

Senedd Cross Party Group Meeting

14/12/23

The Summit Centre

Sam Rowlands, MS, chaired the meeting,

The main item on the agenda was a presentation from Dave Harvey, Gareth Rogers and Graham French about the progress and future of the Residential Outdoor Education (Wales) Bill (ROE bill). The initiation and starting process of the member's bill was outlined by GF and then DH went on to outline the public consultation phases. Finally Gareth shared the ongoing and future processes – evidence is being collected by the committee (Children, young people and education, Justice and Finance) and will be completed by the end of Feb 2024. They will then produce a report. GF on behalf of IOL/AHOEC and Mike Rosser and Clare Adams on behalf of OEP and representatives from Urdd Gobaith Cymru had given evidence in the most recent sessions (all recorded and available on Senedd TV). The report will allow some response time and the chance to update the bill in response to the report. There will then be another vote in the Senedd on or around April 24th. If this passes there will be further leave to proceed to continue developing the bill. If it doesn't pass, it falls and that's the end of it. However, there may be possible compromises that might get government on board as money is the big sticking point. In the meantime, there is a leadership contest where the current education minister is standing so there will be different government/cabinet by the time of the vote. SR noted that even if the bill falls the profile of OEd in Wales has risen unmeasurably. It is now a consideration in every debate around education and young people's well-being. The CPG is supportive of the bill and when members asked how they could support the bill SR suggested a coordinated approach from Jan. onwards to ensure MSs know about it and the impact on their constituencies.

The next item was a presentation from Paul Renfrew of the Pembrokeshire coastal forum, one of the three environmental charter groups in Wales. Paul presented the findings of the recently commissioned research on the economic value of the outdoor adventure sector to the economy and there were a few questions about this. The main infographic summarising the findings is linked [here](#).

The final few items on the agenda included a discussion of how the reform of the school year which is at very early stages of consultation might impact the outdoor education sector and what opportunities this might offer, and members were asked to consider this. There was also a discussion as to how schools following the Agored Cymru level 2 and 3 programmes could be connected with local employers for work experience and centre experience, with suggestions including through Agored themselves or perhaps through ITE providers.