



Title of Meeting:	Inspire Main Board –Minutes
Location:	Zoom Meeting
Date:	Tues 23rd Nov 2021
Time:	5 to 7pm
Attendees:	John Cottee – County Council Nominated Director (Chair) Liz Guildford– Staff Elected Director Peter Gaw – Chief Executive Officer, Inspire Glynn Gilfoyle - County Council Nominated Director Carol Hanley – Member Elected Director Jackie Hewlett-Davies – Member Elected Director John Hess – Member Elected Director Liz Howell– Co Opted Director (Vice Chair) Margot Madin – Co Opted Director Peter Ware – Co Opted Director
Invited:	Mick Allen – Group Manager Place Commissioning, Place & Communities, NCC Kirsty Blyth – Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Inspire Derek Higton – Service Director Communities and Place, NCC Katharine Say – Executive Officer & Board Support, Inspire

Agenda No.	Agenda Subject	Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helen Beckett – Chief Finance Officer, Inspire Kofi Dennis – Member Elected Director (to be appointed) 	
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members agreed that the minutes from 21st Sept 2021 were a true and accurate record and were happy to approve. Matters arising – none. 	
3.	<p><u>Declaration of Conflicts and Interests</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a previous role Liz Howell was involved with BBC Weather Watchers which, as part of the BBC’s Make it Digital campaign, was in partnership with libraries across the UK. Peter Ware works for Browne Jacobson and provides legal services to Inspire. PW supported the organisation in the initial contract negotiations but has not been involved in the renewal process. 	
4.	<p><u>CEO Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG presented an update on the health and wellbeing of the organisation against the six priorities of the Forward Plan 2022. Highlights included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Ofsted Inspection</u> – Inspire Learning are prepared for an inspection and the Learning & Skills committee are also ready and have implemented new actions and has a good membership including GG as chair. <u>Funding</u> - ACE grant application for development of Able Orchestra to be submitted in December to extend for a further 3 years. Partnership bid with NCC just submitted to ACE for cultural education partnership. <u>Finances</u> – impact of wage inflation and national insurance pay within medium term financial strategy. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <u>Staffing</u>–Chief Finance Officer has tendered her resignation and found a new post. In light of this it has been decided to review Inspire’s Auditors next year when the new Director is in place. PG explained that the CFO post has been reviewed, with a new job description and a new title of Director of Finance & Resources. MM has been included in the recruitment process and the organisation will also seek input from CH. Board members asked if the recent staffing changes within the finance team should cause concern and questioned Inspire’s approach to the new Director’s post and recruitment process especially in terms of progression for staff. PG explained Inspire’s need for an individual who can bridge the gap between an accounting professional and a strategic manager. Margaret Anderson, Assistant Senior Finance Officer returns from maternity leave in January 2022 and Karen Barber Assistant Accountant will increase her hours. MM added that the salary offered was correct and Inspire should be able to attract someone with the right strategic and analytic skills. PG explained that the additional vacancies within the team have come about due to individuals following their own career aspirations. Measures are in place whilst recruitment continues and KB noted that Inspire’s recruitment challenges are very much in keeping with those of NCC and what is reported as a national phenomenon after Covid where people re-prioritise and re-appraise their careers. Inspire will continue to keep this under review as it will be an increasing issue. – JHD enquired about the use of exit interviews to gain intelligence on reasons for leaving. PG confirmed that Inspire has a formal exit interview process. GG asked if there were any trends regarding the staff vacancies and the board requested a report on this, capacity, resilience and any key points to address what Inspire can do. Action for KB. <p>The board noted the progress of the organisation and range of current issues.</p>	<u>KB</u>
5.	<p><u>Finance Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PG presented the cash flow summary for the full year 2021/22 and for April to Sept 2021 and noted that in reality a great deal of Inspire’s income sources have only started to return in September. Currently the picture is reasonably positive and the likely outturn would require a lower draw on reserves. Now have a reasonably positive picture with a reduced deficit forecast by £364K. Generally the situation is positive but not strong enough yet to present to the board any recommendations regarding pay awards. • MM asked why premises cost are expected to go up. PG explained that the organisation was projecting higher utility costs because of Covid as well as work completed on buildings and day to day expenditure has spiked this year. Inspire is in constant dialogue with NCC to monitor and reduce costs. <p>John Cottee, Liz Guildford, Peter Gaw, Glynn Gilfoyle, Carol Hanley, Jackie Hewlett-Davies, John Hess, Liz Howell, Margot Madin and Peter Ware noted the 2021/22 current and year end outturn position for cash and reserves and staffing changes across Finance.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Inspire Policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KB presented the next set of Inspire policies that have been reviewed and due for approval. All HR policies have been approved by trade union representatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Computer Usage Policy – approved – Customer Service Policy – approved – Career Break – approved – Domestic Abuse Policy – approved • Domestic Abuse policy has been reviewed by HR and members of staff. • JHD enquired whether the policies apply to trustees and volunteers. KB confirmed this was the case where relevant. JHD also noted that the Customer Service policy does not 	

	<p>cross reference to equality and inclusion. KB to add cross reference to Equality Policy. ACTION.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GG noted that volunteers are not mentioned in the Computer Use policy. KB to add. • JH asked if homeworking staff have to use their own equipment. KB explained it was dependent on their job, many had all their equipment provided but there are some Music staff who use their own devices. <p>John Cottee, Liz Guildford, Peter Gaw, Glynn Gilfoyle, Carol Hanley, Jackie Hewlett-Davies, John Hess, Liz Howell, Margot Madin and Peter Ware approved the updated policies.</p>	<p><u>KB</u></p> <p><u>KB</u></p>
7.	<p><u>Forward Plan Priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board discussed the revised outcomes for the Forward Plan and fed back the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There needs to be an authentic Inspire voice and to be much more people centred on membership and staff. People are at the heart of the Inspire community. Staff engagement is missing from the pictogram. Members discussed what is Inspire’s ambition and felt it was getting people to use libraries and come together in a community environment, responding to needs and leading best lives and to be the glue and cohesion. The group asked if there was any collaboration or opportunities with city libraries for Inspire. What are Inspire’s ambitions? Does the organisation want to expand? How do we measure social value? Members felt that digital progression is very important but the key thing is bringing people physically together where they can get a warm welcome compared to isolation of a digital offer. – PG to look at other wording to ensure inclusivity for those who can’t physically read e.g. blind is included. – Should champions to look at specific areas highlighted by ACE in terms of sustainability and diversity. How is this ambition monitored, how do you involve staff? – Outcomes – safe element seems to have dropped out but thriving replaced it so PG to review. – Members felt it was a little too ‘corporate’ and suggested that the language could be modified so people really understood and engaged with the plan. PG added that a pictogram would be included again. – PG confirmed that a revised final version will be presented to the board for input in February. <p>John Cottee, Liz Guildford, Peter Gaw, Glynn Gilfoyle, Carol Hanley, Jackie Hewlett-Davies, John Hess, Liz Howell, Margot Madin and Peter Ware considered the development of the Forward Plan 2022 - 2026.</p> <p>GG left the meeting.</p>	<p><u>PG</u></p>
8.	<p><u>Approach to Risk Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KB explained that one of the key elements of the governance action plan is the regular review of Inspire’s risk management framework. The mechanism for bringing the most strategic risks to the board and Inspire’s approach were summarised and members were asked to consider and discuss the process, their understanding and involvement, acceptable/unacceptable levels of risk, monitoring and escalation. The board were asked if they were comfortable with the approach and to set the risk appetite and tolerance. • Due to lack of time, members agreed that this should be brought back to the next meeting for a full debate. Action to add to the next agenda. 	<p><u>KS</u></p>

	<p>John Cottee, Liz Guildford, Peter Gaw, Carol Hanley, Jackie Hewlett-Davies, John Hess, Liz Howell, Margot Madin and Peter Ware agreed to move this item to the next agenda in order for members to have a full debate.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Risk Log</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KB presented the updated strategic risk log. <p>The board members present noted the content of the Strategic Risk Register.</p>	
10.	<p><u>Committee Minutes and Reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance & Audit Committee on 16th Sept 2021 – noted Learning & Skills Committee on 18th Oct 2021 - noted 	
11.	<p><u>A.O.B</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
12.	<p><u>Forthcoming meeting and events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward Planner 2021 – 23 meeting and events dates will be added to diaries. MM has advised for a revised date for the April Finance & Audit Committee meeting. JC requested meetings to start from 4.30 rather than 5pm. An Inspired Christmas Concert – Mon 6th Dec, 7 to 9pm at Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham and online. 	
13.	<p><u>Meeting Review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity for chair/vice chair to discuss all aspects of the board meeting – timeliness, communication, quality of papers and opportunity for discussion and debate. No feedback this time. 	