

EHENSIDE FEASIBILITY STUDY – EXTREME SPORTS CENTRE

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Cath Giel
LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy
REPORT AUTHOR: Sarah Mitchell, Locality Manager

WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS

Clarity of the potential for new leisure and tourism facilities through understanding the issues involved in establishing an Extreme Sports Centre at Cleator Moor. This would bring increased job opportunities and investment into the Town and have the potential to regenerate the disused Ehenside site, left derelict since the schools closure in 2007.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE? (eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council,etc.)

The Council has a regeneration framework that supports investigations into Tourism and Economic development opportunities in Copeland and is able to offer enabling through accountable body role for projects.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive is

- a) asked to act as Accountable Body to Regen NE Copeland Ltd for £25k funding from Britain's Energy Coast WC to carry out the Feasibility Study into siting an Extreme Sports facility in Cleator Moor, and
- b) requested to waive any additional administration fee in support of the project and note the commitment of worker time to the project team.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since Ehenside school closed in 2007, the regeneration group has been working with partners to find an alternative use for the site and support the regeneration of the Town and area. The community and partners identified the need to improve local health in Cleator Moor; create a local tourism offer linked to the Lake District National Park and outdoor offer in the area, as

- 1.2 In 2008, the Head of Leisure and Environmental services at Copeland identified the potential for locating an Extreme Sports facility at the redundant Ehenside site. This suggestion was arrived at based on the premise that it meets the criteria identified by the local community and would also create a vital new tourist attraction and facility for use by the wider community. It would complement existing initiatives, such as Pow Beck Sports Valley and the wider tourism development in the Borough. Cleator Moor is also an ideal location in view of its accessibility and proximity to the Lake District National Park.

2 ARGUMENT

- 2.1 Work to develop an Extreme Sports facility cannot progress until further feasibility work is carried out. The viability of the Ehenside site will also be tested alongside other site in the areas to check the business case of Ehenside as an option.
- 2.2 Regen NE Copeland Ltd is a partnership of volunteers, serviced by Copeland's locality team. The partnership does not have the resources or cash flow to manage this project and as key partner wishing to develop Cleator Moor and its tourism portfolio, Copeland BC is best placed to oversee this priority regeneration project for Cleator Moor.
- 2.3 The primary site under consideration for the centre is Ehenside, with the aim of regenerating this strategic site. Cumbria County Council has agreed to let the Regeneration Partnership lead on the project to ensure that a scheme is developed that meets the needs and aspirations of the local community. Should the Feasibility Study prove positive for Ehenside, then County have indicated that they are willing to consider further negotiations regarding their role and support in taking forward the scheme, with the potential of including the land into the development. In the case that the outcome is negative or indicate that the facility would be best located elsewhere in Cleator Moor, then the Ehenside site is likely to revert to the County Council developing the site through their standard internal policy with Capita support.

3 OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 A task group is being formed consisting of members of Copeland's leisure, locality and regeneration teams, Cumbria County Council and Britain's Energy Coast WC. This team would oversee the management of the project and appoint consultants in line with CBC policy.
- 3.2 The feasibility study aims to look at early indications of viability and would be completed within 6-8 weeks.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Executive is asked to agree to act as Accountable Body to this project in receiving and letting a commission to allow it to continue to assess opportunities for adventure and tourism development in Cleator Moor.

5 WHAT ARE THE LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS?

- 5.1 The budget allowed is up to £25k for the commissioned study work, fully funded by BECWC. The offer letter will be made to Copeland Borough Council on behalf of Regen NE Copeland Ltd. The offer letter is expected to contain standard conditions which enable a competitive commission to undertake and complete the feasibility study. No additional conditions are expected.
- 5.2 No competitive tender will be entered into until the grant offer letter has been received and accepted. In line with Contract Standing Orders, we will obtain written prices, quotations or tenders from at least three suppliers, accept the most economically advantageous, and obtain Head of Development Strategy approval before proceeding.
- 5.3 The project is requesting Copeland Borough Council to waive any accountable body fee to support this early stage of the project to be completed. and the offer letter will be accepted by Copeland Borough Council with standard terms and conditions attached.
- 5.4 Team members involved in the project from Copeland would be involved as part of their daily remit of work. This includes a Locality Manager, Regeneration Officer and Sports Development Officer.
- 5.5 Monitoring Officer comments:- Provided procedures are undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules no comments in relation to the letting of the contract. There will need to be some legal involvement including drafting of the contract and presumably negotiations over a licence for access to the site. It would be useful to have an

overarching policy on the what projects are appropriate for the Council to act in as an accountable Body together with the extent of Accountable Body status.

6 HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

- 6.1 Members of the Locality and Regeneration Teams will manage and administer the project on behalf of RNEC. Standard project management measurements will be in place. The Task Group will oversee the project, reporting back to CBC and the RNEC Partnership.

7 WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

- 7.1 A Feasibility Study that clarifies the potential and impact of creating an Extreme Sports Centre in Cleator Moor.
- 7.2 In the event of the Feasibility Study having a positive outcome, this would lead to the creation of a major community and tourism facility for Copeland, creating new jobs and business opportunities.

List of Background Documents:

Pre Programme PDF Application Form

PID: Feasibility study of Extreme Sport Centre, Cleator Moor

Letter from CBC to BECWC