

Briefing note

To: Schools Forum **Author:** Rob Smith, School Improvement Advisor,
Rob Smith PE, Sport & Health

Date: 18th May 2018

Purpose of the Paper:

Information	√
Consultation	
Decision	

Title of Briefing: High Borrans – Use & Utilisation Update

Background: Schools Forum have in the past supported the centre with a contribution to enable a subsidy to be offered to all North Tyneside schools which can then be passed on to parents and carers. This ensures reduced costs in the offer to pupils to support the delivery of outdoor and adventurous activities in the curriculum as well as fieldwork and other programmes at High Borrans Outdoor Education centre.

Current Position: Schools Forum have previously received update reports, but have asked for more clarity on how the centre was being used, utilisation, which schools, etc. It is accepted that the Schools Forum contribution is under review and information has therefore been collated (attached) and is being presented to support members to have more appropriate information to them, be able to ask questions, be able to make more informed decision regarding a future/ on-going contribution, etc.

Recommendations:

Schools Forum having read this report and clearly understanding the information provided consider this report and note the following:

1. understand more clearly how the centre operates and uses the subsidy
2. use the information provided to support future Schools Forum decision on the continuation of the subsidy

Updated 2017/18 Comments for the £95000 supporting High Borran

A description of what the service provides to schools because of this funding allocation

- Reduces the cost for NT pupils to attend the facility.
- Ensured all in borough schools are subsidised at £79 per pupil per week and £59 per pupil per weekend, which equates to 26% reduction.
- Out of borough schools are charged at the commercial rate of £306 + per pupil per week and £229 +per pupil per weekend this may vary depending upon additional requests made by the group.
- The grant enables all in borough North Tyneside schools (Community, Academy and Trust), to have a subsidised cost of £227 per pupil per week and £170 per pupil per weekend.

Partnership Schools (In Borough) benefiting from using the service 2016-17:

Please note school numbers and individual schools as some visit on a two year cycle due to year group sizes. Information collated below reflects purely the last academic year.

Phase	School	% of phase	Pupils	Savings
Secondary: Individual course	4/11	36%	129	£10,191
Secondary through Young Leaders	10/11	91%	48	£3792
Middle	4/4	100%	323	£25,517
First/Primary	28/56	50%	889	£70,231
Special	1/6	17%	18	£1422
Totals	43/75	57%	1407	£111,153

Investment of **£95000** has produced a saving of **£111,153** to NT schools

Partnership Schools (Out of Borough) benefiting from using the service 2016-17:

Phase:		Pupils
Secondary	2	60
Middle	1	48
Primary	8	305
Special	-	
Totals:	11	413

- Increased capacity to a 55 bed centre, 48 bed student, 7 bed staff, as well as a fully inclusive provision
- NT schools have preference for booking over all other groups in order meet the required demand
- Maintained single occupancy where possible for NT schools, though sharing is encouraged, a significant number of schools prefer the existing arrangement
- Supported schools with smaller single occupancy groups to access OAA activities at the centre, this has been done by operating with a flexible approach to our NT schools
- Operated split or shorter adapted programmes for NT schools upon request in order to accommodate flexible programmes and ensure bookings as a priority to NT schools
- Returned a zero deficit budget over the last two years (with the £95k SF subsidy)
- Maintained employee-based staffing ensures consistency and known experience of instructors. Our staff are able to build professional relationships with school staff. We do not rely solely on freelance/casual staffing. The freelancers currently employed are all well established and respected by visiting staff.
- Subsidised travel with tendered bus company. Reduces return travel costs with preferred and vetted supplier from £900 to £760.
- The centre maintains high standards of provision to nationally accredited levels. Including: AHOEC Gold Award, AALA License, Adventure mark status, LOTc accreditation and South Lakes 5star food hygiene rating.
- The centre maintains supplies of clothes and equipment and regularly invests in the continued development of activities. Recently this has been camping, raft building and archery.
- The continued opportunity to immerse children in real environments and adventures.

<p>What schools would/ would not receive if this additional funding was not available</p>	<p>The centre would be likely to operate as a commercial operation on a full cost recovery basis. This would be similar to other existing commercial providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost per head will match the out of borough price and therefore £306 per pupil per week and £229 per pupil per weekend. (This would also be influenced if there was a reduction of bookings and this is annually reviewed, at present a strong understanding of advance bookings means price setting takes place two years in advance in order to support school planning, a reduction in bookings would result in this cost increasing and affecting commercial competition.) • This will also mean that we operate in a way where all customers have an equal basis for bookings and NT has no preferential bias towards priority. • This will also mean that we have to rigidly enforce a minimum group size to NT schools where at present we support NT small groups either with single occupancy and a two schools sharing position. Booking priority would have to be dictated by income. • This realistically will adversely affect booking numbers and a review of staffing may also have to be undertaken. • This would also impact upon the existing programme and bespoke provision available to schools. • If we move to a full commercial provision it will have an adverse effect on our use of minibuses. We would have to operate under a minibus operator's license. This would, under the current legislation, allow us to only operate two minibuses due to the scale of our operation, (we currently run three). We would also have to employ all instructional staff under driver's hours and this would adversely impact on the flexibility of our bespoke programming. • The impact of this will be directly impact upon parents and the ability for schools to offer a residential OAA experience in KS2 as is indicated as a preferred model in the existing national curriculum provision. <p>Price per pupil with the subsidy: £227- week and £170- weekend Price per pupil without the subsidy: £306- week and £229-weekend Increase per pupil: £79-week and £59-weekend. (2018/19 Prices)</p> <p>Increase per pupil against the current subsidised price: £213 per week and £163 per weekend.</p>
---	--

	<p>These prices are projected and based on the minimum group booking size required to secure sole occupancy, group bookings are based on 25 pupils August –March, 36 pupils April- July inclusive.</p> <p>35 children is our current average course size (ranging from 12-48 during 2016-17 for NT schools): an equivalent income would have to become our aim. This price increase is clearly prohibitive. Smaller groups may be excluded as income is prioritised.</p>
--	--