

# Inspire AGM Meeting Minutes

Zoom Webinar & Beeston Library, Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2021, 7pm

---

## **Present:**

Helen Ackroyd, Mick Allen, David Anderson, Sarah Baker, Helen Beckett, Kirsty Blyth, Ian Bond, Jayne Bowers, Sarah Breen, Caren Caunt, Chris Chadburn, Judith Chamberlain, Sophie Collier, Andy Dawson, Michelle Dunstan, Sharon Elliott, Jackie Evans, Adriana Fallon, Carolyn Gallagher, Luci Gallucci, Peter Gaw, Carol Hanley, John Hess, Jackie Hewlett-Davies, Derek Higton, Alison Hirst, Helen Jowett, Margot Madin, Carol Newman, Lesley Parker, Alan Ramsay, Nicky Reed, Lucy Reid, Val Sawyer, Yvonne Sewell, Katharine Say, Clare Tobin, Richard Warr, Ann Whitfield, Gloria Wright

**Apologies:** John Cottee, Kofi Dennis, Glynn Gilfoyle, Liz Guildford, Liz Howell, Peter Ware

## **1. Welcome**

- Peter Gaw (Inspire, Chief Executive Officer) welcomed members to the first in person and online Inspire AGM. He explained how members could ask questions, vote and made everyone aware that the event was being recorded for minuting purposes.
- John Cottee, Chair of the Inspire Board was unable to attend in person, so members watched his pre-recorded presentation. See <https://youtu.be/nOFZiszk24>

### Highlights included:

- A successful fifth full year of operations despite the dominance of COVID19. The response to the pandemic has been of great credit to staff and the can-do attitude and ability to move services online enabled thousands of customers and learners to access resources, services and programmes during lockdown.
- Over the year Inspire has established several employment and wellbeing initiatives including a Way 2 Work programme, the delivery of a successful Women into Business programme and in partnership with The British Library and Nottingham City Libraries the establishment of 3 Business and Intellectual Property Centres.
- Inspire will continue to contribute to the recovery of our communities as services re-open and the launch of Inspire's Community Makers will increase volunteering opportunities and Inspire's capacity to do more in the local community.
- Inspire gained the prestigious TES (Times Educational Supplement) Award for best adult and community learning provider.
- Three key external reviews took place awarding Inspire with the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Standard, Local Government Association (LGA) review of the library service and endorsement of the Inspire model and the MATRIX Standard for the provision of information, advice and guidance.
- The commitment of the Board to the sustainable development of Inspire as a key provider of culture, learning and libraries and was pleased to approve the renewal of Inspire's main contract with Nottinghamshire County Council for an additional five years (2021 – 26).
- The restoration and reopening of Worksop library after the flood in 2019 and the refurbishment of Retford Library.
- As an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), Inspire continues to deliver cultural programmes for children and young people across the county. Funding has been extended due to the pandemic and the organisation will be applying for the next round of NPO funding.
- During the year, Inspire's income greatly reduced with unbudgeted pandemic costs. However, with government support for buildings and staff these balanced out and Inspire has achieved a surplus of £1M placing the organisation in a good position for the challenging times ahead.

## **2. To receive and approve the minutes from 15 Oct 2020**

- Peter Gaw asked members to approve the minutes from the AGM held on 15 Oct 2020 and that they were a true and accurate record.
- Members voted:
  - Yes – 23
  - No – 0
  - Abstain - 17
- Minutes approved by a majority of 58%.

## **3. To discuss any matters arising from the minutes**

- None.

## **4. Motion to make constitutional changes to the Rules of Culture, Learning and Libraries to propose the addition of a clause to rule 68 (a) allowing for the Board to agree a third term of office for an Elected or a Co-Opted Director in exceptional circumstances.**

- Kirsty Blyth (Inspire, Assistant Chief Executive Officer) explained that Inspire is proposing to leave it as two terms, but to add the provision for the board to agree a third term of office for an Elected or Co-opted Director in exceptional circumstances. In the case of the Elected Director, this would mean that the Board member would, in exceptional circumstances, be able to **stand** for election for a third term; it would still be up to the membership to elect them.
- It was proposed to amend the Rules as follows:
  - Rule 68a) to set out that
    - “A retiring Director shall be eligible for re-election, provided that:
      - (a) an Elected Director or a Co-opted Director shall only be entitled to hold office for a maximum of two full terms **unless in exceptional circumstances**, the Board agrees a third term’...”
- As an extraordinary resolution the motion requires a majority of not less than 75% of votes cast.
- Members voted:
  - Yes – 33
  - No – 0
  - Abstain – 7
- Motion resolved by a majority of 83%.

## **5. Motion to make constitutional changes to the Rules of Culture, Learning and Libraries to clarify the regulation of the Society by the addition of a rule 3 (b) to say: “References to “Charity Commission” in these Rules shall only apply to the extent the society is subject to the legal jurisdiction of the Charity Commission.”**

- Kirsty Blyth explained that currently, the Charity Commission is referred to within the Rules as, at the point of them being written, it was envisaged that the regulator for charitable community benefit societies may change to be the Charity Commission from the Financial Conduct Authority. This hasn’t come to pass, and at present, Inspire is still regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. In order to clarify this issue of regulation, the addition of a new rule is proposed that clarifies this wording.
- It was proposed to amend the Rules as follows;
  - To add clause 3b to say
    - “References to “Charity Commission” in these Rules shall only apply to the extent the society is subject to the legal jurisdiction of the Charity Commission.”
- As an extraordinary resolution the motion requires a majority of not less than 75% of votes cast.
- Members voted:
  - Yes – 32
  - No – 0
  - Abstain – 8
- Motion resolved by a majority of 80%.

## **6. Presentation of the Annual Review**

- Peter Gaw directed members to the online annual review - <https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/about-us/annual-review-2020-21/> for a summary of the achievements and impacts made and shared a video presentation of celebrating some of the highlights from the year. Despite the pandemic there has been a wealth of activity and achievement and Peter Gaw thanked staff, volunteers, customers, learners and partners for their inspirational hard work.

## **7. To receive and approve the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021**

- Helen Beckett (Inspire, Chief Finance Officer) was pleased to report that Inspire continues to be 'a going concern' and that the financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 have been prepared, audited and filed with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).
- Services Income and Expenditure - Inspire has achieved a £1M surplus which is made up of lower expenditure due to COVID19 preventing activities costs and COVID funding and grants which have been received and recognised in the year but not all spent in the year.
- Financial Reserves – the £1M surplus builds Inspire's reserves to a total of £3.4M which are made of restricted and unrestricted reserves (restricted reserve funds are tied to conditions and linked to prescribed spending plans).
- Helen Beckett also explained to members where Inspire's funding came from and how it was spent.
- Members were asked to approve the Annual Report and Audited Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- Members voted:
  - Yes – 31
  - No – 0
  - Abstain – 9
- Report and accounts approved by a majority of 78%.

## **8. Confirmation of the newly elected board members**

- During the summer of 2021, Inspire held elections for two new community members. Jackie Hewlett-Davies was welcomed and formally appointed to the board. Due to illness, Kofi Dennis will be confirmed as an Inspire board member at a later date.

## **9. A.O.B**

- None.

**Close of AGM – 7.49pm**

## Inspire AGM 2021 Plenary Poem by Michael Rosen

Please may I call this meeting to order?  
At normal AGMs you'd be stuck here,  
but today, you'll be taken for a ride.  
Of course, there's no trick or hoodwinking here  
I'm talking of a scenic trip with views  
to show each one of you what you've achieved  
what caused folks to gasp, enthuse, be inspired.  
So please do come on board this culture train  
which will feed us better than a buffet  
more nourishment than a sarnie and tea.

You all know well that this amazing service  
was running throughout the previous few months.  
You didn't get stuck at Culture-free Halt  
just because Covid spread across the land.  
You maintained contact with thousands out there  
with books, events, calls and online learning.  
And now that restrictions have been lifted  
you've planned for great new offerings for all.  
Let's go, driver, pull that lever, let's go.  
Let's taste and savour the array of treats.

Hear the sound of the Able Orchestra:  
young musicians with disabilities:  
they are using iPads to create new music.  
Inspire Youth Arts can bring you dance and song  
Join a band, play steel pans, cool tunes.  
Here's Story Explorers for under-5s  
A feast of knitting with Knittinghamshire  
eBooks, eAudio, Book Club, Booktalk  
a superb range of chats about writing  
And not to be overlooked, huh? poetry!

Inspire inspires but who inspires Inspire?  
It's the people, people of all ages  
people of all kinds, no barriers here  
readers, writers, learners, and artists  
musicians, dancers, makers, doers,  
wanting to start something new in their lives  
full of desire and seeking out a space  
and discovering how we change ourselves  
through change in art. In working together  
the impossible becomes possible.

Shall I go on? You might be overcome  
with modest pride that you've laid on all this  
or suffer a surfeit of Food for Thought  
well before this journey comes to an end.  
Heaven forbid that you should not enjoy  
satisfaction of having done so much  
As we arrive at AGM Station  
please take a moment, a second or two  
to give yourself praise, plaudits and applause  
for the year that's been; for the year to come

<https://youtu.be/3-8pvQWgfnc>