

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture & Public Realm)

Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual: Performance Update, 2015/16 half year report

Summary

1. This report updates Members on the performance of Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd (Explore) during the first 6 months of 2015/16.

Background

2. Explore was set up on 1 May, 2015 as a Community Benefit Society with exempt charitable status, jointly owned by staff and the community, with the aim of delivering a comprehensive and efficient public library service, increasing access to library services by providing excellent services, encouraging everyone to be a library member from birth, and giving York residents universal membership of all public libraries in England and Wales. Explore's vision is *to enable people to live fuller, more connected and engaged lives*.
3. Explore is tasked with making a major contribution to helping the Council engage with its communities, facilitating adult learning, getting people on line, promoting the health and wellbeing agenda, and supporting vulnerable people, e.g. housebound people and people with mental health issues.
4. £450k savings were made in establishing Explore. This was achieved whilst maintaining paid staff in every library, ensuring no closures, and driving service improvement.
5. The Council has entered into a 5 year contract with Explore for the provision of services. The contract specification sets out the key requirements with respect to service levels including book stock, professional staffing, service points, and the outcomes to be achieved (see Annex 1).

6. The report from the Chief Executive of Explore (see Annex 2) sets out performance issues in the period to 30 September 2015.

Options

7. This report is for information and there are no options to consider.

Corporate Objectives

8. Explore contributes to a number of corporate objectives including developing opportunities for residents and visitors to experience York as a vibrant and eventful city, improving opportunities for learning, and in strengthening York's economy through investment in the tourism infrastructure.

Implications

9. **Finance:** The contract sum for the full year in 2015/16 is £2,070,940.
10. The report has no implications relating to: Human Resources, Equalities, Legal, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology, Property.

Risk Management

11. This report is for information and there are no risks to consider.

Recommendations

12. That Members comment upon the performance of Explore.
Reason: To help monitor the service received under the contract.

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**

Date 4.6.15.

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex 1 – Schedule 2 of the Contract for the Provision of Services

Annex 2 – Report of the Chief Executive of Explore