance the work required and move centres to a position of actual cost recovery. Commercially this is not a viable option.
- 15.3 Potential price increases have been modelled based on property costs identified by our in-house team. All increases have been calculated against residential prices only. Price increases have been modelled on a 10-year return of capital spend only, without interest or finance costs, and do not account for future cost pressures or requirement to generate a surplus.
- 15.5 The required growth in sales to increase occupancy and recover all costs has been explored, given the site restrictions more could be possibly achieved with off peak pricing and weekend school holiday use.

| Recover all property costs through price increase | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Increase per Night (£) | | Revised Price per Course (£) | |
| | Braeside | Oxenwood | Braeside | Oxenwood |
| Scenario 1: Immediate work only | £12.82 | £3.06 | £170.00 | £139.00 |
| Scenario 2: All works | £23.16 | £8.32 | £191.00 | £149.00 |
| | | | | |
| % increase in course price. | Braeside | Oxenwood | | |
| Scenario 1: Immediate work only | 18% | 5% | | |
| Scenario 2: All works | 33% | 13% | | |
| | | | | |
| Recover all property costs through occupancy increase | | | | |
| | | | | |

| | Increase in number of nights | | Increase in number of courses to be sold (based on 3 day/2 night courses) | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------|---|----------|
| | Braeside | Oxenwood | Braeside | Oxenwood |
| Scenario 1: Immediate work only | 1,120 | 158 | 560 | 79 |
| Scenario 2: All works | 2,023 | 430 | 1,011 | 215 |
| | | | | |
| % increase in nights occupied | Braeside | Oxenwood | | |
| Scenario 1: Immediate work only | 18% | 5% | | |
| Scenario 2: All works | 32% | 13% | | |
| | | | | |
| Cap price increases at 10% and recover remainder through increased occupancy | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | Increase per Night (£) | | Revised Price per Course | |
| | Braeside | Oxenwood | Braeside | Oxenwood |
| Scenario 1: Immediate work only | £7.20 | £6.60 | £158.40 | £145.20 |
| Scenario 2: All works | £7.20 | £6.60 | £158.40 | £145.20 |
| | | | | |
| | Increase in number of nights | | Increase in number of courses to be sold | |
| | Braeside | Oxenwood | Braeside | Oxenwood |
| Scenario 1: Immediate work only | 446 | - | 188 | - |
| Scenario 2: All works | 1,267 | 81 | 599 | 40 |
| | | | | |
| % increase in nights occupied | Braeside | Oxenwood | | |
| Scenario 1: Immediate work only | 7% | 0% | | |
| Scenario 2: All works | 20% | 2% | | |
| | | | | |

Analysis

Provision of the 'immediate work only option' will not provide the quality of accommodation and experience required to compete with private sector providers.

Estimated borrowing to complete all capital works will increase prices for example at Braeside to at least £183 for a 3-day visit. Higher than all but one of the sample comparative group. Figures above do not include any additional marketing costs or sensitivity analysis for the price increases.

Option 2: Transfer centres and/or operations to a third party

15.5 Discussions with private sector organisations have confirmed no interest in the Outdoor Education centres. The view of the private sector is that the current size of the centres restricts opportunities development and growth and they have been described as commercially non-viable. Private sector

operators ideal site is 50+ acres of woods and lakes with accomadation for 700/800 young people.

- 15.6 Engagement with the voluntary sector has resulted in Community First expressing an interest in Oxenwood only if the centre is made over as a Community Asset Transfer and capital costs are covered by the Council. This is not seen as a viable proposal at this stage.

Option 3: Close the Centres

- 15.7 Closure of both centres is an option as outdoor education is a non-statutory activity and research indicates a wide range of alternative provision competitively priced in the surrounding areas that is accessible by Wiltshire schools.
- 15.8 Potential risks of this option include negative public feedback with significant emotional connection to the venues, many local people have visited the sites.
- 15.9 Bookings are taken some way in advance and these would need to be considered. It is suggested that if this option is chosen then there would need to be a run off period for bookings. This would see potential closure of the sites in August 2018.

Option 4: Close one site only

- 15.10 Close one site and leave one open to ensure the continued provision of Outdoor Education services in Wiltshire.
- 15.11 Given the capacity and the site restrictions the commercial and logical approach to this is to close Oxenwood, the smaller of the sites. Oxenwood has such limited ability to increase income due to the space the centre occupies. It is also limited in the range of activities it can offer given a small land footprint and its scale suffers acutely with securing adequate specialist staffing resources.
- 15.12 Scaling down would mean the Council still provides a residential outdoor education offer and the consequence may be to drive more income towards Braeside. The 'off site' activities from Oxenwood potentially could be managed from and relocated to Braeside.
- 15.13 This option is not risk free as Braeside will need to increase income and a robust long-term business plan would need to be developed and closely monitored to ensure delivery. To mitigate this, it is suggested that income and expenditure targets could be set for 2 years with a later review scheduled to assess impact of the business plan and the longer-term viability for Braeside. This option would enable centre staff to develop proposals for marketing, investment, increased usage and possible refurbishment through capital borrowing.
- 15.15 The opportunities to grow the programme and income at Braeside exist at school holiday times and providing bespoke and 'pay as you go' activity camps during the school holidays.

- 15.16 There are opportunities to develop activities targeted at special education needs and or children that are struggling at school. An example of this could be to consider year 7 'catch up needs' that are emerging. Wiltshire schools are offering tailored clubs to develop skills and attainment in year 7 pupils that have fallen behind. Braeside could develop an offer to run these sessions for schools as an incentive to the young people. Sessions could potentially be funded through DFE support (year 7 catch up grant is currently £411k across Wiltshire) alternatively, Pupil Premium could be used. This approach supports the Councils objectives for improving educational attainment in Wiltshire.
- 15.17 This option provides potential opportunities to transfer staff displaced from the closure of Oxenwood and minimise redundancy, closure and exit costs.