

Children, Culture and Communities Scrutiny Committee 3 December 2024

Report of the Director of Housing and Communities

Annual Update – Libraries and Archives

Summary

1. This report provides members with an annual update from Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual Limited (Explore) who operate the Council's libraries and archives service.

Background

2. Libraries and Archives: Explore Libraries and Archives Mutual Limited (Explore) is an independent Industrial and Provident Mutual organisation which entered a service delivery contract with the Council for 15 years on 1 April 2019 and currently operate:
 - York Explore: the city centre flagship facility where all services are available including the Archive & Local History Centre
 - Explore Library Learning Centres: Acomb Library, Clifton Library and The Centre@Burnholme in Tang Hall
 - Explore Gateways: Smaller community libraries are located at; Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe, Dringhouses, Dunnington, Fulford, Haxby & Wigginton, Huntington, New Earswick, Poppleton, Strensall and York Community Stadium
 - Virtual Libraries: E-library services including E-books, E-magazines & newspapers and online reference library
 - Reading Cafes: Homestead Park, Hungate and Rowntree Park
 - Mobile Library: One mobile vehicle covering the smaller settlements around the edges of York on a two-week timetable.

Performance Management Arrangements

3. As part of the contractual arrangements for Explore there is a performance management framework that requires them to report formally to the Council quarterly against a set framework. The framework is split into areas, with each having a service specification with performance measures around availability of services, required outcomes and where required, specific measurements.
4. The performance and monitoring framework also acts to financially penalise poor performance or non-compliance, as well as rewarding over achievements.
5. An annual report from Explore is also a requirement of the contract which is being presented at Annex A to describe the activities against the service specification.
6. In 2023-24 Explore's performance was monitored at each quarter and then finally at the end of the contract year. No financial deductions have been made due to non-compliance or performance issues. Consultation

Options

7. There are no options available for scrutiny members to consider for this report.

Council Plan

8. Explore's annual report for 2023/24 at annex A clearly shows that Explore contributed to a significant number of corporate and 'One City, for all' Council Plan 2023-2027 priorities. Explore's annual service delivery plan aligns to the four core commitments, as can be seen in Explore's detail report, their work can contribute directly to equalities, affordability, climate and health and wellbeing, as well as education, skills and the economy.

9. Implications:

- Financial - There are no financial implications.
- Human Resources (HR) - There are no HR implications.
- Equalities - There are no equalities implications.
- Legal - There are no legal implications.

- Crime and Disorder - There are no crime and disorder implications.
- Information Technology (IT) - There are no IT implications.
- Property - There are no property implications.

Risk Management

10. There are no know risks associated to this update report looking back at the performance of 2023-24.

Recommendations

11. To note and comment upon the activities of the Explore update report.

Reason: To support the council's role in performance management of the library and archives service contract.

Contact Details

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**Report
Approved**



Date 22 November 2024

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

N/A

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

[Children, Culture & Communities Scrutiny Committee – 17 Oct 2023.](#)

Explore's annual report for 2022-23.

[Children, Culture & Communities Scrutiny Committee – 21 July 2022.](#)

Explore's annual report for 2021-22.

[Executive meeting 21 June 2018.](#)

Item 7. The Library and Archives Service: Procurement of Operator Report

Annexes

Annex A: Explore York Libraries & Archives Report 2023-24