

BELFAST BIBLE COLLEGE LIMITED

DIRECTORS' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2023. The directors have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) Accounting and reporting by Charities (FRS102) in preparing the Annual Report and financial statements of the company.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The directors, who also act as Trustees, are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulation.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the directors have prepared the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Accounting Standards comprising FRS102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland, and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure account, of the 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 Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS102): Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2015);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business; and
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The directors are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and 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.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Belfast Bible College Limited is a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital and is incorporated under the Companies Act 2006. The company is governed by its memorandum and articles of association.

The College is formally recognised by HM Revenue and Customs as a charitable body under reference XN47242, and is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC104482. The statutory reliefs under s505 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 are admissible on income subject to compliance with the terms of s505 of the Act.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for the review of all activities, approval of budgets and implementation of future strategy. The Board meets five times per annum. There are three Board sub-committees namely Education Committee, Human Resources Committee and Finance, Risk and Audit Committee; each subcommittee meet on a regular basis and report to the Board of Directors.

The Senior Management Team is made up of three staff under the leadership of the Principal and is responsible for all operational and day to day matters. It recommends key decisions to the Board for approval and will also provide information and recommendations to the Board sub-committees for consideration and approval in the relevant operational areas. This Group meets monthly.

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

Dr N C Morrow (Chair)
Prof N D Black (resigned 15 June 2023)
Ms S Graham
Mr P S Hendron
Mr N Jennings
Mr M H Pitt
Mrs J Smyth
Mr P Fleming (resigned 5 September 2022)
Mrs Lisette Watson (appointed 8 December 2022)
Ms Anne Moorehead (appointed 9 February 2024)
Mr Andrew Robinson (appointed 19 March 2024)

Appointment of Directors

Those serving as directors are invited by the existing Board of Directors on the ground of their proven ability, relevant experience, and personal interest in the work of the College. Prior to joining the Board each prospective member meets with the Chairman. The meeting provides an overview of the College and the role and responsibilities of each member of the Board. An induction process for new Board members has been developed and is used to ensure they are familiar with the objectives, activities, public benefit and risks facing the College. A Directors Pack for the College is given to each new member when they join and ongoing training is provided as required.

Each member of the Company is also appointed as a director, serves for a specific term, retires by rotation, and upon retirement is eligible for re-appointment. As the College receives only limited financial assistance from public funds, relying upon fees charged to students and upon gifts received from supporters there are no directors nominated by any public body or outside agency.

None of the directors has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the directors are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £10 each in the event of a winding up.

The College employs a principal and other full time and part time teaching staff, and the day to day operation of the College as a place of Christian education is delegated to the principal and his staff. However, the Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for the activities of the College, and are governed by the doctrinal statement set out in paragraph 3 of the Articles of Association as well as the original objects expressed in the Declaration of Trust of 8th February 2003.

The College is an independent body and has no constitutional connection with any other college or education establishment.

The professional advisors to the College are set out on the first page of the Annual Report.

During the year the College undertook an organisational review with external assistance with a view to ensuring the College remains fit for purpose to deliver its charitable objectives and secure its financial future in the post-pandemic academic environment. The outcome of this review is being worked through with staff and the transformation process will take a couple of years to fully implement, particularly changes to academic courses in consultation with our accrediting university. This is an exciting opportunity for the College to meet our stakeholders' needs in an innovative and relevant way in accordance with God's will.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the College is:

To equip 21st century followers of Jesus through theological education that fosters the ability to communicate the Christian faith intelligently and with conviction in word and action.

The main activity of the College continued to be in the area of delivering educational programmes in keeping with that purpose. Through this year, we successfully continued to provide courses leading to:

- i. Internal 3 month, 1 year Certificate & graduate Diploma courses.
- i. 3 month Certificate, 1 year Certificate, 2 year Diploma and 3 year BA in Theology (University of Cumbria [UOC] validated courses).
- i. Postgraduate 2 year Part Time MA in Theology (University of Cumbria [UOC] validated course).

EMPLOYEES

All departments within College have regular staff meetings whereby information is disseminated to and obtained from staff by senior management. There are regular meetings to facilitate the exchange of this information and also on the agenda for discussion at these meetings is the current statistical, quality and budgetary information for the College.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is considered by the Board annually but operational oversight rests with the Board Finance, Risk and Audit Committee who consider risk at each meeting. The College has developed a College Strategic Risk Register supported by a subsidiary Register of more minor risks and the risk management process will continue to develop in the incoming year. The Board has considered the financial and operational risks associated with running the College and considers that it has in place the procedures to manage any such ongoing risks. The following is a summary of the key activities in place to mitigate exposure to risk:

- ongoing review of the Strategic Plan and analysis of the market for students who wish to obtain formal bible based training and accreditation;
- monitoring of financial information on a monthly basis with adequate planning and financial controls in place;
- an established Education Committee together with robust reporting and independent quality review procedures through our accrediting sponsors;
- extensive range of policies and procedures to cover all aspects of the College activities;
- organisational structure which includes provision for deputies to cover key roles and an effective succession planning process;
- robust governance controls with sufficient management and reporting structures in place; and
- frequent assessment of risk to ensure all possible consequences are considered and controls implemented.

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The key risks facing the College are set out in the Corporate Risk Register but the focus of attention surrounded the following risks:

- i. Maintenance of a high standard of educational quality and excellence to support academic achievement and Christian service development among the student population.
- ii. Sustainability of funding to support all College activity.
- iii. Maintenance of an appropriate physical environment for both staff and students

These risks are managed and mitigated through various management operated policies and procedures and overseen by specific Board Committees in these key areas – Education Committee, Finance, Risk and Audit Committee and Human Resources Committee. These standing committees are supplemented by ad hoc committees as and when required to oversee other risks and opportunities as they arise. The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee also look at emerging risks such as the General Data Protection Regulation to ensure the College is aware of the impact and is planning to mitigate the risk if and when it arises.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Board believes that the public benefits from its activities in the areas of the advancement of religion and the advancement of education through:

- i. The training of full and part time ministers of religion, lay associates and pastoral ministry workers
- ii. Spiritual formation of laity
- iii. Teaching and spreading the principles of the Christian religion
- iv. Raising awareness and understanding of Christian beliefs and practices
- v. The carrying out of missionary and outreach work

The areas in which the college seeks to achieve this are:-

- i. Through college and higher education
- ii. Community education
- iii. Religious education
- iv. Vocational training and life-long learning
- v. The development of individual capabilities, competencies, skills and understanding

The key beneficiaries are the students who have the opportunity to attend full or part time courses provided by the college. In addition, the public at large may attend public lectures and part time college courses.

The directors confirm they have had regard to the statutory guidance in respect of the Public Benefit Requirement published by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

FUNDS HELD AS CUSTODIAN TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

The charity does not hold any funds as custodian for any other trustee body.

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DISCLOSURES OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS

To the knowledge and belief of the directors, the directors confirm that there is no relevant information that the company's auditors are not aware of. They further confirm that they have taken all the steps necessary to ensure the directors are aware of any such relevant information, and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of such information.

AUDITORS

Harbinson Mulholland have indicated their willingness to continue in office and a resolution concerning their re-appointment will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting and to authorise the directors to fix the remuneration of the auditors for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Approved by the Board on 30th April 2024 and signed on its behalf by



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Dr N C Morrow (Chair)
Director