

Agenda Item No. 3(b)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET MEMBER – HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

14 March 2017

Report of the Strategic Director - Economy, Transport and Communities

**ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND: LIBRARIES OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR EVERYONE INNOVATION FUND**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To inform the Cabinet Member of a bid by the Library Service to the Arts Council England (ACE) Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Innovation Fund and to request permission to accept the grant if the bid is successful.

(2) **Information and Analysis** In December 2016, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Libraries Taskforce published the report *Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021* outlining its five year vision and action plan for English Public Libraries. To accompany the report, DCMS launched the Libraries Opportunities for Everyone Innovation Fund, administered by ACE. The objective of the fund is to pilot innovative projects that will benefit disadvantaged people and places in England.

Derbyshire Libraries is the lead authority on a cross border application with Inspire (Nottinghamshire Library Service). Derbyshire Library Service already has a proven track record of delivering innovative activities and this application is focussed on working with some of the most disadvantaged communities in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire to help them to become digitally enabled. The project intends to use co-design methods to create appropriate digital outreach sessions for each community. In Derbyshire, the outreach work would be concentrated in the Thriving Communities areas of Shirebrook, Gamesley, Cotmanhay, Danesmoor and Newhall.

To address the needs of the five Thriving Communities, the project would fund two full time staff to develop a number of digital access initiatives, both within libraries and in local communities. This work would be done in collaboration with Nottinghamshire so a similar model can be delivered in two areas of disadvantage that adjoin Derbyshire. The staff would purchase a range of equipment to support these activities, such as laptops, tablets, phones, as well as USB sticks to be freely distributed so that participants can create and save content. At the end of the project it is proposed to donate the equipment to

community groups to help mainstream and sustain the work undertaken. This could also include supporting community venues to become UK Online Centres to access further resources and support for their communities. These groups will also be offered free use of library facilities to overcome the challenges of identifying appropriate community based venues.

Examples of the types of sessions which could be run include: one to one support, group sessions in libraries, or other community venues, community pop-up sessions, family learning activities, peer to peer mentoring and help and advice for people to use their own equipment or to acquire new equipment.

An important element of the project is working with the digital charity Good Things Foundation (GTF) which would undertake an independent evaluation of the activities and design, and implement an evaluation framework, to provide a solid evidence base to inform future service delivery.

If Derbyshire's bid is successful, ACE has stated that the funding can only be used for a maximum of 12 months; the project will need to start on 3 April 2017 and finish by 31 March 2018. However, the library service will only be informed if it has been successful at the end of March 2017. Given the very short timescales to start and deliver the project, the Cabinet Member is asked to give permission to accept the grant if the bid is successful.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The grant application to ACE is for £165,810 towards a total project cost of £205,810. Inspire (Nottinghamshire) have committed £10,000 match funding and the remaining balance will be found from within the existing library budget and earmarked reserves.

(4) **Human Resources Considerations** To deliver the project the posts of the existing Senior Librarian: Digital Inclusion, (Full time, Grade 12) and Business Services Assistant: Digital Inclusion (Full Time, Grade 7) will be extended until 31 March 2018. The above posts are secondments which means at the end of the project the staff will return to their substantive posts and that there are no redundancy implications.

(5) **Social Value Considerations** If successful, the project will work in the five of the most deprived communities in Derbyshire to co-design digital sessions appropriate to each community. The sessions will give communities access to skilled and trained staff, as well as a wide range of equipment, which will be left with communities after the end of the project.

The ability to develop digital skills are essential in ensuring that individuals maximise their access to benefits, job opportunities and the financial benefits delivered by online services. Lack of access and skilled support serves to

widen the digital divide and further increase the potential for already disadvantaged groups to suffer digital and financial exclusion.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(6) **Key Decision** No.

(7) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(8) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Communities Department. Officer contact details – Don Gibbs, extension 36572.

(9) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:

9.1 Notes the report.

9.2 Agrees that, subject to a successful bid, the Library Service can accept the grant from Arts Council England to enable the work to begin on 3 April 2017.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Strategic Director - Economy, Transport and Communities**