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GLASGOW 2014 – Delivering a Lasting Legacy Consultation Response from Scottish Outdoor Education Centres

The successful bid for the Commonwealth Games will be fantastic for Scotland and has great potential to leave a lasting legacy. It will increase interest and motivation and lead to a healthier more active population. It will also generate demand for sports facilities. Combined, this will increase the population of active sportspeople for future competition.

Added value can be achieved in 3 ways if new sports facilities are:

- suitable and accessible for use by elite and specialist sportsmen and women as well as thousands of children and young people and others;
- available and accessible for many years after the major international sporting event; and
- located in places that already provide services thereby raising the possibility of reducing costs in relation to land acquisition, security and maintenance etc.

In this way, the legacy of the Games would meet all of the Government's strategic objectives of being wealthier and fairer, healthier, safer and stronger, smarter and greener.

This consultation response highlights one way that this can be achieved by locating new sporting facilities at existing outdoor learning facilities such as those provided by Scottish Outdoor Education Centres (SOEC). SOEC is a social enterprise with charitable objectives:

- ***for the social, physical and intellectual advancement of the community at large and of children and young people in particular... [and]***
- ***for the purpose of promoting and furthering education and outdoor, sporting, leisure and recreational activity... [to]***
- ***construct, own, operate and manage residential centres and facilities in Scotland.***

SOEC provides residential outdoor learning facilities at 4 operational Centres in Scotland. The Centres accommodate and provide for between 120–200 people and are set in grounds of between 15–50 acres including playing fields. Centres are located within ½ hour of major cities and as such are well connected with transport links. SOEC currently works with 20,000 young people every year and facilities exist to increase this by a further 30,000 people. SOEC is therefore a substantial and already existing resource.

SOEC has worked with several sporting bodies over the years including the Rugby U21 Squad, the Women's National Football Team, National Hockey Squads, Judo Teams and Archery Clubs. Some adopt a training camp approach while others work with our highly trained outdoor educators with our novel and exciting activities, focusing on e.g. team work, communications and leadership.

Our Centres have been providing sporting, activity and outdoor learning programmes for over 65 years. They are currently undergoing major refurbishment which has some way to go. This creates an opportunity to integrate the specific needs of particular sports into refurbishment plans. We are refurbishing facilities to last for at least another 2 generations.

There may be several benefits from this approach. Such facilities would be available for home junior and senior squads and overseas teams. They would be available for thousands of young people who stay at SOEC and work with outdoor educators who are experienced in introducing new activities to children and young people. They could be managed, maintained and safeguarded by our existing facilities management teams thereby reducing on-going costs. Providing new facilities in inspirational settings at outdoor centres might add new motivation, enjoyment and mental toughness to practice sessions for elite athletes. Please see Annex 1 overleaf for a possible inclusion for the strategy.

This convergence of sporting and outdoor leisure facilities would be a creative approach to meeting the Scottish Government's Strategic objectives as follows:

- It would be **wealthier** – making connections between the sporting and social enterprise sectors, integrating policies and exploiting development synergies for best value;
- It would be **fairer** – SOEC is fully inclusive and works with children and young people from across Scotland. All would have access to these facilities;
- Such access would make a major contribution toward making the population **healthier** and **stronger**, through direct participation and through motivating young people;
- Such facilities would be **safe** – managed by existing experienced facilities managers at safe Centres within secure grounds;
- This approach would be **greener** – SOEC is a leader in sustainable development education and this is reflected in our outdoor learning pedagogy and facilities; and
- It would be **smarter**. This approach could make full use of the innovation and commitment of a charity and social enterprise, maximise effectiveness through an integrated policy approach and fostering partnership between the voluntary, sporting and public sectors.

SOEC is a long-term investment in Scotland. SOEC has been in operation, providing facilities for children and young people for 65 years. Millions of young Scots have enjoyed their residential experience at SOEC. Our services, educational programmes and sport facilities are relevant and highly important to young people today and for future generations.

We can therefore guarantee that the integration of sporting facilities and services at our Centres will also provide a lasting legacy for the children and young people of Scotland.

Dave Spence
Chief Executive

What Could We Do?

Expand the network of regional sporting facilities, for all people including elite sportspeople, children, young people and others

How Could We Do It?

Identifying charitable organisations and social enterprises that already provide sporting, leisure and outdoor activities for the wider community, enhancing and upgrading existing facilities and venues to add to the global total of all sports facilities in Scotland

What Could Be The Result?

Enhanced regional facilities and increased number of sporting venues, available and accessible to large numbers of people, can be constructed, managed and maintained in a highly cost effective way. Policy integration and synergies can be made between existing accommodation providers and an increased need for sport training camps and facilities. Benefits would accrue at various levels from improved opportunities for introduction to sporting activity for children and young people to enhanced motivation and improved mental preparation by training at inspirational outdoor centres for competition sportspeople.