

The Towers Outdoor Education Centre - User Consultation

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Question	Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4	Response 5	Response 6	Response 7	Response 8
1- The transfer of the facility and staff to another provider within a 12 month period	Having listened to what has been said on the matter – this seems to be the most viable option and would be the option I would prefer if the council are not willing to continue their support of what is an extremely valuable and worthwhile provision for the children of Wolverhampton.	This seems to me to be a good long-term aim. In the meantime, while we wait for extensive repair work schools, and groups such as mine must look elsewhere for good quality ODP provision - and it is hard to find anywhere else.	This is the best option given that the Council would like to lose the liability of the centre and also the subsidy costs which will always be significant if schools want exclusive use and high quality outdoor education. I would like to see that the essential character of the Towers is maintained and that it continues to give great value (in educational terms) to the children of Wolverhampton and that it is not pushed down the route of low value and cheaper taste sessions as given by private centres more local to Wolverhampton. In the new Ofsted Four-part Judgement which is the criteria for assessment for schools the 3rd area (of 4) is "Personal Development" which incorporates Character development, curriculum beyond the classroom, visits, health and well-being, and the Towers is perfectly placed to help our schools with this. If another provider could be found with expertise in making good money out of the weeks which the Tower is not operating with schools (and this could amount to almost half of the year with non Wolverhampton schools) then this could offset the costs of running with a slight subsidy with the Wolverhampton schools. The provision of the towers would allow schools to have the building.	Benefit The provision would not be lost to the young people of Wolverhampton. The building and its maintenance would not be a problem for Wolverhampton council. Staff would have some security of employment. Risk The ethos of outdoor education as provided currently could be lost. The cost could become prohibitive for families from Wolverhampton Control is lost.	This is the best most viable option given the financial situation. It should allow some priority use for Wolverhampton young people and hopefully use existing staff, knowledge and expertise. If the Council could finance the repair work to reopen the facility and then transfer the facility as a going concern.	W-ton council to take on short term costs of essential remedial works to enable Towers to reopen as safely and quickly as possible. Alongside this, conversations to be held with alternative providers for the long-term future.	If the opportunities that Towers has provided to generations of Wolverhampton children can be maintained, then this is a viable option.	This would be the best option for all parties. However, if the council continues to stall/ block on the initial emergency repairs, this would become unworkable.
2- Closure and sale of the facility with users being signposted to alternative provision	In my opinion, this is not an option that should even be considered.	This would be a sad day for generations of Wolverhampton Citizens. The Towers has been a part of life for decades and is a valuable resource - hard to replicate.	This would have many downsides as it would not make much revenue, as the building as it is has little worth in its current state, the children of Wolverhampton would lose the ability to visit the centre, the educational value would be lost (which has affected the lives of 100 000 children from the city since 1961). There may be some political cost and several Wolverhampton employees would be made redundant.	Benefit Only to City of Wolverhampton council budget and only short term . No other benefits Risk The opportunities for young people from Wolverhampton to access high quality outdoor education are lost. The value of this provision cannot be measured simply in financial terms. The young people have a right to as good an education as can be provided. Opportunities to build their self confidence, to assess risk , to rise to challenges, to work in teams and appreciate that everyone has different strengths and weaknesses are all transferable life skills, which help to raise attainment in school. Outdoor education is full of these opportunities and it would be of huge detriment to	This would be a sad loss to Wolverhampton given the outstanding personalised provision it has given to Wolverhampton residents over many many years.	This is an unviable option .There are too many benefits of the Towers to the children of Wolverhampton. The closure would be detrimental to the health and well-being of young people.	I think this would be lamentable decision considering what the City would lose.	The council would be letting down the children who use Towers. This is an unacceptable option and one which would be occurring only as a result of the council's neglect and poor management. This would be an admission of poor strategy and deny pupils this valuable asset in the future.
3- City of Wolverhampton Council to retain asset, bearing costs for compliance works and on-going budget subsidy	I seriously think that the council should consider this option. Towers has provided an excellent service for the children of Wolverhampton for over 50 Years. This provision is even more valuable in the times in which we live. Children's well-being and mental health is a very serious issue and Towers is an asset that could provide wonderful support of provision to improve the well-being of the pupils of Wolverhampton schools.	Hearing about short-term compliance works, that could make Towers safe enough to accommodate groups in a fairly short amount of time, has persuaded me that this is the way to go. If we wait for long-term solutions Towers will lose revenue and schools and groups will be forced to look elsewhere.	With significant investment and a value put on the educational input that the centre makes this would be a great option, however, I do not believe that there is sufficient support available from the council to make this a possible long term alternative. (I understand that this is not the council's "fault" as it is not a statutory service and the council only has limited funds). In the short to medium term this may be a necessary option to get the centre up and running again.	Risk Expensive. But looks like a huge ask in the way the figures are currently presented. Any old building could always swallow large amounts of money endlessly. It looks as if the real figure for now is somewhere between 54k and 154k. The subsidy could and should be addressed. It has long been signalled that a cost neutral centre would do very little work for the young people of Wolverhampton, whilst if it remains a service for Wolverhampton children it will always have a cost. Benefits Massive if you leave out the money element. The value of the building alone in what has just been voted Europe's best National park will be large in the future. The value of the work done for young people from Wolverhampton is inestimable	I think given the financial outlay needed to repair and continue to run the facility over more years this would be difficult for the Council to agree to in the present financial climate of shrinking budgets.	Partial option please see option 1.	Whilst financial constraints are very pressing, the quantifiable benefits to children from Wolverhampton (many of whom come from difficult backgrounds) is massive. Towers must be viewed as an asset for the city to enjoy and benefit from.	I appreciate the council's desire to spend money on the Towers is/ has waived. However, if they commit the £55k or 50 to the initial estimate of emergency repairs, the asset should have a future.
4- Suggested alternative options	The council to continue its support of the Towers but to look at how the facility is used and how extra revenue could be generated. For example during term times the facility to be kept for the use of Wolverhampton schools, but during school holidays and weekends, the facility could be opened up for other organisations to use.	Not an option but an observation. Despite the conclusions drawn by the consultants Towers has actually proved to be a good resource for both the learning disabled and the physically disabled: eg Green Park School used to take groups five times a year and both Penfields and Penn Hall schools were frequent users. My own club (Gateway; a Mencap organisation) has attended Towers twice a year for decades.	Local (Wolverhampton) Business sponsorship and support.	A small council linked housing company based in North Wales are or were of the opinion that the building could be improved, then run at a sufficient profit to enable them to continue the subsidy for Wolverhampton schools for a significant number of weeks. The council are missing a trick here. There are so many uses the building could be put to – all sorts of breaks , holidays, courses for all sorts of people who would be prepared to pay to stay in an iconic, historic building in the centre of the Snowdonia National park. I personally know of a converted church just 3 miles away that sleeps 12 people self catering at a block price of £1200 per night. They only open Friday and Saturday and are full for the next year. If creating enterprise could find a business plan that made a substantial profit then surely the City of Wolverhampton council could do the same and then use a proportion of the profits to continue to provide outdoor education for the very deserving but not wealthy children and families in their constituency. This would need to be a group or organisation within Wolverhampton and not the Towers staff directly. They would be able to provide the courses they are so very good at for young people and I am sure it would be an added bonus to other groups using the Centre if they could also access some adventurous outdoor activities as	N/A	Lottery funding Just Giving Page	A review of the required work needs to be undertaken to possibly get Towers opened and becoming a viable business again. This would make option 1 much more possible.	Action as soon as possible otherwise the inevitable, avoidable option will incur.
5- Any other comments	Whilst I understand that different departments have different funding I find it appalling that the council are willing to write off debts of over £600,000, but appear to be unwilling to consider continuing to support a very valuable asset which serves the children of Wolverhampton.	I feel that the renovations are an opportunity to reinforce the inclusive nature of Towers. It need not be costly. I acknowledge that (eg) a minibus with a lift for wheelchair-users would be expensive but (eg) handrails in the corridors and a changing bed would be more affordable and might help to 'sell' Towers as an attractive option for special needs groups across the country.	The reduction in staffing with the departure of Liz, Jill and Lorenza and a scaling down of instructional staffing, will make scaling up to normal operation difficult and require serious thinking should money be found for the building works.		N/A	Please see testimonials on Facebook where over 1000 shares and historical comments have been made. Hundreds of people are willing to write letters and support the council in keeping the Towers open.	N/A	Act quickly please