Nottinghamshire County Council

Communities Committee

Monday, 19 July 2021 at 10:30

County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

AGENDA

1	Minutes of last meeting held on 10 June 2021	3 - 6
2	Apologies for Absence	
3	Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below) (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (b) Private Interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary)	
4	Cultural Services Strategy Refresh	7 - 10
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Notes

(1) Councillors are advised to contact their Research Officer for details of any Group Meetings which are planned for this meeting.

(2) Members of the public wishing to inspect "Background Papers" referred to in the reports on the agenda or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act should contact:-

Customer Services Centre 0300 500 80 80

(3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules. Those declaring must indicate the nature of their interest and the reasons for the declaration.

Councillors or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact Noel McMenamin (Tel. 0115 993 2670) or a colleague in Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

(4) Councillors are reminded that Committee and Sub-Committee papers, with the exception of those which contain Exempt or Confidential Information, may be recycled.

(5) This agenda and its associated reports are available to view online via an online calendar - http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings.aspx

Nottinghamshire County Council

minutes

Meeting	Communities Committee
Date	10 June 2021 (commencing at 2:00 pm)

Membership
Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

COUNCILLORS

John Cottee (Chairman)
Tom Smith (Vice-Chairman)

Mike Adams
Pauline Allan
Sinead Anderson
Stephen Garner
Glynn Gilfoyle
Sue Saddington
Jonathan Wheeler
Daniel Williamson
Elizabeth Williamson

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

None.

OTHER COUNTY COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE

Maureen Dobson
Gordon Wheeler

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Gaw	-	Inspire
Derek Higton	-	Place Department
Adrian Smith	-	Place Department
Mark Walker	-	Place Department
Noel McMenamin	-	Chief Executive's Department

1. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The appointment at Full Council on 27 May 2021 of Councillor John Cottee as Chair and Councillor Tom Smith as Vice-Chair was noted.

2. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee's membership and terms of reference as detailed in the report were noted.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor John Cottee declared an interest in Item 7 'Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire – Development Update and Fifth Year Review' as a Board member of Inspire, which did not preclude him from speaking or voting.

Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle declared an interest in Item 7 'Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire – Development Update and Fifth Year Review' as a Board member of Inspire, which did not preclude him from speaking or voting.

Councillor Sue Saddington declared an interest in item 6 'Compact between Public Sector Bodies and the Voluntary and Community Sector in Nottinghamshire' as her husband was a volunteer driver, which did not preclude her from speaking or voting.

5 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COVID 19 SOCIAL RECOVERY FUND

RESOLVED 2021/001

That:

(1) the establishment of the COVID-19 Social Recovery Fund be approved;

(2) Regular reports on the expenditure from this Fund be brought to Communities Committee.

6. COMPACT BETWEEN PUBLIC SECTOR BODIES AND THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

RESOLVED 2021/002

That the adoption of the Compact between Public Sector Bodies and the Voluntary and Community Sector in Nottinghamshire be adopted.

7. CULTURE, LEARNING AND LIBRARIES – INSPIRE: DEVELOPMENT UPDATE AND FIFTH YEAR REVIEW

RESOLVED 2021/003

That Members be informed of the development of Inspire in the delivery of culture, learning and library services across Nottinghamshire, and of its achievements in its fifth year of operation.

8. LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME – OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

During debate, an amendment was moved and seconded to amend the published Recommendation 1 by adding the underlined text below to read:

'That the 9-month extension of the existing LIS Revenue Grants on a pro rata basis from 1st July 2021 until 31st March 2022 but remove the matching funding element of the Local Improvement Scheme to help the poorer community groups and organisations in Nottinghamshire'.

Following an adjournment, the Chief Officer explained that the amendment would not be accepted, as the LIS Revenue Grants being extended did not contain a match-funding element within them, and so that element could not be removed.

RESOLVED 2021/004

That:

(1) The 9-month extension of the existing LIS Revenue Grants on a pro rata basis from 1st July 2021 to 31st March 2022;

(2) No LIS Capital Application and Funding round is run in 2021-2022;

(3) Officers develop schemes based on Options R2, C2 and T2 at Appendix 1 of the report, with a view to implementation on 1st April 2022: and

(4) The details of the new schemes should be developed and brought to the September 2021 Communities Committee for approval.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

It was explained that the Work Programme was subject to additions, amendments and deletions in response to emerging and shifting priorities on an ongoing basis.

RESOLVED 2021/005

That the Committee's work programme be agreed.

The meeting concluded at 4.25 pm

Chairman

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Communities Committee

19 July 2021

Agenda Item: 4

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES

CULTURAL SERVICES STRATEGY REFRESH

Purpose of the Report

1. To note plans to refresh Nottinghamshire County Council's (NCC) Cultural Services Strategy (2011-2021) and identify any key issues they would want to see addressed in the new strategy.

Information

2. The Council's current Cultural Strategy (2011-2021) is due to expire at the end of this calendar year, and work will now commence to review and update how the Council will deliver its Cultural Offer over the next five years.

3. Since 2011, the operating model for Nottinghamshire's Cultural Services has changed significantly. Country Park and Library Services, as well as Archives, Arts and Adult Learning Provision, are now delivered via third-party partnerships, rather than by the Council directly. These arrangements were commissioned to secure the long-term sustainability of the Council's Cultural provision by reducing service delivery costs, securing investment, improving facilities and widening the range of available activities through partnership working.

4. The refreshed Strategy will provide a high-level framework for the delivery of detailed service plans, containing the specific objectives for individual sites and cultural services. With reference to the Strategy's overarching principles and commitments, each service plan will outline short and long-term investment priorities linked to the objectives of the Visitor Economy Strategy (2019-2029) and the Councils Corporate Environment Strategy which is in the process of being finalised.

5. The development of these plans will also involve engagement with key partners and stakeholders.

6. Both the Strategy and its associated plans will also align with the commitments of the Council Plan, which is itself due to be updated following recent local elections.

Other Options Considered

7. No other options have been considered.

Reason for Recommendations

8. The Council's current Cultural Strategy is due to be refreshed in 2021.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

10. The preparation of the strategy may require external support however any costs will be met from the existing Cultural Services Budgets.

Implications for Service Users

11. The refresh will also incorporate lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the importance of cultural services to the wellbeing of the county's residents. Demand for outdoor green spaces, in particular, rose in the absence of indoor hospitality, which, combined with the success of remote, mobile and virtual library services, has raised the profile of the Council's cultural offer— something which our new strategic documents will seek to maximise.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

12. The new cultural service strategy will take account of the recent Climate Emergency declaration and the councils ambitions to be Carbon neutral in all it's activities by 2030, and look to identify how the services delivered can adapt to ensure any changed or improved offers impact positively on environmental outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

1) Notes the plans to refresh the Council's Cultural Services Strategy and identifies any key issues they would want to see addressed in the new strategy.

2) Agrees a further report on the refreshed strategy being presented to Committee in due course.

Derek Higton
Service Director Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Mick Allen, Group Manager Place Commissioning, Tel: 0115 9774684

Constitutional Comments (LW 22/06/2021)

13. Communities Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (SES 22/06/2021)

14. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

15. The preparation of the strategy may require external support however any costs will be met from the existing Cultural Services Budgets.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Communities Committee

19 July 2021

Agenda Item:5

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PEER REVIEW OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee on the peer review of the public library service undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Arts Council England (ACE) in February 2021.

Information

Context

2. The County Council has a statutory duty to provide a public library service under the 1964 libraries and museum act. This duty is delivered by the County Council through a contractual agreement with Inspire – Culture, Learning and Libraries.

3. The County Council and Inspire invited the LGA to undertake a peer review of the library service in 2020, this review was funded by ACE. Due to Covid 19 the review was delayed and undertaken as a virtual review on the 1st and 2nd February 2021

4. The peer review aimed to provide a credible external view of the service which would support the County Council in its commissioning role and the Inspire board and leadership team in focusing on the development of the library service.

5. The scope of the review was agreed between the LGA, ACE, Inspire and the County Council. Key areas of enquiry and review included:

   a) Membership engagement and volunteering
   b) Demonstrating impact and performance
   c) Customer journey
   d) Income generation
   e) Staff engagement and skills
   f) Innovation

6. Areas of challenge included:

   a) What have we learnt about the library service from the COVID-19 crisis?
   b) What is the future vision for libraries in a post-Covid world?

c) How can Inspire and the library service contribute to the cross-cutting agendas of other services and wider council objectives and ensure they are involved at key points?
d) The library service is the public face of the County Council however it is not always exploited as well as it could be by the council – how can we ensure that we are talking to the right people at the right time?

Review Process

7. The review team consisted of a senior Councillor, professional lead, LGA associate and a senior manager from ACE. The peer review team prepared for the peer challenge by reviewing a range of documents and information to ensure they were familiar with the Council and the challenges it is facing.

8. The team then spent 2 days meeting people from Nottinghamshire in a virtual visit, conducted on Microsoft Teams, during which they:

- Spoke to 32 people including a range of Inspire and Council staff together with councillors and external partners and stakeholders.
- Gathered information and views from more than 12 meetings and additional research and reading.
- Collectively spent more than 70 hours to determine their findings – the equivalent of 1 person spending nearly 2 weeks in Nottinghamshire.

Key Findings

9. Leadership and Management

Inspire provides high quality and highly regarded library services. The political and officer leadership of the Council are justifiably proud of what has been achieved and there is a strong and collaborative relationship between the Inspire chief executive and senior colleagues in the Council. We also found an enthusiastic and proactive staff team, well led and well supported, responding commendably to the challenges of COVID-19. Everyone we spoke to confirmed Inspire and its staff to be resilient, caring and flexible in their crisis response, using words to describe them such as "agile, responsive, kind and committed".

10. Covid Response

In response to the pandemic, Inspire moved swiftly to deliver an expanded virtual offer, re-engineering their website and providing an information and helpline operating 6 days a week, providing valued support to customers seeking information and resources. Library home delivery, click and collect and mobile services have been particularly effective and Inspire aimed to offer the fullest possible safe and legal offer when it was able to open. Inspire also joined the risk board which coordinated the Council's COVID-19 response. We were impressed by the professionalism of the managers, staff and volunteers we met in our one-to-one sessions and focus groups, by their pride in Inspire and by the public service values they demonstrated. This is particularly apparent through the unwavering focus on customer and community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

11. Political Support

We were consistently told that there is deep and strong cross-party political support for Inspire and the library service it provides with member commitment to the library service over many years. This has provided a solid platform for Inspire since it 'spun off' from the Council in 2016, with successful delivery of the first 5 year contract and a second 5 years in the process of being signed off.

12. Future Strategy

It is evident that Inspire has been fulfilling its current aims and mission very effectively but that the future vision is still to be explored and agreed. COVID-19 has acted as a disruptor and the peer team suggest that this provides an opportunity to think differently about how Inspire develops moving forward. The people we spoke to set out some urgent public sector challenges as part of COVID-19 recovery; such as supporting catch-up and reading in education for children and young people; tackling loneliness and isolation; addressing a widespread loss of confidence and fear; upskilling people; supporting health and care particularly with regard to prevention; developing business and reviving the high street in a changing economy; and tackling widening social disadvantage and inequality.

We heard from senior leaders that there is a significant opportunity in this context for Inspire to make a more strategic and impactful contribution to public health, adult social care, children's and regeneration outcomes and to position Inspire as the 'front door' to Council services. This is a clear invitation from Council leaders to re-examine how Inspire is positioned in the medium to long term, moving beyond the traditional role of a commissioned service to become a more strategic partner for the Council, aligned to the new corporate plan priorities as these emerge.

13. Performance

In terms of overall performance (pre-COVID), Inspire provides a comprehensive and cost-effective library service. Libraries receive over 2.4 million visits per annum, issue 2.9 million loans, have 122 thousand active borrowers (nearly 15 per cent of the population) and 9.5 thousand children take part in the summer reading challenge. When compared with a national cohort of 122 councils, active borrowers and visits to the website are in the top quartile, book stock performs above average and physical visits are similar to the average, although dwell time has increased as the offer includes a varied programme of events, activities, learning and exhibitions. Arts Council England National Portfolio funding has been important here.

14. Library Network

While we recognise the strong commitment to provide a network of library buildings, we identified a potential tension between the number of sites, future budget pressures and need in new or expanding communities, in order to ensure fit for purpose library provision in the most accessible locations. Inspire has a track record in partnering, eg with district councils and the health services, and new opportunities for colocation and integration should continue to be explored as part of the forward strategy.

Key Recommendations

15. Position Inspire to contribute more to cross cutting agendas in the Council and to be proactive in having a voice among senior leaders, creating a strategic 'prospectus' of what can be offered by the service

16. Co-design the new vision and strategy for Inspire and its library service with Council partners, stakeholders, and communities

17. Proactively use the opportunity of the development of a new NCC corporate plan to create a golden thread between Council priorities in COVID-recovery and beyond and the new libraries strategy

18. Use Inspire board members more fully, drawing on their expertise, vision and advocacy, and connecting them more closely to the organisation

19. Explore best practice from other councils with senior leaders, the Inspire board and councillors

20. Library site colocation to be reviewed as communities develop and opportunities arise

21. Volunteering and member engagement – increase opportunities

Action Plan

22. An action plan has been developed to respond to the main recommendations of the review and allocated to key officers from the Council and Inspire – see Appendix 1

Other Options Considered

23. No other options were considered.

Reason for Recommendations

24. To enable the committee to exercise its delegated responsibility.

Statutory and Policy Implications

25. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

26. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) To inform Members of the outcomes of the LGA peer review of the library service.
2) To agree the action plan as outlined in Appendix 1.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Peter Gaw, Chief Executive – Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire, T: 0115 977 4201 E: peter.gaw@inspireculture.org.uk

Constitutional Comments (LW 17/06/2021)

27. Communities Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (SES 16/06/2021)

28. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Library Services Virtual Peer Challenge Inspire and Nottinghamshire County Council 1-2 February 2021. Local Government Association.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All.

Nottinghamshire County Council and Inspire

Action Plan

Key Recommendation / area of challenge	Actions
Recommendation 1: Position Inspire to contribute more to cross cutting agendas in the Council and to be proactive in having a voice among senior leaders, creating a strategic 'prospectus' of what can be offered by the service	Develop an Inspire strategic prospectus in delivery of council priority outcomes alongside new council 2021 – 2026 plan Identify Inspire as strategic partner to deliver public health, adult social care, children's and regeneration outcomes Presentation to Members / CLT / Senior Managers / stakeholders
Recommendation 2: Co-design the new vision and strategy for Inspire and its library service with Council partners, stakeholders and communities	Develop and publish a new Libraries strategy in light of new council plan Policy committee approval autumn/winter 2021
Recommendation 3: Proactively use the opportunity of the development of a new NCC corporate plan to create a golden thread between Council priorities in COVID-recovery and beyond and the new libraries strategy	Reading and learning recovery tackling loneliness and isolation. upskilling people; health and care particularly with regard to prevention developing business / high street offer tackling social disadvantage and inequality
Recommendation 4: Use Inspire Board Members more fully, drawing on their expertise, vision and advocacy, and connecting them more closely to the organisation	Inspire board development and training Board away day 2021 to review Board member recruitment and election
Recommendation 5: Explore best practice from other councils with senior leaders, the Inspire board and councillors	Identify best practice and arrange information exchange and visits
Recommendation 6: Library site colocation to be reviewed as communities develop and opportunities arise	Ongoing consideration of colocations and partnering to ensure libraries are in the best locations. Mobile service to review route and stops.
Recommendation 7: Volunteering and engagement – increase opportunities	Launch community makers volunteering and membership engagement programme

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Communities Committee

Agenda Item:6

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES

INSPIRE LEARNING ANNUAL PLAN AND FEES 2021/22

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to:

- report on performance and outcomes during the 2019/20 academic year
- update on Covid-19 delivery in current 2020/21 academic year
- seek approval for the service's plan for the 2021/22 academic year
- seek approval for plans for use of Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding in the 2021/22 academic year
- seek approval for the Schedule of Fees for the 2021/22 academic year – Appendix 1
- seek approval for the service's Supply Chain Arrangements – Appendix 2

Information

Performance and Outcomes 2019/20

2. During the 2019/20 academic year, the following key outcomes were achieved:

- recruited 267 16/19-year-old students against a funding target of 306 learners
- Achieved 83.3% Achievement rate for Study Programme learners (against a national benchmark of 82.6%*)
- Achieved a 70% positive progression rate for 16 to 18-year-old learners
- Recruited 4,318 ESFA funded Community and Family Learning learners against a target of 6,308. Reduction in recruitment due to the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the Spring and Summer Terms of 2019/20 academic year.
- Achieved a 94.3% achievement rate for Community Learning (up 0.9% on 2018/19)
- Achieved a 64% GSCE resit pass rate in maths and a 48% GCSE resit pass rate for English
- Responded to Covid-19 pandemic and lock-down from 23rd March 2020 by moving to 100% remote delivery for both 16 to 18 and adult provision.

*National Benchmarks were not published for the 2019/20 academic year due to Covid-19 so 2018/19 National Benchmarks have been applied.

Covid-19 Delivery Arrangements in Current 2020/21 Academic Year

3. Since the start of the current academic year, the following actions have been taken:

- 16 to 18 Study Programme learners returned to face-to-face delivery from September 2020, then had to undergo another lockdown from 5th January 2021, and returned to face-to-face delivery from Monday 8th March 2021.
- Secured funding from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to buy in excess of 200 laptops and WIFI connectivity devices for Study Programme learners and successfully deployed them to support remote delivery for the third lockdown.
- developed a new range of on-line courses for adults to take a range of community learning courses.
- delivered apprenticeships, access to HE courses and accredited provision to adults via on-line and 'e' learning.
- Awarded the Times Educational Supplement Further Education award 2020 for Adult and Community Learning Provider of the Year.

4. Inspire learning will ensure it contributes to the local economic recovery through its learning and skills programmes, the Way 2 Work employment support programme, traineeships and apprenticeships.

Approval for Strategic Aim and Objectives for 2021/22

4. The strategic aims and objectives for the 2021/22 academic year are as follows:

Aim

To ensure that local people have access to an appropriate range of flexible learning opportunities that contribute to personal, social, educational and economic development.

Objectives

- Deliver a programme of high-quality learning which clearly contributes to the priorities of the County Council and D2N2's Local Skills Report to support safe and thriving communities; support economic growth and employment; provide care and promote health; and invest in our future
- Focus funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in learning, including Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) young people, people on low incomes, those with low skills and furthest away from the labour market, particularly focusing resources to assist Nottinghamshire residents to respond to the economic challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic
- Continue to deliver a universal community learning and skills offer with access for all and set a fees policy to ensure fees are paid where learners can do so, including waiving fees where appropriate
- Provide Study Programmes for 300+ young people (aged between 16 and 19 years) from 9 centres across the county using a 'blended' delivery model combining face-to-face provision and 'e' learning as appropriate
- Provide a range of community learning programmes under the themes of: Employability; Health and Wellbeing; Family Learning and Learning for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) with a clear focus upon supporting Nottinghamshire residents to respond to the current economic and well-being challenges from Covid-19.
- Deliver learning to fee paying adults including courses designed to appeal to a broader cross-section of learners at a higher rate, using their fee income to support the

Service's offer where appropriate. Extension of fee-paying courses will be introduced gradually to reflect the impact of the Covid-19 crisis

- Deliver £2.25m of adult community learning (i.e. non-accredited) and £385k of formula funded (i.e. accredited) learning to adults in 2021/22. Deliver £1.3m of 16 to19 study programme learning to young adults in 2021/22.Delivery will be via a blended combination of face-to-face and 'e' learning

The Service's Schedule of Fees for the 2021/22 Academic Year

5. A transparent schedule of fees is required to ensure that adults within Nottinghamshire are treated fairly by each delivery partner within the service provider network. It is proposed that the **standard** hourly tuition fee for community learning programmes for adults not qualified for fee remission should be maintained at £4.50 per hour. The service may decide to waive fees as appropriate to ensure that delivery supports Nottinghamshire residents who face the impact of the Covid-19 economic shocks. The proposed schedule of fees for 2021/22 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

The Service's Supply Chain Arrangements

6. As Inspire learning (via Nottinghamshire County Council) intends to sub-contract a proportion of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) non-formula funded community and family learning provision for the 2021/22 academic year, Inspire Learning needs to publish an annual statement of our supply chain arrangements on our website in order to comply with the ESFA requirements. Our intended approach to supply chain arrangements for 2021/22 is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

Other Options Considered

7. No other options have been considered.

Reason for Recommendations

8. The recommendations are made to ensure effective spend of the ESFA grant against relevant government and Nottinghamshire County Council priorities and to set a fair fees policy.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

10. The anticipated 2021/22 Community Learning funding of £2.7 million and the Study Programme of £1.3 million will be fully utilised delivering the services set out in this report.

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

11. The service fully supports fundamental British values, the Prevent agenda and all forms of safeguarding for all its learners and staff. To this end the service has arranged a series of training sessions for staff and subcontracted providers in 2021/22 academic year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee:

1) Considers the performance and outcomes during the 2019/20 academic year and if there is any further information Committee Members require.
2) Approves the service's plan for the 2021/22 academic year.
3) Approves the service's plan for use of the Education and Skills Funding Agency funding in the 2021/22 academic year.
4) Approves the schedule of fees for the 2021/22 academic year (Appendix 1).
5) Approves the supply chain arrangements for the 2021/22 academic year (Appendix 2).

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Ian Bond, Inspire Director of Learning, Tel: 0115 977 2875 E: ian.bond@inspireculture.org.uk

Constitutional Comments (CEH 21/06/2021)

14. The recommendations fall within the remit of Communities Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments [RWK 21/06/2021]

15. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report. The anticipated 2021/22 Community Learning funding of £2.7 million and the Study Programme of £1.3 million will be fully utilised delivering the services set out in this report

Background Papers and Published Documents

- None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All.

APPENDIX 1

INSPIRE LEARNING FEES APPROACH FOR 2021/2022

1. **COVERAGE:** this fees approach covers activity classified as Adult Education Budget Community Learning, funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and sub-contracted to Nottinghamshire County Council/Inspire Learning for delivery in Nottinghamshire. Family Learning programmes (Wider Family Learning, Family English, Mathematics and Language) and programmes for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) contracted to Nottinghamshire County Council/Inspire Learning for delivery in Nottinghamshire will be **free** of charge. In addition, this policy also applies to the fees established by the ESFA for accredited provision which must follow the national regulations (the fees policy for the 2021/22 academic year were published in April 2021).

2. **IMPLEMENTATION DATE:** this policy will take effect from 1st August 2021.

3. **TUITION FEE:** the hourly charge for Community Learning Employability and Health and Wellbeing themed courses will be £4.50 per hour. The collection method is at the discretion of the Community Learning provider. Learners who pay tuition fees will also be charged examination fees if relevant to the course of learning. Exemptions/remissions in respect of course fees also apply to examination fees, if appropriate. The regulations covering how charges for accredited courses are applied vary and are published by the ESFA in their annual fee's guidance. Where appropriate, a deposit will be required to secure a place on a course for both fee paying and fee remitted learners.

4. **ADMINISTRATION FEE**: A £5 administration fee will be charged to <u>all</u> learners undertaking an accredited course to contribute to the cost of examination registration and issuing of certificates. NB learners eligible for remitted tuition fees <u>will not</u> be exempt from the administration charge.

5. **EXEMPTIONS:** the following provision within Community Learning will be exempt from fees:

   - **Customised Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD):** discrete provision for LLDD cohorts will be exempt from fees. Individual members of the LLDD cohort enrolling on Community Learning courses will be charged fees unless they are covered by one of the remissions detailed under section 6, below.

   - **Discrete Courses for Volunteers:** prior approval for remission is required from the Learning Director.

   - **'E' Learning provision** that may be 'experimental' in nature and which it would be inappropriate to charge fees for in the Covid-19 circumstances.

6. **REMISSIONS:** learners in receipt of the following benefits will be eligible for fee remission:

   - **Universal Credit**

   - **Income based Job Seekers Allowance (not contribution based)**

   - **Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support (not Single Person's Discount)**

   - **Employment Support Allowance**

- **Income Support**

- **Incapacity Benefit**

- **Working Tax Credit**

- **Pension Credit (not savings credit)**

- **Unwaged Dependents** of those in receipt of the above benefits.

- **Identified elements of Universal Credit**

All benefits claimants will be required to provide evidence of their benefit status to qualify for fee remission.

7. **DISCRETIONARY REMISSIONS:** there are some categories of learners, for example but not exclusively: foster carers; young adults leaving care; travellers; the homeless; and hostel dwellers, who, whilst not necessarily in receipt of benefits, are clearly unable to contribute to the cost of their learning. In such instances, Inspire Learning may agree discretionary fee remission to groups of learners or individual learners without the prior consent of the ESFA. Records of all such discretionary remissions will be retained. This category of discretionary remissions will be actively kept under review to widen participation in the light of Covid-19 and its economic impact.

8. **REFUNDS:** if a Community Learning course is terminated by the provider because, for example, of low numbers, learners who have paid in advance will be refunded for the sessions cancelled by the provider. Individual learners who choose to leave a Community Learning course before its completion will not be eligible for a refund. If an award bearing class is cancelled by a provider, full refunds will be provided to course participants.

9. **AEB Formula Funded Provision:** As mentioned above, the fee remissions for AEB Formula Funded courses will abide by the 2021/22 ESFA Funding Rules: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/985579/AEB_2021_to_2022_funding_rules_v1_FINAL.pdf . In addition, individuals with an income of less than £17,004 will be eligible for fee remission from the cost of their accredited courses using the 'Low Wage Threshold'.

APPENDIX 2

Nottinghamshire County Council – Inspire Learning: Supply Chain Policy for Community Learning

Mission Statement:

"To provide learners with an outstanding learning experience that enables them to make positive changes to their lives"

Introduction

The Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service has a long and successful tradition of contracting out the delivery of its Education and Skills Funding Agency funded Community and Family Learning provision. The Service was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2017 and was awarded an overall effectiveness Grade 2 (Good). The Ofsted inspectors praised the arrangements that Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service has for managing its subcontractors, and they confirmed that management and leadership of these partnerships is good. Subcontracting allows the Service to work with an extensive number of delivery partners and stakeholders to reach into communities and respond to local needs. The Service's model allows smaller voluntary and community organisations, whose main purpose may not be the delivery of learning, to access the resources to deliver learning opportunities to their client group. This model of working is a key element of the Service's successful widening participation strategy which delivers 50% of learning to residents from the 250 most deprived Nottinghamshire super output areas. Opportunities to access funding are available via the Service's website https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/skills-learning/policies-and-provider-information/

Nottinghamshire County Council targets the majority of its resources on those learners with low skills and who have low confidence levels and consequently the Service seeks to work with partners who can deliver high quality learning opportunities that are tailored to meet the needs of these priority groups. The Service arranges regular Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities for all tutors; feedback on these events has been extremely positive. The opportunity to meet people from different organisations but with similar and /or complementary aims is always favourably commented upon.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency's Funding Rules require providers who subcontract their provision to publish a Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy in the interests of transparency. This document lays out Nottinghamshire County Council's policy for subcontracting its Community Learning funding allocation.

Support Provided to Subcontractors

Nottinghamshire County Council seeks to ensure that all learners participating in an ESFA Community and Family Learning funded activity receive a high-quality learning experience. To ensure consistency of approach and to continually improve quality Nottinghamshire County Council has put in place a range of measures and support for its providers, including providing:

- All Relevant Paperwork: Standard paperwork, (e.g. enrolment forms, registers, evaluation forms, Individual Learners' Plans (ILPs), is provided to all subcontractors.

- Guidance: For new providers a meeting is arranged with a staff member from Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service to clarify processes, procedures and expectations. Handbooks are available for Providers and Tutors. All providers are assigned a named Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service contract officer to resolve any queries they may have.

- Data Analysis: Regular electronic data reports are provided to larger providers so that they may assess their progress as the contract progresses.

- Individual Learners' Record (ILR): Inputting of data, processing of the ILR returns and associated validation reports is undertaken by Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service on behalf of the subcontracted providers.

- Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service Web Site: All our policies, procedures and paperwork are available on the Inspire website: https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/skills-learning/policies-and-provider-information/

- Targets: Clear targets are set for each contract confirming: learner numbers to be engaged; and success, attendance and retention rates, so providers know at the outset what quality standards are expected of them.

- Class Visits/Observations: Once a contract is agreed then Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service will arrange a themed class visit and/or observation.

- Curriculum Development: Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service undertakes regular reviews of the subcontractors' curriculum content to ensure that it meets the required quality standards and the Service provides support to providers in developing new ideas and programmes.

- Meetings: Providers and stakeholders benefit from regular locality meetings to review local learning needs and reflect upon the activity that has taken place and identify any gaps in provision. Focused contract meetings with each provider also take place on a termly basis to review progress and offer support.

- CPD: Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service arranges several CPD events for tutors throughout the year to share best practice, address common quality issues that are arising and ensure tutors are aware of key developments in relation to Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service's drive for continual improvement. Events include an annual Tutor conference that is designed to provide subcontractors with access to a forum to share the challenges and targets for the forthcoming year. Tutors are funded to attend identified types of training events throughout the year.

- Resources: Access to resources to support the quality of delivery e.g. Individual Learning Technology (ILT), minor works etc.

- Infrastructure to support provision of AIM awards qualifications: Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service has registered centre status with AIM Awards and provides all the quality assurance mechanisms (as required by AIM) including verification to offer qualifications to learners should this be appropriate. Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service has its own appointed Internal Verifier and Business Support Officer to support this activity.

- News: Regular news for providers and tutors are issued to communicate updates, developments, their contribution towards meeting overall Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service targets and feedback from learners etc.

Tuition Fee Policy

All Providers are required to operate the Nottinghamshire County Council Fees Policy to ensure learners receive an equitable experience in relation to payment for their classes.

List of Subcontractors

This list is provided to the ESFA via the "Subcontractor Declaration Form" in line with the agreed timelines and the aggregated Subcontracting Register is published on the ESFA website. Updates are provided as required. A copy is located at: https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/skills-learning/policies-and-provider-information/

Payment Timelines

Nottinghamshire County Council endeavours to pay all invoices within 28 days of their receipt. The Nottinghamshire County Council Funding Agreement outlines what information is required from each delivery partner to enable invoices to be paid promptly. Where a provider may experience a cash flow problem(s) with this timeline, then alternative arrangements are negotiated on a case-by-case basis. The Service's Funding Agreement stipulates that reductions may be made where targets have not been met.

Retained Funding

With the introduction of Community Learning Trusts in 2014-2015, the funding the Service receives from the Education and Skills Funding Agency is deemed to be a "contribution" to the overall costs. The funding retained centrally by Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service supports the services outlined above; in summary:

- Contract Management
- Quality Assurance and Improvement
- Submission of Individualised Learner Records (ILR), provision of all required paperwork and associated inputting of all data (including the Management Information System (MIS) system)
- Community Engagement
- Professional Development (Providers and Tutors)
- Curriculum Development
- Budgets to support quality improvement e.g. ILT equipment and minor works
- Marketing, promotion and celebration events
- Additional Learner Support

These services are provided for all delivery partners. Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service endeavours to establish a level playing field for both learners and providers and as such the retained fee is common to all contracted providers.

Nottinghamshire County Council will retain no more than 20% of the annual funding available to cover the costs of the above-mentioned functions.

Policy Review

The Nottinghamshire County Council Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy will be reviewed in January 2022 by the Inspire Learning Director.

Publication

The Nottinghamshire Inspire Learning Service's Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy will be published on the Service's web pages: https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/skills-learning/policies-and-provider-information/

July 2021

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to the Communities Committee

19 July 2021

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES

UPDATE ON KEY REGISTRATION SERVICE MATTERS

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to advise the Committee of key matters arising from the work of the County Council's Registration Service for births, deaths and marriages.

Information

Continuity of Registration Services during the Covid-19 Pandemic

2. The Registration Service has maintained its statutory public functions at an appropriate level, in line with government guidance, throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Death registrations continued uninterrupted, including by use of easements permitting registrations by telephone rather than necessarily being face-to-face appointments with the public. Where services have had to involve in-person contact with customers, the office lay-out, occupancy and working arrangements have been subject to rigorous Covid-safe risk assessments and adaptations. Members of the public attending offices have been given detailed advance notice of the measures in place for their safety and the safety of staff. Some services have been reduced or curtailed entirely at times, on government instruction, creating backlogs in birth and marriage registrations, and for ceremonies.

3. Registration Offices are now open for public appointments at:
   - Arnold
   - Basford
   - Eastwood
   - Mansfield
   - Newark
   - Sutton-in-Ashfield
   - West Bridgford

4. The offices that remain closed are those at Beeston, East Retford and Hucknall, and the accommodation formerly available for death registrations within the Bereavement Centre at Kings Mill is no longer available following a review by the hospital.

5. As outlined in this report, the registration service remains under significant pressure in meeting public demand for its services. Capacity to address this has been created by selective and periodic suspension of non-statutory (discretionary) services such as civil funerals, European Union Settlement Scheme and Change of Name Deeds, for example. The work of the registration service has been increased recently with the introduction of Designated Register Office arrangements (outlined at paragraphs 11 and 12 below) and the legalisation of outdoor

marriage and civil partnership ceremonies (see paragraphs 16 to 19 below). A new national 'marriage schedule' system has also increased the overall workload.

Registration of Deaths

6. During the period from 24th March 2020 to 2nd July 2021, the Registration Service registered 9,741 deaths of which 1,570 included Covid-19 as a cause or contributory factor as recorded on the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death. A total of 835 had died in hospital, 608 had died in Care Homes and 127 had died at home or at another place.

7. Many of these deaths were registered under particularly poignant circumstances as family members had been unable to be with their loved-one at end of their life due to Covid restrictions. Our registrars have been widely complimented for their customary sensitive and compassionate support for bereaved families.

Registration of Births

8. During the peak months of the Covid-19 pandemic last year, the government suspended birth registrations altogether. During this time, risk assessment work and office adaptations were completed to allow face-to-face appointment to resume when permitted. The restrictions in then in place meant that, initially, the backlog of birth registrations continued to grow. However, as it became possible to re-open offices and as the number of death registrations receded it became possible to make greater progress, to the extent that the backlog has now been cleared entirely.

9. An existing Service Level Agreement with Nottingham City Council has continued to enable County Council registrars to register the births of babies born within the City Council area to families who live in the County.

Notices of Marriage, including Designated Register Office Status

10. Couples wishing to marry or form a civil partnership are legally required to give formal notice of their intension at least 28 days in advance of the ceremony. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, many planned ceremonies had to be postponed and for a period last year appointments for notices were suspended altogether under government direction.

11. A significant volume of work has been generated by couples re-arranging the date of their ceremony as Covid-restriction were gradually lifted and new notices were given for dates for this summer, next year and beyond. A further volume of work has arisen from the government decision that all registration offices will be able to take notices where one of the couple is from outside the UK.

12. Up to 30th June 2021, if one of the couple was from outside the UK their notices would have to be given at one of a relatively small number of Designated Register Offices across the UK. These included Nottingham City Council but none in Nottinghamshire. Since 1st July this year this service is available in all registration districts and these couples must give notice together at a Designated Register Office in the area where at least one of them lives.

Civil Marriage and Partnership Ceremonies

13. In a normal calendar year the County Council Registration Service would expect to conduct approximately 3,000 marriage and civil partnership ceremonies. However, at times in the past year these could only be provided under exceptional circumstance, such as in cases of

imminent terminal illness. This year, the availability of marriage and civil partnership ceremonies has followed the government's Covid-19 roadmap. From 29th March ceremonies could take place with six guests, and the figure rose to fifteen from 12th April and to thirty from 17th May. The cap on the maximum number of guests who can attend a wedding was removed from 21st June, however social distancing rules remained. Therefore the change did not affect the numbers that could safely attend a ceremony at any County Council Registration Office.

14. All ceremonies during the pandemic have comprised the essential legal elements only. As a consequence, the registration service has been unable to offer the enhanced ceremonies that in other circumstances would have generated income to offset the cost of delivery of the whole of the registration service.

15. In the financial year 2019 / 2020 the service conducted 2,883 marriage and civil partnership ceremonies. In 2020 / 2021 the figure fell to 988. So far in 2021 / 2022 the number of ceremonies completed or booked is 3,140, and this figure is expected to increase as further Covid relaxations are confirmed.

Outdoor Civil Wedding and Partnership Ceremonies

16. In June this year, the government introduced temporary permission for civil ceremonies to take place outdoors from July 2021 to April 2022 and announced a consultation to consider if the changes should become permanent. This will enable a larger number of guests to attend in a covid-safe environment. Hitherto, it had been required that ceremonies at premises approved for civil ceremonies took place inside a room or within a permanent structure.

17. The changes to legalise outdoor civil marriages and civil partnerships (to take place within the grounds of approved premises) were introduced by means of amendments to the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005. The guidance to registrars included that venues should be encouraged to have contingency arrangements in place in case guests need to move inside due to inclement weather. However, the number of people the venue can safely accommodate inside is based on fire safety and the Covid-19 risk assessment of the venue. Consequently, the indoor ceremony room may not be able to accommodate all of the guests attending for an outdoor ceremony.

18. Guidance to venues makes clear that they must discuss any proposed outdoor proceedings with the registration service before arranging any such proceedings. The Local Registration Service is required to ensure that outdoor ceremonies take place in a location that is seemly and dignified, and that there will be public access and signage for guests.

19. The new permission applies to premises already approved for civil ceremonies, and so the decision does not affect the number of different places where ceremonies can take place. In Nottinghamshire at present there are 69 premises that have been licensed by the County Council Registration Service. The question of the types of location where civil marriage and partnership ceremonious may take place was among a set of possible changes considered by a public consultation undertaken by the Law Commission last year to inform future changes to marriage law.

National Registrars Day – 1st July

20. The 'National Registrars Day' took place on Thursday 1st July and offered the opportunity to mark the achievements of the registration service and to thank staff for their work during the Covid-19 pandemic. Registrars continued to provide vital public services throughout the pandemic, including the registration of more than 1,500 local Covid-19 deaths.

21. Councillor Cottee sent an email to all registration staff on the morning of 1st July offering his thanks to registration staff and an acknowledgement of the importance of their work to the people they serve. On the same day Councillor Smith visited Registration Offices in Mansfield and Newark to pass on his appreciation in person to the staff there. Managers across the service facilitated Covid-safe activities at registration offices to thank their staff.

Other Options Considered

22. None.

Reason for Recommendation

23. To update the Committee on this area of work, which is contained within its remit.

Statutory and Policy Implications

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

25. There are no financial implications in so far as the costs associated with provision of the services described in this report are covered by statutory fees. However, due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic it has not been possible to offer the enhanced services that would otherwise offset the cost of statutory services.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

1) Notes the update on key registration service matters and considers if further reports are required on the topics listed.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Robert Fisher, Group Manager for Emergency Planning and Registration, Tel: 0115 9773681

Constitutional Comments [CEH 30/06/2021]

26. The recommendation falls within the remit of Communities Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments [RWK 01/07/2021]

27. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to the Communities Committee

19 July 2021

Agenda Item:8

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES

UPDATE ON KEY TRADING STANDARDS AND COMMUNITIES MATTERS

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee on key Trading Standards and Communities matters, including the role the Service continues to play in the County Council's response to the Covid-19 emergency.

Information

TRADING STANDARDS

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021

2. These Regulations replace previous Coronavirus Regulations and bring into force the roadmap out of lockdown. Trading Standards (TS) along with colleagues from district council Environmental Health (EH) Services have responsibility for ensuring that businesses comply with the relevant requirements that are contained within each of the steps. By working in partnership, a number of businesses have been supported to re-open in compliance with the requirements of Step 3 without the need for enforcement action.

Preventing Fraud Against The Vulnerable

3. Officers have carried out a training session to both internal and external agencies - Victim Care, The Flexible Response Service, The Maximising Independence Service and Social Workers who have recently joined the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Adult Deaf and Visual Impairment Service. This session was specifically designed to increase awareness of scams/doorstep crime for those agencies that have regular contact with vulnerable residents.

4. A resident in Mansfield has been assisted who has previously lost money to a phone scam. The resident continued to be targeted by unwanted calls following this incident, causing undue stress so successful support has been given to change the settings on their phone to block unwanted calls.

5. As part of a regional operation into doorstep crime, intelligence analysis has been completed and hotspots identified within the County. Work has been carried out in partnership with relevant members of Nottinghamshire Police to leaflet residential houses within these key areas, providing advice to residents on the prevention of doorstep crime.

6. Contact has also been made with residents who have reported a previous doorstep crime incident (December 2020 – February 2021). This work is ongoing but out of the residents that have been contacted to date, 84% of residents have fed back that the information provided to them by Trading Standards was instrumental in giving them confidence to protect themselves. Two residents in particular stated that since the original incident, they had received a further knock at the door, but they had both turned the doorstep caller away.

Food Safety

7. Trading Standards officers have taken some formal samples of chocolate bars from a producer in Nottinghamshire and sent them to the Public Analyst for testing. This was following a complaint about an allergic reaction to the bars elsewhere in the country. Substantial quantities of milk were found, with the source of the contamination thought to be the "dairy free vegan chocolate" used to cover the bars. As allergic reactions can cause death, TS have been supporting the Food Standards Agency to implement a product recall. The products have now been removed from sale to the general public.

Product Safety

8. Ensuring that products available on the market in Nottinghamshire are safe for residents is a priority for Trading Standards. The Service achieves this, through advising and enabling businesses to comply with relevant product safety requirements and taking enforcement action where necessary.

9. Trading Standards has now completed "Phase 4" of the market surveillance project checking the safety of face coverings and hand sanitisers offered for sale to Nottinghamshire consumers. Officers have re-visited premises in the County which were found to have offered non-compliant face coverings and hand sanitisers for sale in phase 2 and phase 3 of the project. These re-visits have shown that the level of compliance in the market for face coverings and hand sanitiser products has improved considerably. This can be seen at distributor level; where the visits for this project have been focused and also at wholesaler/ manufacturer level, indirectly as a result of Trading Standards intervention with the distributor and also from direct communication during previous phases.

10. The project has successfully raised awareness and understanding amongst businesses in Nottinghamshire and beyond, on safety requirements. Non-compliant products have been removed from the market and ineffective, mis-described products found in previous phases claiming to provide false levels of protection are no longer available, thereby reducing the spread of the virus by unknowing consumers.

11. In the last year (2020-2021) the Trading Standards service has removed 8764 unsafe products from the consumer marketplace. The majority of items/products removed from sale or prevented from entering the market were hand sanitising products and PPE/face coverings that were found to be unsafe, incorrectly labelled or non-compliant with the essential safety requirements.

12. Included within the figure above, the Service has also secured the removal from the marketplace of a number of unsafe toys, including those posing a risk of choking, strangulation and also some found to contain high levels of phthalates (chemicals that have been linked to negative health impacts):

Unsafe child bracelet – potential choking hazard	17
Girl Beautiful and Sweet Fashion dolls – high levels of phthalates	10

Sensory ribbon toy – safety issue 56

13. The Service has also supported a Nottinghamshire business who had become aware they had placed 140 potentially unsafe wheelchair wheels onto the market. On assessment of the information it was considered that there was the potential for the product to cause injury to vulnerable consumers, so following advice from TS, the business made the decision to recall the product and contact all customers to notify them of the potential safety issue. The product has subsequently been redesigned.

14. A joint operation with colleagues from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and Nottinghamshire Police has also taken place on a garage in Mansfield. Physical safety checks were completed on the cars for sale on the forecourt and their systems of selling to consumers examined. All appeared to be in order on the day.

Illegal Tobacco Controls

15. The Service continues to tackle the problem of the supply of illegal tobacco products within the County and has recently started to take part in a nationally funded operation that will continue at least until the end of the 2021-22 financial year. The project is aimed at reducing the availability of illegal tobacco products on the streets via disruption activities.

16. From 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 the Service seized nearly 5000 products with a retail value of nearly £43,500 and has a number of ongoing investigations and pending prosecutions. However, since March 2021, 19 inspections have been undertaken with only £950 of illegal products seized. The lack of availability of product at present is believed to be due to HMRC making significant progress in disrupting the supply chain at entry into the UK.

Environmental Weight Restrictions (EWRs)

17. Further enforcement work has been conducted across the County where a weight restriction is in force on a particular road. This is on behalf of Highways colleagues, to prevent heavy goods vehicles using roads which are considered unsuitable and dangerous for them to use.

18. 45 operations took place in the year 2020/2021, with a further 10 completed since 1st April 2021. 728 Lorry Watch reports have been processed (2020-2021) with a further 209 this financial year.

Petroleum Enforcement Authority

19. Trading Standards are responsible for making sure that petrol sites do not cause a risk to the public or the environment. The Service has carried out inspections of plans and onsite visits for new petrol stations and the modernisation of existing petrol stations. Work will be ongoing to ensure that petroleum is stored and dispensed safely.

20. The Service has also carried out 3 Environmental Search Requests this year for building developers to check if there has ever been petroleum or fuel stored on the site. This is important work to prevent harm to the public and the environment.

Investigations & Legal Update

21. On 24th May 2021, legal proceeding began in Nottingham Crown Court in relation to a criminal investigation being conducted by the Trading Standards Regional Investigation Team, which is hosted by Nottinghamshire County Council.

22. The case relates to a series of businesses and individuals alleged to be involved in a large scale scam whereby false claims were made about an exterior wall coating product. Victims allege to have been targeted by the business and told lies about the energy saving benefits that can be achieved by having the wall coating applied to their homes. The business operated across the East Midlands and beyond. A large number of victims have been identified and the detriment levels uncovered are suspected to run into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

23. Eight suspects now face criminal charges for their involvement in counts of fraud and financial crimes covered by the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

24. A Crown Court trial was due to commence on the 7th June 2021, involving a trader who made false representations to customers about building work he carried out on their properties. The case has been moved due to the listing commitments at Court and their reduced capacity during the Covid 19 situation.

25. A Nottinghamshire builder has pleaded guilty to charges in relation to unsatisfactory building work he has carried out on customers properties. He is due to be sentenced at the Nottingham Crown Court on the 29th July 2021.

26. A further case was listed for an initial hearing in the Nottingham Crown Court on the 21st June 2021, where four traders are being charged with fraudulent trading, including targeting vulnerable consumers, making false representations about building work and over charging customers. One trader pleaded guilty whilst the other 3 pleaded not guilty and trial is set for March 22

27. A man has been charged with the illegal landing of a puppy. He was due to appear in the magistrate's court on the 18th January 2019, failed to attend, and an arrest warrant has been issued. This is still outstanding. He is charged with offences under the Rabies Act and fraud.

28. A Lincolnshire farmer has been charged with theft of sheep, animal by product breaches, and failure to maintain records of animal movements. He has pleaded not guilty to the offences. Further offences have also come to light. The 2 cases have been joined together and he should have been due for trial on the 28th June 2021, unfortunately the back log in the court system has meant that the case has been put back until October 2021.

29. One illegal tobacco case was listed for trial in June but unfortunately the back log in the court system has meant that the case has been put back until October 2021. Another case is listed for trial in August 2021. One case involves the sale of cigarettes and hand rolling sold from retail premises and the 2nd is in relation to a home seller. The products do not meet the packaging and safety requirement for cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco sold in the UK.

30. Two car traders are currently in the court system. A trial is listed on the 1st November 2021, in the Nottingham Magistrates Court for a car dealer who has sold an unroadworthy car and has made false claims about another vehicle. The 2nd case is in relation to vehicles with altered mileages and the sale of unroadworthy vehicles. This is due for trial in February 2022.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Update

31. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) gives the Council the power to undertake covert surveillance in relation to certain investigations. There is a strict authorisation process set out in the legislation; applications are considered by senior officers before final approval is given by the Magistrates Court. The Council is required to submit an

annual statistical return to the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) on the number of authorisations made.

32. The Council is also able to obtain communications data through the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN), an expert provider accredited by the IPCO and the Home Office. NAFN submits the annual statistical return to the IPCO on the number of submissions made by the Council. The next IPCO inspection will be in 2022 .

33. These powers given to officers are extensive and there is an expectation that the Committee will be engaged in scrutinising their use. A programme of monitoring and review is set out in the Council's RIPA policy and guidance. Since January 2021 there has been two new directed surveillance applications, in relation to the sales of illegal tobacco and are part of ongoing investigations. There have been no communications data requests.

Support to Businesses

34. The Commercial Services team within the Service continue to provide support to Primary Authority businesses to meet the continually evolving challenges that Covid-19 brings to the trading environment. The team is also providing advice and support to businesses in relation to legislative changes resulting from the impact of the EU Exit.

35. The team are continually looking at ways to reinvigorate and strengthen connections with Economic Development colleagues and with the D2N2 Growth Hub to increase business awareness of the support the Service can offer.

New Food Business Support

36. The Service is anticipating that a significant proportion of the Country's recovery and growth following the pandemic will be driven by small businesses. Various enquiries over recent months have been received from businesses looking to grow and expand, including a number from people looking to start up small food businesses preparing a variety of food products. The Service has been able to give them general advice on food labelling, compositional requirements, allergens controls and the use of appropriate food contact materials. All the businesses are advised that should they need more tailored advice that the Service's commercial offering is available.

Income Update

37. Trading Standards had an income generation target of £729k for 2020/21. During the last financial year the Service's commercial services activities were heavily impacted by Covid-19 and the lockdown on the UK business sector. Other areas of income generation across the Service were also impacted by the constraints that the Covid-19 restrictions brought on our regulatory activities. As a result, the year-end achievement against the income target was lower than in the two previous years when the target had been exceeded. At the financial year end the Service had achieved £550k income against the £729k target, but this was offset by funding of £177k from the Central Covid grant.

38. The income generation target remains at £729k for the 2021/22 financial year. The aspiration is that as the economy recovers from the economic impact of Covid-19 lockdowns there will be new opportunities to grow our commercial offer to businesses. Managers also continue to explore all opportunities to secure additional external funding to support the work done by the Service.

COMMUNITIES

39. The Communities Team is a specialist and flexible resource that supports the delivery of the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) and other community grant funding streams. It has responsibility for co-ordinating the Council's approach to providing community safety.

40. This includes the facilitation of the Safer Nottinghamshire Board, acting as the accountable body for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and delivering the outcomes required by the Council for supporting communities.

41. The Team has a significant role to play in tackling the challenges facing our communities. This requires innovative ways of thinking, new approaches to problem solving, and more effective ways of partnership working and influencing stakeholders to maximise total resource available to achieve better outcomes. Outlined below are some of the work areas the Team are currently delivering.

Safer Streets Fund, Newark

42. In November the Committee was informed about the Safer Street Funding for Newark. This is £550k of Home Office funding that was awarded, through the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner, for preventative work in two areas of Newark to tackle crimes such as burglary and bike theft.

43. The funded phase of this work, which delivered interventions in the target areas of Chatham Court and Northgate such as home security improvements, bike marking and CCTV, has now ended. Partners will continue to work together in the area to sustain the impact of the programme which residents reported made them feel safer. One factor contributing to these increased feelings of safety was the improved streetlighting that was delivered by Via.

44. The Communities Team will continue to take an active role in community capacity building and engagement efforts in the area. This includes providing Community Organising training for residents in the target areas and helping to sustain Residents and Neighbourhood Watch groups.

Safer Nottinghamshire Board

45. The Safer Nottinghamshire Board continues to bring together Chief Officers from across the partnership landscape to enable a Countywide focus on crime and community safety. Chaired by the Nottinghamshire County Council Chief Executive, the priorities for the Board include Reducing Reoffending, Youth Crime Reduction, Domestic and Sexual Abuse, Hate Crime, Modern Slavery and Serious Acquisitive Crime. The Board also provides a platform for Covid-19 recovery specific community safety issues to be discussed.

46. Over the last year the Board has taken steps to further improve its effectiveness, including agreeing a revised performance management approach. Ensuring that the right information is available at all levels of the partnership to inform decisions, drive actions and enable strategic intent to be tracked through to operational delivery are the key aims of the new process.

47. Central to these efforts is the work with Community Safety Partnerships to ensure a clear 'golden thread' between the discussions and decisions of the Board and operational delivery in the communities where crime issues are most prevalent.

Community Support Hub Volunteers: Test Kit Drop off and Collection Task (Backpack Model)

48. The Team, with the support of staff from the Red Cross and REACT, have trained 36 volunteers to drop off and collect test kits and ensure they had the all the information needed if called to assist. So far, through this co-ordination of volunteers, 6 residents have been supported. The test kit drop-off and collection service has been expanded to support surge testing across the County, 10 households have been supported. The Communities Team have been working closely with the Public Health Team to support these requests.

Tackling Loneliness & Digital Exclusion

49. The team are supporting the expansion of Age UK Nottingham & Nottinghamshire's 'One Step at a Time' (OSAAT) initiative, developed in response to an identified need to help people that have become anxious, frail and/or afraid to leave their house due to the COVID pandemic. The team have continued to listen to and support several residents to set up groups and initiatives aimed at supporting those affected by loneliness.

50. Age UK Nottingham & Nottinghamshire, following some initial work by the Communities Team, have also agreed to expand its ClickSilver referral pathway to now include all vulnerable Nottinghamshire residents aged 18 and over (previously 49 and over). This is a hugely beneficial because it now means that younger people who are also affected by loneliness and need digital support can be included.

51. ClickSilver, (run by Business in the Community), provides a mentor to provide 4 weeks of ICT support, training and friendship to help people access online medical appointments, shopping, information and general help with technology.

Community Friendly Nottinghamshire

52. A core area of the work of the Communities Team is the delivery of the Community Friendly Nottinghamshire (CFN) strand, which continues to connect with residents and stakeholders across the County. The aim of this work is empowering, training and inspiring resident-led community activity. This include being a central point of contact for the Coronavirus Community Support Hub.

53. The team have delivered 20 Community Friendly Nottinghamshire (CFN), workshops, with 122 residents and 154 stakeholders trained to utilise the Community Organising approach to get community led outcomes. During the Coronavirus lockdown these workshops have been adapted to the virtual 'MS Teams' format utilising breakout rooms for group activities. Officers has now also established a growing peer support Network who meet every 6 weeks online.

Health and Wellbeing – Countywide and Corporate

54. The Team continues to work with NCC Communication colleagues to promote community spirit across the county by encouraging residents and NCC staff to get involved with and organise Big Lunches and the Great Get Together events. These events are aimed at tackling loneliness and isolation, celebrating community connections, and helping neighbours get to know one another a little better.

55. The team led on the **NCC Corporate Wellbeing Challenge** which aimed to increase the fitness, mental health and general wellbeing of Nottinghamshire County Council employees whilst raising money for the Chairman's charity 'My Sight'. This year the challenge was to

collectively run or walk the distance from Lands' end to John O'Groats (874 miles) in April. However, due to the overwhelming interest, over 100 participants completed this distance within the first week. The challenge was extended to cover the distance to the Egyptian Pyramids (5000 miles), which was then completed in the fourth week. Eventually the participants reached Casablanca (8639 miles) and over £2000 has so far been raised for My Sight.

56. Many of the participants stated how the challenge helped motivate them to be more mindful of their wellbeing, (especially important as most people have been working from home) and enjoyed the cross department sharing of photos, walking routes and positive comments. From this cross departmental collaboration, many new ideas for maintaining good health and wellbeing are being discussed and explored.

Armed Forces Work

57. The new administration has made a commitment to developing this area of work over the next four years with the appointment of an Armed Forces Champion; Councillor Girling and an Armed Forces Advocate; Councillor Lee. A detailed work programme will be presented to this Committee in September to take this commitment forward.

Victoria Embankment World War One Memorial

58. Following the recent vandalism of the War Memorial the memorial contractors, a local contractor has been able to polish out the scratching and return the memorial to its original condition.

Other options considered

59. None

Reason for Recommendations

60. To ensure appropriate political oversight of key Trading Standards and Communities matters, particulary with regards to covert techniques covered by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.

Statutory and Policy Implications

61. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

62. There are no financial implications arising from this report apart from the income target mentioned in paragraphs 37-38.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) That Members consider the updates and highlight any actions required.
2) That Members consider the actions undertaken by Trading Standards under the Regulatory and Investigatory Powers Act.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Mark Walker, Group Manager for Trading Standards and Communities (0115 9772173) or Fiona Needham, Acting Head of Trading Standards (0115 9773046)

Constitutional Comments (KK 30/06/2021)

63. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Communities Committee.

Financial Comments [RWK 01/07/2021]

64. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All.

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Communities Committee

19 July 2021

Agenda Item:9

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEES

WORK PROGRAMME
Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Committee's work programme for 2021-2022

Information

2. The County Council requires each committee to maintain a work programme. The work programme will assist the management of the committee's agenda, the scheduling of the committee's business and forward planning. The work programme will be updated and reviewed at each pre-agenda meeting and committee meeting. Any member of the committee is able to suggest items for possible inclusion.

3. The attached work programme has been drafted in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and includes items which can be anticipated at the present time. Other items will be added to the programme as they are identified.

4. As part of the transparency introduced by the new committee arrangements, each committee is expected to review day to day operational decisions made by officers using their delegated powers. The Committee may wish to commission periodic reports on such decisions where relevant.

Other Options Considered

5. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

6. To assist the committee in preparing its work programme.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the Committee's work programme be agreed, and consideration be given to any changes which the Committee wishes to make.

Marje Toward
Service Director, Governance and Employees

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Noel McMenamin, Democratic Services Officer on 0115 993 2670

Constitutional Comments (HD)

8. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (KRP)

9. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All

Place Department Committee Forward Plan – Communities Committee (C)

Month	Committee	Report Title	Report Author
19 July			
July	C	Update on Key Trading Standards and Communities Matters	Mark Walker/Fiona Needham
July	C	Inspire Learning report	Peter Gaw/Ian Bond, Inspire
July	C	LGA Peer Review of Libraries Provision	Mick Allen
July	C	Cultural Services Strategy Refresh	Mick Allen
July	C	Update on Key Registration Service Matters	Rob Fisher
Sept	C	Modern Slavery Impact Statement	Cathy Harvey
Sept	C	Hate Crime Policy	Cathy Harvey
Sept	C	Community Engagement Strategy (deferred from July)	Mark Walker/Katrina Crookdake
Sept	C	Update on Key Emergency Planning Matters (deferred from June)	Rob Fisher
Sept	C	Armed Forces Strategy	Mark Walker
Sept	C	Community Fund	Mark Walker
Oct	C	Finance and performance report (Q1- delayed from July due to changed which need to be made on BMS)	Chris Williams/Stephanie Shardlow
Oct	C	Cultural Services Strategy Update & Onward Recommendations	Mick Allen
Nov	C	Registration Fees for 2022-2023 to 2025-2026	Rob Fisher
Nov	C	Overview Report Archive Service (with potential follow up visit)	Peter Gaw
Dec	C	Finance and Performance Report Q2	Chris Williams/Steph Shardlow
Dec	C		
Jan	C		
Feb	C		
Mar	C	Finance and performance report Q3	Chris Williams/Steph Shardlow
Mar	C		
Apr	C		
Apr	C		

May	C		
May	C		
Jun	C		
Jun	C		
Jul	C	Finance and performance report Q4	Chris Williams/Steph Shardlow