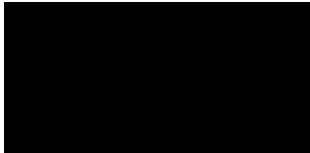


## ASHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL: EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

Please use this form to record any Executive Decision taken by a Cabinet Member or Chief Officer.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE DECISION TAKER:	
<b>1. Title / Subject Matter:</b>	Towns Fund: Grant Agreement with Inspire
<b>2. Is this a Key Decision: YES (over £50k revenue)</b>	
<b>3. Decision Taken:</b>	For the Council to enter into a Grant Agreement with Inspire, for the delivery of the Library Innovation Centres project.
<b>4. Reasons for the Decision:</b>	The Council needs to enter into a Grant Agreement with Inspire for the delivery of the Library Innovation Centres project which forms part of the Towns Fund programme.
<b>5. Copy of the Report or Briefing Note setting out the information which was used as the basis for the Decision:</b>	Copy of the report attached.
<b>6. Was the Decision classed as exempt? If so, what were the reasons for this:</b>	No
<b>7. Alternative Options Considered / Rejected:</b>	<p>Not Enter into the Grant Agreement (not recommended)</p> <p>By entering into the Grant Agreement the Council can ensure that Inspire's performance is monitored. The agreement gives the Council recourse to taking measures and seeking repayment of the grant if required.</p> <p>Not deliver the Library Innovation Centres project (not recommended)</p> <p>The Council could decide not to deliver the project as part of the Towns Fund programme. This is not recommended as the business case has already been approved by DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) and the project is in progress and will deliver significant benefits for the area.</p>

<b>8. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations – if applicable:</b> N/A
<b>9. Name / Title of the relevant Executive Lead Member(s) consulted (if appropriate):</b> Executive Lead Member for Regeneration and Corporate Transformation
<b>10. Name / Title of the decision taker:</b>  Cabinet Member: Cllr Matthew Relf  Executive Lead Member for Regeneration and Corporate Transformation  
Date: 21 March 2023
TO BE COMPLETED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
<b>1. Date that the decision was notified to members:</b>  Thursday, 23 March 2023
<b>2. Date and time when the Call-In period for this decision ends:</b>  5pm – Thursday, 30 March 2023
<b>3. Date when the decision can be implemented (five working days following publication):</b>  Friday, 31 March 2023
<b>4. Decision Reference Number:</b>  N/A

The completed form should be emailed to the Democratic Services Team:

[democratic.services@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@ashfield.gov.uk)

They will arrange for it to be published on the Council's web site.

**EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF THE DECISION:**

Use this section to share any confidential information. **This will not be published or placed on the Council's web site.** It will only be shared within the Authority, as appropriate.

For further support or guidance please contact Ruth Dennis, Director of Legal and Governance (and Monitoring Officer) [ruth.dennis@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.dennis@ashfield.gov.uk) or any member of the Democratic Services Team.

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Cllr Matthew Relf</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 MARCH 2023</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>TOWNS FUND – GRANT AGREEMENT WITH INSPIRE</b>
<b>Executive Lead Member:</b>	<b>CLLR MATTHEW RELF – EXECUTIVE LEAD MEMBER FOR REGENERATION AND CORPORATE TRANSFORMATION</b>
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>Yes</b>

### **Purpose of Report**

To facilitate the delivery of the Library Innovation Centres project, the Council as the Accountable Body will receive the Towns Fund monies and will transfer these monies in a structured way to Inspire over four financial years (2022/23 – 2025/26).

The Council has developed a suitable Grant Agreement and this report seeks approval for the Council to enter into the Grant Agreement with Inspire.

### **Recommendations**

- 1. To enter into a Grant Agreement with Inspire for the delivery of the Library Innovation Centres project which forms part of the Towns Fund programme.**
- 2. To grant delegated authority to the Executive Director Governance to make any minor amendments to the agreement in the future.**

### **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

The Council needs to enter into a Grant Agreement with Inspire for the delivery of the Library Innovation Centres project which forms part of the Towns Fund programme.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

To Not Enter into the Grant Agreement (not recommended)

By entering into the Grant Agreement the Council can ensure that Inspire's performance is monitored effectively. The agreement gives the Council recourse to taking measures and seeking repayment of the grant if required.

#### To not deliver the Project (not recommended)

The Council could decide not to deliver the project as part of the Towns Fund programme. This is not recommended as the Business Case has already been approved by DLUHC and the project is set up and will deliver significant benefits for the area.

#### **Detailed Information**

As the Accountable Body for the Towns Fund, the Council receives the funding from DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) and is responsible for monitoring and overall programme delivery.

Inspire are the delivery partner for the Library Innovation Centres project which will create digital hubs at Kirkby and Sutton libraries. A business hub will be created at Sutton Library, linking to the Enterprising Ashfield programme. Services will enhance the employability, financial wellbeing and life skills of local residents. The project will provide accessible facilities and training courses for foundation digital skills, support those without access and people to move to more advanced provision.

At Sutton Library the refurbishment and technical upgrade of a disused 140 seat lecture theatre, and creation of meeting / breakout spaces will facilitate digital access and access to technology, adult and family learning and skills programmes, small business conferences / seminars and business and job seeker work bases / incubator hubs.

At the satellite centre in Kirkby refurbishment and reorganisation will create space for a skills hub and a flexible, digitally enabled learning space.

To enable Inspire to deliver the project, the Council needs to enter into a suitable Grant Agreement to enable the transfer of funds of up to £720,252 over the next four financial years (2022/23 – 2025/26) and to ensure suitable monitoring of the project.

A suitable standard Grant Agreement has been developed for partner projects (based on the D2N2 LEP – Local Enterprise Partnership standard agreement). The Grant Agreement will ensure that the recipient (Inspire) will utilise the funding for the agreed purposes. The Grant Agreement places responsibility on the recipient to complete timely reporting to support the Council as the Accountable Body to DLUHC.

Inspire was supported with development of the Business Case for the project which passed through the Local Assurance process and the Project Summary was then submitted to DLUHC. The project was approved and payments have been received from DLUHC for delivery of the project.

#### **Implications**

**Corporate Plan:** The Towns Fund programme is identified in the Economic Growth and Place priority within the Corporate Plan under the District Wide Physical Regeneration programme.

**Legal:** The grant funding awarded must be spent on delivering the project in accordance with the Heads of Terms agreed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Ashfield District Council (ADC) on 30 July 2021, failure to do so could result in a requirement to repay the grant.  
The use of the grant must comply with subsidy control rules, both in terms of direct receipt of funds and intended use/expenditure of those funds.

Legal Services will provide advice and assistance to ensure the transactions are formalised by way of the correct legal documentation [LE 08.03.23]

**Finance:** [PH 20/02/2023].

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	The maximum revenue funding available from DLUHC for Inspire to deliver the project is £150,000. This will be released by DLUHC to ADC over the next four financial years (2022/23 – 2025/26), and then paid to Inspire - subject to satisfactory progress and reporting.
General Fund – Capital Programme	The maximum capital funding available from DLUHC for Inspire to deliver the project is £570,252. This will be released by DLUHC to ADC over the next four financial years (2022/23 – 2025/26), and then paid to Inspire - subject to satisfactory progress and reporting.
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	N/A
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	N/A

**Risk:**

Risk	Mitigation
That Inspire do not deliver the project	The Council has developed a robust reporting and monitoring function. Inspire report to the Council on a monthly basis
That the Grant Agreement isn't acceptable to Inspire	Draft base versions of the Grant Agreement have been shared with partner agencies in advance of detailed discussions

**Human Resources:** no HR issues identified.

**Environmental/Sustainability**

There are no Environmental or Sustainability implications.

**Equalities:**

There are no Equalities considerations other than Inspire has its own policy, procedures and processes.

**Other Implications:**

Not applicable.

**Reason(s) for Urgency**

Not applicable.

**Reason(s) for Exemption**

Not applicable.

**Background Papers**

Not applicable.

**Report Author and Contact Officer**

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