

National Forum of Engineering Centres

Directors' Report and Un-audited Accounts

Company Registered number 05127091

Charity Registered number 1106620

Year ended 31 July 2020

Contents

Directors' report	1-6
Financial report	7
Statement of financial activities	8
Balance sheet	10
Notes	11-16

NATIONAL FORUM OF ENGINEERING CENTRES

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2020

The Directorship presents its Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2020

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and they comply with the organisation's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities', issued in March 2005.

1. Structure, Governance and Management

The organisation is a company limited by guarantee. It was established on 13 May 2004 from the transfer of the previous charity NFEC, the National Forum for Engineering Colleges. The Memorandum of Association established the objects and powers of the charitable company and it is governed by its Articles of Association. During the operating year to the 31 July 2020, the individuals who, for the purposes of company law, were the directors of the Company also served as the trustees of the Charity. They were:

Mr J Gill	Chair
Mr W Hall	Secretary
Mr I Gaskill	
Mr J Lockey	
Mr P Winebloom	

Under the requirements of the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association:

- At the first and every subsequent annual general meeting; one-third of the directors for the time being, or, if their number is not three or a multiple of three, then the number nearest one-third, shall retire from office;
- The directors to retire in every year shall be those who have been longest in office since their last election, but as between persons who became or were last reappointed trustees on the same day those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) to be determined by lot;
- A retiring director shall be eligible for re-election.

In 2017 the Directors proposed that none of the Executive Directors would be asked to resign but that Non-Executive Directors would be asked to join the Management and Strategy structure of NFEC and to attend its meetings. It was agreed that an additional Executive Director should be sought and appointed. **This arrangement is working well and it is proposed to continue the current arrangement.** The Directors are again seeking nominations from members to join the Board as either Executive Directors / Trustees or non-Executive Directors / Regional Representatives

The current non-executive directors are;

Mr N Burrows	NFEC regional co-ordinator – North West
Mr K Whitehouse	NFEC regional co-ordinator – Midlands
Mr C Miller	NFEC regional co-ordinator – South West
Vacant	NFEC regional co-ordinator - South East
Mr R Millington	National Liaison

(Region Representative, North East: Mr J Lockey, Executive Director)

None of the Directors/Trustees has had any beneficial interest in the company. All those listed are Members of the company and each guarantee to contribute £10 in the event of the company being wound up.

Executive and Non-Executive Directors have met together during the year to discuss items relevant to current and future issues related to NFEC and its members. The last physical meeting was March 2020 – subsequent and more frequent meetings have been via Zoom.

2. Objectives

NFEC is a member organisation comprising of colleges, training providers, awarding organisations, employers, professional bodies and educational suppliers, all focussed on improving the quality, impact and influence of engineering education and training in the UK.

The NFEC “footprint” footprint covers all of Manufacturing, Mechanical, Electronics, Electrical, Aerospace, Energy, Automotive and associated sectors.

Key services and activities include

- Lobbying government, awarding bodies, the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education and similar organisations on strategy relating to policy development, funding, curriculum and other issues;
- Influencing the development of national standards, qualifications, learning programmes and learning delivery methods;
- Providing information to members on the latest national, regional and local developments in the learning sector and in engineering and technology;
- Providing a network that brings member organisations together, to share good practice and collectively solve problems that they cannot address individually. This covers a range of issues including funding, learning delivery methods and tutorial support;
- Support for the continuing professional development of the managers and staff of learning providers, keeping them abreast of changing curriculum and qualification needs;
- Providing access to new learning materials and resources.

Throughout the year NFEC has continued to employ Jill Mustard as “Operations Manager” providing support to the Regional co-ordinators with the organisation and running of regional meetings and along with Elaine Hyde, NFEC Admin Officer, to improve member liaison and communications, in addition to the planning and organisation of National Conference. The finance operations and book-keeping were brought “in-house” and a new finance control system implemented, with Sarah Jenkins taking on the role and improving membership liaison and financial procedures; in addition, to support member communications, records and website management.

Work continues to ensure that the membership database is accurate and up to date and that potential new members are identified and approached. Whereas previously NFEC held details of only one main curriculum contact within a member organisation, this is now being expanded to include all, or as many as possible, of the engineering facing employees to better reach those on the “front-line” and raise awareness of NFEC amongst the newer generation. We encourage member representatives to extend knowledge of NFEC throughout their departments. NFEC maintains full GDPR compliance relating to member contacts and confidentiality.

We continue to encourage member representatives to ensure that Purchase Requisitions / Orders are raised in advance to ensure that continuous membership is maintained.

3. NFEC Activities

The academic year 2019-20 started with the usual flourish with regional seminars and preparation for an excellent National Conference hosted by Autodesk at their high-tech facility in Birmingham which was to be followed by regional Spring Seminars; it was quickly apparent that, due to Covid 19, face to face meetings were no longer an option and all such events were put on hold, subject to regular review. After much deliberation, the Directors instigated On-Line Seminars for June and July, their success has led to the programme being continued into NFEC's 2020-21 year.

3a. Regional Seminars and National Conference

Regional representation is essential for NFEC and its members to effectively engage with each other. Regional co-ordinators are appointed from among the membership, to provide leadership and conducting regional seminars within their regions. Regional seminars cover a wide range of topics such as apprenticeship reforms, curriculum development, teaching and learning strategies, teaching and learning technologies and awarding body updates. They also allow an opportunity for networking and sharing of good practice between colleges and training providers which helps delegates effectively carry out their respective roles.

Regional Seminars are a "core" activity for NFEC; attendance levels do fluctuate due to geography and timing, however locations and timings are varied to suit attendees needs, all who attend are clear as to the good value that they represent in relation to their work.

In the interests of fairness to all members who support the Regional Seminars, a policy has been applied which allows non-members one free seminar. After that they have the choice of either becoming members or paying £200 for each delegate attending each subsequent seminar.

At this point NFEC would like to thank all the Regional Co-ordinators for their commitment and support outside their busy roles within their respective organisations.

As mentioned above the annual National Conference once more took place in December 2019, hosted by Autodesk, this was another excellent conference with good quality speakers and relevant topics, and with good feedback from delegates.

The Regional Seminars planned for the spring of 2020 were replaced by two very successful and well attended On-Line Seminars, titled as "Where do we go from here"; addressing the experiences of members coping with "lockdown", bringing together representatives from all types of member organisations to contemplate the then challenges faced by all.

3b. NFEC Representation on Key Influential Panels

As part of NFEC's drive to become even more effective and to invest even more of its available resources in achievement of its Charitable Objects, Directors have encouraged members to volunteer their support and involvement in a range of committees and working groups and to respond to several consultation events and reports.

To maximise the effect of available resources, NFEC carefully chooses the panels or committees it should be represented on and this is dictated by how well such representation can best serve the interests of members. There has been a significant increase in NFEC involvement in committee representation (albeit on fewer committees) due mainly to our involvement in Apprenticeship Trailblazers, which coupled with other committees/panels have ensured the views of members (gleaned either from membership surveys or discussions at Regional seminars) have been represented. The Directors recognise the benefits on NFEC being represented in these activities by "current practitioners" and we welcome volunteers for these positions.

The work of these bodies has continued during the year, prior to the "Lockdown" limitations many of these activities had already moved from "physical" meetings with "corresponding" participants into regular On-Line modes.

A summary of activity and representation during the last 12 months is as follows.

Apprenticeship Development

NFEC have continued to be represented on a range of the employer-led "trailblazer" groups, tasked with shaping and designing the new Apprenticeship Standards within the sector, most notably on the Aerospace and Automotive groups.

Stemming from this, NFEC has been able to help in broadening the scope of consultation and thinking relating to new programme developments, with the help of members and their respective industrial contacts.

It is quite clear that this has resulted in a significant increase in the profile of NFEC which continues to be mentioned not just in Awarding Organisation circles but also amongst major industrial companies, the Department of Education and the AoC to name just some. This new profile will help when dealing with other key areas of development NFEC should be involved with.

Whatever the future of trailblazers, or their successor groups, NFEC is now well positioned to be able to represent the views of members on such groups as they evolve, helping shape the development of apprenticeships in the future.

All Parliamentary Committee on Apprenticeships

NFEC has represented the voice of members on several All-Parliamentary Committees on Apprenticeships meetings, dealing directly with government ministers and civil servants and helping to shape government views and approaches to apprenticeship reforms.

T Level Developments

NFEC have secured representation on the Engineering & Manufacturing T Level development group, responsible for developing these new qualifications for the Engineering & Manufacturing sectors. As the introduction of T Level programmes within our sector is becoming closer, NFEC is playing a greater and more active role in the review and consultation process, working closely with its Awarding Body members and other related organisations which will develop further during the next few years.

Degree Apprenticeship Development

NFEC have secured representation on the Engineering Professor Council's Degree Apprenticeship Working Group for developing degree apprenticeships.

4. Future Planned Activities and Initiatives

Conferences and Seminars

NFEC values the benefits that regional seminars and national conferences bring to members, in particular those that come through face-to-face meetings. The continued success of the On-Line seminars, that have continued into 2021; the participation rates and their flexibility to operate, show them to be an excellent way to achieve the networking and inter-member discussions that meet NFEC's objectives; subject to later review it is likely that these will form a significant part of NFEC's future.

Membership and services

As part of our ongoing strategy to grow and widen our membership, NFEC will continue to engage with organisations and institutions that would not have previously benefitted from NFEC membership, including Universities seeking to grow degree apprenticeships, Employer-Providers delivering apprenticeships, new entrants to the Register of Approved Training Providers, and FE Colleges and private Training Providers who are delivering engineering courses but who are not currently members. We will also look at ways in which to broaden the appeal and remit of NFEC to include the wider STEM orientated education and training provider base.

Targeting of New Members

NFEC continues to identify prospective new members, targeting such organisations, engaging in dialogue, encouraging their participation and membership.

We will continue to seek and provide representation on key influential panels, such as those responsible for developing new curriculum such as Apprenticeship Standards, T Levels and Degree Apprenticeships within our sectors, representing and reflecting the views and concerns of our members.

Communications

The NFEC Website and the e-mail based "Newsletter" circulation are considered as key services for members and vital for communications; The NFEC website has undergone a review, changes to format and some new features make it more user friendly with the aim of keeping it as up to date as we can. Maintaining "currency" and inclusion of "news" from a variety of sources. There are new pages where our business members are encouraged to display their latest products and services. Such improvements will continue during the forthcoming year, (as always, contributions and content from members, items of news, showcasing of initiatives, support and advice to others or ongoing commentary and the raising of issues and questions that need addressing are strongly encouraged.

We have space where members' contributions can be easily incorporated, please submit your stories!

NFEC has attempted Blogs, Forum and Twitter, some Directors are adding items to LinkedIn; in the light of "social distancing" practices we will continue to review the use of "social media".

Financial review

At the 2019 Annual General Meeting the Directors were pleased to report that the Charity's finances were on a financially stable footing and are pleased to similarly report the same this year.

The Accounts balance sheet for 2019-20 shows a 'bottom line' of £84,064, compared with the previous year figure of £82,630; income from memberships is reduced by £11,595 and Conference incomes reduced by £3,134, (as has been said before these are "moment in time" year-end figures and are subject to fluctuating expenditure and timing of membership receipts; however, these reductions are concerning). In determining our strategy for the future, we must consider the reasons for these reductions alongside the successes of NFEC activities during the Coronavirus period.

As in previous years, new memberships offset some of the withdrawals, but our continuing challenge is to ensure that current and potential members are aware that 'the greater our numbers the greater our effectiveness' in contributing to national policy setting and confronting the issues that we face. Membership fees for 2019-20 were held at £460.

Members purchasing procedures continue to impact on renewals and other billing processes. NFEC wishes to confirm the importance of appropriate sign off and the provision of Purchase Orders from member organisations to accompany membership applications / renewals and bookings for events. Renewal reminders were issued earlier than usual at the end of the period together with reminders to ensure that internal purchasing procedures were activated; at the same time, we asked for updates of contact names and contact details.

NFEC recognises the challenges facing members and the sector as a whole; mergers, programme rationalisation and funding challenges impact on NFEC and its members. NFEC's long-term sustainability still requires the attraction of new and retention of current members; We consider that organisations best benefit from NFEC membership by extending the membership benefits to more members of staff – there is no limit on the number of staff who can actively access NFEC – we invite them to go to the website.

NFEC Directors are supported by a small but able team of employees, consultants and volunteers to conduct a range of duties and activities – there are more "activities" than we are able to support and as always, we seek further volunteers from the membership to become involved in representational and operational activities; in particular we are looking for key speakers and contributors to future On-line Seminars and possible Webcasts, can you or your colleagues assist?

At the end of the year, summertime, we were asking what the "new normal" would be; we look forward to NFEC taking its place in bringing that "new normal" into being.



Dr Jon Gill
Chair of the Board and Trustee of the Charity

Dated: 12th March 2021

Financial report to the members of National Forum of Engineering Centres.

We report on the accounts for the year ended 31 July 2020 set out on pages 9 to 17.

This report is made solely to the charity's members, as a body, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006. Our reporting work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an independent accountants' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's members as a body, for our reporting work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of directors and reporting accountants

As described on page 1 the charitable Company's directors, who are also the directors of the National Forum of Engineering Centres for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, and they consider that the Company is exempt from an audit. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

Basis of opinion

Our work was conducted in accordance with the Statement of Standards for Reporting Accountants, and so our procedures consisted of comparing the accounts with the accounting records kept by the Company, and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the Company as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. These procedures provide only the assurance expressed in our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion:

- (a) The accounts are in agreement with the accounting records kept by the charitable Company under section 386 of the Companies Act 2006.
- (b) Having regard only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records:
 - (i) the accounts have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in the Act; and
 - (ii) the charitable Company satisfied the conditions for exemption from and audit of the accounts for the year specified in section 477 of the Act and did not, at any time within that year, fall within any of the categories of companies not entitled to the exemption specified in section 478.

S J Jenkins
Date: 4th March 2021

Statement of financial activities
for the year ended 31 July 2019

	<i>Note</i>	Year ended 31 July 2020 £	Year ended 31 July 2019 £
Incoming resources from generated funds			
Incoming resources from charitable activities	2	41,796	56,525
Other incoming resources	3	-	-
Total incoming resources		41,796	56,525
Resources expended			
Charitable activities	4		
Memberships	5	12,018	17,503
National conference		15,714	22,236
Regional events		-	-
Total charitable expenditure	7	27,731	39,739
Governance costs		8,864	10,155
Total resources expended		36,595	49,849
Net surplus for the year		5,201	6,631
Fund balances at 1 August 2019		82,630	75,999
Fund balances at 31 July 2020		84,064	82,630

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

Balance sheet
as at 31 July 2019

	Note	31 July 2020	31 July 2019
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	0	0
Current assets			
Debtors	11	12,890	11,980
Cash at bank and in hand		83,082	80,338
Prepayments		29	
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	96,001 (11,936)	92,348 (9,718)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net current assets		84,064	82,630
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total assets less current liabilities		84,064	82,630
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Income funds (Total Capital Reserves)			
Unrestricted funds		84,064	82,630
		<hr/>	<hr/>

For the year ending 31 July 2020 the Company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Company's Act relating to small companies.

Director's responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small company's regime.

These financial statements were approved by the board on **12th March 2021** and were signed on its behalf by:



Dr Jon Gill, *Trustee*

Notes

(forming part of the financial statements)

1 Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Company's financial statements.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and under the historical cost accounting rules.

Under Financial Reporting Standards ('FRS') 1 '*Cash Flow Statements*' the Company is exempt from the requirement to prepare a cash flow statement on the grounds that it is a small organisation.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 (as updated through Update Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

Incoming resources

Membership subscriptions are accounted for on an accruals basis.

Income received under projects is accounted for as the work progresses and the claims are submitted.

Resources Expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure directly related to the achievement of the charity's objects is included under direct charitable expenditure. Expenditure on support costs is allocated to the charitable activities based on the time spent on each activity. Expenditure incurred in the governance of the charity is recorded as such.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and equipment - 25% straight line

Notes (continued)

2 Incoming resources from charitable activities

	Year ended 31 July 2020 £	Year ended 31 July 2019 £
Membership subscriptions	31,440	43,035
National conference	10,356	13,490
	<u>41,796</u>	<u>56,525</u>

3 Other incoming resources

	Year ended 31 July 2017 £	Year ended 31 July 2019 £
Other income	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Notes (continued)

4 Total resources expended

	Staff costs £	Depreciation £	Other costs £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Charitable activities					
<u>Memberships</u>					
Activities undertaken directly	-	-	-	-	-
Support costs	6521	0	5497	12,018	17,502
Total	6521	0	5497	12,018	17,502
<u>National conference</u>					
Activities undertaken directly	-	-	3696	3696	4,734
Support costs	6521	0	5497	12,018	17,502
	6521	0	9193	15,714	22,236
Total	13,042	0	14,690	27,731	39,738
Governance costs	6521	-	2,343	8,864	10,155
	-	-	-	36,595	49,893

Notes (continued)

5 Activities undertaken directly

Other costs relating to national conference comprise:

	Year ended 31 July 2020	Year ended 31 July 2019
Venue costs	2,726	4,388
Printing	43	46
Materials	155	-
Travel and subsistence	772	-
Consultancy	-	300
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,696	4,734
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Other costs relating to regional events comprise:

Travel and subsistence	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes (continued)

6 Support costs

	Memberships	National conference	Regional events	Total 2020	Total 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
Business support	3,548	3,548	-	9,201	9,250
Office overheads	1,949	1,949	-	4,096	4,844
Staff costs	6,521	6,521	-	13,042	19,553
Depreciation	0	0	-	0	46
	<u>12,018</u>	<u>12,018</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26,339</u>	<u>33,333</u>

7 Governance costs

	Year ended 31 July 2020	Year ended 31 July 2019
	£	£
Other governance costs comprise:		
National executive	8,864	10,155
	<u>8,864</u>	<u>10,155</u>

8 Directors

None of the directors (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year, but 5 of them were reimbursed £2,072 travelling and related expenses (2019: 5 were reimbursed £4,266), and 1 reimbursed £1,345 in respect of consultancy services (2019: £2,439).

9 Staff numbers and costs

The average monthly number of employees (including directors) during the year was:

	Year ended 31 July 2020	Year ended 31 July 2019
Management and administration	2	2
	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Employment costs	£	£
Wages and salaries	19,110	19,219
Social security costs (NI)	453	335
	<u>19,563</u>	<u>19,553</u>

Notes (continued)

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, Fittings & equipment
	£
Cost	
At beginning of year	10,669
Additions	-
	<hr/>
At 31 July 2019	10,669
	<hr/>
Depreciation	
At beginning of year	10,669
Charge for the year	0
	<hr/>
At 31 July 2019	10,669
	<hr/>
Net book value	
At 31 July 2020	0
	<hr/>
At 31 July 2019	0
	<hr/>

Notes (continued)

11 Debtors

	31 July 2020 £	31 July 2019 £
Trade debtors	12,890	11,980
Other taxes and social security costs	-	-
	<u>12,890</u>	<u>11,980</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	31 July 2020 £	31 July 2019 £
Trade creditors	825	890
Accruals	600	-
Deferred income	11,040	-
Other creditors	-529	8,828
	<u>11,936</u>	<u>9,718</u>

