

Home-Start Causeway

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The objects of the charity are:

- a) to safeguard, protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical of children and parents of children;
- b) to prevent cruelty to or maltreatment of children;
- c) to relieve sickness, poverty and need amongst children and parents of children;
- d) to promote the education of the public in better standards of child care; principally but not exclusively within the area of Causeway Coast & Glens and its environs.

Objectives, strategies and activities

The charity provides a wide range of support for families experiencing difficulties or suffering stress and who have at least one child under the age of five. Home-Start volunteers help families facing isolation, the effects of post-natal illness, disability or mental health issues, bereavement, multiple births, poverty or financial difficulties, or a whole range of other challenges.

After meeting with the family to discuss their specific needs, Home-Start will match the family to a volunteer. The help we give each family depends entirely on their circumstances, requirements and what they want help with. Support will be given through core home visiting, family group activities, outings and training opportunities.

Public benefit

The direct benefits that flow from the charity's activities include:

- improved health outcomes and improved uptake of health appointments.
- happier safer children and happier safer homes, resulting in fewer children suffering cruelty or maltreatment.
- parents and children feel less marginalised. Families make better use of local services and are less isolated and have wider horizons. Families are better able to cope with their needs.
- families develop improved coping strategies and parents become more confident through increased education in childcare standards.

Trustees and officers

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees:

Mr A. McGarvey
Mrs M. McCaughan
Mrs K. Millar
Mrs Ann Gault (appointed 1 January 2023)
Mr G. Petersen (retired 1 January 2023)
Mr I. Dunn (retired 19 July 2022)
Mrs D. Henry (resigned 14 July 2022)

Secretary:

Mrs G. Kelly

Home-Start Causeway

Trustees' Report

Structure, governance and management

Major risks and management of those risks

Covid-19

In response to Covid-19, changes were made to service delivery at Home-Start Causeway. Thankfully, we have been able to resume the running of normal service. Indoor home visits have resumed with volunteers and staff taking precautions such as hand hygiene. Play sessions and family groups attendance have been increased to allow a greater number of families to access these services at any one time. The groups are kept small to allow for social distancing and a less crowded room.

Rising inflation and cost of living

Whilst rising inflation and energy bills have had some impact on Home-Start Causeway it would be remiss not to consider the potential impact this may have over the next year. Funders have reached out to organisations to see how best they can support organisations with rising costs with uplifts, and we have availed ourselves of this assistance. We also have been more flexible with budgets to help address increased costs. We will continue to monitor the impact of rising costs on our service. We foresee increased financial difficulties within the families we support as they struggle with rising food and energy costs. We will do what we can to support our families through the service we provide and also to signpost to appropriate services.

Stress and pressure in the NHS

Northern Ireland's Health Service is under increasing stress and pressure. This has impacted the number of families needing assistance, as well as the complexity of their needs. We will continue to carefully balance our response to the needs presented with the level of assistance our volunteers can provide.

Financial instruments

Objectives and policies

The charity's activities expose it to a number of financial risks including credit risk, cash flow risk and liquidity risk.

Cash flow risk

The charity's activities expose it primarily to the financial risks of changes in Government funding and third party support of the charity.

Credit risk

The charity's principal financial assets are bank balances and cash, trade and other receivables. The charity's credit risk is primarily attributable to its trade receivables. The amounts presented in the balance sheet are net of allowances for doubtful receivables. An allowance for impairment is made where there is an identified loss event which, based on previous experience, is evidence of a reduction in the recoverability of the cash flows.

Liquidity risk

In order to maintain liquidity to ensure that sufficient funds are available for ongoing operations and future developments, the charity uses cash reserves.

Home-Start Causeway

Trustees' Report

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Home-Start Causeway for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each trustee has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information. The trustees confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditor is unaware.

Reappointment of auditor

In accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006, a resolution for the re-appointment of D T Carson & Co. as auditors of the charity is to be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 26 October 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Mrs M. McCaughan
Trustee