



Title of Meeting:	Inspire Board –Minutes
Location:	Teams Meeting
Date:	Tues 19th November 2024
Time:	4 to 6pm
Attendees:	<p>Mark Dorrington – Member Elected Director Vicki Dunstall – Co Opted Director Peter Gaw – Chief Executive Officer, Inspire Jackie Hewlett-Davies – Member Elected Director Margot Madin – Co Opted Director Diana Meale – Member Elected Director Ann Penn – Staff Elected Director John Cottee – County Council Nominated Director (Chair) Pauline Allan – County Council Nominated Director</p>
Invited:	<p>Mick Allen – Group Manager Place Commissioning, NCC Margaret Anderson – Chief Finance Officer, Inspire Kirsty Ellis – Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Inspire Carol Newman – Director of Culture, Inspire Claudine White – NCC Group Manager Carolyn Gallagher – Service Spotlight</p>


Agenda No.	Agenda Subject	Action
1.	<p><u>Service Spotlight on Library Services for Children</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carolyn Gallagher gave a presentation about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> library services for children, covering Bookstart, under 5s sessions, Summer Reading Challenge including volunteering, author events, core offer, work with schools, Letterbox Club. cultural offer, including under 5s music, visual arts (Little Creatives), story and drama (with Nottingham Playhouse); school aged children with artist and author in residence, family concerts, family theatre. DM asked about funding – the cultural offer is ACE NPO funded. 	
2.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Walker – Observer - Interim Service Director, Place & Communities, NCC Aidan La Mola – Commissioner, NCC Katharine Say – Executive Officer, Inspire Leon Dale – Member Elected Director Claudine White introduced herself as the Group Manager now responsible for Cultural Services, currently doing a handover with Mick Allen. 	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspire Virtual Tours to be demonstrated at a future meeting. SB and JHD have discussed Volunteer passport and methods to reduce duplication when signing up. KE confirmed volunteers shouldn't need to re-do training if signing up for a second time. Safeguarding report has been raised with LD as safeguarding lead. Library Ambassador role is part of Board Away Day. Members agreed that the minutes from 17th September 2024 were a true and accurate record and were happy to approve. 	

4.	<p><u>Declaration of Conflicts and Interests</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. 	
5.	<p><u>CEO Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PG presented his report and highlighted some of the many events, activities, results and developments. • There is no dashboard report this month due to KS’s absence and the implementation of the new Library Management System. The report will be circulated when available. • PG highlighted the work at Hucknall Library; new Library Management System which went live two weeks ago – this is currently in process of being fully implemented. • Inspire has implemented a spending and recruitment freeze to try and control this year’s spending. • A range of service reviews are being undertaken, in terms of the offer and the staffing associated with it in order to respond to the medium term financial situation. • Inspire Contract with Notts CC – hoping NCC will confirm a direct award for additional two years until April 2028. The decision is currently going through NCC scrutiny. • Change in Adult Skills Funding –will move to the East Midlands Combined County Authority Bidding for ‘contract for services’ and accredited learning allocation – unknown timeline at the moment and the process is unclear – an ongoing dialogue is taking place. • Board Development Day – there is a pre-away day piece of work for board members. • MD asked around the EMLIBs consortium for the new LMS – Nottingham City, Derbyshire and Derby City, Leicestershire, Rutland and our Education Library Service. • MD asked around why the operational library service wasn’t subject to a review – PG explained that to make any savings we would need to cut services, and this was not required at this time. Archives – we were commissioned to have a look at the service model. The other services don’t balance, and the support services need realigning to the new financial picture. • MD asked around the Health and Wellbeing bid – CN explained about carrying on with Songs and Scones, and visual arts workshops with older people and those with dementia. • MM asked around section 12 – engagement with partners and key stakeholders – are there any possible funding opportunities in there that could come in during 25/26. PG explained that whilst there are opportunities in there, any such schemes would be for additional works but would be small and may make a small contribution to back office costs. MM raised that they could be replacement projects. PG explained that there is a great deal of uncertainty around other project streams, particularly around the EMCCA position. PG explained about the need to do the reviews to ensure that we are sustainable, but there is a balance with new opportunities. We are currently working on a new Learning Strategy to concentrate activity in a number of areas. • VD – asked around the rationale for the contract being directly awarded for two years. PG explained NCC’s procurement decision and MA gave further information around the decision being within procurement rules and enabling the council to be able to consider its future approach to cultural services. <p>The board noted the progress of the organisation and range of issues.</p>	
6.	<p><u>NPO Investment Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CN outlined her paper on NPO and progress on quarter two actions. Particular progress has been made on the library strategy, and the range of activities around green libraries week. • The board discussed the how the organisation is working to develop and progress within the Investment Principles. <p>The board noted the contents of the report.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Library Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter explained that NCC has carried out a piece of work to revise its library strategy and has gone out for consultation. It is currently revising the strategy with the responses. The strategy reaffirms the purpose of the service, and focuses on outcomes and how it 	

	<p>contributes to the council’s overall objectives. There has been a lot of feedback on the tiering, which is being revised accordingly in terms of names.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA added that there has been a good number of responses – 758. People are supportive of the wider strategy, with the tiering having caused confusion. Concern was raised around staff roles and volunteering, which is being clarified in the revised version. Renaming of the tiers will be subject to overview committee which is taking place this week. Due to go to full council 5th December to get it signed off as soon as possible and to commit to the wider library offer provided to communities. • PG clarified that our community partnership libraries are not succeeding, and that Inspire’s approach to volunteering is more about value added. Some reporting of the strategy got conflated with the City’s closures. • MD asked around the implications of the strategy – page 15 – City and County reading strategy with the City of Literature and the opportunities for working with universities. PG explained that we have had early discussions with the City of Literature around doing some work and getting funding, including working with University Of Nottingham mainly about research. <p>The board noted the draft strategy and to note the key actions.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Finance Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA presented her paper, noting the better in year position compared to budget. We have implemented an in year discretionary spending freeze and recruitment freeze. The forecast figures in the accounts include the current pay award offer. She set out the reserves position. • The medium term financial plan is presented, included the service design reviews. The plan is worst case scenario if we don’t take any action. It does include the National Insurance increases, which have been calculated at £397k pressure next year (c£245k re the NCC part of the contract). We are unaware yet of whether we’ll get support from NCC or other funders. There are therefore two scenarios in the paper depending on whether we get support (A or B) with associated deficits. • Inspire pays the Real Living Wage, which had already been factored in. • The paper details the various assumptions that is contained in the scenarios set out within the paper. • PG highlighted how concerned Inspire is around the financials, notwithstanding that the worst case scenarios are set out in the paper. He also highlighted reserves and the need to keep a level, and the impact on cashflow. The national insurance position has added a very significant financial pressure . • MM also expressed her concern, and explained that F&A committee had scrutinised them. There is a lack of clarity from the government about any support for charities, and that it hadn’t yet been debated in parliament. MM set out how we want to continue the impact that Inspire has and how it would be very disappointing to cut services. MM emphasised that the board were available for any help. • VD asked around the Education Library Service and that it was noted that it was doing better. MA explained that the position didn’t include any spend on books, which isn’t a viable position. Inflation on wages has had a big impact, and although income has been better than forecast, it hasn’t been enough. <p>The board noted the contents of the report.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Pay Award 2024/25</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA presented the pay award paper, explaining the fixed amount in the local government offer and its impact. The estimated amount from NCC has been included in the contract sum for the year. • Music Teachers’ award have been separately negotiated with the unions in keeping with the rest of the Inspire. 	

	The board approved the pay award for all staff (including music teachers).	
10.	<p><u>Sustainability Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KE presented her annual update on progress through the year. Inspire tries to ensure sustainability is borne in mind across the organisation. Progress has slowed a little this year, but recycling and waste, water saving, cleaning supplies have all shown improvements and High Pavement has been built to ensure sustainability is a high priority. Green library spaces have been increased. Difficulties reviewing monitoring of energy due to systems issues. <p>The board noted the report</p>	
11.	<p><u>Flexible Working Policy Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KE highlighted issues of putting previous policy into practice. This updated policy is to ensure putting into practice is more straightforward. <p>The board noted the contents of the report and approved updated policy.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Terms of Reference – Staffing & Standards and Culture & Heritage</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter presented the revised terms of reference for the Culture and Heritage Committee, which have been revised following the removal of music from the committee’s responsibilities. • Staffing and Standards were reviewed with no substantive changes. • MM asked around Music Hub governance. PG explained that they are forming a partnership board for the new Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Music Hub. There is a proposed initial chair, James Gibbons former chair of Nottingham Music Service charity and Head of Legal and Data at Capital One. A prospectus to recruit to the new partnership board will be issued in December , with an aim to recruit a core board by April 2025. There will be an opportunity for a member of the Inspire Board to sit on this partnership. <p>The board noted the contents of the report.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Risk Log</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KE presented the risk log. Risks have remained the same, with the addition of 2 new risks, one around the impact of employer NI contributions which we’re trying to mitigate through service design reviews; the other regarding a consultation regarding how CBS are governed. One proposal is that we’d be required to register as a Charity. This would mean being regulated under the Charity Commission. This would change our constitution due to paid members of staff being on the Board. KE encouraged Board members to engage in the consultation. • DM asked about the rationale behind the scoring of the risk regarding registering as a charity. KE responded that there are fundamental changes that would need to happen in terms of how Inspire is governed and how the Board operates. • MM asked if Inspire is going to respond as a CBS or should individual Board members. There are over 80 questions to respond to. KE is planning to respond on behalf of Inspire. MM volunteered to help and KE accepted. VD also happy to help. 	<u>KE & MM & VD</u>
14.	<p><u>Committee Reports and Minutes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning & Skills – 14th October 2024 • Staffing & Standards 4th November 2024 <p>The board noted the committee meeting reports.</p>	

15.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD picked up an item from the Staffing and Standards committee, which would benefit from another Board member. PG to email around and ask. 	<u>PG</u>
16	<p><u>Forthcoming meeting and events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues 11th Feb 2025, 4 to 6pm at West Bridgford Library & Teams • Weds 7th May 2025, 4 to 6pm at Inspire HQ & Teams • Tues 16th Sept 2025, 4 to 6pm at Notts Archives & Teams • Tues 25th Nov 2025, 4 to 6pm at Beeston Library & Teams 	
17	<p><u>Meeting Review – opportunity for chair/vice to discuss all aspects of the board meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JC thanked the Board members. 	

Noting of approved minutes	
Name:	John Cottee
Signature:	
Title:	Chair of Inspire Board
Date:	10/12/2024