

East Belfast Enterprise Ltd
Trustees' report
for the year ended 31 December 2022

Social Good

- Re-engage in charitable activity and encourage tenant engagement through events.
- Continue to engage local suppliers in facilities maintenance.
- Deliver the Eastside Awards to promote local endeavour in East Belfast.
- RE-engage with schools and colleges as part of the stakeholder engagement to be carried out during the strategic planning process.

As well as achieving the delivery objectives, the plan for 2022 also included development of the strategy for 2023 – 2025, which involved a survey of all tenants and programme service users, consultations with key stakeholders including the Board and Staff and a number of Board and staff workshops.

By the end of 2022 all key objectives had been realised with occupancy levels at City East starting the year at c91% and finishing the year at c91%, with small fluctuations during the year where occupancy hit a peak of just over 92% and reduced during the summer months to c88%. The Albertbridge Road site started the year at c94% and increased to 100% by April, where it remained at 100% to the end of the year.

A new programme named Renewal was secured and delivered during the year, which assisted those in the criminal justice system to explore self-employment as an opportunity to re-engage in economic activity. This project was delivered in partnership with NIACRO and contributed to the successful financial programme performance, exceeding the budget that had been set at the start of the year.

Work continued during the year with Enterprise Northern Ireland to deliver services to clients through the Go For It, Kickstart and Pathways to Enterprise programmes and development work continued with Enterprise Northern Ireland to develop plans post Brexit. The final European Erasmus+ project completed this year with all targets met. March 2023 will see the end of most of the European funding as a result of the UK exit from the EU and hence there will be no further opportunity to secure Erasmus+ contracts in forthcoming years.

A process of stakeholder consultation was completed during the year as part of the development of the new strategy for 2023 – 2025. This next period will be extremely challenging as the economy faces the challenges of the cost of living and cost of doing business crises, the continued political vacuum with no functioning Executive in Northern Ireland, the loss of funding as a result of Brexit, the ongoing economic and political difficulties associated with implementation of the Windsor Framework and the ongoing war in Ukraine. All of this will bring more pressure on household incomes. This, in turn, could increase the demand for those seeking help to investigate self-employment as a way in which to bring in revenue to meet these increasing household costs.

The loss of EU funding and risks to tenancy (particularly those charitable organisations which are tenants at City East and rely on EU funding) is likely to bring downward pressure on revenue for EBE, but at a time that demand for support services from the market that EBE is set up to serve is increasing.

Loss in revenue for EBE may necessitate cost reductions, which could result in a reduction in the staff team. However, this would result in a loss of expertise and capacity to deliver services, which are likely to be in increased demand.

The loss of EU funding brings about an opportunity to look at new ways of delivering services, such as developing services that could attract partners willing to support through sponsorship and for clients willing to pay for services, if value can be demonstrated.

EBE has a strong network and experience in partnership working. It has developed some sponsorship relationships with private sector partners, but has never really pro-actively sought these sort of commercial partnerships. The organisation has expertise in the start-up market, but has been unable to deliver client centred services, due to the restrictive nature of the "programme

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delivery”, where the programme criteria are designed by the funding body.

The property asset is the engine that drives unrestricted revenue for the organisation. This has subsidised much of the programme activity in recent years. Further expansion of the property asset would enable the organisation to achieve a greater level of freedom to design and deliver client centred business advisory services. To do this will require capital funding and suitable property development opportunities with property development expertise that is not a strength of the current staff team and has not been a priority for the Board. There is an opportunity to address this through strategic partnerships and by bringing new members with this specific expertise into the Board.

Membership of ENI is a strength, but there is a threat to ENI from the future loss of EU funded programmes. New opportunities may develop with new funding streams and it would seem sensible for EBE to remain involved in the ENI led development work to secure new programme activity.

In addition, or in parallel to the work led by ENI, there is an opportunity for EBE to commit some resource to investigate the market for a market led business services offering, through a business club initiative.

During 2022 and in response to this analysis a three-year strategy has been agreed for 2023 - 2025 with the following guiding statements:

Our Vision:

“To establish East Belfast as a vibrant social and economic hub.”

Our Purpose:

“To inspire and support entrepreneurs to establish and grow businesses in East Belfast and to have a positive social impact in the local community.”

Our Mission:

“To provide entrepreneurs with facilities and valued services, to meet their changing economic and social needs.”

To advance the strategy, focus will be on three strategic aims:

- To be recognised as a centre for business start-up support
- To ensure organisational sustainability and to become financially independent from Government
- To enhance Corporate Governance

Key projects to be advanced during the strategy have been agreed and are set out as follows:

Aim 1: To Be Recognised as a Centre for Business Start-up Support

a. Projects: Business Club

b. SMART Objectives for 2023:

I. to complete costed feasibility study/appraisal by end of 2023; to launch Business Club in 2024

Aim 2: To ensure organisational sustainability and become financially independent from Government funding

a. Projects: Business Club, Property Development, Net Zero, PR & Marketing

b. SMART Objectives for 2023:

I. by end of 2023 to identify services that can be sold to the market, through a fully researched feasibility study into the business club concept

II. By end of 2023 to have identified a short list of property development sites and funding options

III. By end of 2023 to complete pricing and benchmarking of property sites and develop sales and marketing plan

IV. Install PV panels across all property sites by end of 2023

Aim 3: To Enhance Corporate Governance

a. Projects: Board Membership and Roles, Board Committees, Documentation (Articles, Director Handbook, Policies)

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b. SMART Objectives for 2023:

- I. to restructure, renew and refresh the Board and sub-committees by end of 2023;
- II. Update relevant documentation, policies, procedures by end of 2023

There were some changes in staff during 2022. a new business advisor was recruited to deliver the Renewal project and the receptionist at City East left to take on a new role and was replaced by a new full-time receptionist. The advisor recruited for the Renewal programme left the organisation once this project completed.

Overall, the charity has performed well throughout 2022 and I must give credit to the staff team for their diligent work and creativity shown in delivering valued services for the community of East Belfast in very challenging circumstances. The financial performance was strong, providing a solid platform to commence delivery of the new strategy in 2023 and face the challenges as the economy deals with the consequences of the UK exit from the EU.

I would like to conclude my report by acknowledging the support that I have received as Chair from my colleagues on the Board, all of whom are volunteers and bring considerable expertise and experience to their governance of the charity. I was saddened to accept the resignation of Graham Thompson and Joanne Jennings from the Board this year. Graham and Joanne have been a great support while serving on the Board, but, due to other work commitments, they no longer felt able to commit the time required to continue as members of the Board. On behalf of the Board I would like to record my thanks to Graham and Joanne and wish them every success in their future careers. On a happier note, I was delighted to welcome Jason Hempton to the Board this year. Jason comes with a great deal of experience and expertise and I have no doubt will prove to be a great addition to the Board.

As we look forward to 2023, we face a very uncertain time, with many economic, political and social challenges to face, most significant of which will be that resulting from the loss of European funding as a result of the UK exit from the EU. However, in the face of these challenges I remain optimistic that we have got a strategy and a team, incorporating both the Board and Staff, that will guide us through these turbulent times and ensure we continue to be a positive economic force in East Belfast.

Duncan Graham
Chair

Our Purposes and Activities

The Charity's objects ("Objects") are specifically restricted to the following:

The promotion for the public benefit of urban regeneration within East Belfast and its environs (the 'area of benefit') being an area of social and economic deprivation, by all or any of the following means:

- (a) the relief of poverty in such ways as may be thought fit;
- (b) the relief of unemployment in such ways as may be thought fit, including assistance 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;
- (e) the creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings, and/or land for use on favourable terms.

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Public Benefit

The public benefits that flow from the advancement of community development and the promotion of urban and rural development are:

(i) the creation of employment, training and work experience opportunities for residents living in economically and socially deprived areas and consequently a reduction in poverty, unemployment and hardship, leading to a better quality of life for the beneficiaries and consequent improvements in health and well-being;

(ii) enhanced knowledge about setting up and running small businesses and social enterprises resulting in increased levels of self-employment and better prospects of sustainable development;

(iii) increased levels of knowledge and transferable vocational skills among employees / work experience trainees, assisting in the creation of a more educated, skilled and qualified community;

(iv) a greater sense among the beneficiaries of more fulfilled and purposeful lives, resulting in a safer, more stable and cohesive community.

These benefits can be evidenced in records kept by various agencies of the number of jobs and work experience opportunities created and the numbers of those who have successfully completed training courses. Evidence can also be found in independent evaluations of the activities of enterprise agencies carried out by funding bodies and in community surveys of living standards and attitudes.

Some private benefit is obtained by the owners of small businesses who rent units on favourable terms, but this is ancillary to the main purpose and is greatly outweighed by the gains in public benefit.

No harm arises from any of these purposes.

Activities

East Belfast Enterprise offers on favourable terms a variety of workshop units at our site on Albertbridge Road and office accommodation at the City East Business Centre.

A variety of meeting facilities, training rooms and a co-working space are available for hire to both businesses and community and voluntary organisations.

A café, Urban Skullery, continues to operate on site, providing an important catering facility on-site for tenants and visitors attending City East and has also provided training to those keen to learn culinary skills and take the first steps into the employment opportunities offered by the catering and hospitality sector.

Following the COVID pandemic, as the charity returning to more normal operations, the business support programmes re-focused on pre-start and start-up interventions and less on business survival, which had been an important element of operations during COVID.

During 2022 there were a number of programmes which completed:

- Street Culture for Regions - This EU Erasmus+ funded programme got underway in January 2021 and completed in December 2022. This was the last Erasmus+ funded programme that East Belfast Enterprise will work on as this funding source is no longer available due to the UK exit from the EU. The programme created resources to support those involved in "street culture", including mural artists, performers, street vendors, musicians and other artisan activities to explore opportunities for self-employment and involved a transnational partnership, led by EBE,

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with partners from Denmark, Portugal, France, Poland, Greece and the Republic of Ireland.

- **Renewal** – This programme was funded by the UK Community Renewal Fund, a fund which was established and funded by the UK Exchequer as a pre-cursor to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which is the UK response to the European Social Fund, which will be lost once the UK exits the EU. This project was developed in partnership with NIACRO, a voluntary organisation that works with those at risk of offending and those in the criminal justice system. This project was developed to provide training and guidance to participants interested in exploring self-employment as a option to re-engage in economic activity. The project was a 6 month project, which started and finished during 2022.
- **East Belfast A/R Story / Urban Villages** – Funding for this project concluded in March 2022 and an agreement was reached with EastSide Partnership through their subsidiary EastSide Tourism, to take ownership of the project to make use of its assets, videos and platform moving forward. This ensures the work completed on the project will benefit and promote tourism within East Belfast for many years to come.

The only new programme that was added during 2022 was the Renewal programme, which started and completed during 2022. Funding cuts and, in particular the end of EU funding, which will complete in March 2023, has resulted in a very difficult funding environment and this is expected to continue into 2023.

As well as those programmes that completed and others that started during the year, a number of programmes continued during 2022, which were carried on from 2021. These were:

- **Go for It Programme / LCCC (Council)** – a programme that provides assistance to entrepreneurs with assistance to develop a business plan for their enterprise.
- **Kick Start Programme / Invest NI & Belfast City Council** – A programme supported by Belfast City Council as the 'follow-on' to Go For It for businesses anticipating to recruit and employ within the next 18 months. Each business approved onto the programme is allocated a bank of mentoring hours in specific subjects, bespoke to their business, on topics such as marketing, finance, legal, business development, IP and a bursary of up to £1,500 for the business.
- **Pathway to Enterprise Programme (PEP)** – Belfast City Council - Participants on this programme are supported with access to business training, mentoring and a start-up grant with the target demographic being those currently unemployed.
- **Feel Good With Food / Urban Villages** – This programme supports local residents in the area to attend taster sessions on how to improve their diet to enhance nutrition, combat ailments and on an affordable budget.

Achievements in 2022

At the start of the year it was recognised that 2022 and for the immediate years following will be very challenging due to the outworking of the pandemic, global economic pressures and the loss of EU funding. This focused attention on the importance of the property asset and to maintain occupancy levels. This was successfully achieved throughout 2022 with occupancy targets achieved at City East and exceeded at the Albertbridge Road site. Greater attention to promotion of facilities through the Foundry co-working space also resulted in an increase in revenue from hot-desking and the sale of PO boxes and virtual office products.

Programmes are under severe funding pressure, but a notable success was securing funding from the UK Community Renewal Fund to deliver the Renewal programme. This programme helped clients who have been involved with the criminal justice system and who are one of the most disadvantaged groups when trying to re-enter the labour market. The project provided training and guidance to explore the option of self-employment as an opportunity to re-engage in the

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economy. The success of this project and achievement of delivery targets across the other programmes has resulted in a strong financial performance again in 2022, exceeding budget targets for the year.

The delivery of these programmes has enabled the charity to continue to assist individuals to explore enterprise and entrepreneurship, with the aim of entering self-employment, thereby reducing dependency on state benefits and consequently addressing financial hardship and the relief of poverty and unemployment. This year has been another busy year, but one in which funding for new programmes has been increasingly difficult. Plans for 2023 recognise that this will continue to be the case, but the demand for the services of those seeking assistance to look at self-employment as an option to re-engage in economic activity remains strong.

A summary of some of the programme activity that was delivered under contracts with a range of public funders including Belfast City Council, UK Community Renewal Fund, EU Erasmus+, The Executive Office and Urban Villages is as follows:

- **Go For It:** 112 business plans produced during 2022
- **AR Story:** This project completed in the first quarter of 2022, after which the intellectual property developed was passed to Eastside Tourism, a social enterprise which operates as part of the Eastside Partnership, to develop the tourism product for East Belfast. Work on the project is now displayed on a dedicated website at <http://arbelfaststory.com>
- **Kick Start:** 35 Clients received support during 2022, with 817 hours of mentoring provided, 4 financial incentives paid to clients and 4 jobs created.
- **Pathways to Enterprise Programme:** 3 Clients received support during 2022, with 100 hours of mentoring provided.
- **Street Culture for Regions:** This project was a pan-European partnership, led by East Belfast Enterprise, with partners in Greece, Poland, Portugal, France, Denmark and the Republic of Ireland. The project completed in December 2022 and created resources to assist those involved in street culture to investigate entrepreneurship/self-employment as a viable economic opportunity.
- **Feel Good with Food:** The programme supported by The Executive Office through the Urban Village Initiative continued throughout 2022, providing on-line training and advice about how to improve health through nutrition to people from inner East Belfast. During the year the project worked with 4 local community organisations, Orchardville, East Belfast Mission, Sure Start and Flourish NI to make the sessions available to their clients, with an "in person" event held in East Belfast Mission at the end of the year.
- **Renewal:** Three clients completed the programme, having received 70 hours of mentoring.

The ongoing challenges with operating during the pandemic delayed work with the Board to progress the review of Board and Committee structure, membership and terms of reference, but this has now been prioritised in the new strategy, which will commence in January 2023.

Work on the development of a third site has continued with exploratory discussions with the Board of Inspire Business Centre, to investigate options for a joint approach to property development. This work will continue as a core part of the strategy in 2023. Plans were also completed during 2022 to set out a programme of refurbishment and improvement works at the Albertbridge Road and City East sites, to be progressed during the 2023 to 2025 strategy.

In relation to programme activity, work has been ongoing with ENI, led by the CEO of East Belfast Enterprise in his role as Chair of Enterprise Northern Ireland. This work is seeking options to replace the Go For It, Kickstart and PEP programmes, once European funding finishes in March 2023. It is expected that work will be ongoing during 2023 to find replacement funding for these programmes and hence the charity has put in place additional research plans to investigate opportunities to develop a business club and other potentially stand alone programmes.

Foundry Events

As COVID restrictions eased, there was a gradual return during 2022 to "in person" events. An important part of the charity's strategy is to increase opportunities for tenant engagement and

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networking and so a number of events were hosted in the autumn of 2022. The events included a networking breakfast, attended by 29 tenants in September, a social event based around the World Cup attended by 16 tenants in December and a tenant Christmas event attended by 41 tenants. It is planned to increase the number of networking events during 2023.

Community Partnerships and Community Engagement

EBE continued to engage with local community organisations during its training delivery including the Orchardville Society, East Belfast Mission, Sure Start and Flourish NI. The CEO also continued to act as a Director on the Eastside Partnership and Landmark East companies, which are involved in community led regeneration in East Belfast. These Board roles are important strategic positions to ensure EBE remains connected to and informed about local community plans and activities in East Belfast.

The charity is also a member of the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, Social Enterprise NI, CO3 and Enterprise Northern Ireland, which enables strategic links to be made to other similar organisations operating across Northern Ireland. In 2021, the CEO took on the role of Chair with Enterprise Northern Ireland and will remain in this position for three years, until February 2024. The CEO served on the Board CO3 during the year, giving further prominence to EBE's role within the broader third sector.

EBE continues to take the lead in organising the Eastside Awards to recognise endeavour from all walks of life across East Belfast. With the easing of COVID restrictions, it was possible to return to the pre-COVID format with a gala black-tie event held in April 2022 at the Hastings Stormont hotel. It was encouraging to again see a sell out event at the hotel, with over 300 in attendance, celebrating all that is good about East Belfast and shining a spotlight in particular on those that work tirelessly and without recognition for the community of East Belfast.

A new project commenced in 2022 to engage with multiple community organisations, schools, sports clubs and businesses to work on a community art project. The project will result in the installation of two large mural artworks on the walls of the City East building and will actively involve those from across the community, living in close proximity to City East. This project will bring prominence to the work of the charity and will further embed the charity within the community fabric of East Belfast. Completion of this project is expected in the autumn of 2023.

Financial Review

In accordance with required accounting policy, grants are recognised in the statement of financial activities when approved by the Trustees and communicated to the recipients, irrespective of the future period over which payments are to be made, and the obligations outstanding at the year end are recognised as creditors.

In the year ended 2022 the Trustees are happy to report that the company exceeded its budgeted plans and returned a surplus after depreciation for the year, despite budgeting for an anticipated loss, which had been forecast due to expected negative pressures on rental revenue as a result of anticipated reduced occupancy following the COVID pandemic. This surplus has built on the surpluses generated in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. This is in line with the plans that were set at the outset in the current strategy and establishes a solid platform for the charity to face another challenging period, having set out its new strategy for 2023 – 2025 to navigate the turbulence expected as the UK economy navigates its exit from the EU.

At the end of 2022 the occupancy levels were retained at both sites at pre-pandemic levels, with the Albertbridge Road site reaching 100% occupancy. In the new strategy for 2023 – 2025 retaining occupancy at these levels will be essential to ensure the charity is sustainable and able to take the opportunities that will present in the next period.

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Reserves Policy and Going Concern

A standing item on the Agenda for each Finance Committee meeting ensures that there is a review of the cash position each month and that the Reserves policy is applied. This has continued throughout 2022 and there has been no concern raised by the committee. Cash reserves remain at a level that the Board is comfortable with in relation to the ongoing needs of the charity. The Board of Trustees has approved a budget for 2023 and is of the view that the charity has no concerns regarding its continued status as a going concern.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trustees will continue to aim to preserve as far as possible the capital base of their investments and to increase annual income levels. Work will commence on the new strategy which will focus on three key strategic aims:

1. To Be Recognised as a Centre for Business Start-up Support
2. To ensure organisational sustainability and to Become Financially Independent from Government Funding
3. To Enhance Corporate Governance

Underpinning this strategy will be the need to maximise revenue from the Charity's asset base and hence there are plans in the first year of the strategy to fund capital projects to renew and revitalise the property assets and invest in new branding and promotional activity. The strategy also pays attention to the charity's environmental responsibilities and plans are in place to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the charity's activities, with a plan to move towards a carbon net zero position.

Plans in the year ahead will also see further work on Board Governance to clarify Board committee structures and membership, as well as ensuring the skills and expertise across the Board team are matched to the needs of the strategy.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Number: NIC103061

Company Number: NI023055

Registered Office: City East, 68 – 72 Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 1GW

Our Advisors:

Auditors: FPM Accountants Limited (Re-appointed following a tendering process in 2018 for a 3 year period with an option for a further 2 years)

Solicitors: McCartan Turkington Breen

Bank: Danske Bank

Directors and Trustees

The Directors of the Charitable Company (the Charity) are its Trustees for the purpose of Charity Law. The Trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Key Management Personnel East Belfast Enterprise: Trustees and Directors

Duncan Graham (Chair)

William Miskimmin (Co. Secretary)

Mervyn Hempton

Joanne Jennings (resigned 12 April 2023)

Nicola Bothwell

Gerry Gilpin

Jacqueline Locke

Graham Thompson (resigned 21 January 2022)

Jason Hempton (appointed 12 April 2023)

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Key Management Personnel East Belfast Enterprise: Chief Executive
Jonathan McAlpin

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

East Belfast Enterprise is a Company Limited by Guarantee, governed by a voluntary Board of Directors.

The company is also a registered Charity with the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland and submitted its first return to the Charities Commission NI during 2017.

Appointment of Trustees

As set out in the Articles, Directors of the Company (who serve as Trustees of the Charity for the purposes of Charity Law) are elected by the members of the company, or can be co-opted by the Directors. The maximum number of Directors will be 12, with a minimum of 3.

Trustee Induction and Training

Incoming Members of the Board of Directors are aware of the aims and objectives of the Charity and the manner in which the Trustees carry out their responsibilities. The Chair, supported by the Chief Executive, oversees an induction process for new Directors, who are provided with key documents, including the Strategic Plan and Articles of Association of the company. An overview of the operations of the company is provided by the Chief Executive and new Directors are afforded the opportunity to meet with key staff and view the key elements of the company's operations.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the Charity. The Board meets a minimum of 5 times per annum on a bi-monthly schedule. Standing sub-committees of the Board include a Finance committee, which oversees the organisations finance, reviewing management accounts and overseeing the company's risk policy; a Property sub-committee, which meets as required to oversee capital projects and an HR Sub-committee, which meets a minimum of once annually and as required to set remuneration and to review HR matters.

The operations of the charity are managed on a day-to-day basis by a Chief Executive, appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Chief Executive has delegated authority, within the terms of delegation approved by the Trustees, for operational matters including, finance, employment and HR. A management team has been appointed by the CEO to provide management oversight for key company functions including Programmes, Property & Tenancy and Finance & Administration. These management posts report directly to the CEO.

Related Parties and Co-operation with Other Organisations

During 2022, the Chief Executive continued in his paid role with Enterprise Northern Ireland as the Chair of the Board of Directors of Enterprise Northern Ireland. This appointment was approved at a Board meeting of the Trustees of East Belfast Enterprise in January 2021 and the appointment will be for a period of three years.

All of the Trustees serve in a voluntary capacity and do not receive any remuneration for their role as a Director (or Trustee). Any related interests are declared at meetings where the interest may arise and if any Trustee may benefit personally or in their business interests from a decision to be taken by the Board, the Trustee in question will be absent from the discussion and subsequent decision making process.

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The Company is a member of Enterprise Northern Ireland, which is now under the Chairmanship of the CEO of East Belfast Enterprise and benefits from this membership by accessing contracts as a sub-contracted partner. Other memberships held by the Charity are for the purposes of seeking advice, information or knowledge of the Community and Voluntary sector and potential funders for the work of the charity. These memberships include membership of the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, CO3 and Social Enterprise Northern Ireland. The Chief Executive also serves on the Board of Directors of CO3 in a voluntary capacity, but there are no contractual relationships between East Belfast Enterprise and CO3.

Pay Policy for Senior Staff

The remuneration of the Chief Executive and other members of senior staff is decided by the HR sub-committee, under delegated authority of the Board of Directors.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a risk management strategy, which is overseen on behalf of the Board by the Finance Sub-committee, under the delegated authority of the Board. A risk register is in place and this is reviewed every month by the Finance Sub-committee. Any risks that are identified as Current risks identified have categorised risks under those relating to Finance, Property, Staff, Equipment and Data, Public liability and Professional liability, Political and those risks relating to the COVID 19 pandemic. The register records procedures to mitigate against these risks both presently and in the future.

As society finally moves on from the COVID pandemic, the charity now turns to face the risks presenting as a result of global economic shocks and the loss of EU Funding as a consequence of the UK exit from the EU. A new strategy has been agreed to guide the organisation through this next period, which is expected to be a financially difficult period and one which will require extra vigilance from Trustees.

Trustee's Responsibilities in relation to the Financial Statements

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's incoming resources and application of resources during the year and of its state of affairs at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- 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 ensuring the keeping of proper records which disclose with reasonable accuracy 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 charity's assets and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and breaches of law and regulations.

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Statement of Disclosure to our Auditors

So far as each of the Directors in office at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditor's are unaware
- They have taken all the steps they ought to have taken as Directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has an appropriate system of internal controls, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to 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.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Mr D Graham (Chair)

30th June 2023

Date