

2024 Trustee Report

East Belfast District Scouts Public Benefit Report 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024

Reference and Administration Details:

Registered Charity Number: 104046

Trustees:

Mrs Ann Anderson [President]

Mrs Anne Jackson [Vice President]

Mrs Ann Hanna [Vice President]

Mr Gareth McAuley [Chair (acting)]

Mr Andrew Murphy [Treasurer]

Mrs Jeanette Allen [District Commissioner]

Structure, governance and management:

Description of the charity's trusts:

Type of governing document e.g. trust deed constitution:

East Belfast District Scout Council's governing documents are those of The Scout Association. They consist of a Royal Charter, which in turn gives authority to the Bye Laws of the Association and The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

How the charity is constituted e.g. trust, association, company:

East Belfast District Scout Council is a trust established under its rules which are common to all Scouts.

Trustee selection methods e.g. appointed by, elected by:

The Trustees are appointed in accordance with the Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.

Additional governance issues:

East Belfast District Scout Council is managed by an Executive Committee, a minimum of 4 members of which are the 'Charity Trustees' of East Belfast District Scout Council which is an educational charity. As charity trustees they are responsible for complying with legislation applicable to charities. This includes the registration, keeping proper accounts and making returns to the Charity Commission as appropriate.

The Committee consists of three independent elected representatives (Chair, Treasurer and Secretary), District President and Vice Presidents, together with the District Commissioner, his or her Deputy, the District Youth Commissioner, the District Explorer Scout Commissioner together with representatives elected annually from amongst the leadership of the Scout Groups and Explorer Scout Units within East Belfast District.

The Executive meets a minimum of three times per year or more frequently as required. Members of the Executive Committee complete 'Essential Information for Executive Committee Members' and 'Trustee Introduction' training within the first 5 months of joining the committee.

East Belfast District Scout Council's Executive Committee exists to support the District Commissioner in meeting the responsibilities of all appointments and is responsible for:

- ☒ The maintenance of East Belfast District Scout Council's property;
- ☒ The raising of funds and the administration of East Belfast District Scout Council's finance;
- ☒ The insurance of persons, property and equipment;
- ☒ East Belfast District Scout Council's public occasions;
- ☒ Assisting in the recruitment of leaders and other adult support;
- ☒ Appointing any sub committees that may be required;
- ☒ Appointing East Belfast District Scout Council's Administrators and Advisors other than those who are elected.

Risk and Internal Control:

East Belfast District Scout Council's Executive Committee has identified the major risks to which they believe East Belfast District Scout Council is exposed, these have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate against them.

The main areas of concern that have been identified are..

- ☒ Damage to buildings, property and equipment. East Belfast District Scout Council would request the use of buildings, property and equipment from neighbouring organisations such as the church, community centre and other Scout Groups. Similar reciprocal arrangements exist with these organisations. East Belfast District Scout Council has sufficient buildings and contents insurance in place to mitigate against permanent loss.
- ☒ Injury to leaders, helpers, supporters and members. East Belfast District Scout Council through the capitation fees contributes to the Scout Association's national accident insurance policy. Risk Assessments are undertaken before all activities.
- ☒ Reduced income from fundraising. East Belfast District Scout Council is primarily reliant upon income from subscriptions and fundraising. East Belfast District Scout Council does hold a reserve to ensure the continuity of activities should there be a major reduction in income. The Committee could raise the value of subscriptions to increase the income to East Belfast District Scout Council on an ongoing basis, either temporarily or permanently.
- ☒ Reduction or loss of leaders. East Belfast District Scout Council is totally reliant upon volunteers to run and administer the activities of the District. If there was a reduction in the number of leaders to an unacceptable level in a particular section or the group as a whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section. In the worst case scenario the complete closure of a Group or the District.
- ☒ Reduction or loss of members. East Belfast District Scout Council provides activities for all young people aged 6 to 18. If there was a reduction in membership in a particular section or the group as whole then there would have to be a contraction, consolidation or closure of a section or group. In the worst case scenario the complete closure of the District. East Belfast District Scout Council has in place systems of internal controls that are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material mismanagement or loss, these include two signatories for all payments and comprehensive insurance policies to ensure that insurable risks are covered.

Objectives and Activities:

The Purpose of Scouting:

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

The Values of Scouting:

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

- ☑ Integrity - We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.
- ☑ Respect - We have self-respect and respect for others.
- ☑ Care - We support others and take care of the world in which we live.
- ☑ Belief - We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.
- ☑ Co-operation - We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

The Scout Method:

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

- ☑ enjoy what they are doing and have fun
- ☑ take part in activities indoors and outdoors
- ☑ learn by doing ☑ share in spiritual reflection
- ☑ take responsibility and make choices
- ☑ undertake new and challenging activities
- ☑ make and live by their Promise.

Summary of the main activities in relation to these objectives:

Main activities include badge-work, games and physical activities, art and craft, music and drama, adventurous outdoor activities, camping and hiking expeditions, parades and church services, and voluntary service projects undertaken within the local community. The Committee made the decision to partially subsidise the increased headquarters' membership subscription fee for all members during the current financial year. An approved standard operating policy is in place to enable the Committee to consider requests fairly and equally from members for bursaries to attend national and international camps and jamborees and voluntary service projects at home and overseas.

Public Benefit Statement:

East Belfast District Scout Council meets the Charity Commission's public benefit criteria under both the advancement of education and the advancement of citizenship or community development headings. Achievements and Performance During April 2023 to March 2024, all sections met weekly face-to-face. Members continued with badge-work, with another successful partnership to deliver a first aid course in partnership with QUB Medical School. We were able to organize more events for all age groups as well as camps and residential. The focus continues to be supportive to groups in building numbers and gaining and supporting volunteers. We have facilitated several events across all sections, with plans to develop these further. We have recovered from Covid and our numbers have returned to pre-pandemic levels and continued growth would be expected.

Financial Review Reserves Policy:

East Belfast District Scout Council's policy on reserves is to hold sufficient resources to continue the charitable activities of the group should income and fundraising activities fall short. East Belfast District Scout Council's Executive Committee considers that EBDS Council should hold a sum equivalent to 12 months running costs, circa £3,000, excluding any Capitation Liability. East Belfast District Scout Council's held reserves of approximately £25,969 against this at year end. This is above the level required for operating expenses. The Council provided significant support from reserves held at the beginning of the financial period to Scout Groups to part-subsidise HQ membership fees during the pandemic. Investment Policy East Belfast District Scout Council's Income and Expenditure is very small and as a consequence does not have sufficient funds to invest in longer-term investments such as stocks and shares. East Belfast District Scout Council has therefore adopted a low-risk strategy to the investment of its funds. All funds are held in cash using only mainstream banks or building societies or The Scout Association's Short Term Investment Service. East Belfast District Scout Council's Executive regularly monitors the levels of bank balances and the interest rates received to ensure the group obtains maximum value and income from its banking arrangements. Occasionally this may involve using an account that requires a period of notice before funds may be withdrawn, before doing so the East Belfast District Scout Council's Executive considers the cash flow requirements.

Declaration:

Trustees declare that they have approved the 2024 this report on Monday 26th November 2024.

Additional note:

The Executive Committee of East Belfast District Scouts became a Trustee Board from June 2024 which will be reflected in the 2025 CCNI submission.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Mr A. Murphy [Treasurer]

26th November 2024