

Raidió Fáilte Teo

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2023

The trustees present their Trustees' Annual Report, combining the Directors' Report and Trustees' Report, and the unaudited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2023.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The Trustees' Report contains the information required to be provided in the Trustees' Annual Report under the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) guidelines. The trustees of the company are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the company's constitution are known as members of the board of trustees.

In this report the trustees of Raidió Fáilte Teo present a summary of its purpose, governance, activities, achievements and finances for the financial year 31 December 2023.

The company is a registered charity and hence the report and results are presented in a form which complies with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and, although not obliged to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP effective January 2015), the organisation has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these financial statements.

Mission, Objectives and Strategy

Mission Statement

Our mission is to promote the Irish language by providing comprehensive, inclusive community radio and media services through the medium of Irish.

Charitable objectives and Ofcom Key commitments

Raidió Fáilte Teo is registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (effective from 16/02/2015). The company continues to meet (and exceed) its charitable objectives in relation to the advancement of arts, culture, heritage, education etc.

In addition, the organisation meets the objectives and targets set out in the Ofcom Key Commitments agreement - including objectives in relation to broadcasting, community training in radio skills and the provision of community access to the media.

Raidió Fáilte proactively engages in outreach activities thereby increasing the overall capacity of the station and increasing its accessibility to a wide range of community stakeholders.

As part of our commitment to provide an attractive and welcoming space for staff, volunteer broadcasters and visitors alike and to contribute to community regeneration in an area of high levels of deprivation, a coffee shop 'An Lon Dubh' was opened in the building (April 2019). An Lon Dubh café was established as a social enterprise initiative, offering quality coffee/tea and light, healthy food choices, providing a pleasant space for Irish speakers, learners of the language, the local community and others to meet, further increasing accessibility to the wide range of community facilities and services offered by Raidió Fáilte, in furtherance of our charitable objectives. Raidió Fáilte continued to operate An Lon Dubh community café throughout the period January to December 2023. The Directors & Management wish to thank the staff (past and present) of An Lon Dubh café for their hard work and commitment to providing a welcoming service. The existing model for the operation of An Lon Dubh café will be subject to review in the new financial year.

Stúideo Feirste, a community-based recording studio, was officially launched in December 2022 and continues to provide services to local musicians, other media organisations, school and community groups and others who can avail of sound-recording services at affordable rates, with input from accomplished, professionally trained sound engineers. For example, in this period, members of the Chinese community were invited to the station to participate in sound-recording and language-learning projects.

The Directors of Raidió Fáilte Teo can report also that the station continues its involvement in a range of cross-community/outreach initiatives, encouraging the participation of members of the wider community in the work of Raidió Fáilte - as broadcasters, listeners and as visitors to the station. For example, a very successful cross-community project (An Gort) based on the local history of the Divis/Shankill area was held.

Raidió Fáilte continues to collaborate with Raidió na Life (the only other licensed community radio station on the island of Ireland that broadcasts on the airwaves through the medium of Irish) and we support a number of organisations throughout the north of Ireland to produce radio content (subject to availability of resources). We are pleased also to report on-going collaboration with Raidió na Gaeltachta who now use Raidió Fáilte broadcasting

Raidió Fáilte Teo

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2023
facilities on a regular basis.

Raidió Fáilte continues to explore new methods of engaging with our volunteer broadcasters and other stakeholders – including by hosting small community events at the station, the provision of station-based and online training in community radio broadcasting skills and by means of on-going initiatives for engaging with the community, such as the radio series *Guth an Phobail* (Voice of the Community).

Raidió Fáilte is committed to strengthening community engagement on an on-going basis, with online and off-site training programmes dovetailing with increasing levels of studio-based radio production and face-to-face community engagement projects. Management and staff of the station continuously seek new opportunities to engage and collaborate with the Irish language community of speakers and learners of the language, both locally and wider afield and with the local community, including on a cross-community basis, in pursuance of the overall charitable objectives of the organisation.

As part of its remit as a community radio station to support other community and language organisations, staff and volunteers from the station attend events and conduct interviews with representatives of numerous organisations on an on-going basis throughout the year. The enhanced broadcasting/recording facilities at the station enables live broadcasts from remote locations as well as recordings of interviews, talks, book launches etc for broadcast on Raidió Fáilte, further increasing access to a wide range of broadcasts in the Irish language.

The Directors & Management would like to commend Raidió Fáilte staff who have worked tirelessly throughout 2023, towards providing a high-quality Irish language community radio service to the Irish language and the local/wider community (including those staff members involved in financial administration, training, building management, technical, community outreach, business development, community café and sound recording roles).

Financial Review

The Directors of Raidió Fáilte Teo gratefully acknowledge all monetary support received since the inception of the community radio service, towards the furtherance of our charitable objectives and to creating community benefit - notably the on-going support of Foras na Gaeilge (since 2006) and of Northern Ireland Screen-An Ciste Craoltóireachta Gaeilge (ILBF) (since 2011).

The Directors can report that the objectives and targets agreed with Foras na Gaeilge in relation to the promotion and usage of the Irish language through the medium of community radio have been met and exceeded, with the input and co-operation of a wide range of Irish language organisations and individual speakers and learners of the language. During this period, Raidió Fáilte gratefully acknowledges continuation funding received from Foras na Gaeilge-Scéim Raidió Pobail 2022-2024 (Community Radio Scheme), supporting 4 posts and ongoing broadcasting, training, volunteering, community outreach, awareness raising (in relation to the Irish language and to the station itself), archiving and the ongoing development and maintenance of the community building. Raidió Fáilte was successful in attracting funding of €243,600 annually for the period 2022-2024 (2019-2021 €216,000)

The Directors wish also to gratefully acknowledge the support of Colmcille-a funding initiative administered by Foras na Gaeilge, for a project carried out in 2023. (Colmcille is a partnership programme between Foras na Gaeilge and Bórd na Gàidhlig, promoting the use of Irish Gaelic and Scottish Gaelic in Ireland and Scotland and between the two countries). Funding of £8,666.43 was granted by Colmcille in this period, with a further £1,924.60 gratefully received from Manx Heritage Foundation-Culture Vannin towards the Manx language element of the project.

Furthermore, the Directors gratefully acknowledge Foras na Gaeilge support in the form of Scéim Tacatochtá Fuinnimh, towards escalating energy costs (£7,668.65 received 24/04/2023)

The Directors are pleased also to report the continuation of funding from Northern Ireland Screen - Irish Language Broadcast Fund for a further year (April 2023 - March 2024: £85,000). The ongoing support of Northern Ireland Screen-Irish Language Broadcast Fund for the Raidió Fáilte Broadcast Training Scheme is a highly valued and critical element in the success of Raidió Fáilte, supporting employment and contributing to skills-building within the Irish speaking community and to the growth and development of the overall Irish language media infrastructure. Awarded on a contract basis, for the development of the training, radio production and archiving capacity of the station, it is a very valuable support package for the provision of community radio services by Raidió Fáilte. Regular workshops, group and one-to-one training sessions in sound recording, broadcasting, sound editing and mixing and podcasting are held on a regular basis throughout the year. A popular, always over-subscribed radio broadcast training course for female participants was held for a third year in succession during February/March 2023, with very positive outcomes and feedback. Raidió Fáilte training courses impart valuable, transferable skills, nurturing new talent and produce high quality content for broadcast, thereby increasing audience reach.

The Directors can report also that the NI Screen-ILBF Scéim na Léiritheoirí Raidió Faoi Oiliúint (Trainee Radio Producers Scheme) has been re-instated, with one trainee to be placed with BBC & Raidió Fáilte over the period September 2023-August 2024 (following successful engagement between Raidió Fáilte management and NI

Raidió Fáilte Teo

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 December 2023

Screen-ILBF). This training scheme, initiated in 2021-2022, whereby 2 trainee radio producers were placed with Raidió Fáilte for a period of 12 months, was proven to be a great success by Raidió Fáilte, contributing to skill-building in radio broadcasting through the medium of the Irish language and to the growing success of Raidió Fáilte, further strengthening its appeal to existing and new listeners. The Directors of Raidió Fáilte very much welcomes the re-instatement of Scéim na Léiritheoirí Raidió Faoi Oiliúint and are hopeful that this training opportunity in radio production skills will become a constant, on-going element of NI Screen-ILBF support going forward.

In this period, Raidió Fáilte continues to benefit from funds secured for a Business Development Officer (June 2022 – March 2024) and for a Social Enterprise Development Officer-Café An Lon Dubh (August 2022 – July 2025). The Board is very grateful to Department for Communities and to the administrators of these funds - An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge and The Rank Foundation (respectively) for this very valuable support.

The Directors are especially pleased to report that during this period Raidió Fáilte was successful in attracting (for the first time) much-needed additional revenue funding from Belfast City Council towards the increasing running costs associated with the operation of the community building (amounting to £20,000 approx, awarded on an annual basis for the period April 2023 – March 2026).

Furthermore, the Directors are delighted to report that funding of £100,000 over a 3-year period has been secured from Dormant Accounts Fund NI (delivered by The National Lottery Community Fund) towards succession planning for the organisation. The funding has been awarded primarily to support mentoring of new employees to be appointed in key finance/administration and broadcasting roles within the organisation-with additional budgets for finance/administration, staff, building management, digital infrastructure and social enterprise development support, contributing to the overall strengthening and sustainability of the organisation into the future.

The Directors are extremely grateful also to Gaelchúrsa/Department for Communities for employment support over a 9-month period (October 2023-June 2024) under the OBAIR/Job Start scheme, supporting a young Irish speaker to pursue further training/employment opportunities.

In addition, the Directors gratefully acknowledge receipt of funding in this period for a number of small projects, including:

Belfast City Council Good Relations funding for a cross-community, local history (Divis/Shankill) project (An Gort: £3,310)

An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge (Towards Stiúideo Feirste: £4,500)

Conradh na Gaeilge (An Ciste Spreagtha: €1,000)

Glór na nGael (Bláthú: €1,000)

The Board of Directors wish to keep on record our gratitude to the wide range of community and statutory stakeholders who supported the capital build project at 30 Sráid Dhubhaise (completed October 2018) - In particular Belfast City Council, Department for Communities, An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge, the Alpha Programme, NI Housing Executive, Department of Infrastructure, Foras na Gaeilge, NI Screen-ILBF, Raidió Fáilte staff and volunteers and the many community stakeholders, both individuals and organisations who supported us.

The Directors especially value the 'in-kind' support of the many Irish speakers and learners who have donated their time, talents and energy to the station as broadcasters and in other supporting roles. The Directors estimate (using Ofcom approved rates) that the monetary value of the work and services provided by volunteers and others during the year was £49,238 (2022-£39,833).

Financial Results

At the end of the financial year the company has assets of £221,989 (2022 - £241,998) and liabilities of £14,376 (2022 - £14,237). The net assets of the company have decreased by £(20,148).

Reserves Position and Policy

Reserves are needed to bridge the gap between spending and receiving of income, to cover unplanned emergency repairs, other unforeseen expenditure and/ or loss of funding. The trustees consider the ideal level of reserves as at 31st December 2023 to be £118,493, which is equivalent of 3 months running costs.

The unrestricted reserves of Raidió Fáilte Teo as at 31st December 2023 is £116,208. Of this balance £28,743 can be realised by the disposal of tangible fixed assets.

The charity has restricted reserves totalling £91,405 at 31st December 2023. Of this balance, £27,166 is in relation to a grant provided by ILBF of £85,000, which is to be utilised during the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

In common with Ofcom-licensed community radio stations elsewhere, Raidió Fáilte has operated its FM service with a 5-kilometre broadcast restriction since 2008, with broadcast coverage limited to the Belfast area. In 2018 Raidió Fáilte submitted an application to Ofcom in a bid to gain an extension to existing coverage for the community radio service.

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for the financial year ended 31 December 2023

In their decision (September 2019) Ofcom granted an extension of the community radio service, with approval for a power increase. Raidió Fáilte will continue to lobby for further extensions to the coverage area, in line with demand from communities outside the current broadcast area. In addition, station management continue to monitor developments and explore opportunities (subject to funding) in relation to small-scale DAB.

Raidió Fáilte is funded primarily by Foras na Gaeilge-Scéim Raidió Pobail and NI Screen-Irish Language Broadcast Fund. We are hopeful that funding from these bodies will continue, and we are always aware of the necessity to seek other additional sources of funding. As reported above, Raidió Fáilte was successful in attracting 3-year funding from Belfast City Council and from The National Lottery Community Fund-Dormant Accounts NI in this period. Further opportunities to strengthen the community radio broadcasting service (an organisational priority) continue to be sought.

Future Developments

From its base at 30 Sráid Dhubhaise, Béal Feirste, BT12 4AL, the Directors and management of Raidió Fáilte Teo strive to maximise the benefits of location in a purpose-built centre for Irish language radio broadcasting, training, sound editing and sound archiving (operational since October 2018). The Raidió Fáilte centre is located in an area of multiple deprivation, providing services and facilities that contribute to the alleviation of poverty and social exclusion. Furthermore, by virtue of its location at the edge of the city centre, Raidió Fáilte provides an inclusive, accessible community radio service and associated activities that assist in providing further impetus to overall Gaeltacht Quarter economic regeneration plans, benefitting the city as a whole. The centre aims to expand Irish language media and community infrastructure and to support, where possible, other communities who wish to increase their capacity in the Irish language.

The coming period will see the realisation of succession plans, particularly the recruitment of 2 new senior members of staff (in finance/administration and broadcasting roles) and the rolling out of a comprehensive mentoring programme to ensure that the new staff members are equipped to carry the organisation forward in their respective roles. In addition, securing continuation funding from Foras na Gaeilge-Scéim Raidió Pobail (Community Radio Scheme) 2025-2027 will be a priority in the new financial year.

Trustees

The current trustees are as set out on page 3

Gearóid Ó Cairealláin
Dr Pól Mac Cana
Áine Ní Gearailt
Clarán Ó Pronntaigh
Fergus O'Hare
Caolmhe Ní Chathail (Appointed 12 September 2023)
Gearóid Ó Mulleoir (Appointed 12 September 2023)

In accordance with the Articles of Association, the directors retire every third Annual General Meeting and, being eligible, can offer themselves for re-election.

The secretary who served during the financial year was:

Dr Pól Mac Cana

Compliance with Sector-Wide Legislation and Standards


The company engages pro-actively with legislation, standards and codes which are developed for the sector. Raidió Fáilte Teo subscribes to and is compliant with the following:

- The Companies Act 2006
- The Charities SORP (FRS 102)

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 3 September 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr Pól Mac Cana
Director



Áine Ní Gearailt
Director