

Title of paper:	Year of Reading 2011	
Report to:	Children's Partnership Board	
Date:	25 th May 2011	
Accountable Officer:	Cllr David Mellen, Nottingham City Council	Wards affected: All
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Heidi Shewell-Cooper, Ellis Guilford EIP Manager/Year of Reading Project Officer 0793 067 0537 heidi.shewell-cooper@nottinghamcity.gov.uk Unit 13, New Brook house, 385 Alfreton Road, Nottingham, NG7 5LR	

Addendum to Report dated 11th April

1. Liz Asher, Director of PlayWorks, has agreed to become a Year of Reading Champion. A meeting to discuss this will be agreed following her return from leave.
2. Schools and Early Years and Sporting/Cultural workgroups have now met.
3. The first community workshop for the NLT, NCC and Nottingham University pilot is due on 1st June at Nottingham University Samworth Academy.
4. The summer term will be key to promoting the Library Summer Reading Challenge. A 'Boys Ambassadors' event is planned for June 30th at the Ice Arena.
5. The recruitment of Reading Volunteers from NCC has begun, with 34 enquiries to date (11th May) and The Big Book Drop was launched 12th May. There has been a communications campaign behind both initiatives.
6. Planning meetings to implement the Dolly Parton Imagination Library are underway for May, with agreement from the Bilborough Children's Centre to lead this piece of work.

Title of paper:	Year of Reading 2011	
Report to:	Senior Officers Group	
Date:	25 th May 2011	
Accountable Officer:	Cllr David Mellen, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Nottingham City Council	Wards affected: All
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Ellis Guilford EIP Manager/Year of Reading Project Officer 0793 067 0537 heidi.shewell-cooper@nottinghamcity.gov.uk Unit 13, New Brook house, 385 Alfreton Road, Nottingham, NG7 5LR	
Other officers who have provided input:		
Relevant Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) objectives(s):		
Stronger safeguarding – With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across all agencies and that the Partnership takes a pro-active approach to the elimination of domestic violence.		
Healthy living – With a key focus on increasing the proportion of children and young people who have a healthy weight.		X
Reducing substance misuse – Partnership work to lessen the impact on children of parental drug and alcohol misuse and to reduce drug and alcohol misuse amongst children and young people.		X
Raising attainment – Raising the attainment levels and increasing engagement in employment, education and training.		X
Improving attendance – Improving rates of attendance at both Primary and Secondary as a key foundation of improving outcomes.		X
Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):		
<p>The need for improvements to literacy levels is an issue that cuts across the business of the Children's Partnership and supports priorities across Nottingham City Council's Plans and One Nottingham. We know that nationally 1 in 6 people do not have the literacy skills of an eleven year old and that this increases in disadvantaged communities. We want to do more to ensure that everyone has the skills they need in order to succeed in life. We recognise that services and agencies of all kinds encounter poor literacy and bear the cost of it. Research shows that low literacy is part of a cycle of factors which undermine life chances.</p> <p>Literate people are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">less likely to be on benefits, more likely to own their own homes, less likely to smoke and drink and have better mental health, <p>Literate communities have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">High levels of participation, high levels of trust and perceive their communities to be safer. <p>A literate nation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Is interested in governance and politics, has higher levels of general wellbeing and has a better skilled and more flexible workforce.* <p>(Literacy Changes Lives: An Advocacy Resource (National Literacy Trust, 2008))</p> <p>These support priorities across partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Being one of Europe's 'top ten' cities for science and innovation, sport and culture		

- Making every neighbourhood a great place to live
- Giving the best start in life to all our children and young people
- Making poverty history

(One Nottingham vision)

The National Literacy Trust (NLT) the largest national literacy charity, has worked with local authorities for over three years producing evidence indicating that authorities which develop an integrated literacy strategy involving a wide range of services and community partners and promote reading for pleasure have a significant impact on literacy levels.

Our aim is to use the Year of Reading to engage more Nottingham citizens in reading for pleasure. However this must be about the life chances of our citizens in the longer term and we propose to use the Year of Reading to develop a literacy strategy which can drive improvement into the future.

This paper sets out the background to, and progress of, the Year of Reading to date.

Recommendations:

1	That the need for a 'joined up' approach to literacy across the Council and with partners across the community is recognised, and that the potential for the Year of Reading to support a longer term strategy is maximised.
2	That the proposed and emerging activities for The Year of Reading are actively supported across all departments.
3	That an additional Senior Officer, outside of Children and Families, is identified to 'champion' this initiative to reinforce the reality that this is a cross cutting priority rather than a single issue project.
4	That key staff from all departments are represented on the relevant working groups
5	That consideration is given to additional funding to maximise the impact of this initiative.
6	That The Children's Partnership receive regular reports on progress during The Year of Reading and review evidence and recommendations for the future as the Year draws to a close

1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

In this year we will promote the concepts of 'reading for pleasure' and 'reading for life' across our communities, making sure that reading and achievement are indeed **for everyone**. We want all citizens to gain the benefits and joy of being a 'Reading City' but equally we want to develop innovative practice with groups/areas that need particular attention e.g. boys. Therefore the approach is two-fold

- To quickly raise the profile and enthusiasm for reading for all – developing a 'reading city culture' e.g. promoting a strong literacy cultural offer in the city
- To develop robust sustainable partnerships across all sectors promoting integrated literacy development, based on effective practice and local data to target work, e.g. targeting boys through the Summer Reading Challenge (see below)

Reading in terms of educational attainment is low, at Key Stage 2 reading scores reduced in 2010 by 3% points. Research continually identifies that parental engagement in learning is the most significant factor in literacy development. This influence is most crucial during a child's earliest years

but remains throughout a child's life and into their teenage years. There is evidence of excellent practice across schools but staff tell us that engaging parents in reading with children is a difficult job. Consequently, schools and children's centres will be at the heart of the year, brokering family learning and early intervention. We will seek to share good practice across these partners adding value to existing work. However, we recognise that to shift parental attitudes we need to extend our reach to families by working with partners across the community, for example housing. We aim to build an approach which effectively targets support to the most vulnerable families helping them to develop capacity and skills.

Key activities:

- NCC Volunteer Reading Scheme
- Creation of defined work groups to progress an integrated approach – Schools, Early Years & Communities, Cultural & Sporting Offer, Business & Voluntary
- Partnership between Nottingham University, National Literacy Trust and NCC, based around the NUSA Academy community – a focus for pilot projects and learning 'what works'. Funded through the University of Nottingham and trialling engagement with community partners.
- Encouraging pledges of support, especially from business
- 'Big Book Drops' across the city (target of 5000 books to be donated), reading in 'different' places e.g. Nottingham's beach
- Related communications campaigns, including development of a 'one stop shop' website for citizens and practitioners, high profile local press coverage
- Proactive promotion of The Summer Reading Challenge for children (Read 6 books over the summer holidays/circus theme), to increase the take up and completion rates, led by libraries and targeting boys.
- Pilot implementation of 'the Dolly Parton Imagination Library' – book gifting scheme for 0-5's through Bilborough Children's Centre, in partnership with Nottingham Rotary Club.

2. RISKS

The Council has to convey the positive messages of this campaign within the current economic climate of government cuts to public funding, and associated strategic choices locally, e.g. changes to library opening hours. Partners are also operating within a similar context. The planned strategy is to draw heavily on co-ordinating and disseminating existing good practice wherever possible, building on existing relationships and strengths. We recognise that this approach offers an opportunity to do more through working collectively but that many partners may find it difficult to engage due to re-structures. Senior support for this initiative will be crucial to facilitate partnership working.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding has been provided by NCC to cover the cost of a two day per week Project Officer. Funding is required to enable the implementation of the NCC Volunteer Reading Scheme and communications. Small initial donations and support in kind have been offered by a limited number of sponsors, the tight timescales associated with projects this year have reduced the scope for securing sponsorship, but this can be better planned for repeat activity next year, as part of the legacy of the Year of Reading.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

5. CLIENT GROUP

This applies to all Nottingham citizens, but particularly those with literacy needs. Identified cohorts for an early intervention approach are families of 0-5's and also boys 8-11. Due to the impact of inter-generational low skills we are keen to take a holistic approach to family literacy and ensure we offer support to parents to improve their own skills as well as helping them to support their children.

6. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES

Under achieving groups will be actively consulted as part of the pilot work in the NLT/Nottingham University/NCC partnership project to inform the needs assessment for literacy. Links have been made with faith groups and the BME Forum of NCC re the volunteer reading scheme.

7. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED

Council Plan Priority – Aspiring Nottingham; ‘By 2020 Nottingham will be a city of aspiration where children and adults alike have high aspirations of themselves and for their future and have the motivation and abilities to follow their ambitions ‘

Council Plan Priority, Family Nottingham: Ensure that all children and young people thrive and achieve

- Children, young people and families will benefit from early and effective support and protection to empower them to overcome difficulties
- All children and young people will leave school with the best skills and qualifications they can achieve and be ready for work or further learning.
- Raise the % of children developing well across all areas of early years foundation stage so that Nottingham is in the top 25% of local authorities

The Council Plan & the wider Sustainable Community Strategy (One Nottingham) refers to the 4th strategic objective of achievement which is progressed by Year of Reading initiatives:

4. Achievement - All children and young people will leave school with the best skills and qualifications they can achieve and will be ready for work or further learning	(11) Engaging learners' better - Improving school attendance and improving engagement and progression from age 16 in education, employment and training. (12) Improving attainment- Improving educational attainment and skills. (13) Closing the gap - Closing the gap in attainment and skills between disadvantaged groups and their peers.
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Working Nottingham – Tackle poverty and deprivation by getting more local people good jobs.

- By 2020 Nottingham will have more adults with the appropriate skills and qualifications able to progress in work and earn more.
- Raise the proportion of adults with at least Level 2 qualifications to 90%

Healthy Nottingham – Improve health and well-being

- By 2020 Nottingham people will be healthier, happier and live longer and will feel able to achieve their potential and make a positive contribution to city life.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Lead Officer; Gill Ellis, Director of Schools and Early Years

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