

MALLUSK ENTERPRISE PARK LIMITED

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The directors present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

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 company'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).

Objectives and activities

The objectives of Mallusk Enterprise Park are the promotion for Public Benefit of Urban and Rural regeneration, in or around the vicinity of areas of social and economic deprivation, in the Newtownabbey area and its environs by all or any of the following means:

- i. The relief of poverty in such ways as may be thought fit
- ii. The relief of unemployment in such ways as may be thought fit, including assistance to find employment
- iii. The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly amongst unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience
- iv. The provision of financial assistance, technical assistance or business advice / 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
- v. The creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings and / or land for use on favourable terms.

The principal objectives of the organisation are to promote community and economic development by means of assisting unemployed and economically inactive people to become self-employed, and to offer workspace accommodation to businesses that will create employment opportunities for those who are not currently employed. Business incubation and mentoring support is offered to both new and existing tenants to enable them to sustain, grow and develop their businesses.

The organisation provides free enterprise advice, education and training courses, and organises events and workshops to promote self-employment as a viable alternative to long term unemployment. We provide management advice and expertise to local community groups in the third sector, to assist them in areas such as sustainability, governance and general management skills. There are a wide range of support services that are offered to anyone seeking business or management advice.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year, the trustees have given careful consideration of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Achievements and performance

As a social enterprise Mallusk Enterprise Park records its social impact and tracks how it helps local individuals and businesses. The directors have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the company should undertake.

In the last financial year we have recorded the following:

Businesses On Site – 67, employing 562 people

New Jobs Created – 285 (Jobs created by tenant companies, Mallusk Enterprise Park and as a direct result of mentoring provided through programme interventions)

Individuals upskilled through workshops – 369

Entrepreneurs supported – 847, via 15 various funded programme interventions

One to One Expert Mentoring hours delivered – 2953.25

Contribution to Local Economy through procurement and pro bono activity- £365,710

Free enterprise advice, education and training courses

Pre-start support

Pre-Coaching Programme (Jan – Sept 2023)

Funded by Antrim and Newtownabbey Council, this programme provided tailored mentoring support (2 hours per participant) to aspiring entrepreneurs and early stage business owners.

- 61 Enquiries
- 37 Participants on the programme
- 74 Mentoring hours completed

Post-Coaching Programme (Jan – Sept 2023)

Funded by Antrim and Newtownabbey Council, this programme provided tailored mentoring support (5 hours per participant) to entrepreneurs and business owners to help them overcome challenges and accelerate growth.

- 37 Enquiries
- 19 Participants on the programme
- 95 Mentoring hours completed

NIEESS (Apr – Dec 2023)

Funded by the UK Government through the UK Prosperity Fund, NIEESS provides employment support for economically inactive individuals aged 16+ in Northern Ireland. This programme is designed to assist individuals who have been unemployed for at least four weeks, who are facing barriers to employment due to lack of skills or personal circumstances.

- 4 Participants on the programme
- 52.5 Mentoring hours completed
- 84.5 Hours of marketing/promotion/admin on program

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Go Succeed - (Oct – Dec 2023)

Go Succeed is the new business support programme being led by Northern Ireland's eleven local councils. It provides tailored advice and guidance for business owners to help shorten the journey to business growth. MEP successfully tendered and won the contract for the Go Succeed Growth Programme for the Antrim & Newtownabbey and Mid & East Antrim areas. This programme only commenced in the final quarter of 2023.

Engage and Foundation

- 40 Enquiries
- 9 Participants on the programme
- 9hrs Completing Diagnostics
- 10.75 Mentoring hours completed

Growth

- 69 enquiries
- 30 Participants on the programme
- 30hrs Completing Diagnostics
- 3 Workshops delivered – 61 attendees

Go For It Jan – Sept 2023

The Go For It programme provided pre and start-up businesses with confidential and impartial advice on a one-to-one basis on all aspects of starting up a business. Go For It was part funded by Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the Investment for Growth & Jobs in Northern Ireland (2014-2020) Programme. The support through this programme included mentoring support and the development of a business plan which could be used to access funding such as grants and loans.

- 87 Enquiries
- 97 Participants on the programme
- 48.5hrs Completing IAM
- 414 Mentoring hours completed
- 69 Business Plans.

Loan Fund

The NI Small Business Loan Fund is part of Invest NI's Access to Finance Strategy, managed and delivered in Northern Ireland through the partnership of Enterprise NI and Ulster Community Finance Ltd. Loans range up to £100k for existing businesses and up to £15k for start-ups.

Funding can be provided for a range of purposes including Working Capital, Asset Purchases, Growth Finance, Start-Up Costs, and Match Funding. As part of the support where clients successfully apply for a business loan they have access to mentoring support from a business adviser from the local enterprise agency.

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Women In Business

MEP delivered on its 4th & 5th Women in Business, Yes You Can programme in partnership with WIB throughout 2023. The Yes You Can programme is a hybrid 5 month programme for cohorts of 15 women who are in the idea stage or early trading stages of business. With ongoing support, participants are guided on how to put what they learn into practice through Business Start training, Digital Marketing training, Peer Advisory Groups and 1:1 Buddy Support.

- 35 Enquiries
- 15 Participants on the programme
- 115 Mentoring / buddy hours completed
- Workshops delivered – number of attendees 75
- 2 peer networking sessions

Optimal I 2 (Q1 only)

The first quarter of 2023 saw the conclusion of the Optimal Programme. The Optimal Programme supported small and medium sized businesses and social enterprises with fewer than 50 full time employees. The programme was designed to offer support through bespoke mentoring, workshops and networking in a range of areas for example marketing, finance, digital, sales, export and social enterprise etc.

In the last quarter of the programme we achieved:

- 31 Enquiries
- 31 Participants on the programme
- 1697.59hrs Mentoring hours completed
- 1 Workshop delivered – 29 number of attendees
- The programme completed in March and overall 181 participants participated on the programme with 3912.59 hours of mentoring support delivered on the full programme.

Social Enterprise Programme

This programme offered a range of support to incubate and stimulate social economy projects in the Borough, from pre-start workshops to one to one mentoring, collaboration and networking and a bursary of up to £1,000 towards set up costs.

With the aim to boost the local economy and create social benefits through sustainable and ethical business models.

The outputs of this programme were as follows

- 39 Enquiries
- 17 Participants on the programme
- 407 Mentoring hours completed
- 5 Workshops delivered – 58 number of attendees
- 9 participants successfully applied for the bursary support.

Mallusk Enterprise Park records its outputs in terms of both quantitative and qualitative impact.

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Social Impact Report

Social outputs are measured as follows:

- Board of Directors and staff voluntary time supporting the local economy with a focus on economic regeneration
- Discounted and free usage of conference and meeting rooms (primarily by tenant companies and local business start-ups)
- Discounted office / industrial units business incubation for local entrepreneurs
- Staff time on non-income generation activities to support local business start-up and wider economic regeneration

Directors / Trustees voluntary contribution and staff pro-bono work

As a social enterprise, Mallusk Enterprise Park Board comprises experienced and highly skilled individuals, operating themselves within a range of private and public sector Organisations. Staff employed within the Organisation primarily work on income generating projects however a proportion of their time is offered to local individuals, businesses and third sector organisations on a pro-bono basis. All activities undertaken by Directors and Staff are in line with the Charity's aims and objectives. Directors time is monitored and captured via board and sub-group meetings.

Based upon an hourly rate of £55 per hour for employees and £70 per hour for CEO and Directors, this equates to a total contribution in kind of **£17,950** to the economic development of the local area.

Staff pro-bono assistance was provided to:-

- Economic Development Department within Antrim and Newtownabbey Economic Development
- Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership
- Enterprise Northern Ireland Board membership
- Judging for Young Enterprise NI
- Judging for Women in Business NI
- One to one support provided to multiple entrepreneurs and small business owners who could not be supported through the suite of programmes or those who had exhausted the support available under programmes.
- Tenant Businesses are supported under the Mallusk Incubation Programme. Ad-hoc advice and support is available to all tenants through on-site business advisers and management.

Discounted / Pro bono use of units and meeting space

In certain circumstances discounted rent periods, coupled with incubation support and advice is offered by Mallusk Enterprise Park to support local economic regeneration. In 2023 there was minimal tenant movement out of the Park, therefore incubation units were limited in availability.

The associated pro-bono value for meeting / conference space in 2023 (based upon a £30 average hourly rate) was £16,065.

Mallusk Enterprise Hub

Proactively responding to the needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs we have invested in new workspace provision within the business park.

Opened in October 2022; the hub which spans 3,000 square feet of commercial space, offers co-working desks, huddle rooms for private meetings and a training, conference and meeting space for up to 40 delegates with top of the range audio visual equipment. The provision includes a meeting 'OWL' which allows event organisers to turn face to face events into hybrid events to provide a 360 degree view that accommodates delegates tuning in from home, locally and across the world.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Since its launch the hub has offered those working in the Newtownabbey area and beyond a productive and professional workspace for training courses, enterprise programme workshops, new product exhibitions and showcases. Both new and established entrepreneurs and local organisations have been able to hold one to one mentoring sessions, job interviews, consultancy and HR meetings in spaces ideally suited for privacy, focus and confidentiality.

Working patterns and practices have evolved and the team at Mallusk Enterprise Park are delighted to be able to offer high end solutions to meet the workspace and event requirements of solopreneurs, small, medium and large sized businesses, social enterprises, charities and the public sector. Working from home can and does work but it can also bring challenges and distractions.

We have found that demand for these facilities primarily comes from existing tenants. Other users of the serviced offices have included individuals employed by larger organisations who ordinarily work from home and early-stage start-ups seeking incubation space.

The 2023 Mallusk Christmas Market (held within the Enterprise Hub)

The Mallusk Christmas Market was an opportunity for Mallusk Enterprise Park tenants, programme participants (current & past) to showcase and trade their products and services and be supported by Mallusk Enterprise Park in the run up to the peak Christmas season. This was an opportunity also to support the corporate social responsibility aspirations to build a bank/a mountain of Christmas food items and gifts for local people in need this Christmas.

The market brought together entrepreneurs, marketers, photographers, videographers, influencers & consumers together at Christmas for trading/sales, networking and 'evergreen' content creation.

Mallusk Christmas Market Outputs:

- Showcase and Sell Opportunity for 26 local entrepreneurs
- Free Santa's Grotto experience for 100 local children
- £1,077.57 Funds Raised for NI Children's Hospice
- Mountain of gifts collected for Cash for Kids NI appeal to support local children at Christmas
- Mountain of festive food and drink collected to support Newtownabbey Food Bank Christmas Hamper appeal for local families in need
- Local Businesses/Brands Involved in Supporting Festive Community Event (Sponsoring Raffle Prizes, Golden Goodie Bag, Providing Advertising Space and Food/Drink/Selection Boxes)
- Volunteers 'on the night' = 13
- Local Press Coverage achieved pre-event and post event; in print and online
- Digital/Social Media Audience growth and engagement
- Increase in awareness of OPTIMAL business growth support mentoring support programme with traders and resultant new applicants
- Upskilling of Traders via delivery of online webinar and digital marketing toolkit pre-event
- Development of content bank for individual traders, Mallusk Enterprise Park, B Social Deli which included 201 professional photos, video, amateur photos and user generated content by traders, visitors and inclusive content i.e. sign language by local trader and mentee Ed's Wood Turning
- On site visit by Deputy Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

B Social Deli

In Quarter 3 of 2023 Mallusk Enterprise Park transformed two ground floor office units into B Social Deli.

The new B Social Deli operates as a social enterprise and offers training and employment opportunities to local people. This includes the provision of paid casual work shifts to individuals who would like to earn extra income but who have caring and other responsibilities which make it difficult to commit to set working hours.

B Social Deli opening hours are from 8am to 3pm, Monday to Friday and the casual bank of workers are not required to work evenings, weekends or on bank holidays. This make your own hours earn and learn opportunity is open to anyone willing to upskill as a fully trained Barista. The cafe, which commits to a local supply chain, where possible, also hosts tasting events to help local food producers and entrepreneurs showcase and sell their products.

Mallusk Enterprise Park is more than just a business park and this brand new social enterprise is more than just a coffee shop. We hope that these earn and learn opportunities help not just local people but will also provide a future flow of trained hospitality workers to an industry that is facing a skills shortage. The hundreds of workers on site at Mallusk Enterprise Park have warmly embraced the new catering offering on site and it is encouraging to see the networking that happens daily in this new shared space. The team have already provided high quality catering for a number of business events hosted in the Mallusk Enterprise Hub conference and meeting room and we look forward to welcoming even more customers and catering bookings throughout 2024. When someone chooses to eat or drink at B Social Deli they are buying social and supporting our goal to deliver social good to, and for, our local community.

Both Mallusk Enterprise Park and B Social Deli are serving the practical, day by day, needs of local entrepreneurs, small businesses and social enterprises across the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough and beyond. The Newtownabbey community of residents and workers are at the heart of everything we do and the B Social Deli offers a welcome environment for many different types of customers, a learning and development space and an opportunity for local people to add to their household incomes during this cost of living crisis. We hear firsthand about the many difficulties some people have in trying to hold down a job and we hope that our casual worker bank will offer a way for them to make their own hours so that they can take up paid part time work. There are many benefits of employment, beyond that of a pay check and we look forward to helping individuals grow in confidence, build their CVs and improve their mental health and wellbeing by gaining the sense of purpose, belonging and achievement that comes with working.

Financial review

At 31 December 2023 the balance of unrestricted reserves was £2,092,762 (2022 - £2,062,408), of which £720,300 (2022 - £750,629) has been designated by the Board at the year end.

Restricted funds are restricted for the purpose specified in letters of offer provided by the funding bodies. At 31 December 2023 the balance of restricted funds was £Nil (2022 - £Nil) .

The directors are pleased to report that the charity contributed £365,710 to the local economy by the provision of pro bono activities undertaken by the board and staff of the charity as well as the procurement of services from business in the local area.

It is the policy of the company that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and six month's expenditure. The directors consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the company's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

The principal funding arose from rental income and services to tenants with additional income arising from the delivery of enterprise support via a range of programmes managed by the Organisation. All expenditure during the year was directly attributable to achieving the business objectives as outlined above.

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The directors have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- a quarterly review of the risks the company may face;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to manage those risks identified in the plan; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the company should those risks materialise.

Future plans

The charity is focused reaching out to, and supporting even more individuals, SME's and social enterprises in 2024. The Enterprise Park is 100% occupied, with a waiting list of 60 businesses. It is committed to servicing the needs of its local community in the provision of affordable workspace and free business advice and support.

The acquisition of additional commercial sites within the Borough continue to be explored as the Enterprise Park is currently at full capacity, with a waiting list maintained.

Public Benefit ring-fenced budgets allocated in 2023 will continue to provide more free or subsidised educational training for unemployed people to become self-employed; such as women setting up a part-time business from home and training/ mentoring for those contemplating starting up a small business and those in more rural or inaccessible areas.

Business consultancy and advisory services will continue to be provided by both directors and staff to local community groups, education boards and the voluntary sector.

The Organisation is a member of the following professional bodies: Enterprise Northern Ireland, FSB, NICVA, Social Enterprise NI, CO3, NI Chamber of Commerce, DTNI and IOD.

Structure, governance and management

Mallusk Enterprise Park Limited is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association under Companies Act 2016.

The directors who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr I Patterson (Chairperson)
Mr S Pollard
Mr M Spence (Vice Chairperson)
Ms Z Webber

As set out in the Articles of Association, one third of the board retire at each AGM. Each year the directors carry out an appraisal of their own and the board's performance and a skills audit helps to identify if there are any skills gaps within the board that would hamper the achievement of objectives. If a gap is identified then a description of the skill required is drawn up and the post advertised in the local media. Applications are reviewed and applicants are invited to attend an interview. An interview panel consisting of the chair, vice-chair and the CEO (as an observer and acting as Company Secretary) conduct the interview and a scoring process ensures that all applicants are treated equally and the highest scoring applicant is recommended by the interview panel to be co-opted on to the board and then formally elected at the next Annual General Meeting. All directors once appointed are given a detailed brief of the operations of the organisation and provided with all relevant documentation. Training in company law and the responsibilities of directors is offered to all directors.

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

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The board of directors administer the company at a strategic level. The board meet quarterly at present and the chief executive officer manages the day to day running of the company. The organisation relies on directors acting in a voluntary capacity in overseeing the strategic direction and governance of Mallusk Enterprise Park. In terms of time and value of these volunteer directors - each of the 4 directors would dedicate up to 36 hours in meetings plus an additional 10 in preparation and review of reports and up to 10 hours on other matters relating to the organisation. The total input in time therefore would equate to approximately 224 hours of time input by the directors and valued at consultancy rates of £70 per hour this contribution is valued at almost £15,680 over the year.

The organisation has in place the following: Code of Conduct, reserves policy, risk register, governance manual, HR policies, board and staff appraisals, quarterly action plans, quarterly management accounts and balanced scorecard with performance measures.

The Organisation is a member of the following professional bodies: Enterprise Northern Ireland, FSB, NICVA, Social Enterprise NI, CO3, NI Chamber of Commerce, DTNI and IOD.

CEO, Emma Garrett, is also a board member of Enterprise Northern Ireland.

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors are responsible for preparing the directors' 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 directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company 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 directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (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 company will continue in operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the directors 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 directors' report was approved by the Board of Directors.

Mr I Patterson (Chairperson)

Director

Dated: 30 May 2024