

**22 June 2017****Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING, RESOURCES  
AND CULTURE****CULTURE, LEARNING AND LIBRARIES – INSPIRE: DEVELOPMENT  
UPDATE AND FIRST YEAR REVIEW****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update the Committee on the development of Inspire in the delivery of cultural, learning and library services across Nottinghamshire and its achievements in the first year of operation.

**Information and Advice****Context**

2. Inspire was established as an independent Community Benefit Society in June 2015 and undertook the delivery a range of cultural and learning services on behalf of the County Council from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. The change in operating model was part of the Council's 'Redefining Your Council' strategic vision.
3. There is a contractual arrangement between the Council and Inspire which outlines the scope and range of services to be delivered on its behalf. A detailed services specification and performance mechanism has been established and is reviewed and reported on between the Council and Inspire monthly.
4. Customers and learners have seen no significant change in the level and quality of service delivery.
5. Staff transferred to Inspire on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and are members of the new Society, and have elected a staff member to the Inspire board.
6. In addition to the smooth transfer of staff, senior staff of Inspire have established systems and policies to enable the new organisation to be financially robust, be compliant with legislation, maintain its charitable status, ensure it can meet its contractual agreements and agreed levels of performance.
7. This report informs the Committee of progress since April 2016.

## Review of Year One

### Performance and Quality Assurance

8. Inspire has met the range of performance requirements laid out within the service specification (attached as **Appendix 1**).
9. Inspire has also achieved several external accreditations to validate its performance. These include:
  - **Archives accreditation** – Nottinghamshire Archives service meets the standards as inspected by The National Archives (TNA)
  - **Customer Service Excellence (CSE)** – Inspire wide accreditation to the government's standard
  - **MATRIX** – Inspire wide accreditation to the national Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) standard.

### Finance

10. Inspire achieved £1m savings as it went live in April 2016 including £500,000 from the change to charitable status of the new organisation. Further savings of £350,000 are programmed to be made by March 2018.
11. In addition, Inspire has also made a number of savings and efficiencies within the contract price which reduces the burden on Council funding. This includes costs of pay awards, changes in National Insurance, the apprentice levy, VAT liabilities and one-off pressures that if the services were within the Council would present a financial risk to the Council.
12. Inspire as an independent organisation and employer can drive through greater efficiencies and is flexible enough to manage financial pressures.

### Entrepreneurial dividend / grants / continuous improvement

13. During its first year Inspire has started to develop its approach to attaining greater sustainability to meet the ongoing reductions in Council funding, to enable it to deliver and develop services on behalf of the Council.
14. Staff teams are focussed on cost efficiency and generating new streams of income. Reductions in running costs and smarter procurement have been successful. Further work to enhance and promote meeting space hire across the whole estate is underway. Through interviews with Inspire staff customer service excellence inspectors identified that the new operating model had empowered and motivated staff in new ways.
15. Seeking grant funding to develop and deliver services has resulted, in the first year, in additional one-off investments of over £400,000 in Nottinghamshire, resulting in

additional engagement and training of 2,036 people and working with 31 groups and schools.

16. Bidding for further grants will be pursued within the framework of the strategic aims of the organisation and where greatest impact can be made.

### **Governance**

17. The Inspire board has been operating since April 2016 and following elections is now fully established. The board recently agree to establish a number of sub-committees to support the development of the organisation. These include: Music; Culture and Heritage; Learning and Skills; Finance and Audit; Staffing and Standards and Development.
18. Inspire will continue to gain from the wide-ranging skills and experience of board members.

### **Achievements / Highlights**

19. These are as follows:
  - Archives – national accreditation as an approved place of deposit
  - Awards – a public awards scheme to celebrate achievement
  - Big Draw enhanced with grant funding to 1,500 people and 22 organisations
  - Christmas celebration – over 850 people saw Nottinghamshire young singers perform at the Royal Concert Hall
  - Commissioned rural touring ‘Village Ventures’ and ‘Earth and Fire’ ceramics fair
  - County Youth Arts – Able Orchestra participation in BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall
  - Establish and support community partnership libraries
  - Grant funding to deliver children’s theatre in libraries
  - Membership – over 39,000 people are members of Inspire
  - Music Hub – partnership delivery of music education - eg Big Sing / National Youth Choirs of Great Britain (NYCGB)
  - New external partners – Nottingham Trent University and Nottingham University, The Broadway Cinema
  - Skills service – achieving 68% progression to work or further training
  - Summer Reading Challenge – highest take up ever – 10,696, a 5% increase
  - Website – includes events and course directory, booking and online payment.

### **Customer and Learner satisfaction**

20. Across all services 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.

21. During the first year of operation the following satisfaction levels have been achieved:
- Community Learning - satisfaction score current running total for 2016/17 is 95.1%
  - Education Library Service customer satisfaction score currently 97%
  - Instrumental and Music Teaching customer satisfaction is 93%
  - Archives – overall customer satisfaction score of 95%.
22. Feedback from the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) inspection undertaken in March 2017 indicated high levels of satisfaction and engagement across all Inspire services.

### **Staff Feedback**

23. During the transition process staff were highly engaged in developing the new organisation and its values. The recent CSE and Matrix inspection identified positive feedback and engagement from staff in supporting the new operating model. It also identified a higher level of innovation and desire to ensure the success of the whole organisation. During 2017 a new workforce development strategy will be implemented to support staff and further engage with staff. A new staff forum model will be launched providing staff input into service developments, innovation and problem solving.

### **Relationship with the Council and stakeholders**

24. The Council has a good working relationship with the new organisation and maintains two nominated places on its main board. The Council also has board observer status for senior officers.
25. An agreed communications protocol between the Council and Inspire was approved by Culture Committee and is working well.
26. Other funders, Arts Council England, Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency, have engaged in a positive way with Inspire during its first year.
27. New working relationships have been developed with a range of organisations, including - Nottingham Trent University, First Arts Creative People and Places, The Royal Concert Hall Nottingham, NYCGB, The Harley Foundation, UNESCO City of Literature and BBC Radio Nottingham (book club).

### **Other Options Considered**

28. The report is for noting only.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

29. The report is for noting only.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

30. 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**

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

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

1) That the update on the development of Inspire in the delivery of cultural, learning and library services across Nottinghamshire and its achievements in the first year of operation be noted.

**Derek Higton**  
**Service Director, Commissioning, Resources and Culture**  
**Children, Families and Cultural Services**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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### **Constitutional Comments**

32. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

### **Financial Comments (SS 04/03/17)**

33. There are no 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.

Launch of Inspire – report to Culture Committee on 19 April 2016

Inspire review October 2016  
[https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/documents/148/IAR\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/documents/148/IAR_FINAL.pdf)

Inspire communications and marketing activity protocol – report to Culture Committee on 1 November 2016

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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