

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH**CULTURE, LEARNING AND LIBRARIES – INSPIRE: DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2024/2025****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Place Select Committee on the development of Inspire in the delivery of cultural, learning and library services across Nottinghamshire and to share its plans for 2024/2025.

Information**Context**

2. Inspire – Culture, Learning and Libraries (Midlands) was established as an independent Community Benefit Society with charitable status in June 2015 and commenced the delivery of a range of cultural and learning services on behalf of the County Council from the 1st of April 2016. The change in operating model was part of the Council's 'Redefining Your Council' strategic vision and identified as part of the 'Strategy for Nottinghamshire's Libraries,' approved by the Council in December 2011.
3. Inspire has a contractual arrangement with the Council which outlines the scope and range of services to be delivered on the Council's behalf. A detailed services specification and performance mechanism has been established and is reviewed and reported on to the Council on a quarterly basis.
4. A high level of service delivery has been maintained and further developed since April 2016. This report and an accompanying presentation by the Chief Executive Officer of Inspire will inform members of progress and allow them to note and consider plans for 2024/25.

Priorities 2024/2025**Public Libraries Contractual Delivery**

5. Inspire will continue to deliver the service outlined in the contractual agreement with the County Council. This includes access to services (via open hours across library buildings, telephone and online). The core offer, covering Reading, Information/Digital, Heritage, Culture, Health and Learning, will be delivered in line with the current libraries' strategy and national universal offers.
6. Specific service offers are linked to the level of libraries outlined in the current Libraries strategy and customised in the context of, and demand from, local communities.

Areas of Future Development

7. Most activities and projects are long-term and will continue to be delivered into 2024/25. Appendix A provides a detailed summary of the key service area actions for this period.

Impact

8. Inspire has a mission to 'inspire people to read, learn and enjoy culture,' and has eight key outcomes designed to make a positive impact for individuals, communities, and schools, enabling them to:
- i. enjoy and value reading.
 - ii. achieve their learning potential.
 - iii. discover, value and share the Nottinghamshire story.
 - iv. live an active, long and healthy life.
 - v. engage with and participate in arts, music and cultural activity.
 - vi. be better informed and more knowledgeable.
 - vii. be a part of supportive, safe and thriving community.
 - viii. able to participate in increased economic growth and employment.
9. Outcomes for individuals can be significant and life changing, many and varied, from someone gaining a qualification to access a university course, making an online application to gain employment, preventing debilitating loneliness, helping a child learn to read, attending a course for the first time and making a healthy choice as a result of accessing a health hub.

Finance

10. The Council's budget for the contract with Inspire in 2023/2024 is £10.9m. As an independent organisation and employer, Inspire has been able to drive through greater efficiencies and has been flexible enough within the first five-year contract period (2016-2021) to manage financial pressures without reduction of service provision.
11. Inspire achieved £1m savings as it went live in April 2016. This included a £500,000 saving from the change to charitable status of the new organisation. Overall, the initial contract period delivered a total of £1.2m of savings for the Council.

Entrepreneurial Dividend/Grants/Continuous Improvement

12. In 2018 Inspire became an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) to deliver cultural programmes through the library network aimed at children and young people. Inspire was awarded £1.25M between 2018 – 2023.
13. In 2023 Inspire was awarded NPO status for a further 3 years to continue to develop an expanded cultural offer. Inspire was awarded £1.5M between 2023-2026).
14. Recent additional grant funding gained has included –
- £165,000 ACE National Lottery project Grant to develop and support the Able Orchestra.
 - £262,000 DCMS/ACE Volunteering Futures Fund to provide a creative volunteering programme for young people.
 - £40,000 – ACE National Lottery project Grant – "I AM A READER" project.

- £ 175,000 – DCMS Libraries Improvement Fund – Village Hubs – 6 small libraries reconfigured following consultation with local communities to meet local needs.

Governance

15. The independent Inspire board has been operating since April 2016. The board has established committees to scrutinise and support the development of the organisation. These include Music; Culture and Heritage; Learning and Skills; Finance and Audit; Staffing and Standards. The County Council has two nominated places on the board.
16. Inspire continues to gain from the wide-ranging skills and experience of board members.

Capital Investment

17. The council has also provided match funding capital contributions to Libraries Improvement Funding projects.
18. Towns funding in Ashfield has enabled the development of Kirkby library as a learning centre and will create a learning centre at Sutton library during 2024.
19. Towns funding in Broxtowe has enabled the development of new learning spaces at Stapleford library and will during 2024 enhance the exterior of the library façade to improve the street scene.

Customer and Learner Satisfaction

20. Across all service areas there is a regular process of gaining satisfaction levels and feedback. Complaints are very low and outnumbered by compliments, both are reported to the Council monthly. Customer and learner satisfaction levels (good or very good) target of 90% is set within the performance specification.

Relationship with the Council and Stakeholders

21. The Council has a good working relationship with the organisation and maintains two nominated places on its main board. The Council also has board observer status for senior officers.
22. The Local Government Association and Arts Council England peer review of Library services undertaken in February 2021 highlighted the good relationship with the council and opportunities to ensure the service and wider Inspire services can further deliver council priorities and objectives.
23. An agreed communications protocol between the Council and Inspire was approved by the former Culture Committee and is working well.
24. Other funders, including the Arts Council England, Education Funding Agency, and Skills Funding Agency, continue to engage in a positive way with Inspire.
25. Good partnership relationships have been developed with a range of partner organisations, including:
- ABL Health
 - ATTFE and REACH

- BBC Radio Nottingham
- BFI / Broadway Cinema
- First Arts Creative People and Places
- Fun Palaces
- Lakeside Arts University of Nottingham
- Libraries Unlimited and Suffolk Libraries
- Nottingham City Libraires
- Nottingham Playhouse
- Nottingham Trent University
- NYCGB
- The Harley Foundation
- The Royal Concert Hall Nottingham
- UNESCO City of Literature
- West Notts College
- York Explore

Other Options Considered

26. No other options were considered.

Reasons for Recommendations

27. The recommendation is made for the purpose of enabling the Committee to note and consider Inspire's activities, and development plan for 2024/2025.

Statutory and Policy Implications

28. 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

29. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Implications for Residents

30. This report sets out the priorities for the delivery of cultural, learning and library services for Nottinghamshire residents and service-users for 2024/2025.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the Committee notes and considers the activities undertaken by Inspire alongside proposals for the future development and delivery of cultural, learning and library services in 2024/25.

**Councillor Scott Carlton,
Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health**

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

Constitutional Comments (LPW 11/12/2023)

31. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Place Select Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (PAA29 11/12/2023)

32. 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.

- Launch of Inspire – report to Culture Committee 19 April 2016
- Inspire communications and marketing activity protocol – report to Culture Committee 1 November 2016
- Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire development update and first year review – report to Communities and Place Committee 22 June 2017
- Inspire review and Forward Plan 2020 - October 2017
www.inspireculture.org.uk/uploads/documents/IAR_for_web.pdf
- Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire development update and second year review – report to Communities and Place Committee 14 June 2018
- Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire development update and third year review – report to Communities and Place Committee 4 April 2019
- Inspire Inspiration and impact review of 2018/19 - October 2019
<https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/about-us/annual-review/>
- Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire development update and fourth year review – report to Communities and Place Committee 3 September 2020
- Culture, Learning and Libraries – Inspire development update and fifth year review – report to Communities and Place Committee 10th June 2021
- Inspire Annual Review 2022- 23 – October 2023 (digital only)
www.inspireculture.org.uk/about-us/annual-review-2022-23/

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All.