

## **DIVIS JOINT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT** **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2023**

The Committee present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

#### **Reference and Administration Details**

The reference and administrative details of the charity are as shown on page 1.

#### **Structure, Governance & Management**

##### **Organisational Structure**

The organisation was established as an unincorporated organisation and is governed under its constitution.

The organisation is governed by a Management Committee. Any person wishing to become a committee member must apply in writing prior to the AGM. A vote is then taken at AGM as to whether they are to be appointed.

#### **Mission Statement**

“The aim is to provide, develop and enhance core programmes and activities that meet the needs of the local community, which contribute to improving the quality of their lives in a real and meaningful way”.

#### **Post Covid to Cost of Living Crisis**

The impact of the covid pandemic on our core services, programmes and many of our in-house services was very challenging and we had hoped that we would come out of that challenge with a renewed sense of optimism. Most significantly after the pandemic however many people continue to struggle under a cost-of-living crisis, and this has impacted on individuals, communities and organisations supporting local people. Significant financial challenges are in front of every organisation, and we are (not unlike during the covid period) watching new challenges emerge from people who previously did not need our support.

A particular focus this year was the increasing difficulties of rising costs of fuel, utilities and food costs with significant difficulties created for our own staff and volunteers, additionally this also had a detrimental impact on our organisational ability to support local people. We did however continue our work with Bryson Charitable Group distributing fuel poverty vouchers under a scheme for those on benefits and under a Belfast City Council for the “working poor”.

We have tried, as much as we could, within our limitations to develop a coordinated response within our organisation and across our locality between partners, initially within our direct locality but also in partnership across the West Belfast area. A range of practical supports ran throughout the year including combating food poverty and support for utility bills (gas/ electric and food vouchers). We endeavoured where possible to act as a direct support and often as a conduit of behalf of others to reach those in need. It should be stated this is an ongoing issue and has tested our organisation to the limit and it is not clear when it will ease.

#### **Core Focus**

Divis Joint Development Committee focused on 2 main strands of work throughout the year, although this was heavily impacted by covid in terms of type but also numbers involved;

- Programme, activities and services provided directly through the Frank Gillen Centre and through online activity and outreach support (with partners in other facilities, at home or through online contact)
- External contact; development of activity and partnership approaches continued unabated and remained central to the identification and continuity of support for vulnerable people across our community.

Both strands continue to demonstrate the extent of resource that the FGC provided both as a practical resource and as a human resource in the form of development, support and guidance to local and broader organisations to

increase their capacity to deliver better quality programmes to local people and increase access for local people to those services, particularly during another difficult year.

### **Our Main Aims remained;**

- To provide, develop and enhance core programmes and activities by the Frank Gillen Centre and its team of staff and volunteers. Practical projects and activities that met the needs of the local community during a cost of living crisis, which contribute to supporting vulnerable people and sustaining the quality of their lives in a real and meaningful way.
- To liaise, advise and guide local community organizations in the strategic development of core programmes and activities.
- To develop platforms for discussion and co-ordination between local community activists and groups, sharing information, experience and resources (via the Falls Partnership Initiative, Greater Falls Neighbourhood Partnership and the West Belfast Partnerships Health Group, in which we chair all 3 structures)

### **Support Aims**

DJDC attempted in a difficult and challenging year to adhere to the following 3 support aims:

1. **Facilities, Resources, Investment** – to secure and manage human, physical and financial resources to enable us to achieve our long term aims.
2. **Sustain, and Improve Governance & Organisational Structures** – to ensure effective organisational structures, management and administrative procedures and controls for the efficient operation of Divis Joint Development Committee.
3. **Maintaining and Build Supportive Partnerships** – to maintain support and enhance mutually beneficial relationships with community, statutory, public and private sector organisations as part of collective responses to shared challenges and delivery of local service support.

### **Core Programmes**

#### **Early years and After Schools Programme (reviewed annually)**

Children's emotional, social and educational development (via Play Development, 2-year-old programme, Play and Stay and an After Schools project). We delivered a range of in-house support services at the Frank Gillen Centre. Our team also continued a programme of online support with children and parents/ families. This hybrid approach included social, emotional and practical support.

#### **Youth Development Team**

At present we operate both an in-house youth programme and an outreach project) covers key elements of personal development and life skills, employment support, skills development and capacity building. Our Youth programme operates on a nightly basis with some weekend activity both on and off-site, other activity. Young people periodically complete structured training and skills building.

Additionally, GCSE study support (Maths and English) continues to be provided for most of the year with a break over the summer and resumption in September on a one-to-one basis, this is a hybrid approach of both face to face and online support, although this is more resource intensive it does work better. The timing of the exams and resits do not neatly fit into a financial year and often the results are spread across 2 financial years.

#### **Family support Services**

Again our normal range of services were severely impacted in that for large parts of the year we could not deliver in-house support. However, our team did take up the challenge and converted a range of online services with children and parents/ families. This included social, emotional, and practical support via telephone on a weekly basis, online and in gate visits. Support packs for children and parent/ families were distributed regularly

throughout the year. We continued to work and provide one to one support and liaise with the Greater Falls Family Support Hub.

### **Education support service**

DJDC's continues to be involved in city wide discussions around the issues pertaining to lifelong learning through Belfast Learning City and through the Jobs, Skills and Education Board of the Community Planning Partnership and continue to hold the position of co-chair on the Learning City initiative, alongside a BCC senior manager.

A strong strategic base for the initiative and activity has as previously reported centred on developing Belfast as a Learning City, including a binding charter which can highlight the value of City partners working together and collectively make a greater impact on reducing life inequalities across the city. We have been formally included in the membership of UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities for the past 5 years.

We now have a working network and agreed MOU with Cork, Derry/ Strabane, Limerick and Dublin learning cities who have developed a similar approach and Mayors from all 5 cities across the island renewed this in May 2022.

It remains difficult however to raise interest in formal training and much of what we offer are practical tools to support people rather than an educational attainment process.

### **Administration and Support Role**

We provide additional and free administrative support to DJDC's core projects listed above and to local organisations when required.

We directly support;

- Falls Residents Association
- Immaculata Junior Football Club
- Greater Falls Neighbourhood Partnership (as lead agency)

We continued to act as an umbrella organisation for the processing of the Access NI applications across the West Belfast geographical area for local community and business organisations.

### **Partnership Development Role**

We continue to play an active role in many local networks, this included cooperation and direct collaboration in delivering many local services including;

- **Clan Mor Surestart**, a programme for 0–4-year-olds and family support.
- The **Heart project** - healthy living centre initiative based in a community health complex, the Maureen Sheehan Centre delivering social prescribing, health education through the Healthwise scheme and direct condition management support in the form of rehab for cancer and stroke patients.
- **Falls Partnership Initiative [FPI]** a local partnership operating throughout the Falls electoral ward area, brought together to promote and develop and implement an area wide growth process. This has been given a renewed sense of purpose during and post covid and a more active involvement by local partners including current Belfast City Council Mayor Councillor Tina Black.
- **Greater Falls Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership:** we continue to work at all levels of the Partnership to implement the key issues and priorities outlined in guiding strategic document.
- **Healthy Living Centre Regional Alliance;** as part of the sustainability, development and quality assurance of the local Healthy Living Centre we continue to play an active role in this organisation. Focus remains on a planning process to sustain social prescribing programme and support is being negotiated through DfC, Dept of Health and DAERA, this is a region wide initiative but includes our local HLC at the

Maureen Sheehan Centre. A programme continues under the title of ‘**Strengthening Commonalities**’ continues to develop common approaches and programming across a network of what is now 29 HLC’s and includes each Trust area across the region.

- We are continuing working with **GP Federations** and the local ICP team to develop a more formal relationship that supports our local community where HLC’s are based across the network. This includes being part of discussions on the continuing development of the **multi-disciplinary team** attached to GP practices.
- West Belfast has rolled out this initiative and we have attempted to include this approach in the ‘Building Resilience and Embedding Wellbeing’ Health framework. Additionally, we have been working to a common approach with both GP Federation and ICP teams around access to services and are currently working through initiatives to do improve this area of work including a health hub app for West Belfast and a Green Spaces map with Belfast Healthy Cities.
- As part of the **Connected Care Hub**. 4 key link workers are employed throughout the city, the West contact is based at the Maureen Sheehan Centre and this connects to the dementia navigators and the BHSCT reablement team as well as a range of community deliverers and service providers. We continue to be involved in conversations with the CCC Hub to develop a stronger organisational relationship between them, GP Federations, the HLC network and the West Belfast Health planning approach.
- DJDC’s key worker continues to be involved in city wide discussions around the issues pertaining to **Lifelong Learning** (LLL) and the development of a Belfast a Learning City, this period has focussed on a commissioned piece of research by Baker Tilly Consultancy to improve governance and increase collaborative opportunities under this initiative across the range of partners.
- **West Belfast Partnership Board** on behalf of the Neighbourhood Partnership and chairing their health sub-group which is developing a Building Resilience and Embedding Wellbeing population and place-based health framework. This period has seen an increase in focus on this work as we embark on a significant engagement process to test progress in the thinking so far.

Divis Joint Development Committee has had a very challenging year and we remained actively involved in facilitating discussions around collaboration between community and statutory providers at several levels locally, citywide and regionally. This period of course was dominated by responses to the cost-of-living crisis but as our work on the West Belfast Health framework demonstrates also leading the way to recovery and long-term development.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Our organisation is subject to both internal and external inspection and review. DJDC has an internal programme of service development and reviews involving all staff, management and volunteers.

Additionally, we are subject to periodic reviews and inspection by a range of statutory organisations including the Education Authority, Department for Communities and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, this year of course with a particular focus on public health advice and guidance and risk assessments on our revised activity and programmes.

### **Financial Review**

The organisation is a charitable organisation. The Results for the year are set out in detail on pages 11 to 20.

Principal sources of funding and how this has supported the key objectives of the charity are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

A significant proportion of wages and salary costs are currently covered by restricted funding, however in the current and prior year some wages and salary costs had to be paid from unrestricted funds. The Management

Committee acknowledge the current level of free reserves is well below the desired level. The charity continues to seek additional sources of funding and applications for future funding in relation to forthcoming years.

### **Responsibilities of the Management Committee**

The Committee are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards. The financial statements for each financial year give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable organisation and of the incoming resources, including the income and expenditure of the organisation for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the committee are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the organisation will continue to operate.

The Management Committee are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the organisation and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **Statement of Disclosure of Information to Auditor**

In so far the Management Committee, who held office at the date of approval of these financial statements, are aware;

- There is in no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware.
- The Management Committee have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the audit is aware of that information.