

LISBURN ENTERPRISE ORGANISATION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019)

Chairman's Foreword

Welcome to the 2022 Annual Review of the activities of Lisburn Enterprise Organisation, presented on behalf of the LEO Board of Directors.

This year has been an extremely busy year for the organisation which has included the continued support to local businesses through the provision of advice, business support initiatives and workspace.

Providing business support initiatives to aspiring, start-up and existing entrepreneurs within the greater Lisburn area remains a key objective for the organisation. This year our Business Advisory team have continued to deliver a range of business support initiatives such as Exploring Enterprise, Go For It and our own funded initiative, MY Adviser.

LEO has continued to develop strong partnerships with other organisations throughout the year. During the year we also highlighted the issues facing our local entrepreneurs and as we faced uncertainty around funding with the ending of European funding in 2023, we met with MLAs to raise concerns.

As the provision of workspace units and Grade A office facilities at favourable economic rates continues to underpin many of the charitable activities of LEO, I am delighted to report that by December 2022 occupancy levels at the site were 100%.

The excellent success, performance and achievements of LEO is due to the dedication of our staff team led by our Chief Executive, Martina Crawford. On behalf of the Board, I wish to record our thanks to them.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank our Board of Directors for their continued support. LEO's success is a result of their individual and collective contributions which have enabled LEO to maintain high standards of service and performance.

As we learn to navigate the many challenges we are faced with in business, from uncertainty of programme funding to rising costs, LEO will continue to invest in the future of the organisation and to fulfil our charitable objectives for Lisburn and the greater local area.

LISBURN ENTERPRISE ORGANISATION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Objectives and activities

LEO's main activities and beneficiaries are detailed in this report. All of our charitable activities focus on the promotion of urban and economic regeneration in the Greater Lisburn area and are intended to further our charitable purpose for the public benefit. Every activity is assessed in respect of its impact on beneficiaries and its contribution to charitable activities so that Trustees may determine the best allocation of resources. The objectives of the charity include the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture, support for business start-ups and mechanisms to encourage existing business development.

In the course of promoting an entrepreneurial culture and offering support services to new and existing businesses, the Charity makes a contribution to the following charitable purposes:

- a. The relief of poverty;
- b. The relief of unemployment, including assistance to the unemployed to find employment;
- c. The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience;
- d. The provision of financial assistance, technical assistance or business advice or consultancy in order to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people in cases of financial or other charitable need through help: (i) in setting up their own business, or (ii) to existing businesses; and
- e. The creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings and/or land for use on favourable terms.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission Guidance on public benefit in the Charities Act 2011.

The public benefit of our charitable purposes of advancing citizenship and community development through the promotion of urban regeneration in Lisburn are as follows:

- The relief of poverty through increased opportunities to learn, train and be successful in attaining paid employment locally;
- A reduction in unemployment because of enhanced opportunities to upskill, gain work experience and attain paid-for job positions;
- An increase in the number of indigenous businesses established;
- An increase in the survival rates of business start-ups as a result of the advice, training & mentoring received;
- An improvement in the skills and experience of the local resident population so that Lisburn becomes an attractive destination for businesses to locate, thus providing more opportunities for paid jobs, skills and experience;
- An enlargement of the local economy by providing support to businesses to become sustainable and prosper thus employing more people locally who's wages when spent locally, sustain many more businesses;
- The enhanced access to support structures making it easier for people to access advice, training & mentoring in entrepreneurship & business skills; and
- The advancement in awareness of enterprise as a viable career option.

These benefits are evidenced in a number of ways, both in the collection of primary data and the review of independently produced statistics.

Lisburn Enterprise Organisation was formally registered with the Charity Commission NI on 13 February 2015 having been confirmed by the Commission to exist for charitable purposes and the public benefit.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

LISBURN ENTERPRISE ORGANISATION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Achievements and performance

Enterprise Awareness

A key feature of the work at Lisburn Enterprise Organisation is the promotion of an enterprise culture and the undertaking of awareness raising activities to highlight the opportunity of self-employment and business start-up.

The latest Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2021) provides an insight into entrepreneurial activity at national and international levels.

Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rates in 2021 were not significantly different across the UK with 11.8% in England, 10.3% in Wales, 9.5% in Scotland and 9.1% in Northern Ireland. There appears to be significant growth in 2021 TEA rates which may be attributed to a postponement of start-up decisions from 2020.

The rate of total early-stage entrepreneurship activity (TEA) in Northern Ireland in 2020 was 5.4% and 6.6% in 2019. The TEA rate in Northern Ireland of 9.1% reported in 2021 is therefore a considerable increase on pre pandemic levels.

During the year the Business Advisory team continued to provide guidance and support to individuals considering self-employment. Business advisers also engaged with the Jobs and Benefits office and Community organisations to promote the opportunities afforded by entrepreneurship. Other activities included the hosting of business start-up clinics and participating in case studies to highlight entrepreneurship as a career option.

Throughout the year LEO also worked with The Science Shop in Queen's University Belfast to sponsor a post graduate student undertaking research into entrepreneurship. The findings of this research will assist the organisation in the development of appropriate entrepreneurship support and enterprise awareness raising activities.

Business Start Up

• Exploring Enterprise

Designed for individuals who wish to explore the options of self-employment, education, training and employment, Exploring Enterprise bridges a gap in the provision of enterprise support. The programme assists individuals who are unemployed or working less than 16 hours per week and have an interest in self-employment but are not ready to start up. A range of other options are also explored with individuals such as further training, education or finding employment.

Participants receive training and mentoring on a range of areas to help them increase their knowledge of self-employment and build their confidence. Delivered by a dedicated Business Adviser, participants are equipped with the skills and confidence to start their own business or take the first steps to finding employment. The programme also provides participants with the opportunity to work towards an OCN qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise.

During the year 5 individuals participated on the programme. Following COVID the team were delighted to get back to delivering in person workshops and mentoring sessions.

Delivered locally by LEO Business Advisers, the Exploring Enterprise Initiative is part-funded through the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-20, the Department of the Economy and Local Enterprise Agencies.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Business start up (continued)

• **Go For It Start a Business Programme**

The Go For It Programme provides the opportunity for budding entrepreneurs to avail of professional business advice and tailored business start-up mentoring and support from a Business Adviser to help progress their business idea. Individuals can take the steps along their entrepreneurial journey by clarifying their idea with an expert Business Adviser, developing a comprehensive business plan and participating in business skills workshops.

The programme is delivered free of charge to participants through Northern Ireland's wide network of Enterprise Agencies highly experienced Business Advisers. Lisburn Enterprise Organisation deliver the programme locally in partnership with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. Go for It is part-funded by Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the Investment for Growth & Jobs Northern Ireland (2014 – 2020) Programme.

LEO Business Advisers offered business advice throughout the year to over 160 individuals who wished to explore a business idea. The team also worked with aspiring entrepreneurs to deliver business start-up mentoring and developed 104 business plans with entrepreneurs to help them get a business idea off the ground.

Local entrepreneurs, Tony Murphy and Joe Murphy availed of the Go For It programme when they decided to launch their custom woodworking furniture business, Alderwood Studios, in Lisburn. Having spotted a gap in the market for custom made epoxy resin tables combined with a passion for woodworking and running their own business together, the brothers approached the Go for It programme for assistance.

Commenting on the support received, Joe notes that, "The Go For It Programme helped us in various ways. First of all, it gave us confidence that there was a market for what we were doing". Tony also adds, "The business plan really helped start us off in the right direction and we still refer back to it today. It also has set us up for future funding if we need it, so its really investment friendly".

• **Start Her Up**

The Start Her Up programme encouraged women aged 18-40 years old to launch their business idea and was delivered by Enterprise Northern Ireland members in partnership with Ulster Bank.

Female entrepreneurs participating on the programme had the opportunity to avail of a bespoke personal development action plan, a series of workshops and mentoring to help build awareness of self-employment and build the confidence to start up and grow their venture. The programme completed with participants having the opportunity to win up to a £1,000 incentive to take their business to the next level.

LEO were delighted to host a roadshow and provide mentoring as part of this initiative.

• **Support Network for Social Entrepreneurs (SuNSE)**

The Support Network for Social Entrepreneurs (SUNSE) delivered training, workshops and networking events to new and existing social enterprises throughout the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area. Jointly funded by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and the EU Interreg North West Europe programme, the programme was delivered by Development Trusts NI.

During the year LEO worked in partnership with Development Trusts NI to assist in the delivery of this initiative through the provision of business mentoring to two existing social enterprises in the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Business start up (continued)

• MY Adviser

The MY Adviser programme is an initiative that is fully funded by LEO and provides start-up entrepreneurs in the Lisburn area who are trading less than 18 months, the opportunity to avail of one-to-one business mentoring support and MY Network catch up events.

Such support has been beneficial to entrepreneurs to assist them in getting their business up and running. The programme provides tailored business mentoring support to each participant over the course of a 12-month period alongside the opportunity to network with other start-up business owners.

Each participant is assigned their own dedicated Business Adviser who will develop a bespoke mentoring action plan and deliver mentoring to the client over the 12-month period. The programme focuses on the building of entrepreneurial skills and business confidence through the combination of mentoring and monthly MY Network workshops.

Monthly MY Network events provide participants with the opportunity to develop business skills while building their network of support with other local entrepreneurs.

Throughout the year 8 MY Network workshops took place. These events focused on a range of topics from Video content creation, Customer journey, HMRC compliance, Quickbooks, Cyber Security, Resilience for business, Blogging and Goal Setting.

By the end of December, 14 participants were enrolled on the programme and availing of tailored one to one business mentoring and networking workshops.

Since 2018 a total of 71 individuals have availed of support through the programme. This includes 6 entrepreneurs who received support in the form of subsidised workspace and virtual office accommodation.

Business Development

• Co-Innovate

Supported by the EU's INTERREG VA Programme and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), the Co-Innovate initiative was designed to support SMEs in Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland. The primary aim of the initiative was to give SMEs and micro-businesses access to innovation capability development and help to implement enhanced research and innovation activity on a cross border basis.

Focusing on helping businesses discover how innovation can be implemented right across a business, Co-Innovate provided participants with the opportunity to avail of workshops, business assessments, innovation audits, expert mentoring and collaborations with academia and business to business projects.

During 2022 the Co-Innovate programme completed. Lisburn Enterprise Organisation were delighted to be a delivery partner of this very successful initiative which recognised that nurturing innovative ideas could lead to business growth and success.

From its inception, 32 businesses in the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council area participated on the programme to assess their innovation readiness. Recognising that businesses have different innovation needs, these businesses were able to avail of workshops, innovation assessments and apply to receive further expert mentoring to help harness innovation in their business.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Business Development (continued)

• Resource Matching Workshop

Resource matching provides an opportunity to transfer business waste, unwanted materials and bi-products from one business or organisation to be reused, recycled, reprocessed and repackaged by another. This year LEO were delighted to partner with International Synergies NI to host a resource matching information session for local businesses.

At the session delegates were introduced to the Invest Northern Ireland Resource Matching Service and learned how this free service can help companies benefit from our growing circular economy.

Following on from the session, businesses had the opportunity to receive a free consultation visit from a sustainable business consultant to help identify practical cost saving in day to day operations as well as reducing carbon footprint.

Business Support

• Workspace

At the centre we have 85,000 sq. ft of flexible workspace accommodation which comprises of light industrial units and high-tech offices. Entrepreneurs are provided with a choice of flexible workspace to meet their business needs. Terms include a flexible licence agreement that can be terminated with a minimum of 30 days' notice, a single all inclusive licence fee that includes site security, waste disposal and grounds maintenance and access to on-site administration and business support functions.

During the year occupancy figures throughout the site remained high with 100% occupancy recorded in December 2022, bringing the total number of businesses trading from the site to one hundred and fifty and providing employment for almost 550 people.

As part of LEO's commitment to the environment, the Organisation is pleased to report that waste reduction and recycling initiatives during the year contributed to 70 tonnes of waste being diverted from landfill.

• Virtual Office Facilities

By the end of the year 44 businesses were taking advantage of the virtual office facilities offered by LEO. These services allow the business owner to present a professional image whilst keeping overheads low. Businesses were offered a commercial mailing address and rather than incur the cost of a full-time receptionist, the LEO administrative team provided personalised call handling services to these clients.

• Conference Facilities

This year we seen a move back to in person meetings following the pandemic and as a result demand for our meeting rooms and conference facilities increased with a total of 132 room hire meetings facilitated during the year.

• Accessing Finance

LEO is an official and pro-active Delivery Partner of the Start Up Loans Company and the NI Small Business Loan Fund. In 2022 these two loan funds committed £70,000 in loans to 4 Lisburn based businesses and entrepreneurs. During the year LEO were also delighted to deliver business mentoring to clients who received a loan through the Start Up loans Company.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Business support (continued)

• Co-operation & Partnership

An intrinsic part of LEO's charitable activities is the significant contribution made by Trustees and staff to a range of other initiatives within the city of Lisburn and further afield.

The partnership with Fusion Theatre Company continued throughout the year. Fusion provides an opportunity for youth aged 8-21 from all backgrounds to engage in the collective and inclusive production of high-quality musical theatre, thus building personal and employability skills. Following COVID when theatre productions were halted, it was great that once again Fusion brought an outstanding performance this year to delighted audiences with their production of *The Addams Family*.

The Board of Directors welcomes the relationship that exists with our primary enterprise and economic development partners Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Enterprise Northern Ireland and Invest NI. This year LEO promoted several business growth initiatives and networking events on behalf of the Council.

LEO remains a dynamic and enthusiastic member of Enterprise Northern Ireland and is represented on the organisation's Board. LEO deliver many ENI initiatives to local entrepreneurs and ensure that the issues facing micro and SMEs are raised at a government level.

The organisation maintains strong links with Lisburn Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Directors were delighted to attend the Lisburn Chamber Dinner this year at La Mon House Hotel.

LEO continues to work alongside the Bank of England, ensuring the experience of Lisburn businesses is represented in the economic and financial intelligence gathered by Bank of England Agents. This in turn helps inform decisions made by the Monetary Policy Committee, the Financial Policy Committee and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

Financial review

The charity returned net incoming resources of £99,974 (2021 - £135,681), of which all were unrestricted. At 31 December 2022, the level of unrestricted reserves held was £3,774,802 (2021 - £3,674,828).

The primary objective of the LEO Reserves Policy is to retain a level of free reserves which matches the needs of the charitable company both at the current time and in the foreseeable future.

The most recent review of this policy encompassed the nature of the income and expenditure streams, the need to match variable income with fixed commitments and the nature of the reserves. The review concluded that to allow the charity to be managed efficiently and to provide a buffer for uninterrupted services, an adequate general reserve should be maintained at a level equivalent to 6 month's expenditure.

The LEO Board believes in retaining an appropriate level of reserves for the following reasons:

- To ensure sufficient funds are available to meet current commitments when income streams are erratic.
- To ensure services can be maintained in the event of an unexpected loss of income or exceptional expenditure.
- To provide sufficient funds for an orderly winding up in the event that the organisation should cease operations.

The trustees maintain a policy of actively managing the reserves in order to increase the operational possibilities of the charitable company in future years. The Reserves Policy is formally reviewed annually.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charitable company is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Future Plans

LEO plans on continuing its activities under the headings of enterprise awareness, business start-up, business development and business support in forthcoming years.

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Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. It is governed by a Memorandum and Articles Association. The charitable company was incorporated on 13 August 1990 and registered as a charity on 16 February 2004. The company has charitable status for taxation purposes.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr A H Robinson (Chairman)

Mr J R Catney (Company Secretary)

Mr N E Elliott (Financial Director)

Mr R S Briggs

Mr N S Fenton

Mr G A Green

Mr D T Magill

Mr I S S McBrien

Mrs J E McQuitty

Mr C Mitchell

(Resigned 12 April 2022)

Mr B Sofley

The charitable company is managed by the Board which usually meets each month. The day to day management of the charitable company is carried out by the Chief Executive Officer.

The trustees of the company are elected by the members of the charitable company. Trustees are recruited and appointed in accordance with the Articles of Association. Upon election each trustee is given a copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the latest Annual Report and also introduced to the legal and operational aspects of the charity to ensure they have an understanding of the nature of charity trusteeship and responsibilities and duties that go with this position.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Key Management Personnel

The Board consider the board of trustees, the chief executive officer and the senior business advisor as comprising the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling the charity and running and operating the charity on a day to day basis. All board members give their time freely and no board remuneration was paid in the year. Board members are required to disclose all relevant conflict of interests and register them at each monthly board meeting and in accordance with the Trust's policy withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

The Board of Directors wishes to record its appreciation of the dedication during the year of Martina Crawford, Chief Executive and all the team. Throughout the year demand for our programmes remained high, room hire levels increased and an occupancy level of 100% was reached which is a tremendous achievement.

The Charity is committed to developing and training its staff and Board, thus contributing to the provision of the highest quality service to its clients. Throughout the year training was provided in a range of areas including Safeguarding.

During the year, the organisation successfully maintained both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 accreditations.

Trustees and staff are also heavily involved with voluntary action in the local community, in prisons, local community groups and voluntary organisations. In 2022, these activities included staff and licensees raising over £715 for Macmillan Cancer.

The Trustees of the Charity give their time to support LEO voluntarily and are not in receipt of any payment from the Charity.

LISBURN ENTERPRISE ORGANISATION LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of Lisburn Enterprise Organisation Limited for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the 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 incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

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 the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- 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.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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. They 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.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemptions

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr A H Robinson (Chairman)
Trustee

Dated: 16/05/23