

REPORT TO EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE – 30 MAY 2019

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES POLICY

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 **Approve the updated corporate policy for the administration and management of excursions which involve adventurous activities.**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 The previous Aberdeenshire Council Adventurous Activities Policy was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 19 September, 2013. Within 1.3.1 of that Policy, it stated that *'All planned adventurous activities must be notified to the Council's adventure activities safety consultants, Adventure Scotland and should not be authorised or undertaken until a formal response has been received from Adventure Scotland and has been acted upon.'*
- 2.2 The contract in place with Adventure Scotland has been terminated. Subsequently, Aberdeenshire Council's Outdoor & Adventurous Activities Steering Group has taken over the coordination of the functions previously contracted to Adventure Scotland.
- 2.3 Section 1.3 of the Aberdeenshire Council Adventurous Activities Policy, provided as Appendix 1 to this report, has been amended to reflect the new arrangements in place for the notification and approval of adventurous activities.
- 2.4 The change to the Policy is required due to the change in advisor. In terms of the Policy Development and Review Framework in Part 4B of the Scheme of Governance, specifically Section 3.6.7, the Policy has not been identified as requiring a full review. Therefore, the full consultation process is not required before approval of the change by this Committee.
- 2.5 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Their comments are incorporated within the report and they are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section E.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance, as it relates to an Education & Children's Services policy matter.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because this change to the Policy is regarding the ratification of activities. It will not affect service delivery and does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.
- 4.2 There are no staffing and financial implications.
- 4.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level: Operational Risk Management (Including Health & Safety), ensuring providers of Adventurous Activities are compliant.

The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level: Support Inclusive Vibrant and Healthy Communities, ensuring that Adventurous Activities are properly regulated.

Laurence Findlay, Director of Education & Children's Services

Report prepared by Avril Nicol, Service Manager, Communities and Partnerships
Date April, 2019

Appendix 1

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES POLICY

1.1 Scope of the Policy

The organisation, planning, notification and delivery of all adventurous activities delivered by or on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council and its Establishments and Services.

1.2 Responsibilities

Aberdeenshire Council is a licensed provider of Adventurous Activities.

The planning and organisation of adventurous activities is of a voluntary nature (unless there are contractual implications) but, where such activities are organised, they must comply with the rules and procedures set out in this document.

All Aberdeenshire Council Services, who undertake adventurous activities with their client groups, are responsible for the management of this policy and should ensure that all adventurous activities are governed by this policy and are carried out in accordance with this and other relevant Aberdeenshire Council policies and any legislative requirements.

1.3 Policy Statement

Adventurous activities delivered by, or on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council, must operate within agreed Aberdeenshire Council policies and procedures as embedded within the Education and Children's Services document "Procedures for all Off-Site Excursions". All planned adventurous activities must be notified to Aberdeenshire Council's Outdoor & Adventurous Activities Steering Group via the EVOLVE system and should not be authorised or undertaken until a formal response has been received by the Outdoor Excursions Group.

1.4 Objectives

To direct all Council Services to the guidance on the planning, management and delivery of all adventurous activities and the requirement to comply with them.

2 Key Principles

2.1 Aims of Outdoor Learning in Aberdeenshire

- To support and promote the four capacities underpinning the [Curriculum for Excellence](#), namely 'successful learners', 'confident individuals', 'responsible citizens' and 'effective contributors'.

- To promote living, journeying and working together out of doors through a range of activities which provide learning, experience, adventure, challenge and enjoyment.
- To actively promote a greater awareness of the environment and sustainability issues, both local and wide, through educational activities and visits to a variety of natural environments and through taking part in and understanding the impacts of adventurous activities.

2.2 Definitions and Terminology

Outdoor Learning:

This is a generic term encompassing many forms of experiential learning out of doors.

Off-site and outdoor learning is defined as:

"Active learning through direct personal experience offering challenge, fun and adventure within a managed framework of safety."

Adventurous Activities:

Activities with a level of perceived risk and for which specialist training and/or qualifications would normally be required to lead them.

This list can never be exhaustive but includes:

- All upland, hill and mountain activities on foot, horseback, bicycle, ski or snowboard.
- All climbing related activities such as rock climbing in and out of doors, deep water traversing, abseiling, improvised Tyrolean traverses, bouldering, bridge swings, bungee jumping, rock hopping, coastal scrambling, etc.
- All watersports and water related activities such as kayaking, open canoeing, rafting, sailing, wind surfing, surfing, water ski-ing, wave boarding, inflatables, gorge walking, coasteering, fishing and swimming in natural waters.
- Underground activities – caving, mine exploration, pot holing.