



**Business  
Disability  
Forum**

**Annual Report and Financial  
Statements**

30 June 2024

Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registration Number: 02603700  
(England and Wales)  
Charity Registration Number: 1018463

## Contents

### Reports

Reference and administrative information	1
Trustees' report	2
Independent auditor's report	32

### Financial Statements

Statement of financial activities	38
Balance sheet	39
Statement of cash flows	40
Principal accounting policies	41
Notes to the financial statements	46

## Reference and administrative information

<b>Trustees as at 14 November 2024</b>	Rachel Blackett Ian Callaghan Victoria Cleland Fiona Daniel Dr Shaun Davis Stephen Ingham CBE (Chair) Janet Hill CBE Rebecca Hitchings Hannah Mallett Paul Smyth Edward Stainton Iain Wilkie Angela Whitty Ben Kelly
<b>Company Secretary</b>	
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	Diane Lightfoot
<b>Registered and Principal office</b>	Dowgate Hill House 14-16 Dowgate Hill London EC4R 2SU
Telephone	020-7403-3020
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<b>Company registration number</b>	02603700 (England and Wales)
<b>Charity registration number</b>	1018463
<b>Auditor</b>	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
<b>Bankers</b>	HSBC Bank plc 69 Pall Mall London SW1 5EY
<b>Solicitors</b>	Bates Wells & Braithwaite 10 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1BE

## **Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024**

The trustees are pleased to present their statutory report together with the financial statements of Business Disability Forum for the year ended 30 June 2024.

The report has been prepared in accordance with Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011 and constitutes the directors' report for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out herein and comply with Business Disability Forum's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

### **Statement of trustees' responsibilities**

The trustees (who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements, for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing the accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Statement of trustees' responsibilities (cont.)

The trustees are responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the trustees confirms that:

- So far as the trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- The trustee has taken all steps that he/she ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s418 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

### Trustees

The trustees constitute directors of the charity and company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006. The board of trustees is known as the Council of Management (the Council).

Trustees take responsibility for monitoring the charity's activities and care is taken to ensure that members of the Council have the necessary skills required to contribute fully to the charity's development.

The following trustees served throughout the year and remain in office, except where shown.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

Trustee	Appointed/resigned	Date
Rachel Blackett Ian Callaghan Victoria Cleland Paulette Cohen Fiona Daniel Dr Shaun Davis Stephen Ingham CBE Janet Hill CBE Rebecca Hitchings Hannah Mallett Stephen Miller Paul Smyth Edward Stainton Iain Wilkie Angela Whitty	Resigned Appointed	30 November 2023 09 October 2024
	Appointed Resigned	17 March 2024 30 November 2023
	Appointed	17 March 2024

New trustees may be appointed by the Council either to fill a vacancy or as an additional trustee. At each Annual Retirement Meeting (ARM) any trustees who have been appointed by a decision of the Council since the last Annual Retirement Meeting shall retire along with those trustees whose three-year term of office has concluded; they may offer themselves for re-election.

No trustee received any remuneration or expenses from the charity during the year (2023 - £nil). No trustee had any beneficial interest in any contract with the charity during the year (2023 – nil).

### Other officers

#### Company Secretary

Ben Kelly

### Senior executives

Name	Position
Diane Lightfoot	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

### Members

The members of the charitable company, who are guarantors, are:

Barclays Bank plc.  
British Telecommunications plc.  
Cisco Systems.  
Royal Mail Group.  
Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Organisation and management of Business Disability Forum

Business Disability Forum is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, most recently amended on 29 June 2020.

In order to achieve both Business Disability Forum's vision and mission, a formal management structure is in place.

The Council is responsible for the general control and management of the organisation. At 14 November 2024, the Council comprises senior figures from business and the public sector, some of whom also have extensive experience of the not-for-profit sector. Beneath the Council four committees provide additional oversight on the strategic direction and operations of the organisation. Those committees are: Commercial, Finance and Audit, People, and Policy.

The Council meets regularly to review financial and other management information and longer-term strategic priorities for the organisation, corporate governance issues and other relevant matters. The committees meet prior to each Council meeting and update the full Council on their discussions. Further ad hoc meetings are convened as required.

An induction programme and governance manual are in place to ensure new trustees understand the vision, mission and management of the organisation as well as their responsibilities as trustees and company directors in accordance with the relevant guidelines issued by the Charity Commission and Companies House. The recruitment process for new trustees includes interviews with the Chair or another nominated trustee, CEO and Company Secretary with final approval by the Council at the Annual Retirement Meeting. Appropriate guidelines and information on the organisation's governance, activities, products and services are also provided. The new trustee is also introduced to members of the Leadership Team and, where appropriate, to the wider membership. In addition, ongoing training is sometimes offered in the form of external courses and presentations to the Council.

The trustees appoint and employ a CEO to provide vision and leadership, achieve their strategic and charitable aims and manage the organisation.

Business Disability Forum produces an annual Business Plan. This year that plan formed the second year of our five-year strategy to "explore the road less travelled", an agenda to grow sustainably and to use our predicted surpluses to pursue non-core activities which advance the less commercial aspects of disability in business which nonetheless need attention and innovation and which are part of achieving our wider mission and vision.

The annual Business Plan is submitted to the Council for approval. It sets out the vision and mission, reviews progress, achievements and the financial outcomes in the current year and sets out the action plan and budget for the forthcoming year.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### **Organisation and management of Business Disability Forum (cont.)**

Progress against the annual Business Plan is reviewed at Council meetings and, where appropriate, at committee meetings, with written updates also provided at regular intervals. The Council and committees receive brief, formal written reports covering Policy & Research (Policy consultations and member engagement and BDF led research projects), Operations (Advice Service, Membership Recruitment & Retention, Sponsorship, Disability Smart product suite, Professional Consultancy, Learning & Development and Supplier relationships), Legal and Content (Development of our best practice guidance, Design, Legal and Training & Events), Communications and Marketing (Communications, Marketing, PR & media, Digital communications) and Finance & Resources (HR, ICT, Administration, Finance, and Corporate Governance). In addition, the CEO and members of the Leadership Team attend Council meetings to provide further verbal reports and more information, for example on new projects or strategic items. Other employees attend these meetings as required.

### **Key management personnel**

There is a designated Leadership Team which includes the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Communications & Marketing, Operations Director, Director of Legal & Content, Director of Policy & Research, and Finance Director. The Leadership Team is accountable to the Council and is responsible for the day to day running of the organisation. It has agreed objectives that correspond to the organisation's vision and mission. Formal performance & development reviews are carried out annually, with Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) set six monthly and reviewed regularly, to ensure that objectives are met and that members of the Leadership Team have appropriate development opportunities.

The senior executives who form the Leadership Team are Diane Lightfoot, Adrian Ward, Angela Matthews, Bela Gor, Lara Davis and Ben Kelly (Company Secretary).

When personnel are appointed, the salary offered is benchmarked against roles with similar expectations and responsibilities in the not-for-profit sector, mindful that our business model also depends upon complementary skills required in the commercial sector. Key personnel salaries are set by the People Committee to ensure transparency.

When the responsibilities of the roles that the key personnel perform are increased, a review of the remuneration offered is undertaken and the salary is again benchmarked against roles with similar expected outcomes to decide if a pay increase is appropriate, again to be decided by the People Committee.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### **Organisation and management of Business Disability Forum (cont.)**

Key personnel are awarded our standard range of benefits; these are available to all employees. We use the XpertHR, Cendex, salary benchmarking tool and take part in their annual survey to ensure parity with comparable organisations. In 2023/24 a 7% cost of living salary increase was awarded to our team and we increased our pension contributions from 5% to 8%. Key personnel were also awarded the same increase.

### **Major risks**

The trustees have reviewed the major risks to which the organisation is exposed. During the year the continued economic and supply chain fallout from Covid lockdowns together with other supply chain issues arising from and the Ukrainian war and Middle East tensions remained the greatest risk that we face over the short term.

Factors that we consider as part of the risk process include:

- The ongoing Ukrainian war and unrest in the Middle East and its impact on inflation and supplies;
- IT and data security;
- Financial and our status as a going concern;
- Government attitudes to disability;
- Competition and demand for our products and services/ market conditions;
- Staffing and training;
- Insurances and facilities;
- Governance and statutory reporting;
- Internal reporting and other compliance issues;
- Processes, systems and quality control;
- Our mission and objectives;
- Opportunities and innovation;
- Internal culture, capacity and decision-making processes;
- Demand for international products and services;
- Procurement;
- Theft, fraud and business interruption/ continuity;
- Failure to protect intellectual property;
- The current and longer-term effects of the UK exiting from the EU;
- Issues arising from increasing our prices; and

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Major Risks (cont.)

- Issues arising from the increased costs of labour, goods and services (inflation).

Systems have been established to mitigate losses from such events where practical and are reviewed at each council meeting.

The top ten risks for the coming year have been identified as:

- Insufficient capacity and capability to deliver what we need to achieve
- Our products and services do not keep up with developing demands from our customers
- The ongoing effects to the economy of the geo-political situation in Ukraine and the Middle East and rising inflation
- Impact and profile insufficiently communicated to make disability a compelling area for business investment with us.
- Growth in competitors
- Key personnel leave to work for competitors
- Business Disability Forum receives adverse publicity in the media
- Disruption to our membership recruitment team following retirement of Membership Director
- "Anti-woke" sentiment
- Income does not continue to exceed expenditure.

We are fortunate that unlike many not-for-profit organisations we do not carry life-threatening risks such as operating in dangerous countries and infectious areas or working with vulnerable individuals in unsafe situations, nor do we rely on statutory grants for our income. As a membership organisation, it is unlikely that any one event would be so impactful as render us non-existent overnight, nor do we minister directly to vulnerable people as do other charities. So necessarily, much of our focus is on our service delivery, income generation and operational effectiveness with further consideration for the social and economic environment in which we operate, guarding against events which could have a long-term debilitating effect on the organisation.

### Review of our main risks

Our products and services are dependent upon the innovation and capacity of our employees. Staying ahead of the competition and delighting our Members and Partners is essential for our continued success. Our capacity and knowledge is therefore the biggest risk to that continued success and needs to be constantly monitored and nurtured. We generate sufficient revenue to resource our team and reward our team well and to recruit good quality talent to bolster our team.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Major Risks (cont.)

Costs increasing from demand returning to the economy and from rate changes and the Ukrainian war will impact our costs in the coming year. We have held our own prices to show solidarity with our membership. We believe this action reinforces what great value we offer to our membership.

We continue to mitigate the risks of disruption to our membership recruitment team following the imminent retirement of Membership Director. We have put several measures in place to increase membership recruitment capacity in terms of generating leads and taking meetings. This includes created a new Head of Membership role and increasing the capacity of the Operations Director to take on this role.

There has been a rise in “anti-woke” sentiment recently, particularly a questioning of identity politics and a backlash against calls for favourable treatment based on identity. Whilst not directly related to disability, this has the potential to affect budgets and enthusiasm for the subject of disability and business. We have long recognised that we need to provide practical and pragmatic solutions to show that spending on disability inclusion and specifically our offer, delivers tangible value and this should mitigate anti-woke sentiment. Disability is the only diversity strand which legally requires adjustments, and disabled candidates and employees who have the right adjustments offer productivity and capacity solutions for the skills shortages many sectors are facing. Ensuring products and services are accessible can increase market share for businesses. We will continue to make this case; our mission has always been symbiotic for the disabled community and business.

Our General Fund is increasing healthily as income performance has improved this year, which when combined with the reduced overhead that will arise from moving offices, makes finance and cashflow a less immediate risk. Income generation (or lack thereof) will always feature as a risk to our operations and the risk register lists our principal mitigations to ensure that the organisation's income remains above its expenditure. This risk remains at number ten on the list.

To increase our income generating opportunities we need to continue to give business more compelling reasons to invest in membership and our other products and services. Showcasing the benefits, financial and philanthropic, of getting it right on disability will make the case for its mainstream inclusion in budgets at board and departmental level.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Objectives and activities

In shaping our objectives and activities for the year, the trustees have complied with their duty in section 17 of the 2011 Charities Act to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Business Disability Forum is a membership-based charity which promotes, through its Members and Partners, the economic and social inclusion of disabled people. At year-end, the organisation had 595 (2023: 559) Members and Partners from the private, public and third sectors and emergency and law enforcement services. The membership employs approximately 17.0% of the UK workforce in employment i.e. approximately 5.3 million UK employees.

There are 5.46 million disabled employees in the UK workforce out of a total of 10.32 million disabled people of working age (an employment rate of 52.9%) which is an increase of 203,000 from 5.26 million in the same period last year (employment rate was 53.0%). The number of non-disabled employees in the UK workforce has again reduced, by 401,000, since last year, and their employment rate has reduced by 0.7% to 81.7%. The disability employment gap had reduced in the year by 0.6% as the rate of unemployment for disabled people fell at a lower speed.

The disability employment gap is closing, but doing so very slowly, and due to a higher proportion of non-disabled workers being out of work not a higher proportion of disabled workers being in employment. We continue to push to reduce this gap more rapidly and to change the narrative to one of that talent – and highlight that this is a pool of talent that no business can afford to overlook – as well as continuing to work with Government to seek to change wider policy change to support this.

Table showing Disability Employment Gap

	2024		2023	
	Disabled workforce	Non-disabled workforce	Disabled workforce	Non-disabled workforce
<b>Employees</b>	5,458,000	26,297,000	5,255,000	26,181,000
<b>Working age employees</b>	10,324,000	31,917,000	9,924,000	31,650,000
<b>Employment rate %</b>	52.9	81.7	53.0	82.4

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Objectives and activities (cont.)

Business Disability Forum is a registered charity and its charitable objects are the promotion of equality and diversity for the benefit of people with disabilities, in particular, but not exclusively by:

- The provision of advice, assistance and training aimed at increasing employment opportunities in industry and commerce for people with disabilities; and
- The provision of advice, assistance and training aimed at increasing accessibility to goods and services for people with disabilities.

### Creating a disability smart world together

Business Disability Forum is the leading business membership organisation specialising in disability inclusion. We are based in the UK and have global reach. We are trusted partners, working with business, Government and disabled people to improve the life experiences of disabled employees and consumers, by removing barriers to inclusion.

**Our Mission** is to drive equity and remove barriers to inclusion for disabled people as employees and consumers, by partnering with business, Government and policymakers.

**Our Vision** is an inclusive world where disabled people can access employment, products and services equitably.

We do this by:

- Advising, supporting and encouraging businesses (many of them global) to become more disability-smart.
- Influencing policymakers by representing the voice of employers and disabled employees.
- Providing evidence-based thought leadership on how business affects the lives of disabled people.
- Helping effect changes in business practices, products, services and policies, that positively impact the life experiences of disabled people, and also benefit business.

Our membership includes organisations of all sizes and represents a huge cross sector of UK and global business.

We provide our members with:

- expert, tailored, trusted, advice and support on disability inclusion, as it affects business.
- opportunities to share, learn from each other and collaborate.

We also use evidence from our membership – employers and disabled people - representing their voice to influence Government and policy makers and shape policy.

## **Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024**

### **Creating a disability smart world together (cont.)**

Our Disability-smart Framework drives best practice by providing the benchmark against which organisations measure their own performance on disability, as employers and service providers, as well as that of their suppliers and partners. We mobilise UK and global business behind the economic and social inclusion of disabled people. We bring business, government and disabled people together for mutual benefit.

#### **Our values:**

- Purposeful – we are focused on removing barriers to disability inclusion.
- Evidence-based – we are informed and driven by unique insights from our membership.
- Respectful - we are supportive and approachable.
- Pragmatic - we find practical solutions that business can implement.
- Responsive – we are constantly evolving to meet our Members' and Partners' needs.
- Bold – we are thought leaders and unafraid to challenge.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Review of activities and impact in 2023-24

It was an incredibly busy and largely positive period which saw strong Member and Partner growth and productive stakeholder engagement. This was reflected in our bi-annual membership satisfaction survey where our Net Promoter Scores increased from an already very high base.

Highlights in this year included our Disability Smart Awards, which saw an extensive range of high-quality entries submitted and which culminated in an award ceremony hosted by Bloomberg. We also held a Partner dinner, hosted by EY and focusing on the hot topic of AI, and the first (in a while) of our more intimate Leader to Leader dinners, hosted by KPMG, where we discussed the topic of data reporting – what to collect and, crucially, why. Data collection featured extensively in our activities this year and will continue to do so in the coming year as we report on our workforce data project and seek to influence the new Government in their approach to the possible introduction of disability pay gap reporting to ensure it achieves its aims and to avoid unintended consequences which can all too easily arise in this complex policy space.

Less positively, we were concerned by the noise around the “anti-woke” agenda and DEI. Whilst we hope that this is now reducing, we will continue to work with our membership to create a strong business case for collaborating with us, focusing on a track record of positive delivery and outcomes, and to demonstrate the importance of disability inclusion as core to productivity and organisational success, not just a “nice to have”.

The topic of a business case – should we need one when it is clearly the right thing to do? – was discussed further with our Advanced Practitioner Group and was also a strong theme at a roundtable to kick off a new project to increase the number of disabled NEDs on and advisors to boards. This is an area which we will further explore in the new year, including in the context of ESG reporting and encouraging investors to ask questions about disability when they are making investment decisions. To assist organisations to measure their progress in this area we are making good progress on our major project to create a global version of our Disability Smart Assessment tool.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### **Review of activities and impact in 2023-2024 (cont.)**

The timing of the election paused our ongoing engagement with Government and wider policy on topics including Fit Note Reform and exploring new approaches to vocational rehabilitation in the group risk insurance and occupational health space. We look forward to pursuing this much needed reform with the new administration alongside the other policies which we believe are the key priorities for any incoming government if we are truly to move the dial on disability inclusion, as set out in our own "Manifesto". As well as being a tool to engage with Government and Policy makers, the manifesto is an engagement tool and call to action for our Members and Partners; interest in the policy space is high and that we are keen to increase awareness of what we are doing.

<https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/knowledge-hub/resources/manifesto/>

Just before the election was called, we did see the publication of the first interim report of the Lilac Review, (our CEO is part of the Steering Board) which is looking at what is needed to support disabled entrepreneurs. The high-level recommendations include a move across all business support to a trust-based approach to assessing disability rather than a proof-based approach and a reassessment of assumptions about entrepreneurs' suitability for programmes based on their disability, directly reflecting our input.

We have also input into a large number of government consultations and calls for evidence and are increasingly asked to be part of private working groups, for example on the future of Access to Work and the Work and Health Unit Advisory Group, where we are often the only disability charity round the table. We consistently get feedback that our (behind the scenes) constructive and solutions-based approach is unusual (potentially unique) and very helpful to officials. This of course does not preclude us speaking out when we believe that Government policy or messaging is wrong, and we have openly criticised some of the very damaging messaging and rhetoric that has accompanied announcements on policy in this space (such as the review of Fit Notes).

Our workforce has grown to enable us to continue to provide great service, advice and guidance to the increasing membership. As a result, we have revised our management hierarchy and added an additional layer of management into our structure to provide pastoral and mentoring support to their reports and relieve some of the bottlenecks from our leadership team.

### **Designated Fund – Changing the Image of Disability**

Our five-year plan 2022-27 aims to continue sustainable growth and generate sustainable surpluses. We wish to divert some of those surpluses to pursue non-core activities which advance the less commercial aspects of disability in business which nonetheless need attention and innovation and which are part of achieving our wider mission. By designating surpluses already earned we can pilot and test ideas with a real chance of making a difference but which are less likely to make a financial return to sustain us.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Review of activities and impact in 2023-2024 (cont.)

Our first project, which was allocated £75,000 of designated funding, was our Changing the Image of Disability project. This project was designed to improve the way disabled employees and customers were portrayed through imagery in the media. The project built up a bank of over 400 images which are available to our membership (with a smaller library also available to print and online media) showing disabled customers and employees in everyday situations, some using their aids but some with non-visible disabilities. All the models featured are disabled and all are presented as their authentic selves. We have had very positive feedback on the images and on the accompanying open-source guidance for media creators to show disabled people in a better light and to use alt-text well.

Two webinars were run to launch the image bank one for the membership and others interested parties and one for print and online media. Take up has been encouraging with 409 users downloading nearly 3,000 images.

### Policy & Research

Business Disability Forum's policy work brings together the voice nearly six hundred businesses, of all sizes and all sectors, and collectively representing nearly a fifth of the available UK workforce. Crucially, all are working to make employment, consumer experiences, and access to services more inclusive for disabled people and those with long-term conditions.

Our policy and research team works closely with businesses and disabled people and those with long-term conditions to drive the disability inclusion agenda. Our unique position as the organisation that links disabled people, business, and Government enables us to gather original insight to inform independent inquiries as well as broader employment, health, social, and economic policymaking.

It is core to our mission to provide pragmatic solutions that work for disabled people, business, and the wider economy so our findings convert into practical business recommendations for change as well as evidence to influence and inform Government policy development; a direct feedback loop on what works – and what doesn't.

Our policy remit includes the following:

- Responding to Government or other calls for evidence to inform a debate or Parliamentary session.
- Being an expert adviser to policymakers on aspects of disability, health, and employment.
- Contributing to guidance or information development on topics related to health and disability as it affects the UK economy.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Review of activities and impact in 2023-2024 (cont.)

- We are also part of various Government policy stakeholder groups, the Disability Charities Consortium (which our CEO co-chairs), and we collaborate with disabled people's organisations. Our CEO is also now Deputy Chair of the Disability Confident Business Leaders Group.

Our research underpins the policy positions we develop to ensure these are strongly rooted in a sound evidence base. We regularly undertake research on a wide range of business and disability related topics.

Our Director of Policy and Research in particular is in demand to speak at public policy conferences. Feedback is excellent and these appearances generate interest from delegates which also supports business development activity.

Projects that we undertook this year included:

- Our key piece of consultation work during this period was on the Disability Action Plan. In the published Plan, 27 of our positions were mentioned in the Disability Action Plan and 8 of our recommendations will be taken forward by the government.
- Continuing to influence government on mandatory data reporting – with a change of government we are keen to express business' concerns on the methodology of disability workforce and wider pay gap reporting which as proposed do not reflect disabled many disabled employees' preference for part time working.
- Acting as an adviser to the Office for National Statistics' Assembly which is steering data reform and inclusive engagement on the Government's social data collections.
- Engagement with business and universities to prepare to use the government's Adjustments Planner.
- Publishing further analysis of data from The Great Big Workplace Adjustments Survey, with continued media and trade publication interest continues. Our latest release is "Intersectional experiences at work: Disabilities, adjustments, and everything in between".

We continue to influence government and aim to influence the new government and help them create their new policies.

Our Policy team produced two key pieces of guidance:

- Guidance with CIPD for employers on disability workforce reporting.
- Guidance for employers, universities and disabled students on the government's new Adjustments Planner.

Our CEO also engages with senior political figures at ministerial and Deputy Director level across various government policy areas. As part of the Disability Charities Consortium we are also co-funding barrister representation of disabled interests at the ongoing Parliamentary Covid inquiry.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Review of activities and impact in 2023-2024 (cont.)

#### Our manifesto for a disability-inclusive UK

Prior to the General Election, we drafted a manifesto that set out five key strategies needed for Government and organisations to create better experiences and opportunities for disabled people who work in or with their organisations as staff, customers, and other stakeholders.

The purpose of the manifesto was to:

- Position BDF as knowledgeable, strategically minded, and understanding of the issues that currently underpin the hindering of progress on disability inclusion across the UK labour market and society.
- Say something “different”.
- Provide evidenced-based asks informed by our members and disabled people.
- Be bold and ambitious, but possible.

Feedback on the manifesto was positive and we look forward to using the document to engage with government and all opposition parties in the future.

#### Advice Service

The Advice Service, and the many queries it responds to, continues to add huge value to our members as well as providing us with valuable insight into their needs and concerns. The Advice Service also provides Disability Confident Level 3 “Leader” validations for our members and advises those members beginning their disability confident journey on levels one and two. The service also provides guidance on members’ policies to ensure they are inclusive and accessible for disabled colleagues and customers.

The Advice Service was even more busy this year. We responded to 1,930 queries in the year (2023: 1,629). The increase reflects the growth in our membership and the excellent engagement with the membership through our Business Partners team, highlighting the service and encouraging its use. The complexity of many of the queries was again greater than the previous year. Data monitoring and managing workplace adjustments processes continue to be the main ‘broad’ topics we are being asked about. The number of queries that we receive on data monitoring does support our policy position that companies are already collecting data and that they are best placed to decide what data to gather and how to use it to best serve their disabled employees.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Review of activities and impact in 2023-2024 (cont.)

#### Legal & Content

##### Content and resources

2024 saw us concentrate on updating our guidance and adapting it for the new platform that our website will be hosted on, with search optimisation, accessibility and user experience as the areas of focus. Resources launched or updated through the period have included:

- New resources following our Annual Conference “Back to the future”, and Global Conference 2023 “Better together – Creating an accessible and inclusive world”.
- Designated Fund project “Changing the image of disability” webinar, guidance and image bank.
- New Technology Toolkit; Getting Started and Mental Health Toolkits both significantly updated and improved.
- A new open source “A-Z of disability”.

##### Events

The Events team continued to deliver high quality online, in person and hybrid events for the membership and other stakeholders.

The team ran 58 online events attended by 3577 delegates. These included: ELEN (Emergency Services and Law Enforcement Network), Procurement, Inclusive Communication, Northern England, Customer, Scotland, New Member, Government, NHS, HEI and Legal networks, our Global and Technology taskforces plus the newly created Legal Ease webinars which provide insight into disability employment and the law.

We ran our four of our highly regarded flagship events including: Global Conference (online, sponsored by HSBC) and the Disability Smart awards (hosted by Bloomberg). Our annual conference, which was hosted by BT, was delivered in the new financial year. These interventions bring our members together for networking and thought-provoking debate.

##### Business Disability Forum in the Press

We generated a substantial amount of press coverage in 2023-24 with 337 pieces published or broadcast in the local, national and trade media. They include:

- Financial Times
- LBC Radio
- BBC Online
- BBC South
- Daily Telegraph
- BBC Parliament
- The Sunday Post

**Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024****Review of activities and impact in 2023-2024 (cont.)**

- The Independent
- The Guardian (Media Planet supplement)
- Standard.co.uk
- The Mail (Online)
- Forbes
- Enable
- AXSChat
- The HR Director
- People Management
- HR Magazine (print)
- HR Magazine (online)

Press releases announced at the end of the year included our manifesto release and our post conference release.

These election-related releases both called on government to prioritise disability employment. They resulted in media interest continuing through the summer.

**Speaking and profile raising appearances**

This year, our CEO, Diane Lightfoot has spoken at:

**Open or invite-only external events:**

- ILO Global Business Disability Network Annual Conference
- IGPP Disability Inclusion in the Workplace
- Disability Inclusion Knowledge Exchange
- D&I Leaders Disability at Work Summit
- ACEVO Jane Slowey Leadership Programme
- London Anchor Institutions Network
- Balance the Board: Accelerating Change
- Level Up: We are Tech Women
- Occupational Health Legal and Professional Conference
- ABI DEI summit
- Disability Confident: Capital Group
- Oracle: Evolving HR Conversations
- Oracle: HR Leaders' Dinner

**Events for Members and Partners including:**

- Allianz
- Atos
- Bloomberg
- BT
- Cabinet Office
- Channel 4
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- GLA Building a Fairer City- LA Building a Fairer City- "Accelerating the pace of change in developing an inclusive workforce: People with disabilities
- Giesecke + Devrient More Accessible Payments Workshop, Munich

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Review of activities and impact in 2023-2024 (cont.)

- Ministry of Justice
- PwC
- Raytheon
- State Street

Our CEO is increasingly invited to be part of UK and global steering groups and taskforces. She is currently co-Chair of the Disability Charities Consortium and Deputy Chair of the Disability Confident Business Leaders Group.. She also sits on committees including the ILO (International Labor Organization) Global Business Disability Network Steering Committee, the Lilac Review Steering Board, the RSA Inclusive work, Disability and Ageing network, the "Everyone Economy" Advisory Committee Chaired by Sir Trevor Phillips and a range of other Government working groups.

### Taskforces and Networks

Our taskforces and networks continued to remotely support the membership through a growing range of subject, sector and location specific groups. Taskforces are included in the Partner offer with Members who have an interest in the area invited to join for an additional fee, Networks are open to the whole membership. The list of regular support network meetings includes:

- Career Development Network
- Central Government Roundtable
- Construction Round Table
- Customer Retail Network
- Emergency and Law Enforcement Network
- Higher Education Network
- Inclusive Communications Network
- Neurodiversity Taskforce
- NHS Network
- Northern England Network
- Scottish Round Table
- SME Network
- Technology and Global Taskforces

### Celebrating best practice

Our Disability-smart awards were bigger than ever in 2024 and hosted by Bloomberg at their London HQ. The Disability-smart Awards recognise the work of teams and individuals who have gone above and beyond to improve the experiences of disabled people. The awards show what is possible and encourage all businesses to aim higher on disability inclusion.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Review of activities and impact in 2023-24 (cont.)

Ten Disability Smart Awards were presented this year recognising excellence across the areas of workplace and customer experience and we again partnered with DWP to present three Disability Confident awards. We also awarded a special "Lifetime achievement award".

The event was hosted by both our CEO Diane Lightfoot, and TV personality Simon Minty, a long-standing Ambassador of Business Disability Forum.

The full list of winners and finalists of the Disability Smart Awards 2024 (by category), include:

- **Disability Smart Diversity and Inclusion Professional Award**
  - Winner: Kim Whippy, PwC LLP
- **Disability Smart Leader Award**
  - Winner: Oliver Holbourn, CEO of RBS International (NatWest)
- **Disability Smart Technology Award**
  - Winner: Microsoft
- **Disability Smart Inclusive Workplace Experience Award**
  - Winner: PwC UK
- **Disability Smart Inclusive Recruitment Award**
  - Winner: Whitbread PLC
- **Disability Smart Inclusive Communication Campaign Award**
  - Winner: Reckitt
- **Disability Smart Inclusive Customer Experience Award**
  - Winner: TUI UK&I
- **Disability Smart Accessible Built Environment Award**
  - Winner: HSBC
- **Disability Smart Global Disability Inclusion Award**
  - Winner: Accessibility Discovery Centre, London @ Google
- **Disability Smart Inclusive Product Design Award**
  - Winner: Primark

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Financial review 2023-24

Business Disability Forum began the year with a positive general fund of £2,230,482 (2023: £1,483,449). The target for the year was to generate £159,183 additional funds with the income generated in the year to further our mission (2023: £290,204).

Revenue generation exceeded the previous year as we continued to satisfy increased demand for our practical, pragmatic support from business and government. Our expenditure expanded to increase our capacity to satisfy that demand but remained well controlled. Consequently, and exceeding our most optimistic forecasts, the general fund increased by £ 261,649 (2023: the fund increased by £747,032) to £ 2,492,131 (2023: £2,230,482).

Most income strands performed well in the year considering the uncertainty within the UK and global economies, Membership remained our major income contributor with our Membership Income growing 12.6% in the year to £3,426,943 (2023: £3,042,195). That growth was supported by a small increase in Seminars and events but Publications and Training packages and Consultancy delivered lower income as we included more within the core membership offer. Consequently our renewal rate for members was maintained at over 90%. Overall income from charitable activities increased by £242,504; 6.6% (2023: £544,712 increase; (16.9%).

Throughout the year Membership continued to generate strong income as we delivered the services our membership expects remotely, digitally and a strong return to hybrid or in person sessions. We focus on being able to consistently delight them and exceed their expectations.

Our expenditure increased in the year by £709,255; (24.3%), (2023: increased by £514,314; 21.4%). Much of this increase was staff costs as we grew our head count by 22% in the year and increased remuneration packages to remain competitive and protect our employees against the consequences of the rising costs of living. We also invested heavily in developing a future proof digital strategy with an update to our digital offerings due to be released in September. We will continue to invest charitable funds wisely to deliver our business plan, focus on keeping our profile high and to champion the awareness of disability as a business priority.

### Reserves policy

The trustees have agreed the target level of reserves for the end of the 2023/24 financial year should be £1,680,200. This represents the level of funds in the upcoming budget year required to run the charity for five months. The reserves serve to provide funds for investment in service expansion or property if appropriate but also provide sufficient cash to close the organisation down in an orderly fashion while providing paid for services if required.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Reserves policy (continued)

Reserves for this purpose include the balance of the general fund and total £2,492,131 (2023: £2,230,482). The trustees can report that reserves at the financial year end exceeded our target while not preventing opportunities to deliver our mission.

The designated fund initiative is designed to use funds in excess of our required reserves. Our pilot, Changing the Image of Disability was successfully completed with a £75,000 grant <https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/changing-the-image-of-disability/>. The Trustees have now designated £200,000 of additional funds to be targeted at non-core and mission based activities which we may not otherwise be able to fund. The initiatives we are considering include; an accredited training programme for disability professionals, a support portal for disabled parents and support for companies to recruit more disabled non-executive directors.

### Gender pay and other equality and inclusion metrics

At year-end 2023/24 we had 36 female employees and 16 male employees. Our median gender pay gap was very small at 1.2% with men paid on average per hour 1.2% more than women. Our disability pay gap was also very small with our 20 non-disabled employees being paid on average 1.5% higher than our 32 disabled employees. Our ethnic minority pay gap shows that our 37 non-ethnic minority employees are paid 21.3% higher than our 15 ethnic minority employees. Our LGBT pay gap shows that our 45 non-LGBT employees are paid 27.7% more than our 7 LGBT employees. We will continue to focus on these areas in our recruitment and development activities.

Our other equal opportunity statistics for the full year are:

- Percentage of employees with a disability or long-term condition: 63.4%
- Percentage of with a disability or long-term condition, Leadership Team: 50.0%
- Percentage of employees from an ethnic minority: 20.8%
- Percentage of employees from an ethnic minority, Leadership Team: 16.7%
- Percentage of female employees: 70.3%
- Percentage of female employees, Leadership Team: 66.7%
- Average number declared sick days per employee non-disability related: 2.22 days
- Average number of declared disability-related sick days per employee: 3.48 days

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Membership

Our Disability Business Partnerships teams comprise: Senior Disability Business Partners, Disability Business Partners, the Advice Service plus a Taskforce Manager and Learning and Development Team. These team members each have specialist knowledge and experience of disability best practice aimed at disabled employees and customers, but which can also benefit all employees and customers.

A strong membership base, with committed and engaged Members and Partners, is necessary to fulfil our mission to promote the economic and social inclusion of disabled people by ensuring our membership is equipped to recruit and retain disabled people and serve disabled customers. In 2023/24 we maintained our retention rates for all levels of membership at over 90%. We recruited nearly 100 new Members and Partners in the year and increased our total engagement with our members through events, account management, consultancy, the Disability-Smart product suite, online resources, policy and campaigns activity and advice.

Business Disability Forum wishes to enhance and develop our membership base. In 2023/24 we challenged ourselves to increase our membership numbers to 570. This was not only achieved but we outperformed our expectations, and membership increased to close to 600. The target of ten new Partners was exceeded (twelve were recruited) and only five of our Partners left in the year.

The recruitment target of 80 new Members was met and reflects the sustained growth in interest and awareness of the benefits of being disability-smart. Our retention rate achieved in 2023/24 was 90.06% (2023: 91.08%); targeted retention rate was 87.02%. The total number of Members and Partners at year-end was 592 (target 570).

Membership income (£3,426,943) was £384,448 greater than 2023 (£3,042,195). Membership Income was £59,328 greater than the target, at £3,367,615. These results reflect over performance in recruitment of Partners and delighting our membership resulting in retaining nearly 3% more of our members than we had hoped we could achieve.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Membership (cont.)

A realistic yet stretching target has been set for 2024/25 given the uncertainties inherent in the UK and Global economy but mindful of the possibilities that a change of Government brings. That target is ten new Partners and 80 new Members with an overall retention rate of 88.19%. This would result in 609 Members and Partners at year end, an increase of 17 which would build on our gains from the last few years and maintain a strong base for our evidence-based policy positions and a draw for new Members and Partners who want to be part of a growing, relevant and dynamic movement. As always, we will seek to over-achieve on these figures; our past performance shows that we are not constrained by prudent targets in seeking to exceed them.

Business Disability Forum's Disability Business Partner framework allows each Partner to work with one of our experienced Senior Disability Business Partners to assist in developing their overall approach to becoming disability-smart and sharing best practice. Our wider membership is served by our sector specific Disability Business Partners. This combined approach has seen improved Member and Partner engagement, giving our membership the support they need to drive change.

Support has continued in the year for sector specific networks, including the Emergency Services and Law Enforcement Network (ELEN), Construction Sector Network, HEI Network, NHS Network, Retail network, Neurodiversity Network, Peer Learning Network, Procurement Network, Legal Network, Central Government Network and the Communications Network. We have also maintained activity in regional (Scotland and North of England) networks. As video conferencing is now a routine and expected means of running these networks we are able to increase attendance and engagement within these networks and they are flourishing. The offer is further enhanced by two taskforces; our Technology Taskforce and the Global Taskforce which are included in the Partner offer and available to Members to join for an additional fee.

To further support our membership offer and improve membership retention rates, we continued with a series of podcasts and webinars. These make Business Disability Forum accessible on a national and international basis through our contacts' desktops and browsers (a large number of our contacts within membership organisations change every year and these are useful tools to showcase what is available to new contacts). New contacts each have an introductory telephone or video conference meeting to share the latest "best practice" guidance on disability management and to discuss how the Member or Partner can best use our guidance to achieve their objectives.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Membership (cont.)

The Disability-Smart Framework, our assessment and accreditation framework measuring how disability-smart an organisation is, continued to be available free to our membership as an online self-assessment exercise. All our members have access to the self-assessment process, a less evidence-based solution than our full Disability-smart audit, assessing ten criteria across business areas using a binary scale to measure their performance. At the end of the self-assessment a report is produced suggesting potential improvements (including legal risk) and highlighting areas of excellence. In the new financial year we aim to expand this self-assessment to our global members.

The 'Advice Service', our service for best practice guidance on managing disability in the workplace and to welcoming disabled customers, has been widely used by our membership. In 2024, we increased the size of the team on the service and were able to assist with an average of 161 calls per month (2023: 135). Queries are ever more complex, indicating the evolution of our membership's knowledge of disability in the workplace and their subsequent requirements from this service. Users of the service have increased requests for policy reviews and Disability Confident Level 3 "Leader" validations which often take longer to complete than ad hoc queries and the increase in capacity has enabled us to keep pace with requests and maintain the high level of member satisfaction with this much appreciated service.

Although the 'Advice Service' is essentially a service offered to fee paying companies from within the membership, non-member companies who contact us are provided with basic advice, invited to join the organisation or directed to other organisations that can provide them with more detailed advice. Disabled people or other stakeholders who call the 'Advice Service' are also able to take advantage of the "connect service" free of charge where they are put in touch with either the relevant company from the membership or other suitable organisations to provide them with assistance.

Further advice and information is provided to the membership through our monthly newsletter; legal update bulletin; e-communications regarding our online and flagship events; products and services; online networking and webinar events and our website. Our membership and other website visitors also benefit from our online Disability Essentials toolkit which is an open-source product and freely available to all.

As part of our drive to improve membership engagement we have invested heavily in our Knowledge Hub in 2023/24. Early in 2024/25 we will relaunch the Knowledge Hub and Disability-smart self-assessment. The self-assessment will be available in an updated Learning management system to improve the user experience and the Knowledge Hub has been designed to greatly enhance user experience, accessibility and search.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Membership (cont.)

We will continue to respond to the membership's needs through active communication with them: anticipating any non-renewals; the needs of disabled stakeholders; and ensure the whole team is actively involved in membership retention. Member and Partner numbers and retention rates are key performance indicators that reflect the organisation's ability to achieve its vision and mission. We are confident that the retention rates we have budgeted are achievable and realistic and that our membership will continue to thrive. In times of uncertainty, shared purpose and a sense of belonging can bring comfort and much-needed peer support.

### Seminars & events

Our expectations for this year, reflected by our budget, included more in-person events and greater hosting by our Members and Partners. Financial sponsorship proved problematic to secure, perhaps as companies were cautious about partnering with causes in the context of the anti-woke sentiment in the media. Companies were willing to be generous and provide in-kind support, hosting our in person events at their own cost which replaced the income that we forfeited from sponsorship. Our Disability Smart awards were hosted in person at Bloomberg and also live streamed for remote attendees. Our annual Conference was hosted by BT but the room we were offered was not available until early in July so hence falls into the next financial year. The current expectation that events, webinars and roundtables will be delivered and attended online gives us greater scope to deliver more events and welcome more delegates from a broader range of locations, including globally.

We will continue for the foreseeable future with the current format of events using online, hybrid and in-person platforms as appropriate for the type and audience of each event. During the year our Legal & Content team delivered flagship events alongside seminars, podcasts, round table discussions, toolkit launches, Business Disability podcasts and events tailored specifically for individual Members' and Partners' needs. We hosted 3,577 delegates in 2024 (2023: 4,115).

This year we expected to deliver six (2023: six) income generating events which would be complemented by 74 network meetings and webinars. We actually delivered four (2023: six) income generating events, including in-kind sponsorship, alongside 58 (2023: 46) engagement events and network or Taskforce meetings, generating income of £63,206 (2023: £54,167). This was less than the target of £108,900 (2023: £125,000) but the programme gave our membership plenty to engage them and to consider. Our events always aim to make delegates view the issues in a new way.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Publications

We have a large cache of online toolkits and resources available to our membership through our Knowledge Hub. (<https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/knowledge-hub/toolkits/>) covering a comprehensive range of topics. Our distribution model has become almost wholly online although we do provide hard copy for accessibility purposes.

Many of our resources are open source and available to all. Access to these resources, while contributing to the continuing increase in memberships and membership income, has diminished the appetite for sales of resources for our memberships' intranets and Learning Management Systems. Toolkits do provide great opportunities to raise sponsorship income but this stream has diminished as an income raising exercise and we now concentrate on the public benefit and engagement aspect of our guidance distribution rather than revenue generating opportunities.

We continued to offer our Partners all our guidance as part of their membership and to Members all but the Procurement toolkit and Global Guides. Logged in Members and Partners accessed our Knowledge Hub over 24,500 times (2023: 19,000) and downloaded 45,153 resources (2023: 44,660). The page views were many times that number. Several of our toolkits are available as open-source resources and the Disability-essentials toolkit remain one of our most landed on pages.

Turnover on publications sales and projects was £43,100, a significant but expected decrease on the previous year (£130,613). This was entirely accounted for by the Roche sponsored Sightloss toolkit from 2023.

We have alliances with two companies to promote their accessibility products to our membership who pay us commission at varying rates for introductions. The purpose of these alliances is primarily to ensure we can offer our membership a fuller range of solutions. These strategic alliances delivered £3,500 (2023: £11,700) income in 2024.

There were no new sponsored resources projects delivered in the year but our Mental Health Toolkit and Neurodiversity Toolkit continued to be sponsored by Anglo American and Microsoft respectively generating £18,500 revenue and the Global Toolkit was sponsored by Texthelp generating £10,000 (2023: £104,725) at a cost (excluding support costs) of £0 (2023: £0).

Business Disability Forum continued to offer discounted rates on its publications for all charities and non-profit making organisations as well as its range of free publications and toolkits.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### **Disability-smart Framework, consultancy and other projects**

The Disability-smart framework (formerly the Disability Standard) is the basis for all that Business Disability Forum does. Grounded in a long history of B2B work, the Disability-smart framework uses an organisation-wide approach to disability in a unique way that differentiates Business Disability Forum from other organisations working with employers and service providers on disability.

The framework was last reviewed in 2021 and we will release the latest iteration in 2024 as part of our website and Knowledge Hub update. The current version stretches the boundaries of best practice to reinforce the importance of a structured approach to planning for, and making improvements to, disability management as it affects all functional areas within an organisation. The Disability-smart framework provides an evaluation tool with participants answering a comprehensive on-line questionnaire on how disability is addressed and managed within their organisation.

The Disability Smart Framework has generated interest around the globe and has provided a framework for much of our international consulting work and ongoing discussions. This year we have made good progress in developing a global framework to complement the UK based approach which we will launch in 2025.

We continue to use a third party to deliver some of our consultancy services, which allows us to concentrate our efforts on delighting the membership and delivering the consultancy projects included within the Partner offer. Our outsourcing arrangement provides ideal solutions to those of our membership that need additional services. This has enabled us to deliver more internal and external projects and to continue to provide in house Learning and Development interventions.

Revenue generation of £392,373 (2023: £441,268) in 2024 was higher than our expectations of £356,000 but our direct costs were also elevated as our new, growing team were supported by our external support to a greater extent, meaning direct costs increased to £ 470,718 (2023: £391,038). The revenue and expense increases reflect the volume of outsourced work delivered and has supported income delivery while providing valuable solutions to a greater number of Members and Partners.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Strategic priorities

Our aim is to be the go-to organisation for guidance and advice on all aspects of disability as it affects business whilst striving to maintain and grow our core income streams.

2023/24 was a very productive year for Business Disability Forum. We expanded our reach nationally and internationally and continued to improve our profile and reputation particularly in the policy space while developing improved opportunities and capacity to recruit new members and income generating opportunities.

In this time of economic uncertainty, and while the disabled stakeholders who we serve are often more disadvantaged by the economic situation than most, Business Disability Forum's main focus will be to increase our capability and capacity to deliver the services for which our membership pays.

We will be running schemes using our designated funds to sustainably utilise some of our surplus funds in areas that have less commercial return, to reach some of the most disadvantaged disabled employment candidates and customers whose disabilities attract less focus than others. The pilot scheme "Changing the image of disability" showed that this is a highly productive use of our surplus funds over and above the level of reserves to run these programmes in future.

Strategic priorities for 2024/25, driven by our new five-year plan are:

- To improve life choices and experiences for more disabled people.
- To sustainably increase the membership.
- To deliver outcomes from our evidence-based policy and research programme that improve life choices and experiences for disabled people as employees and consumers.
- To develop and share cutting edge thought leadership.
- To extend opportunities for businesses to network and share best practice.
- To create quality information and guidance content in response to business need.

To this end we will increase our capacity through careful employee recruitment, train our existing employees and develop new ways of working for the current environment. We will develop new products and upgrade our website as a medium through which to deliver to a wider audience.

To judge how we are performing against these priorities we will use a range of measures including anecdotal feedback, qualitative and quantitative research.


The ultimate OKR for our relevance is member numbers and by how much the disability employment gap can be reduced.

## Trustees' report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Financial objectives 2024-25

- To release sufficient funding to enable recruitment of enough new employees to provide services paid for by the membership, but to ensure this remains sustainable.
- To maintain the sustainability of Business Disability Forum's business model. Increasing the volume and predictability of income and reviewing expenditure, to monitor the cashflow and working capital required to run the organisation.
- Further develop OKRs and real time reporting, using real time data to monitor progress against budget and the new five-year plan.
- Monitor and control expenditure ensuring a "value for money" approach to resources expended without missing any realistic opportunities for growth and mission delivery.
- Report on income and expenditure in real time and provide sufficient information for management to make timely and informed decisions.
- Carefully monitor membership renewals which are essential for cash flow.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Signed by:  11/18/2024  
EB8D3C81C95E41B...

Stephen Ingham CBE, Chair

Approved by the trustees on: 14 November  
2024

## Independent auditor's report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Independent auditor's report to the members of Business Disability Forum

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Business Disability Forum (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 30 June 2024, which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 30 June 2024 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

## **Independent auditor's report: Year to 30 June 2024**

### **Conclusions relating to going concern (continued)**

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### **Other information**

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Financial Statements, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Independent auditor's report: Year to 30 June 2024

### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

### Responsibilities of Trustee

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Independent auditor's report: Year to 30 June 2024

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the sector;
- the identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit;
- We focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the charity. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act 2011 and 2022, the Companies Act 2006 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland - FRS102, and also the Charities SORP FRS102, 2019; and
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management, inspecting legal correspondence and reviewing Trustee meeting minutes.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

**Independent auditor's report: Year to 30 June 2024****Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)**

- making enquiries of management and those charged with governance as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- tested the authorisation of expenditure as part of our substantive testing thereon;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias; and
- used data analytics to identify any significant or unusual transactions and identify the rationale for them.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of Trustee meetings;
- enquiring of management and those charged with governance as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing any available correspondence with HMRC and the Charity Commission.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.


## Independent auditor's report: Year to 30 June 2024

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)**

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

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11/20/2024

Edward Finch, Senior Statutory Auditor  
for and on behalf of Buzzacott LLP, Statutory Auditor  
130 Wood Street  
London  
EC2V 6DL

**Statement of financial activities incorporating income and expenditure account:**  
Year to 30 June 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	<b>2024 Total funds £</b>	2023 Total funds £
Income and expenditure					
Income from:					
• Investments		99,248	-	<b>99,248</b>	39,137
• Donations		-	-	-	75
• Charitable activities	1	3,925,322	-	<b>3,925,322</b>	3,680,818
Total income		<u>4,024,570</u>	<u>-</u>	<b><u>4,024,570</u></b>	<u>3,720,030</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities					
	2	3,631,530	-	<b>3,631,530</b>	2,922,275
Total expenditure		<u>3,631,530</u>	<u>-</u>	<b><u>3,631,530</u></b>	<u>2,922,275</u>
Net Income and net movement in funds		393,040	-	<b>393,040</b>	797,755
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward at 1 July 2023					
		2,307,673	12,125	<b>2,319,798</b>	1,522,043
Total funds carried forward at 30 June 2024					
		<u>2,700,713</u>	<u>12,125</u>	<b><u>2,712,838</u></b>	<u>2,319,798</u>

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

The charity has no recognised gains and losses other than those shown above.

## Balance Sheet: Year to 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	8		<b>7,597</b>		11,009
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	9	<b>523,994</b>		516,188	
Cash at bank and in hand		<b>4,851,835</b>		<b>4,142,695</b>	
		<b>5,375,829</b>		<b>4,658,883</b>	
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	10	<b>(433,311)</b>		<b>(423,174)</b>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>4,942,518</b>		4,235,709
<b>Deferred income</b>	11		<b>(2,237,277)</b>		(1,926,920)
<b>Total net assets</b>			<b>2,712,838</b>		<b>2,319,798</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>					
<b>Funds and reserves</b>					
Unrestricted Funds					
General Fund			<b>2,492,131</b>		2,230,482
Training Designated Fund	12		<b>8,582</b>		12,656
Image Designated Fund	12		-		64,535
Designated Fund	12		<b>200,000</b>		-
Restricted Fund	13		<b>12,125</b>		12,125
			<b>2,712,838</b>		<b>2,319,798</b>

Approved by the trustees  
and signed on their behalf by:

Signed by:  
  
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 11/18/2024

Chair  
Name Steve Ingham

Approved on: 14 November  
2024

Company Number 02603700

## Statement of Cashflows: 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	<b>611,176</b>	1,123,051
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends and interest from investments		<b>99,248</b>	39,137
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		<b>(1,284)</b>	(13,499)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<b>97,964</b>	25,638
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<b>709,140</b>	1,148,689
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 1 July 2023</b>	B	<b>4,142,695</b>	2,994,006
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 30 June 2024</b>	B	<b>4,851,835</b>	4,142,695

### Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 30 June 2024.

#### A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash (used in) provided by operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Net income for the year (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>393,040</b>	797,755
<b>Adjustments for:</b>	-	
Depreciation charge	<b>4,696</b>	14,089
Dividends and interest from investments	<b>(99,248)</b>	(39,137)
Decrease / (Increase) in debtors	<b>(7,806)</b>	14,998
Increase in creditors	<b>320,494</b>	335,346
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>611,176</b>	1,123,051

#### B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	<b>4,851,835</b>	4,142,695
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>4,851,835</b>	4,142,695

## **Principal accounting policies: 30 June 2024**

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

### **Basis of preparation**

These financial statements have been prepared for the year to 30 June 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland - FRS102, and also the Charities SORP FRS102 2019 and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

### **Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement**

Preparation of the accounts requires the trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- Our year end membership figure of 559 assumes that 38 Members and Partners (2023: 40) who have not yet confirmed they will continue in membership will do so. This has no effect on income which is not booked until confirmation is received.

### **Assessment of going concern**

The trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these financial statements.

## Principal accounting policies: 30 June 2024

### Assessment of going concern (continued)

The trustees of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due. The most significant areas of judgement that affect items in the financial statements are detailed above. With regard to the next accounting period, the year ending 30 June 2024, the most significant areas that affect Business Disability Forum continuing as a going concern have been raised in the note on Major Risks in the Trustees Report namely:

- Insufficient capacity and capability to deliver what we need to achieve
- Our products and services do not keep up with developing demands from our customers
- The ongoing effects to the economy of the geo-political situation in Ukraine and the Middle East and rising inflation
- Impact and profile insufficiently communicated to make disability a compelling area for business investment with us.
- Growth in competitors
- Key personnel leave to work for competitors
- Business Disability Forum receives adverse publicity in the media
- Disruption to our membership recruitment team following retirement of Membership Director
- Anti-woke sentiment
- Income does not continue to exceed expenditure

Issues remaining from Covid lockdowns and arising from the war in Ukraine plus the inflationary impact of those supply chain issues, energy shortages driven by the drive for net zero and huge money printing programmes undertaken by Central Banks cast a shadow over all companies' assessments of going concern at this time. We feel our stock of deferred income as reported in these pages (£2.2 million; note 11) provides more than half of the working capital and cashflow to fund us in the year to come. Our free reserves, totalling £2,492,131, have also increased from just £17,085 in 2019 and are budgeted to increase again in 2024/25 following four years of rising demand for our services.

## Principal accounting policies: 30 June 2024

### Assessment of going concern (continued)

Further Comfort is provided across our core membership income by the historically high rates of member retention and recruitment that we achieve, the proposition and approach that delivers these high retention rates is continually reviewed and monitored using feedback from the membership, market conditions, advances in disability best practice and knowledge and perceived value. Indeed our recent membership survey returned results which provided areas for continual improvement while confirming that overall our delivery exceeds expectations.

Our budget for 2024/25 has been designed to build on our current performance and is mindful of the likely recession that will come from Government action to combat inflation and consumer reactions. We have assumed realistic attrition rates for the membership than we have seen in previous years, and used experience gained in 2008-2011 during the great recession to guide our income projections while allowing sufficient expenditure to deliver the services our membership expects to our usual high standards. We can expand as the economy contracts to consolidate our position as the go-to provider of advice on disability in business.

Our healthy cash position resulting from deferred membership, sponsorship and project income means that we will be able to meet all foreseen liabilities as they fall due. Our General Fund has been improved by this year's sterling performance and our fixed costs are manageable for an organisation of our size and income.

### Income recognition

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income and the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received. Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period.

Income comprises membership fees, income from seminars and events, income from publications and training, consultancy and bank interest.

Income from membership fees is recognised over the membership year with the unexpired portion of membership fees being included in the balance sheet as deferred income.

Income from seminars and events, income from publications and training, consultancy, disability standard and from the provision of training and workshops is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the company and the revenue can be reliably measured.

**Principal accounting policies: 30 June 2024**

**Income recognition (continued)**

Income is measured as the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other taxes.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when received and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid by the bank.

**Expenditure recognition**

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure comprises the costs of charitable activities in respect to the charity’s primary charitable purposes as described in the Trustees’ report. Such costs include:

- Events and seminar expenses;
- Publication costs; and
- External supplier delivery costs.

All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

**Allocation of support and governance costs**

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned using staff numbers.

**Tangible fixed assets**

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated at the following annual rates in order to write them off over their estimated useful lives:

- Furniture and general office equipment                      25% per annum based on cost
- Computer and similar equipment                                      33% per annum based on cost

## Principal accounting policies: 30 June 2024

### Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

### Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed asset investment.

### Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

### Pension costs

Contributions by the charity in respect of the group money purchase pension scheme (workplace pension scheme) are included in the statement of financial activities when they are payable.

### Fund accounting

Designated funds comprise monies set aside out of unrestricted general funds for specific future purposes or projects.

General funds represent those monies which are freely available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the charity's charitable objects.

Restricted funds are monies raised for a specific purpose.

### Leased assets

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

## Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024

### 1 Income from charitable activities

	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	<b>2024 Total £</b>	2023 Total £
Membership fee income	3,426,643	-	<b>3,426,643</b>	3,042,195
Seminars and events	63,206	-	<b>63,206</b>	54,617
Publications and training packages	43,100	-	<b>43,100</b>	130,613
Consultancy	392,373	-	<b>392,373</b>	441,268
Other projects	-	-	-	12,125
	<u>3,925,322</u>	<u>-</u>	<b><u>3,925,322</u></b>	<u>3,680,818</u>

### 2 Charitable activities

#### (a) Analysis of costs of unrestricted charitable activities

	Costs allocated directly £	Support costs £	<b>Total 2024 £</b>
Membership	1,320,941	1,098,594	<b>2,419,535</b>
Seminars and events	239,665	118,858	<b>358,523</b>
Publications and training packages	112,085	81,503	<b>193,588</b>
Consultancy and other projects	539,328	120,556	<b>659,884</b>
	<u>2,212,019</u>	<u>1,419,511</u>	<b><u>3,631,530</u></b>

	Costs allocated directly £	Support costs £	Total 2023 £
Membership	992,138	975,107	1,967,245
Seminars and events	209,789	105,366	315,155
Publications and training packages	89,832	68,966	158,798
Consultancy and other projects	391,038	90,039	481,077
	<u>1,682,797</u>	<u>1,239,478</u>	<u>2,922,275</u>

## Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024

### 2 Charitable activities (continued)

#### (b) Analysis of support costs

	Staff costs £	Office expenses £	Depreciation £	Professional and legal £	2024 Total £
Membership	624,257	365,789	3,634	104,915	<b>1,098,595</b>
Seminars and events	67,538	39,575	393	11,351	<b>118,857</b>
Publications and training packages	46,313	27,137	270	7,783	<b>81,503</b>
Consultancy and other projects	68,504	40,140	399	11,513	<b>120,556</b>
	<b>806,612</b>	<b>472,641</b>	<b>4,696</b>	<b>135,562</b>	<b>1,419,511</b>

Support costs are allocated to charitable activities on the basis of staff numbers assigned in each area. Since 2020/21 we have outsourced much of our Consultancy delivery to allow us to focus on deliver Membership services.

	Staff costs £	Office expenses £	Depreciation £	Professional and legal £	2023 Total £
Membership	609,598	223,209	11,084	131,216	975,107
Seminars and events	65,870	24,119	1,198	14,179	105,366
Publications and training packages	43,115	15,787	784	9,280	68,966
Consultancy and other projects	56,289	20,611	1,023	12,116	90,039
	<b>774,872</b>	<b>283,726</b>	<b>14,089</b>	<b>166,791</b>	<b>1,239,478</b>

### 3 Governance costs

	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff costs	<b>32,004</b>	29,652
Legal and professional fees	<b>25,508</b>	16,481
Other	<b>8,020</b>	3,731
	<b>65,532</b>	<b>49,864</b>

## Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024

### 4 Net income (expenditure) and movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	<b>2024</b>	2023
	<b>Total</b>	Total
	<b>£</b>	£
Staff costs (note 5)	<b>2,689,265</b>	2,161,352
Auditor's remuneration		
• Statutory audit services	<b>14,800</b>	14,000
• Other services	<b>4,626</b>	4,100
Depreciation	<b>4,696</b>	14,089
Operating lease rentals	<b>95,000</b>	95,195

### 5 Employees and staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	2023
	<b>£</b>	£
Wages and salaries	<b>2,019,024</b>	1,660,961
Social security costs	<b>216,315</b>	178,614
Other pension costs	<b>239,293</b>	170,053
	<b>2,474,632</b>	2,009,628
Payments to agency staff	<b>133,649</b>	95,442
Staff training	<b>16,866</b>	14,302
Other payments/benefits	<b>64,118</b>	41,980
	<b>2,689,265</b>	2,161,352

The average number of employees during the year was 50 (2023:41).

The number of employees who earned £60,000 or more (including taxable benefits but excluding employer pension contributions or termination charges) during the year was as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	2023
	<b>Number</b>	Number
£60,001 - £70,000	-	1
£70,001 - £80,000	<b>2</b>	2
£80,001 - £90,000	<b>1</b>	-
£90,001 - £100,000	<b>2</b>	2
	<b>5</b>	5

## Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024

### 5 Employees and staff costs (continued)

Total employer contributions to the group money purchase schemes in respect of the above employees during the year amounted to £90,816 (2023: £67,207). The increase in contributions in 2024 is due to some of these employees taking advantage of the salary exchange option for pension contributions that is open to all of our team. We contributed 8% of gross salary to all our employees for the whole year in 2024 (2023 – 8 months).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Leadership Team of six members, 5.7 FTE (2023: six members, 5.4 FTE). The total remuneration of the key management personnel for the year was £630,673 (2023: £574,546).

### 6 Trustees

None of the trustees received any remuneration in respect of their services during the year (2023: £nil).

During the year travelling expenses were incurred by the trustees in the course of their duties. Such expenses were not reimbursed to trustees during the year as a matter of policy. Our policies do allow for expense for any adjustments to be reimbursed but this has not been necessary in the year.

Business Disability Forum has indemnity insurance which covers actual or alleged breach of duty, breach of trust, neglect, error, misstatement, omission, breach of warranty of authority, libel and slander or any other act committed by trustees, officers and employees in the course of the organisation's activities (subject to specified exclusions). The cost of this insurance was £4,052 (2023: £3,859).

### 7 Taxation

Business Disability Forum is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

## Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024

### 8 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £
<hr/>	
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 July 2023	83,321
Additions	1,284
Disposals	(11,142)
At 30 June 2024	<u>73,463</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At 1 July 2023	72,312
Charge for the year	4,696
Disposals	(11,142)
At 30 June 2024	<u>65,866</u>
<b>Net book values</b>	
At 30 June 2024	<u>7,597</u>
At 30 June 2023	<u>11,009</u>

	Fixtures, fittings and equipment £
<hr/>	
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 July 2022	70,377
Additions	13,499
Disposals	(555)
At 30 June 2023	<u>83,321</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At 1 July 2022	58,778
Charge for the year	14,089
Disposals	(555)
At 30 June 2023	<u>72,312</u>
<b>Net book values</b>	
At 30 June 2023	<u>11,009</u>
At 30 June 2022	<u>11,599</u>

**Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024****9 Debtors**

	2024	2023
	£	£
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Fees receivable	405,886	457,839
Other debtors	42,447	2,576
Prepayments and accrued income	75,661	55,774
	<b>523,994</b>	<b>516,189</b>

**10 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Expense creditors	107,319	110,352
Payroll and VAT creditors	201,385	199,083
Accruals and other creditors	124,607	113,739
	<b>433,311</b>	<b>423,174</b>

**11 Deferred income**

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 July 2023	1,926,919	1,634,071
Invoiced in the year	5,137,072	4,284,112
Released in the year	<b>(4,826,714)</b>	<b>(3,991,264)</b>
At 30 June 2024	<b>2,237,277</b>	<b>1,926,919</b>

Deferred membership income includes £ 1,539,248 (2023: £1,343,906) for the unused element of Members' and Partners' current membership year. The remainder of deferred income relates to the second year of certain Partners' or Members' two year membership fees and also income due from projects, publications and events to be delivered post year-end.

**12 Designated Funds****Training Fund**

The Trustees recognised that following the restructure in 2020 it was vital that Business Disability Forum's employees retain, share and improve their business and disability skills and knowledge. To ensure that was possible they designated £20,000 of funds to be used for training and development of employees. We were able to continue to routinely develop our staff as income remained strong so we now use the fund for professional development and qualifications of our employees such as CIPD, legal, IT or accountancy qualifications.

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 July 2023	12,656	12,656
Expenses incurred	4,074	-
At 30 June 2024	<b>8,582</b>	<b>12,656</b>

## Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024

### Changing the image of disability fund

As written earlier a central aim of our five-year plan is to use our surpluses for less commercial, more philanthropic purposes by designating funds for non-core projects aimed at disability in business.

The first, pilot project launched in 2023 and aims to create an image bank of disabled employees and customers for use by business to better represent the image of disabled employees, customers and service users in the media. We will also release guidance on how business can create their own images with the same aims. This project will last for one year and if successful we will designate further funds for other projects in 2024.

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 July 2023	<b>64,535</b>	-
Funds transferred form General Fund	-	75,000
Expenses incurred	<b>64,535</b>	10,465
At 30 June 2024	<b>-</b>	<b>64,535</b>

### Designated Fund 2024/25

As written earlier a central aim of our five-year plan is to use our surpluses for less commercial, more philanthropic purposes by designating funds for non-core projects aimed at disability in business.

We have transferred £200,000 to the designated fund for 2024/25 to be used on projects that are currently undergoing the rigorous selection process. The ideas include: Greater disabled representation as Non-Executive directors. An AI chatbot for our website, an accredited training programme for disability professionals and a portal to provide support for disabled parents.

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 July 2023	-	-
Funds transferred form General Fund	<b>200,000</b>	-
Expenses incurred	-	-
At 30 June 2024	<b>200,000</b>	-

## 13 Restricted Funds

### City Bridge London SME project

City Bridge Trust committed to a five-year grant funded programme to improve the disability confidence of London's SMEs. This project did not receive the traction that had been hoped, focus on survival following Covid lockdowns being a major cause. In 2023 we agreed with City Bridge that this project should cease but that we would create a toolkit of guidance specifically for SMEs as a legacy of our involvement in the project. This toolkit is maintained on our website.

**Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024**

	<b>2024</b>	2023
	<b>£</b>	£
At 1 July 2023	<b>12,125</b>	25,937
Grants received in the year	-	12,125
Expenditure in the year	-	(25,937)
At 30 June 2024	<b>12,125</b>	12,125

**14 Leasing commitments****Operating leases**

At 30 June 2024 the charity had the following total minimum commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	<b>2024</b>		2023	
	<b>Land &amp; buildings</b>	<b>Equipment</b>	Land & buildings	Equipment
	£	£	£	£
Operating leases:				
Less than one year	<b>19,950</b>	-	95,000	195
Between one and two years	-	-	19,950	-
Between two and five years	-	-	-	-

**15 Related party transactions**

Five organisations by which trustees are employed or who are members of the company paid to the charity £94,999 during the year in respect of membership fees and other services, (2023: six organisations paid £169,200).

Of the 2024 related party transactions £28,740 was outstanding for payment at 30 June 2024 (2023: £49,200).

**16 Liability of members**

The charity is constituted as a company limited by guarantee. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

## Notes to the financial statements: 30 June 2024

### 17 Prior year statement of Financial Activities

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
Income and expenditure					
Income from:					
• Investments		39,137	-	<b>39,137</b>	1,215
• Donations		75	-	<b>75</b>	7,056
• Charitable activities	1	3,668,693	12,125	<b>3,680,818</b>	3,210,656
Total income		<u>3,707,905</u>	<u>12,125</u>	<b>3,720,030</b>	<u>3,218,927</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities					
	2	2,896,338	25,937	<b>2,922,275</b>	2,466,643
Total expenditure		<u>2,896,338</u>	<u>25,937</u>	<b>2,922,275</b>	<u>2,466,643</u>
Net Income and net movement in funds					
		811,567	(13,812)	<b>797,755</b>	752,284
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward at 1 July 2022					
		1,496,106	25,937	<b>1,522,043</b>	769,759
Total funds carried forward at 30 June 2023					
		<u>2,307,673</u>	<u>12,125</u>	<b>2,319,798</b>	<u>1,522,043</u>

### Accessibility Statement

Business Disability Forum is committed to ensuring that all its information, products and services are as accessible as possible to everyone. If you wish to discuss anything in regards to the accessibility of the information provided in our Annual Report and Financial Statements please contact us as follows: telephone: 020-7403-3020 or by email: [enquiries@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@businessdisabilityforum.org.uk)