# Connected Voice

England & Wales · Charity number 1125877

## Details

| | |
|---|---|
| **Other names** | NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE |
| **Status** | Registered |
| **Legal form** | Charitable company |
| **Company number** | 06681475 |
| **Registered** | 2008-09-15 |
| **Register** | View on the Charity Commission register |

## Contact

| | |
|---|---|
| **Address** | Connected Voice<br>One Strawberry Lane<br>Newcastle Upon Tyne<br>NE1 4BX |
| **Phone** | 01912327445 |
| **Email** | connect@connectedvoice.org.uk |
| **Website** | www.connectedvoice.org.uk |

## Activities

**Objects:** TO PROMOTE ANY CHARITABLE PURPOSES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ANY LOCALITY OR COMMUNITY IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT AND TO PROMOTE AND ORGANISE CO-OPERATION IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SAME AND TO THAT END BRING TOGETHER REPRESENTATIVES OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS WITHIN THE AREA OF BENEFIT

**Activities:** We aim to improve the quality of life in Newcastle by a broad programme of voluntary action, recognising that priority should be focussed on the most disadvantaged communities. We achieve this by providing a voice for individuals & the voluntary & community sector, championing voluntary & community action, strengthening voluntary & community organisations, highlighting poverty & inequality issues.

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## Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UK, PARTICULARLY BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY THE NORTH OF ENGLAND
- Gateshead
- Newcastle Upon Tyne City
- North Tyneside
- Northumberland
- South Tyneside
- Sunderland

## Finances

| Period end | Income | Expenditure | Assets | Employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2024-09-30 | £1,870,315 | £1,888,088 | £727,465 | 47 |
| 2023-09-30 | £1,794,932 | £2,312,471 | £741,312 | 49 |
| 2022-09-30 | £1,868,539 | £1,613,155 | £1,209,163 | 49 |
| 2021-09-30 | £1,815,608 | £1,808,151 | £1,015,027 | 45 |
| 2020-09-30 | £1,401,856 | £1,275,768 | £938,086 | 38 |

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## Trustees

| Name | Role | Appointed |
|---|---|---|
| Adebusola Monique Afolabi | | 2022-03-01 |
| Andrew Keith Dalton | | 2026-04-23 |
| Bethan Grace Hosker | | 2026-04-23 |
| Dr Garry-Alexandros Efraim Dearges-Chantler | | 2026-04-23 |
| Elaine Slater Elaine Slater | | 2020-04-29 |
| Hannah Lucy Owens | | 2021-04-21 |
| Keith Michael Proudfoot | | 2023-01-18 |
| Peter Brian Elliott | | 2023-04-25 |
| Peter Deans | | 2023-04-25 |
| Salha Kaitesi | | 2023-04-25 |
| Sam Cooper | | 2023-04-25 |
| Tracy Huitson | | 2021-04-21 |

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**Connected Voice**

England & Wales - Charity number 1125877

# Accounts

Charity registration number 1125877

Company registration number 06681475 (England and Wales)

# CONNECTED VOICE

# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

# ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

# FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Trustees** | AM Afolabi<br>S Cooper<br>P Deans<br>P Elliott OBE<br>C Harrison<br>T Huitson<br>S Kaitesi<br>A Lee<br>H Owens<br>K Proudfoot<br>E Slater | |
| **Senior management** | L Goodwin | Chief Executive |
| **Charity number** | 1125877 | |
| **Company number** | 06681475 | |
| **Registered office** | One Strawberry Lane<br>Newcastle Upon Tyne<br>NE1 4BX | |
| **Auditor** | Sumer Auditco Limited<br>Unit 2<br>Gosforth Park Avenue<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE12 8EG | |

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
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# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## CHAIR'S REPORT
## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

**Chair's Report**

A strong voluntary sector is important to every area. It provides services that reach beyond the state and private business. It is citizens supporting each other in ways that are important to them. It is a voice for those without power and a way of us connecting with each other.

I am delighted to present Connected Voice's annual account of its work helping voluntary organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead to be as strong and as effective as possible. From the many tiny and informal groups to the large multi-million-pound organisations, they are all important to creating a good society here. We are proud of our achievements over the year, but it was not without its challenges for us as an organisation, including the decision to close our long running payroll service. It was equally a time of challenge for our members, who continued to support their beneficiaries while facing rising costs and increasing demand.

I commend Connected Voice's work to you. In doing so I thank the organisations we have worked with, our fabulous staff team and volunteers, and our trustees.

P. S. D

**Peter Deans**
**Chair of Trustees, Connected Voice**

Date: 10 April 2025

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)
## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "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)" (effective 1 January 2019).

**Objectives and activities**
The objectives of Connected Voice are, 'to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of any locality or community in the County of Northumberland and in the neighbourhood of the River Tyne.'

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 having due regard to the general guidance of the Charity Commission with respect to public benefit when reviewing the Connected Voice aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the trustees considered how the planned activities would contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Connected Voice has the following values:

**We amplify voices**
From individuals to organisations, we believe everyone has a right to be heard. Trusted to listen, understand and advocate, we strive for excellence. We're open and honest, we stick by people and give our support to ensure their voices are heard.

**We champion equality**
We believe that diversity should be celebrated and valued, and everyone deserves equality.
Working towards a fairer future for all, we won't stand still. By making an impact on causes big and small, we want to improve the quality of life across the region.

**We inspire charge**
Courageous, resourceful and determined, we will challenge unfairness and ask difficult questions.
Working effectively and accountably to instil confidence. We aim to become stronger and more sustainable to inspire positive and lasting change throughout our community

**We support action**
We understand from our own experiences the challenges people face. We truly value people and we won't judge or dictate. Leading independently and side by side with our communities and partners, we share our resources, skills and expertise to enable people to take meaningful action.

**We connect people**
At the heart of voluntary and community action for 90 years, we are immersed and rooted in the North East.
We work collectively and inclusively to connect, grow and strengthen our society. We are warm and approachable, and we create opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from and empower one another.

**Our purpose**

**Connected Voice exists in service of organisations committed to voluntary and social action in Newcastle and Gateshead and beyond. We work to support the enduring mission of those organisations to benefit society by reducing inequality and enriching lives.**

Over the year we contributed to our overall purpose in the following ways:·

- As a high-performing and well-led organisation; providing a voice for individuals and the voluntary and community sector.
- By championing the value and importance of voluntary and community action.
- By strengthening voluntary and community organisations through our advice and training services.
- By ensuring VCSE organisations had multiple opportunities to come together for peer support, networking and working collectively.
- By being proactive in tailoring our support to VCSE organisations as they met growing levels of need and dealt with financial pressures.
- By highlighting issues around health inequality in Newcastle and Gateshead, and addressing these through our work, including the work of Haref with ethnically marginalised communities.
- By growing engagement with Health Equity work through Haref, the Haref Allies programme, and our Digital Inclusion programmes.
- By continuing work on our EDI action plan, working towards ensuring our membership and staff team reflect the communities we serve.
- By growing our role in supporting volunteering, running the independent Gateshead Volunteer Centre, and working closely with partners to support volunteering in Newcastle.
- By providing a wide range of advocacy services and support to vulnerable people.

**Our Volunteers**
We value the unique contribution of our volunteers and the added value they bring. It is our intention that all volunteers are supported and respected. We encourage volunteers to fulfil their potential and aim to provide meaningful roles where both the organisation and the volunteer mutually benefit.

This year, staff continued to benefit from our volunteering policy, which allows them two paid days off per year to volunteer locally. We share examples of staff volunteering experiences within our team meetings. We have policies and procedures in place to support our volunteers, and work closely with our partner, Volunteer Centre Newcastle, to ensure we follow best practice in volunteering. During the year we achieved the national Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA).

**Our Staff**
We recognise the value and expertise of our staff, and we strive to put in place appropriate support as a good employer. We have a range of staff engagement and involvement activities, including a staff council and ideas forum and an annual staff away day. We hold the Better Health at Work award at Gold level. We are an accredited Living Wage Employer. We provide drop-ins and support for staff on topics which they have identified as important, such as menopause and pensions. We also hold the Investors In People accreditation. This year we implemented more wellbeing sessions for our staff, following feedback from our staff council.

**Public benefit**
The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

**Achievements and performance**

Connected Voice enables and promotes voluntary and community action, providing voluntary sector organisations with services that enable them to be well run, fulfil their aims and objectives, and provide them with the opportunity to extend their influence in Newcastle and Gateshead through the sector's collective voice.

We do this by providing expert advice on governance, on the policies and practices that voluntary organisations need to have to ensure they are safe and securely run, and by providing funding advice based on experience and knowledge of what funders are seeking in a good application.

We hold regular events and training to keep the sector informed, and to enable them to learn from and connect with each other. We provide opportunities for VCSE organisations to increase their reach and influence.

Connected Voice supports VCSE involvement, enabling engagement directly with public sector agencies and acting as a voice for the sector within multi-sector partnerships. During this year we continued to develop our role in representation and voice for the VCSE sector.

We engage in local authority-wide, sub-regional, regional and national activities because we want to be able to promote, share and deliver best practice. We work with a wide range of public sector partners – local authorities, NHS trusts, local NHS, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities, and many others.

We continued to develop our generated income through our paid-for services, which have become a core part of our offer and support our overall sustainability.

During the year we refreshed our strategy and have been working towards developing our five-year plan from October 2025 onwards.

**Connected Voice Support and Development**

Support and Development works with community organisations, charities and social enterprises working in Newcastle and Gateshead. We provide advice and guidance on all aspects of running an organisation, a comprehensive training package and opportunities to network and share best practice.

**Support and Guidance**

The Support and Development team worked with **582** organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead across the year, providing advice and guidance on topics including legal structures, governance, funding, policies and procedures, and organisational development.

*"I just want to express our gratitude one more time for finding the time to meet us and help us to sort our plans out. Yesterday's meeting is already huge step forward on our way to achieve our vision."*

*"It is fantastic that Connected Voice provides so much freely available support. Thank you for all the other guidance too, it's incredibly useful!"*

*"We would like to thank Connected Voice for the fantastic, consistent support, advice and guidance you have given us throughout 2023, it has really made a positive difference."*

**Funding**
We helped VCSE organisations to secure **£2,358,139** of grant funding and organised our annual Newcastle and Gateshead Funding Fair, attracting 19 funders and 102 VCSE organisations attended.

*"We spoke to Connected Voice for support with creating a fundraising strategy for an exciting capital project. Beth was really supportive and encouraged us to undertake a crowdfunding campaign. We are delighted that this has been hugely successful and exceeded our target. Raising over £125,000 from donations and pledges. We are so grateful to Connected Voice for being a constant source of encouragement, ideas and support."*

*"There was such lots of energy in the room and a sense of excitement about meeting each other. You and your team organised [the Funding Fair] really well."*

**Networking Events**
We delivered **four** successful VCSE Networking Events during the period, attended by **107** organisations. The themes were as follows:

- Environment and Wellbeing
- Digital Inclusion and Women's Empowerment
- Cost of Living
- Social Prescribing and Healthy Communities

*"I have attended a range of events and never been disappointed. Staff are very friendly, knowledgeable and really great at connecting organisations. They have had a positive direct impact, especially in regards to networking."*

**Training**
We delivered and supported **37** training courses over the year. Sessions included: Funding Strategy, Effective Bid-Writing, Monitoring and Evaluation, Trustee Roles and Responsibilities, Legal Structures, Using Social Media Effectively and an Introduction to Safeguarding. Moreover, we worked with other Connected Voice departments to support training on Finance, Advocacy and Health Inequalities. The feedback from these was overwhelmingly positive.

We continue to work with two other local infrastructure organisations (North Tyneside VODA and Northumberland CVA) to offer an eLearning platform called Elements. Between October 2023 to September 2024, **462** students enrolled in one or more Elements courses.

*"I think all trustees should have to attend this training and I wish I had it 10 years ago when I started. I would give it 11/10."*

*"Trainer Mark was really good at explaining in a clear and concise way what we need to be aware of and why. I really appreciated that he was prepared to knowledgably answer any question asked without making me feel foolish. I found the session both interesting and helpful."*

**OurGateshead**
Following last year's redesign, OurGateshead has continued to significantly increase its visitor numbers. During the year, there were **370,907** site visits with **898,631** pages viewed. This was an increase of **134%** and **246%** respectively on last year's figures.

*"I was part of a meeting around ESOL in Gateshead yesterday and providers were pleased we were gathering info in one place for people to access. That's brilliant!"*

**Premium Services**
During the year we provided paid-for services to **46** organisations. These are specialised pieces of work that take us a significant time to complete. They include organisational and governance reviews, charity registration, policy writing and bespoke training courses.

"Encouraged lots of ideas and conversation...I feel the session was good and definitely made us think. The SWOT session was very informative."

"I thought it was brilliant! Great presenters - very knowledgeable and confident [and] the session was pitched at the right pace and level for me. I learned such a lot and felt inspired."

**Information**
We are a key source of information for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Newcastle and Gateshead. Our follower numbers on social media continue to grow each year. In the reporting period we:

- Distributed fortnightly electronic news bulletins to **1,400** plus subscribers
- Distributed a monthly health and social care bulletin to the sector
- Produced four quarterly magazines shared with around **1,500** members and key contacts. Magazine themes:
    - The Power of Partnership
    - Devolution
    - Financial Inclusion
    - Working Across Sectors
- Number of followers on Twitter/X: **5,022** as of 30.09.24
- Number of followers on LinkedIn: **1,844** as of 30.09.24
- Number of followers on Facebook: **1,618** as of 30.09.24

Following a review of our communications strategy and link to EDI, we are reducing our profile on Twitter/X and have created a profile on the new social media platform Bluesky.

**Connected Voice Haref**
Connected Voice Haref works with ethnically marginalised communities to identify their key issues around health and improve the health information available to them. We help health services gain a better understanding of what communities need and we build confidence within communities so they can talk to health services about their cultural needs.

**Haref Network**
In the Haref Network we have **90** organisations with **120** people representing ethnically marginalised community groups and projects.

We ran **4** Haref Network meetings with discussions about:

- Mental health and the stigma and language used to describe mental health
- Refugee and asylum seeker healthcare
- Improving access to health services
- Impact of racist violence and support for mental health and the VCSE

**Haref Allies**
By the end of September 2024, we had **50** organisations as Haref Allies members with **66** individual Allies. We changed the Allies membership from two people per sign up to a single person in this year.

We held **3** Haref Allies meetings on the following themes:

- Skill building session on Refugee and Asylum Seeker Mental Health.
- Health literacy and communication
- Skill building session on Health research and public involvement

**Cultural Competency Training**
For the Newcastle City Council Public Health contract, we delivered training to **305** attendees over **25** sessions. The contract has been extended until July 2024.

We also delivered **19** paid-for Cultural Competency training sessions to **217** people over the year.

**Research Projects**

- **The Comfrey Project - Wellness and Awareness project.** Haref supported the Comfrey Project's Wellbeing Champions to discuss opinions on mental health services for refugees and asylum-seekers and identify good practice. Haref helped with ruining the focus groups, did all the data transcribing and completed the report, in consultation with the wellbeing champions. They presented their findings at our network meeting and a Haref Allies Skills Building Session.

- **EVOLVE mental health research**. Haref are a partner in the research project, led by Newcastle University which is looking at mental health services in the in North East and Manchester and the cultural barriers to these services. We have helped to recruit participants into this study. We are also part of the PPI group and have helped with data analysis.

- **Discharge from hospital project with Newcastle University**. Haref are partners in research being conducted by the School of Pharmacy at Newcastle University. The research focuses on the experience of hospital discharge and returning home from hospital, and how this transition could be improved. The research hopes to develop and test a model of hospital discharge that brings together health and social care and charitable organisations to make sure the right support is in place for a timely and safe hospital discharge.
  Haref are supporting with developing focus groups for the research and supporting links to practitioners and community members for their workshops.

**Health Information Sessions**
Haref have been providing capacity and support to initiate information sessions with Network members on topics they are interested in and delivered by our Haref Allies. This year we supported the following sessions:

- Dieticians from NUTH dietician project with the Rabta group about access to services, finding out more about why people might not be accessing their service, look at any promotional materials, and talk about diet and exercise.
- Digital Voice to a Muslim women's group in Gateshead to deliver Digital Skills courses.
- In collaboration with Gateshead Public Health, delivered an online session to the Haref Network on Understanding Polio and Vaccination Types.
- Arranged a mental health and wellbeing information session for South Mountain Chinese Older People's Association delivered by ReCoCo.
- Coordinateda meeting with Everyturn and Elswick Pool to run 6 weeks of wellbeing mental health course.
- Coordinated 6 weeks of wellness sessions delivered by Everyturn to First Step to run throughout April, May, and June.
- Dementia and Memory Loss health information session delivered by Dr Alison Killen to the Hindu Temple.
- Coordinated a nutrition and diabetes session for the Rabta group within Bilal Jamia Mosque, ran by NUTH dietitian Faye Bremner.
- Coordinated a health check session delivered by Farah Chemists for the Rabta group within Bilal Jamia Mosque.
- Company of Others and Rabta Muslim Women's group session on Dance and exercise.
- North East Ambulance Service and Hindu Temple Elders group session on Emergency First Aid.

**Sharing experiences of accessing health services**
Haref are providing paid opportunities for network group members to have their say, influence health service delivery and share their experience. We have 6 community groups who we will support to share their story of using a health service, either in anonymised written transcript, audio or in video format.

These case studies can then be shared with the Integrated Care Board for their Patient Voices board meetings. Stories that are heard at the board meetings should then get a response from the Integrated Care Board and will get clinical leads to feedback on this.

**Response to the impact of rise in racist incidents**
We held discussions with our Network members and have fed back information to key contacts in the OPCC, Local authorities, Hospital trusts and the ICB. The key issues raised were:

- Communities were scared and the impact of this remains.
- Public transport particularly felt unsafe.
- Parents were concerned about the safety of their children at schools.
- More preventative and anti-racist work needs doing with children and you people.
- People felt the police response was good however more ways to share local key messages are needed, as there were mixed messages and misinformation.
- Work to support communities and cohesion needs to be undertaken, and to tackle the issues that caused people to riot.
- Funding to the VCSE is vital to support wellbeing and resilience to improve security, and to deliver training.

**Commissioning of Interpreters and Translators in Public Services**
Haref has been working with Success for All, Everyday Language Solutions, English Unlocked and US Language Services and Consultancy about the commissioning and standards of interpreters and translators' services for people whose first language is not English in public services. We found there are several key issues with the way interpreters and translators are commissioned in public services:

- The commissioning system for the provision of interpreters and translators is not designed to support local and smaller providers.
- The quality control on current providers is not adequate, there are poor employment rights and pay, a lack of adequate supervision, and a lack of qualified interpreters and translators.
- People do not know their rights around asking for interpreters and translators in different settings, and they are not getting a service that works for them due to the first two issues.
- Staff are not trained or upskilled to work professionally with interpreters and translators and require training.
- VCSE organisations struggle to cover the costs of using interpreters and translators, as funding for this is often not included in funding bids.

We collated information on the key issues, why interpreter quality matters, and suggestions on what commissioners need to do to make it more equitable towards local and smaller providers, including ongoing quality control on providers. This information was shared with Commissioners and key contacts in statutory services and within the VCSE.

**Ramadan calendars 2024 with safe fasting messages**
Haref worked with 10 mosques across North Tyneside, Gateshead and Newcastle and with the NHS Diabetes Centre, Glaucoma UK and Diabetes UK to get the right health information relating to fasting for the calendars. We printed 4000 of our calendars which were distributed to 10 mosques and to community-facing buildings and health services, including GPs.

**Communications and recipients**
For the Haref monthly bulletin:

- We had **927** people signed up in September 2023 with an opening rate of **32.9%**
- We had **1,030** people signed up in October 2024 with an opening rate of **41.9%**

**Health Equity**

This area of our work supports VCSE involvement in health equity work across Newcastle and Gateshead, and is underpinned by the Connected Voice Health bulletin.

**VCSE Engagement in Mental Health Transformation in Gateshead**
This role works with smaller-sized voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations that support people with mental health issues in Gateshead, to ensure they have a direct role in influencing and benefiting from the borough's NENC ISB delivery plan and commissioning for mental health services. This year we:

- In consultation with stakeholders, we launched the Gateshead VCSE Health Alliance in March 2024 and this was aligned with the ICB Integrated Neighbourhood approach and the Local Authority Locality working.
- The purpose of the Alliance is to create formal and informal learning opportunities to grow skills and knowledge to help our sector and our communities thrive, and to join up resources within the community to improve opportunities for local people.

- We had 90 Alliance members signed up in Gateshead by September 2024.
- We run Connected Voice Health and Wellbeing Events in Gateshead to support the Alliance.
- The first was on 3 July and the theme of the event was working with the new mental health roles in Primary Care.
- The second event on 26 September themed on Gateshead's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and how to build effective collaboration between Public Health team and VCSE in Gateshead. The Alliance now has representation on the Strategy Implementation Group.
- Thanks to the ICB, Connected Voice were able to administer a Small Grants Programme through the Alliance on the theme of mental health of children and young people. This Small Grants Programme provided £70,000 to ten organisations in Gateshead. In addition to the Grant funding, the Alliance was given a budget to cover the cost of venues and refreshments for the training.
- The Alliance are delivering training provided by the Children's Primary Care Mental Health Team for VCSE organisations across 2025. Successful Grant applicants need to attend these as part of their project but is also open to other VCSE staff and volunteers.

**Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care in Gateshead**
This project works across Gateshead to improve digital inclusion in the area in collaborations with local communities and stakeholders. It coordinates the Gateshead Digital Inclusion Steering Group, which includes local NHS partners, Gateshead Council, voluntary and community organisations, researchers, and tech firms.

- We were awarded Levelling Up funding from Gateshead Council for the UKSPF Digital Inclusion funding. Through this project, from December 2023 to March 2025 we are working with 20 VCSE organisations based in Gateshead to improve digital inclusion through funding, project support, and free opportunities.
- Thanks to a joint decision panel with the Community Foundation, we have awarded 22 grants and project support to smaller VCSE organisations working in Gateshead for bespoke digital inclusion projects with £65,000 of grants awarded.
- We have worked with Gateshead East PCN and Pelaw Bowling Club to set up 6 sessions for patients on the NHS App at Pelaw Community Bowling Club. We are linking with other PCNs for other possible digital inclusion work in primary care.
- We have been collaborating with the BT Engagement Team, Gateshead Council, and Gateshead VCSE organisations that support marginalised communities to provide engagement and information about the Digital Switchover.
- We organised a drop-in on the digital switchover at the Jewish Community Council of Gateshead. A large part of the Jewish Communities in Gateshead are landline-only. We requested a male and a female staff to provide a culturally appropriate session, in a segregated space and 45 people attended the drop-in.

*"Very informative drop-in - within a few minutes, the advisor had explained what the changes would be and basically explained that in my case, it wouldn't affect me much besides for having to use the local area code when calling out."*

**Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care in Newcastle**
We have recruited the new officer for the Digital Inclusion role in Newcastle who started in September 2024. This is a 24-month funded project and will establish a steering group to support collaborative working to enable digital Inclusion for people, the VCSE and statutory services in Newcastle upon Tyne.

**Healthy Communities and Social Prescribing Place-Based Engagement in Newcastle**
From March 2023 until March 2025, Connected Voice are supporting VCSE capacity with Social Prescribing within Newcastle. We worked with NENC ICB, and the NCC officer for locality working to deliver this work. We are running Health and Wellbeing events for the VCSE in Newcastle These will include information about health service delivery and local updates about the Integrated Care Boards (NHS) and information from the wider regional VCSE involvement structures.

- We have run 4 Health and Wellbeing events for the VCSE in Newcastle:
- October 2023, a Social Prescribers and PCN event jointly facilitated by the ICB, Local Authority and Connected Voice.
- October 2023, a VCSE Healthy Communities and Social Prescribing networking event.
- March 2024, a Newcastle VCSE Health and Wellbeing event with updates about the NENC ICB new structure
- July 2024, a Newcastle VCSE Health and Wellbeing event with updates Newcastle General Practice Services, Newcastle City Council Locality work and Neighbourhood Networks and Newcastle City Council Health Champions
- We attended the Newcastle Neighbourhood networks. They are in 4 areas of the city and are networking opportunities where we could promote our events. We also have conversations about VCSE understanding of Social Prescribing and have directed others to attend through our social media and website.
- We have shared more targeted information in our monthly Health bulletin linked to healthy communities and social prescribing.

**North East and North Cumbia VCSE Partnership Programme**
The North East and North Cumbria VCSE Partnership Programme is run by VONNE and its aim is to ensure that the VCSE sector is embedded at all levels of our Integrated Care System (ICS). The VCSE sector is able to provide extensive expertise and reach into the communities that receive health and care services, particularly those that the NHS can find it difficult to connect with. Our Chief Executive and the Heath Equity and Involvement Manager attend and represent Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE at key meetings.

- VCSE Partnership Programme Executive meeting
- VCSE Partnership Programme Steering group
- Newcastle ICB Place Committee
- Gateshead Cares System Board
- Collaborative Newcastle Joint Directors Team
- ICP North Partnership meeting

**Communications**
In September 2023, we revamped our monthly Health bulletin, which was previously known as 'On the Hoof'. This Health bulletin covers:

- Updates on Connected Voice Health Equity projects
- Information for the Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE sector about the local NHS, council services and multi-agency structures
- Information for the Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE sector about local, regional and national health policy
- Information about local health events and activities
- Information about current consultations, research and reports

We had **1,159** people signed up to the Health bulletin in September 2024.

**Connected Voice Business Services**
CVBS continued to support organisations with year-end accounts preparation, Independent Examination, and book-keeping. We also supported organisations to switch to digital finance, providing training as Quickbooks Pro certified advisors. As the reporting year drew to a close, our trading subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd was wound up. Our payroll bureau closed after the end of the financial year. Financial services for charities are now provided directly through the main charity.

**Connected Voice Advocacy**
The Connected Voice Advocacy vision is that people from marginalised communities, who experience disadvantage or discrimination have their voices heard, their rights upheld, access to the services they need and improved quality of life. Our strategic goals for 2023/24 focused around advocacy delivery, quality, communication, sustainability, developing equity and effective systems.

Each year the advocacy team gets together to analyse the case work of the previous year and identifies trends in the communities we serve. This helps the team write a collective annual work plan which aligns to the Aims and Vision. In addition to our regular funded advocacy projects, we chose to fundraise and target extra support in 2023/24 to Refugee and Asylum communities, and people experiencing housing crisis. We also chose to further develop our Self Advocacy workbook and online app DIY Advocate by offering more in-person workshops. We held two workshops this year in which ten people received in-depth learning. One of the workshops was led by our Farsi speaking advocate to support local communities to learn in their first language and create peer support networks. The workshops cover topics of: Self Advocacy, the person and their world, communication, managing emotions, tackling problems. this includes learning skills to negotiate, be assertive, and prepare well for meetings or formal challenges.

Our communities were significantly affected by the civil unrest and riots across the region in the summer of 2024. Our Hate Crime Advocacy Service offer supports people affected by racism to identify and report a crime and recover from the impact. To ensure a strategic approach we attended meetings with Police, Local Authorities and VCSE organisations across the region to share our data intelligence and offer solutions. Our advocates take a person-centred, holistic approach and were able to explore the impact of the crime on the person's life and help them access health and social care and housing. Advocating for anyone impacted by abuse or threats to property or people targeted on the basis of race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity, we noted trends around problems with housing and public transport as well as the need for safeguarding. Many people we supported were at risk of isolation and mental health crisis. Of the people we advocated for this year, English was not the first language for over a fifth people, 24% experienced barriers to accessing health appointments, with 53% having mental health needs or neurodivergence, a third experienced risk of homelessness or housing disrepair and 50% needed financial support from foodbanks and energy vouchers. We continue to hear that people find it hard to report a hate crime and fear repercussions, feel ignored or lack trust in the criminal justice system.

We joined up with Durham and Northumbria Universities again this year to revisit the groundbreaking research from 2019 "Exploring 'hate relationships' through Connected Voice's Hate Crime Advocacy Service.". This research introduced the concept of repeated hate incidents now known as Hate Relationships. We were curious to find out what impact the Covid 19 Pandemic had on hate crime referrals, so the research team looked over 384 cases from April 2019 to March 2022. We held a launch event in summer 2024 to share the findings of "Improving Responses to Hate Relationships". The research showed that repeated hate was on the rise, and that there was a systemic lack of understanding across all professions to support the victim adequately. They found

that victims were misunderstood, disbelieved, and that there was often a mislabelling as anti-social behaviour or harassment. There was also a lack of understanding around people having more than one protected characteristic and intersectionality. The research found that hate relationships rose from 28% to 44% of the total hate crime cases. So together with Connected Voice the Durham and Northumbria University team created a solution to offer professionals a way to better understand the impact on victims mental and physical health and created HATE ID app to help clarify what a hate crime is and how to deal with it. We held a consultation event in summer 2024 to launch research and share the prototype app for feedback from police, and other statutory partners. This will be launched in March 2025.

In winter 2023/24 we were involved in the Sunderland University Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries annual Police Project. We advised students who created a series of short films to depict the barriers to reporting hate

**Growing and developing**
We had a year of successfully securing existing services as well as expanding and developing on what we already did. In 2023/24:

- We held successful events to showcase our expertise in advocating for people in vulnerable situations such as Child Protection processes and Personal Injury claims and rehabilitation
- We delivered presentations to raise awareness of advocacy to several partners in the region including Pride NE, Walking with in North Tyneside, Wearside Women in Need as well as offering advocacy surgeries in community venues and outreach venues
- We developed training programmes **Social Justice Champions** and **Supporting people with neurological conditions: helping them to be heard and protecting their rights.** We made the programmes adaptable so we can offer two standalone modules around Effective Communication and Active Listening and Putting People First, person centred approaches to supporting individuals
- We were re-awarded a Community Foundation grant to widen the support we offer to **Refugee and Asylum Seekers**
- Our six-year partnership project with Northeast Law Centre and Changing Lives continued to deliver **Help through Crisis** to support people in financial crisis in Newcastle with a National Lottery Fund grant
- The Northumbria Office for Police and Crime Commissioner continued to fund **Hate Crime Advocacy** which we have pioneered for the last seven years
- An ongoing contract from the NHS Integrated Care Board enabled us to deliver our long-standing **Health and Social Care advocacy i**n Newcastle and Gateshead.
- We were funded by the Barbour Foundation to develop our core advocacy services
- We reached new customers for individual contracts, reaching an additional 37 people this year who have experienced child protection hearings or recovering from life changing accidents
- We continued to provide Independent Mental Health Advocacy in Mitford National Autistic Unit in Northgate Hospital.

**Listening and learning**
The team are proud to have received excellent feedback this year and worked well to achieve an outstanding Net Promoter Score (NPS) consistently over 75% throughout the year, meaning that people who used the advocacy service or referred to us would recommend us highly.

*"I don't think I would have been heard at all if you hadn't been there."*

*"Made it a lot less stressful and I think I composed myself better through this support."*

*"Our experience with Connected Voice Advocacy has been exceptional. The service provided to our mutual client was exemplary, demonstrating the organisations commitment to promoting social inclusion, equality and social justice. The Advocate showed great skills in helping the client get their voice heard and needs met. Overall, Connected Voice Advocacy's professionalism, expertise and client-centred approach make them an invaluable resource in the community. Their service truly embodies their mission of enabling people to have their views heard and their rights upheld."*

We have been delighted that people who have used advocacy have volunteered their time in 2023/24 to share their views and help shape the way we deliver our services. This is now a crucial part of our 2024/25 work plan to ensure people are at the heart of the work we do. In 2023/24 we continued to deliver on our Service User Engagement Strategy this year committing time and energy to arranging sessions to bring people together. We reached over 50 people through surveys, direct phone calls and most popular was our focus groups with lunch which brought 22 people together. This year people helped us with the following developments in the service:

- Overhaul of our referral process to make it easier for people to self-refer which resulted in an easy online referral form
- Clarity on the terminology when speaking about people who use advocacy to avoid unwanted labels. This also led to a re-write of our webpages to speak to people who use the website for information on advocacy and create a dedicated Service User Hub page
- People met some of the Connected Voice Trustees to learn more about the governance of the organisation and how the advocacy vision sits within it. They shared ideas which Trustees are incorporating into the new Connected Voice three-year strategy

**Influencing**
We believe research is a fundamental way to ensure visibility of the people we support and raise their issues strategically.

- This year we joined the Steering Group of the Sunderland University for Safeguarding Adults for Empowerment (SAFE) project exploring effectiveness of the Making Safeguarding Personal agenda in the over 75 age group.
- Our role on the Safeguarding Adults Boards brings key issues facing the VCSE in Newcastle and Gateshead, and to ensure that the safeguarding process is person-centred, and statutory partners understand the role of advocacy. This year we have been involved in setting strategies and training offers as well as Serious Adult Reviews.
- We ensure we have a strong publicity campaign for Safeguarding Adults week, Hate Crime week and Advocacy Awareness Weeks.
- We worked with the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman to help shape their offer and strategy to understand barriers people face to making complaints and improve access to the Ombudsman.
- We fed into the review of the Equality and Human Rights Commission Code of Practice.
- Our feedback informed the Office of the Public Guardian survey to improve services. We have influenced systemic change within housing providers complaints process to ensure equity.
- We have been involved in the national Advocacy Leaders Network since it began in 2020 and during 2023/4 we continued to contribute to consultations and research nationally.

**Year in numbers:**

- Supported 516 people across multiple projects and worked with them on 1017 issues, providing 15607 hours of direct advocacy
- Advocated for 77 people facing court hearings for child protection cases, rehabilitation planning after life changing accidents, or upholding the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards for people
- Supported 100 victims of hate crime and 64 of those were experiencing ongoing incidents called hate relationships
- Ensured 21 people were safeguarded or prevented from harm and abuse
- Gained over £19,419 for people's awards/claims
- Supported 81 people to formally challenge decisions, including Tribunals, Court of Protection, and complaints processes
- Worked in over 80 ethnically marginalised communities across 17 languages and employed 2 bilingual Independent Advocates.

**Connected Voice Volunteering**
During 2023/24, the Volunteering service continued to grow, expanding from two to three projects with the launch of Volunteering Newcastle. This new initiative aimed to amplify the voices of volunteers and the organisations that involve them, while also assisting organisations in recruiting individuals with additional needs into volunteering roles. Outlined below are the key achievements of each project featuring quotes and case studies.

**Gateshead Volunteer Centre**
We secured the Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation from the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA). The accreditation is valid for three years. Across its five functions, GVC exceeded in Strategic Development of Volunteering and Good Practice Development, while meeting all the requirements in Brokerage, Developing Volunteering Opportunities, and Voice of Volunteering.

Gateshead Volunteer Centre supported **56** people with additional needs into volunteering opportunities.

Gateshead Volunteer Coordinators' Network continued to grow over the year with meetings themed on topics including cost of living, mental health, and neurodiversity.

*"I attended the Gateshead Volunteer Coordinators' Network meeting in July 2024. I am often unable to attend the meetings but made a point of making sure I could go because the topic of neurodiversity was so relevant to my role and organisation. The speakers were fantastic, and we had some good discussions about improved ways of working and different perspectives. I was able to bring these insights and ideas back to my workplace and share with the team to benefit not just our volunteers but also staff to ensure everyone's skills and strengths are valued and utilised. Thanks for organising this event!"*

**Volunteering Newcastle**
In Newcastle, **85** volunteering-involving organisations were consulted about their challenges and successes resulting in the establishment of the Newcastle Volunteer Coordinators' Network. The network has met on three occasions, covering topics including inclusion and wellbeing.

*"The Connected Voice meetings and sessions have been invaluable to me as a Volunteer Coordinator. It can be isolating working in this role as I am the only one dealing with volunteer management. The meetings and training provided by Connected Voice has been a great way to network and chat to other professionals who deal with volunteering. The training has been really useful also helping me gain an insight into procedures and practices for managing volunteers. Thank you for being a great support mechanism."*

Through Volunteering Newcastle, **27** VCSE organisations completed a volunteering health check and were provided additional support to update or create new volunteering policies and procedures, role descriptions, and recording systems.

**Seven** VCSE organisations were funded to deliver social action projects led by volunteers in their local communities across Newcastle.

*"The grant we received helped us deliver weekly sessions at the Haven in North Kenton. The group is a women's group which uses business enterprise skills as a vehicle for social action in the local area. We created naughty and nice greetings cards to sell at Home Group, as well as learning how to crochet, cooking on a budget and general peer-to-peer support group helping and signposting women for skills and mental health support. The group came with a schedule of activities and events for 2024, so the group could be sustainable, with facilitation by On the Up. These women are a force to be reckoned with, despite suffering with PTSD, anxiety, domestic abuse, agoraphobia, issues with their children. They have an idea for a mam's podcast which we are going to launch once we have the funding, which we are very close to achieving."*

**Sector Connector**
Sector Connector organised **14** free workshops and events in collaboration with eight local, regional and national businesses for VCSE organisations. Workshop themes included recruiting with purpose, what is social impact, and staying safe online.

Sector Connector worked in partnership with Muckle LLP during Small Charities Week in June 2024 to deliver free legal clinics to **23** VCSE organisations. Topics included governance, construction, data protection, and property and real estate.

Sector Connector collaborated with Home Group in July 2024 to deliver a trustee's event for their employees, resulting in four charities each securing new trustees with skills across legal, finance, and health and safety.

> *"This was an excellent event by Connected Voice, so helpful for charities looking for trustees. The endorsement from Home Group to employees considering a trustee role is exemplary. It's refreshing to see a large employer recognising, and valuing, the benefit that being a trustee can bring to their organisation, employees and local communities. Having the opportunity to explicitly recruit for the skills needed to a room full of interested people was invaluable, I think all the Charities attending made relevant connections. Thanks!"*

**Financial review**
**Review of transactions and financial position**
The balance sheet shows that at 30 September 2024 total funds carried forward are £727,465 (2023: restated £741,312), of which £365,817 (2023: restated £425,629) relates to unrestricted funds, £21,653 (2023: £77,267) relates to designated funds and £339,995 (2023: £238,416) relates to restricted funds. The specific earmarked restricted funds projects are detailed in note 26 of the accounts and note 27 for designated funds.

This was represented by tangible fixed assets of £15,399 (2023: £18,864), investments of £nil (2023: £460,065) and net current assets of £712,066 (2023: restated £262,383).

Connected Voice holds contracts from the NHS and local authorities, as well as applying for grants from charitable trusts and foundations. We are growing our self-generated income through development of paid-for services. A substantial part of our income comes through contracts. In the current year this was three contracts. Connected Voice is assiduous in looking for appropriate sources of funding, and as an organisation responsible for advising the voluntary sector on funding sources, is well placed to know what opportunities are available. We use a full cost recovery model, which enables us to estimate the actual costs of a service and its true cost to Connected Voice. As the value of public sector contracts continues to decrease in light of inflation, this is an essential tool for us to use in deciding whether or not to bid for a service.

Senior managers and the board meet to set budgets annually. The management team reviews financial performance monthly, and the board reviews it quarterly via a finance sub committee and the board meetings. Day to day financial management and reporting is managed by our finance arm - Connected Voice Business Services.

Our trustees are clear about our aims and mission and that we need to be sustainable, but keep to our vision and values. Connected Voice will not enter into partnerships and contracts which are contrary to our aims and objectives and we recognise that we need to stay within our agreed budget limits for the year

**Assets**
The charity's assets are being held to enable them to carry out its objectives. The movements in fixed assets during the year are set out in note 15 to the accounts.

**Trading activities**
The results of Connected Voice Charity Business Services for the prior financial year was a deficit of £188,602. The decision was taken by the board in 2022 to bring the subsidiary back into the main charity as of 1 October 2023 and wind up the separate company. The company was dissolved in September 2024

**Financial dependency**
The charity in order to meet its objectives is financially dependent on grants from the Local Authorities, government programmes and charitable trusts.

Additional funds are derived from smaller grants and charitable donations made by a variety of organisations and individuals.

**Going Concern**
The Trustees have considered the level of funds and forecast income and expenditure for a period of 12 months after the date of approval of these financial statements, the budgeted income and expenditure is considered sufficient given the levels of reserves held by the Charity. Therefore, the Trustees have adopted the going concern basis of preparation for these financial statements.

**Reserves Policy**
The Trustees regularly review levels of reserves and have agreed again this year that reserves equivalent to between three and five months running costs are appropriate for the organisation.

Three months running costs would equate to around £210,000 and five months £350,000, based on the accounts for the 12 months to 30 September 2023. The reserves should not fall below this level in order to support good governance of the organisation.

The Reserve Policy allows for the use of funds in excess of the level required to be spent in furtherance of the organisation's vision and mission. Any proposal should be presented as an individual business case to the Trustees for review and approval.

The 'free reserves' of the charity (defined as those unrestricted funds not designated for specific purposes or tied up in fixed assets) stood at £350,418 (2023: restated negative funds of £49,455). The Trustees monitor the level of reserves regularly and the Reserves Policy is reviewed annually with the support of the Finance Sub Group.

**Risk management**
The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The Board reviews the strategic risk assessment annually and the full report is discussed at. a Board meeting annually where mitigating actions identified and taken. Health and Safety information is presented on a quarterly basis to the Board.

**Indemnity insurance**
The charity has Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in respect of the Trustees and Officers of the charity.

**Structure, governance and management**
The charity's full name is Connected Voice. It is an incorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 1125877) and a company limited by guarantee (number 06681475).

**Governing documents**
The charity's governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Connected Voice is an independent charity working with the voluntary sector primarily in Newcastle and Gateshead. It is run by a Board of Trustees elected annually by its member organisations, and by co-opted members. The Board controls the direction and policy of the work, and met five times during this financial year. It holds a special away day meeting with senior managers, once a year, in order to look at opportunities and define strategy for the coming year.

Connected Voice is a membership organisation with over 844 members.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

| | |
|---|---|
| AM Afolabi | |
| S Cooper | |
| P Deans | |
| P Elliott OBE | |
| C Harrison | |
| T Huitson | |
| S Kaitesi | |
| A Lee | |
| H Owens | |
| K Proudfoot | |
| E Slater | |
| S Elliott | (Resigned 7 May 2024) |
| M Horrocks | (Resigned 7 May 2024) |

**Recruitment and appointment of trustees**
Trustees are elected from the membership. Notice is sent to all members, and if a ballot is required, it is conducted prior to the Annual General Meeting Trustees may only serve for a set period of time. The skills and experience of existing trustees are audited regularly and new trustees are recruited in order to complement the existing trustees ensuring a wide set of skills and knowledge is reflected in the overall board. If the Board feels there are particular skills lacking, they are able to promote these during the recruitment process The governance document allows for co-opted trustees so that specialist skills can be brought onto the board. The Chair has extensive experience in the charity sector and of governance. The treasurer is a chartered accountant with significant experience of the charity sector.

The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to follow the CBI's Prompt Payers Code (copies are available from the CBI, Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU).

The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to:

- settle the terms of payment with suppliers when agreeing the terms of each transaction;
- ensure that suppliers are made aware of the terms of payment by inclusion of the relevant terms in contracts; and
- pay in accordance with the company's contractual and other legal obligations.

Trade creditors of the company at the year end were equivalent to 14 day's purchases, based on the average daily amount invoiced by suppliers during the year.

**Organisational structure**

The Board of trustees, which can have up to fourteen members, has control of the charity, including its property and its funds. The Board normally meets four times per year and there are three sub groups covering finance, advocacy, and volunteering, which report into the Board. Task and Finish groups of the trustees are also created as necessary. This year we closed the Task and Finish group for workforce development, after the agreement of our new pay polity, and created one for trustee recruitment. We have staff-led groups who take forward our EDI and Climate emergency action plans, and these report into the board. The Chief Executive is appointed by the trustees to manage the charity and has delegated authority for all operational matters.

**Pay policy for senior staff**

The Chief Executive implements the pay policy on an ongoing basis and is responsible for pay reviews and setting salaries for senior staff. The Board reviews the Chief Executive's salary annually and is responsible for making any decisions about remuneration of the Chief Executive. Remuneration is benchmarked against similar roles within voluntary and community sector organisations of similar size in the North East.

We understand that in light of increasing inflation and a difficult employment market, pay should continue to be reviewed regularly. Our workforce strategy task and finish group of the board developed and implemented a new pay policy during the year.

Connected Voice's new Pay Policy covers all staff. Senior staff are not treated differently to other staff and all benefits (including pension contributions) are applied equally across all staff groups. The pay policy allows for staff progression within pay bands, based on performance.

**Related parties and co-operation with other organisations**

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between trustees or senior managers of the charity with suppliers must be disclosed to the full Board of trustees In the current year no such related party transactions Were reported. Trustees are asked to declare their interests before each board meeting and there is a Register of Interests.

**Statement of trustees' responsibilities**

The trustees, who are also the directors of Connected Voice for the purpose 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).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and

- 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 keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time 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 assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**Auditor**

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Sumer Auditco Limited be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

**Peter Deans**
**Chair of Trustees, Connected Voice**

10 April 2025

**Statement of trustees' responsibilities**

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In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Sumer Auditco Limited be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

**Disclosure of information to auditor**

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

**Peter Deans**
**Chair of Trustees, Connected Voice**

10 April 2025

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
## TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE

### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Connected Voice (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 September 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 30 September 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

**Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities, including fraud**

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the sector in which it operates, we identified that the following laws and regulations are significant to the entity:

- Those laws and regulations considered to have a direct effect on the financial statements including UK financial reporting standards, Company Law and Charity Law.
- Those laws and regulations for which non-compliance may be fundamental to the operating aspects of the charity and therefore may have a material effect on the financial statements include compliance with charitable objectives, public benefit, fundraising regulations, safeguarding and health and safety legislation.

These matters were discussed amongst the engagement team at the planning stage and the team remained alert throughout the audit.

Audit procedures undertaken in response to the potential risks relating to irregularities (which include fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations) comprised of: inquiries of management and the Trustees as to whether the entity complies with such laws and regulations; enquiries with the same concerning any actual or potential litigation or claims; inspection of relevant legal correspondence and legal costs incurred; review of Trustee meeting minutes; testing the appropriateness of journal entries; and the performance of analytical review to identify unexpected movements in account balances which may be indicative of fraud.

No instances of material non-compliance were identified. However, the likelihood of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is limited by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the entity's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed. Irregularities that result from fraud might be inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error. As explained above, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit has been planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

S.D.

**Stephen Slater (Senior Statutory Auditor)**
**for and on behalf of Sumer Auditco Limited**
**Statutory Auditor**
**Unit 2**
**Gosforth Park Avenue**
**Newcastle upon Tyne**
**NE12 8EG**

Date: 11/6/2025

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
## INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

| Current financial year | Notes | Unrestricted funds general 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds designated 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Total 2024 £ | Total As restated 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income from:** | | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 3 | 8,974 | - | - | 8,974 | 18,542 |
| Charitable activities | 4 | 886,947 | - | 915,665 | 1,802,612 | 1,415,174 |
| Other trading activities | 5 | 21,668 | - | 100 | 21,768 | 66,255 |
| Investments | 6 | 36,961 | - | - | 36,961 | 3,955 |
| **Total income** | | 954,550 | - | 915,765 | 1,870,315 | 1,503,926 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | | |
| Raising funds | 7 | 3,570 | - | - | 3,570 | 11,492 |
| Charitable activities | 8 | 1,029,074 | 22,324 | 814,592 | 1,865,990 | 2,045,581 |
| Other expenditure | 10 | 18,528 | - | - | 18,528 | - |
| **Total expenditure** | | 1,051,172 | 22,324 | 814,592 | 1,888,088 | 2,057,073 |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | 11 | 3,926 | - | - | 3,926 | 49,688 |
| **Net income/(expenditure)** | | (92,696) | (22,324) | 101,173 | (13,847) | (503,459) |
| Transfers between funds | | 32,884 | (33,290) | 406 | - | - |
| **Net movement in funds** | 15 | (59,812) | (55,614) | 101,579 | (13,847) | (503,459) |
| **Reconciliation of funds:** | | | | | | |
| Fund balances at 1 October 2023 | | 425,629 | 77,267 | 238,416 | 741,312 | 1,244,771 |
| **Fund balances at 30 September 2024** | | 365,817 | 21,653 | 339,995 | 727,465 | 741,312 |

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
## INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

| Prior financial year - as restated | Notes | Unrestricted funds general 2023 £ | Unrestricted funds designated 2023 £ | Restricted funds 2023 £ | Total 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income from:** | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 3 | 18,542 | - | - | 18,542 |
| Charitable activities | 4 | 735,179 | - | 679,995 | 1,415,174 |
| Other trading activities | 5 | 66,255 | - | - | 66,255 |
| Investments | 6 | 3,955 | - | - | 3,955 |
| **Total income** | | 823,931 | - | 679,995 | 1,503,926 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | |
| Raising funds | 7 | 11,492 | - | - | 11,492 |
| Charitable activities | 8 | 1,043,586 | 111,759 | 890,236 | 2,045,581 |
| **Total expenditure** | | 1,055,078 | 111,759 | 890,236 | 2,057,073 |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | 11 | 49,688 | - | - | 49,688 |
| **Net income** | | (181,459) | (111,759) | (210,241) | (503,459) |
| Transfers between funds | | 24,817 | (33,816) | 8,999 | - |
| **Net movement in funds** | 15 | (156,642) | (145,575) | (201,242) | (503,459) |
| **Reconciliation of funds:** | | | | | |
| Fund balances at 1 October 2022 | | 582,271 | 222,842 | 439,658 | 1,244,771 |
| **Fund balances at 30 September 2023** | | 425,629 | 77,267 | 238,416 | 741,312 |

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## BALANCE SHEET
## AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

| | Notes | 2024 | | 2023 as restated | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 16 | | 15,399 | | 18,864 |
| Investments | 17 | | - | | 460,065 |
| | | | 15,399 | | 478,929 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Stocks | 19 | 21,691 | | 10,081 | |
| Debtors | 20 | 679,655 | | 376,395 | |
| Investments | 21 | 232,777 | | - | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 618,735 | | 92,381 | |
| | | 1,552,858 | | 478,857 | |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | 23 | (840,792) | | (216,474) | |
| **Net current assets** | | | 712,066 | | 262,383 |
| **Total assets less current liabilities** | | | 727,465 | | 741,312 |
| **The funds of the charity** | | | | | |
| Restricted income funds | 26 | | 339,995 | | 238,416 |
| Unrestricted funds - general | | | 365,817 | | 425,629 |
| Unrestricted funds - designated | 27 | | 21,653 | | 77,267 |
| | | | 727,465 | | 741,312 |

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 10 April 2025

**K Proudfoot**
**Trustee**

Company registration number 06681475 (England and Wales)

# CONNECTED VOICE
# (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

| | Notes | 2024 £ | 2024 £ | 2023 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cash flows from operating activities** | | | | | |
| Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations | 33 | | 282,383 | | (316,264) |
| **Investing activities** | | | | | |
| Purchase of tangible fixed assets | | (1,816) | | (14,205) | |
| Proceeds from disposal of subsidiaries | | 2 | | - | |
| Purchase of other investments | | (48,372) | | (352,125) | |
| Proceeds from disposal of other investments | | 279,584 | | 361,886 | |
| Investment income received | | 36,961 | | 3,955 | |
| **Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities** | | | 266,359 | | (489) |
| **Net cash used in financing activities** | | | - | | - |
| **Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents** | | | 548,742 | | (316,753) |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year | | | 69,993 | | 386,746 |
| **Cash and cash equivalents at end of year** | | | 618,735 | | 69,993 |
| **Relating to:** | | | | | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | | 618,735 | | 92,381 |
| Bank overdrafts included in creditors payable within one year | | | - | | (22,388) |

## 1 Accounting policies

### Charity information

Connected Voice is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is One Strawberry Lane, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 4BX.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "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)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised for a specific purpose. The cost arising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

### 1.4 Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when the trust becomes entitled. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be qualified. The value of the services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts in line with the SORP (FRS102). Assets donated are recognised in full as donations and fixed assets.

No amount is included within the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102).

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Income is deferred only where criteria for recognition as incoming resources in the Statement of Financial Activities does not exist at the balance sheet date.

Incoming resources from charitable trading activities and commercial trading activities are accounted for when earned as the related services are provided. Services provided to clients which at the balance sheet date have not been billed to clients and where there is a right to consideration, have been recognised as income. Income recognised in this manner is based on an assessment of the fair value of the services provided at the balance sheet date as a proportion of the total value of the engagement. Unbilled revenue is included in work in progress.

Investment income is included when receivable.

**1.5 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of generation funds comprises the costs associated with the commercial trading activities of Business Services department.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services fir its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the expenditure when incurred.

**1.6 Tangible fixed assets**

Individual fixed assets costing over £1,000 are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their expected useful economic lives as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Resticted electronic office equipment | 25% straight line basis |
| Electronic office equipment | 25% straight line basis |

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

**1.7 Fixed asset investments**

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

**1.8 Impairment of fixed assets**

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

**1.9 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

**1.10 Financial instruments**

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

***Basic financial assets***

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

**1.11 Employee benefits**

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

**1.12 Retirement benefits**

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

## 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

## 3 Income from donations and legacies

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Donations and gifts | 8,974 | 18,542 |
| **Donations and gifts** | | |
| Sir James Knott Trust | 7,000 | 7,000 |
| NAVCA | - | 10,000 |
| Other Donations | 1,974 | 1,542 |
| | 8,974 | 18,542 |

## 4 Income from charitable activities

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Total 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ | Restricted funds 2023 £ | Total 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Commercial Income | 217,663 | - | 217,663 | 279,014 | - | 279,014 |
| Services provided under contract | 455,180 | 915,665 | 1,370,845 | 445,483 | 679,995 | 1,125,478 |
| Sales of services | 204,287 | - | 204,287 | - | - | - |
| Other income | 9,817 | - | 9,817 | 10,682 | - | 10,682 |
| | 886,947 | 915,665 | 1,802,612 | 735,179 | 679,995 | 1,415,174 |
| **Summary of grants** | | | | | | |
| Newcastle City Council | - | 161,972 | 161,972 | - | 141,750 | 141,750 |
| Gateshead Council | - | 174,500 | 174,500 | - | 153,667 | 153,667 |
| NHS ICB | 44,706 | - | 44,706 | 43,337 | - | 43,337 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via VODA | - | 15,649 | 15,649 | - | 30,386 | 30,386 |
| Newcastle City Council - Health and Wellbeing Development Support | 51,422 | - | 51,422 | 45,000 | - | 45,000 |
| Gateshead Council - Volunteer Centre | - | 77,499 | 77,499 | - | 62,166 | 62,166 |
| Police & Crime Commissioner Northumbria | - | 75,502 | 75,502 | - | 69,249 | 69,249 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via North East Law Centre | - | 36,587 | 36,587 | - | 25,763 | 25,763 |
| Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council | - | - | - | 87,592 | - | 87,592 |
| Waiting Well via VONNE | - | - | - | - | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| VCSE Resilience Fund | - | - | - | - | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| NHS Newcastle and Gateshead IBC | 242,133 | - | 242,133 | 241,929 | - | 241,929 |
| UKSPF North of Tyne Volunteering/Social Action via VODA | - | 138,171 | 138,171 | - | - | - |
| Newcastle City Council - Community Champion | - | - | - | 7,625 | - | 7,625 |
| Community Foundation - Refugees & Asylum Seekers | - | 10,000 | 10,000 | - | 5,481 | 5,481 |
| Gateshead Council - Digital Inclusion | - | 4,000 | 4,000 | - | - | - |
| Carry forward | 338,261 | 693,880 | 1,032,141 | 425,483 | 500,962 | 926,445 |

4 Income from charitable activities (Continued)

| | Unrestricted funds general 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Total 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds general 2023 £ | Restricted funds 2023 £ | Total 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brought forward | 338,261 | 693,880 | 1,032,141 | 425,483 | 500,962 | 926,445 |
| Community Foundation via Linden Family Fund | - | - | - | 5,000 | - | 5,000 |
| Newcastle Council Digital Inclusion | 4,167 | - | 4,167 | - | - | - |
| Gateshead Council - UKSPF Digital Inclusion Project | - | 48,197 | 48,197 | - | 87,500 | 87,500 |
| NIHR - Mental Health - Newcastle University | - | 1,737 | 1,737 | - | 3,463 | 3,463 |
| Newcastle University - Engaging Roma Women | - | - | - | - | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| NHS/ICS via VONNE | - | 24,686 | 24,686 | - | 19,064 | 19,064 |
| NHS/ICB Gateshead | - | - | - | - | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| Gateshead Youth Mental Health NHS/ICS via Gateshead Council | - | 75,000 | 75,000 | - | - | - |
| OPCC WSIPP | - | - | - | - | 9,990 | 9,990 |
| Barbour Foundation | 20,000 | - | 20,000 | 15,000 | - | 15,000 |
| Health Bulletin - NHS ICB | - | 6,583 | 6,583 | - | 6,516 | 6,516 |
| Gateshead Council - Financial Sustainablility Support | 37,500 | - | 37,500 | - | - | - |
| Newcastle Council - VCSE Infrastructure Support | 50,000 | - | 50,000 | - | - | - |
| Community Foundation - Guy Readman Endowment | 5,000 | - | 5,000 | - | - | - |
| The National Lottery Community Fund - Awards For All | - | 20,000 | 20,000 | - | - | - |
| Gateshead Council - HAREF Engagement | - | 20,000 | 20,000 | - | - | - |
| Gateshead Metropolitan Council - Community Fund | - | 17,729 | 17,729 | - | - | - |
| UKSPF Local Community Partnership | - | 7,853 | 7,853 | - | - | - |
| NIHR Hospital | 252 | - | 252 | - | - | - |
| | 455,180 | 915,665 | 1,370,845 | 445,483 | 679,995 | 1,125,478 |

## 5 Income from other trading activities

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Restricted funds 2024 £ | Total 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ | Restricted funds 2023 £ | Total 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Trading activity income: other | 21,668 | 100 | 21,768 | 66,255 | - | 66,255 |

## 6 Income from investments

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Income from listed investments | 30,358 | 3,955 |
| Interest receivable | 6,603 | - |
| | 36,961 | 3,955 |

## 7 Expenditure on raising funds

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Investment management | 3,570 | 11,492 |

## 8 Expenditure on charitable activities

| | Advocacy 2024 | Voluntary Sector Support 2024 | Total 2024 | Advocacy 2023 | Voluntary Sector Support 2023 | Total 2023 As restated |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Direct costs** | | | | | | |
| Staff costs | 491,121 | 956,450 | 1,447,571 | 574,448 | 599,543 | 1,173,991 |
| Activities directly undertaken | 18,051 | 73,686 | 91,737 | 21,810 | 333,302 | 355,112 |
| | 509,172 | 1,030,136 | 1,539,308 | 596,258 | 932,845 | 1,529,103 |
| **Share of support and governance costs (see note 9)** | | | | | | |
| Support | 68,509 | 258,173 | 326,682 | 133,406 | 383,072 | 516,478 |
| | 577,681 | 1,288,309 | 1,865,990 | 729,664 | 1,315,917 | 2,045,581 |
| **Analysis by fund** | | | | | | |
| Unrestricted funds - general | 458,728 | 570,346 | 1,029,074 | 650,052 | 393,534 | 1,043,586 |
| Unrestricted funds - designated | - | 22,324 | 22,324 | - | 111,759 | 111,759 |
| Restricted funds | 118,953 | 695,639 | 814,592 | 79,612 | 810,624 | 890,236 |
| | 577,681 | 1,288,309 | 1,865,990 | 729,664 | 1,315,917 | 2,045,581 |

## 9 Support costs allocated to activities

| | 2024 | 2023 As restated |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Staff costs | 110,613 | 67,247 |
| Depreciation | 5,281 | 8,580 |
| Facility costs | 103,176 | 43,103 |
| Office costs | 83,483 | 102,101 |
| Professional fees | 10,549 | 59,884 |
| Loss on trading subsidiary | - | 213,283 |
| Governance costs | 13,580 | 22,280 |
| | 326,682 | 516,478 |
| **Analysed between:** | | |
| Voluntary Sector Support | 258,173 | 383,072 |
| Advocacy | 68,509 | 133,406 |
| | 326,682 | 516,478 |

## 9 Support costs allocated to activities (Continued)

| Governance costs comprise: | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Audit fees | 12,500 | 13,500 |
| Accountancy | - | 6,399 |
| Annual Review, AGM & trustee planning | 1,080 | 2,381 |
| | 13,580 | 22,280 |

## 10 Other expenditure

| | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Loss on closure of trading subsidiary | 18,528 | - |

## 11 Gains and losses on investments

| Gains/(losses) arising on: | Unrestricted funds 2024 £ | Unrestricted funds 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Revaluation of investments | 424 | 49,688 |
| Sale of investments | 3,502 | - |
| | 3,926 | 49,688 |

## 12 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

There were no expenses paid to trustees during the year totalling (2023: £50).

## 13 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

| | 2024 Number | 2023 Number |
|---|---|---|
| Advocacy | 16 | 17 |
| HAREF | 6 | 7 |
| Business Services | 10 | 11 |
| Support & Development | 11 | 9 |
| Commercial | - | 1 |
| Core | 3 | 3 |
| Marketing | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 47 | 49 |

| Employment costs | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Wages and salaries | 1,368,009 | 1,056,344 |
| Social security costs | 124,437 | 123,864 |
| Other pension costs | 65,738 | 61,030 |
| | 1,558,184 | 1,241,238 |

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

| | 2024 Number | 2023 Number |
|---|---|---|
| £60,000 - £70,000 | - | 1 |
| £70,000 - £80,000 | 1 | - |

**Remuneration of key management personnel**
Key management has been determined to be the Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer (2023: 1).

Trustees receive no remuneration or benefits.

The total remuneration of the senior management team was:

| | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Aggregate compensation | 78,410 | 68,350 |

## 14 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

## 15 Net movement in funds

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting): | | |
| Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements | 12,500 | 13,500 |
| Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets | 5,281 | 8,580 |

## 16 Tangible fixed assets

| | Resticted electronic office equipment | Electronic office equipment | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| **Cost** | | | |
| At 1 October 2023 | 19,771 | 58,698 | 78,469 |
| Additions | - | 1,816 | 1,816 |
| At 30 September 2024 | 19,771 | 60,514 | 80,285 |
| **Depreciation and impairment** | | | |
| At 1 October 2023 | 15,926 | 43,679 | 59,605 |
| Depreciation charged in the year | 3,845 | 1,436 | 5,281 |
| At 30 September 2024 | 19,771 | 45,115 | 64,886 |
| **Carrying amount** | | | |
| At 30 September 2024 | - | 15,399 | 15,399 |
| At 30 September 2023 | 3,845 | 15,019 | 18,864 |

## 17 Fixed asset investments

| | Listed investments | Cash in portfolio | Other investments | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Cost or valuation** | | | | |
| At 1 October 2023 | 453,255 | 6,808 | 2 | 460,065 |
| Additions | 48,372 | - | - | 48,372 |
| Valuation changes | 424 | - | - | 424 |
| Disposals | (502,051) | (6,808) | (2) | (508,861) |
| At 30 September 2024 | - | - | - | - |
| **Carrying amount** | | | | |
| At 30 September 2024 | - | - | - | - |
| At 30 September 2023 | 453,255 | 6,808 | 2 | 460,065 |

## 17 Fixed asset investments (Continued)

| | Notes | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Other investments comprise: | | | |
| Investments in subsidiaries | 32 | - | 2 |

## 18 Financial instruments

| | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| **Carrying amount of financial assets** | | |
| Instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss | 232,777 | - |

## 19 Stocks

| | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Work in progress | 21,691 | 10,081 |

## 20 Debtors

| | 2024 £ | 2023 As restated £ |
|---|---|---|
| **Amounts falling due within one year:** | | |
| Trade debtors | 449,114 | 190,904 |
| Amounts owed by subsidiary undertakings | - | 25,702 |
| Other debtors | 31,008 | - |
| Prepayments and accrued income | 199,533 | 159,789 |
| | 679,655 | 376,395 |

## 21 Current asset investments

| | 2024 £ | 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Listed investments | 6,737 | - |
| Cash held on deposit | 226,040 | - |
| | 232,777 | - |

## 22 Loans and overdrafts

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Bank overdrafts | - | 22,388 |
| Payable within one year | - | 22,388 |

## 23 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

| | Notes | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ |
| Bank overdrafts | 22 | - | 22,388 |
| Other taxation and social security | | 90,983 | 49,565 |
| Deferred income | 24 | 672,217 | 7,396 |
| Trade creditors | | 21,516 | 19,728 |
| Other creditors | | 17,449 | 84,887 |
| Accruals and deferred income | | 38,627 | 32,510 |
| | | 840,792 | 216,474 |

## 24 Deferred income

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Arising from amounts invoiced in advance | 672,217 | 7,396 |

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Deferred income is included within: | | |
| Current liabilities | 672,217 | 7,396 |
| Movements in the year: | | |
| Deferred income at 1 October 2023 | 7,396 | 16,711 |
| Released from previous periods | (7,396) | (16,711) |
| Resources deferred in the year | 672,217 | 7,396 |
| Deferred income at 30 September 2024 | 672,217 | 7,396 |

## 25 Retirement benefit schemes

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| **Defined contribution schemes** | £ | £ |
| Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes | 65,738 | 61,030 |

## 25 Retirement benefit schemes (Continued)

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

## 26 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

| | At 1 October 2023 | Incoming resources | Resources expended | Transfers | At 30 September 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Restricted IT equipment | 8,787 | - | (3,845) | - | 4,942 |
| HAREF (Restricted donations) | 24,845 | - | (10,653) | 2,795 | 16,987 |
| North of Tyne Volunteering (VODA) | 28,514 | 15,649 | (38,100) | - | 6,063 |
| Gateshead Infrastructure | 14,146 | 174,500 | (174,318) | - | 14,328 |
| Gateshead Volunteer Centre | 20,418 | 77,499 | (82,782) | - | 15,135 |
| Newcastle Infrastructure | 10,121 | 161,972 | (141,073) | - | 31,020 |
| Health Bulletin - NHS ICB | 459 | 6,583 | (6,905) | - | 137 |
| National Lottery Community Fund | 7,997 | 36,587 | (36,047) | - | 8,537 |
| PCC Hate Crime | 3,577 | 75,502 | (75,332) | 10,990 | 14,737 |
| Refugees and Asylum Seekers | - | 10,000 | (7,574) | - | 2,426 |
| NHR Mental Health | 96 | 1,737 | (1,607) | (226) | - |
| HAREF Digital Inclusion | 60,688 | 4,000 | (10,227) | - | 54,461 |
| Health Equality | 9,168 | 24,686 | (22,374) | - | 11,480 |
| Health Equality Mental Health | 41,463 | 100 | (24,549) | - | 17,014 |
| UKSPF Local Community Partnership | - | 7,853 | (1,181) | (6,672) | - |
| VCSE Resilience Fund | 3,950 | - | - | (3,950) | - |
| Waiting Well (VONNE) | 1,746 | - | (1,746) | - | - |
| UKSPF Digital Inclusion | - | 48,197 | (48,197) | - | - |
| Gateshead Youth Mental Health | - | 75,000 | - | - | 75,000 |
| Awards For All | - | 20,000 | (3,070) | - | 16,930 |
| Gateshead Council | - | 20,000 | (1,228) | - | 18,772 |
| Community Foundation | - | 17,729 | (3,684) | - | 14,045 |
| NIHR HAREF Covid | 2,441 | - | - | (2,441) | - |
| UKSPF NOT Volunteering / Social Action | - | 138,171 | (120,100) | (90) | 17,981 |
| | 238,416 | 915,765 | (814,592) | 406 | 339,995 |

26 **Restricted funds** (Continued)

| Previous year: | At 1 October 2022 | Incoming resources | Resources expended | Transfers | At 30 September 2023 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Restricted IT equipment | 8,787 | - | - | - | 8,787 |
| HAREF (Restricted donations) | 30,372 | - | (5,527) | - | 24,845 |
| Newcastle/Gateshead CCG | 290,258 | - | (290,258) | - | - |
| NCC Public Health Digital | 21,600 | - | (21,600) | - | - |
| North of Tyne Volunteering (VODA) | 24,004 | 30,386 | (25,876) | - | 28,514 |
| Gateshead Infrastructure | 10,212 | 153,667 | (149,733) | - | 14,146 |
| Gateshead Volunteer Centre | 33,616 | 62,166 | (75,364) | - | 20,418 |
| Newcastle Infrastructure | 9,945 | 141,750 | (141,574) | - | 10,121 |
| Health Bulletin - NHS ICB | - | 6,516 | (6,057) | - | 459 |
| National Lottery Community Fund | - | 25,763 | (17,766) | - | 7,997 |
| PCC Hate Crime | - | 69,249 | (65,672) | - | 3,577 |
| Refugees and Asylum Seekers | - | 5,481 | (7,520) | 2,039 | - |
| NHR Mental Health | - | 3,463 | (3,367) | - | 96 |
| HAREF Digital Inclusiion | - | 87,500 | (26,812) | - | 60,688 |
| Health Equality | - | 19,064 | (9,896) | - | 9,168 |
| Health Equality Mental Health | - | 50,000 | (8,537) | - | 41,463 |
| UKSPF Local Community Partnership | - | - | (6,671) | 6,671 | - |
| VCSE Resilience Fund | - | 10,000 | (6,050) | - | 3,950 |
| Waiting Well (VONNE) | - | 2,500 | (754) | - | 1,746 |
| OPCC WSiPP | - | 9,990 | (9,990) | | - |
| UKSPF North of Tyne Volunteering | - | - | (90) | 90 | - |
| ARC Roma | - | 2,500 | (2,699) | 199 | - |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | (7,295) | | - |
| NIHR HAREF Covid | 3,569 | - | (1,128) | - | 2,441 |
| | 439,658 | 679,995 | (890,236) | 8,999 | 238,416 |

26 Restricted funds (Continued)

**Restricted IT equipment**
Providing resources to enable key staff to work from home throughout the COVED-19 pandemic.

**HAREF (Restricted Donation)**
An ICB NHS funded project to support engagement with ethnically marginalised communities across Newcastle and Gateshead into health services.

**North of Tyne Volunteering Project (VODA)**
To create the North of Tyne as a volunteer area of excellence, this is a five year. project.

**Gateshead Infrastructure**
VCSE infrastructure support contract for Gateshead.

**Gateshead Volunteer Centre**
To establish and run an independent Volunteer Centre for Gateshead.

**Newcastle Infrastructure**
VCSE infrastructure support contract for Newcastle.

**Health Bulletin - NHS ICB**
To fund On the Hoof health information bulletin.

**National Lottery Community Fund**
To 'support families through crisis.

**PCC Hate Crime**
Providing. Hate Crime Advocacy, supporting-people who have experienced, or .are at risk of hate crime in the Northumbria area.

**Refugees & Asylum Seekers**
Direct advocacy to refugee and asylum seekers to have voices heard and access to services.

**NIHR Mental Health**
Research project looking at how culturally competent mental health services are for ethnically marginalised communities in Newcastle and Nottingham.

**HAREF Digital Inclusion**
An ICB NHS funded project to improve Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care Project in Gateshead.

**Health Equity**
A project for supporting better links between the VCSE and social prescribers in Newcastle and running Health and wellbeing event for the VCSE.

**Health Equity Mental Health**
An ICB NHS funded project improving VCSE Engagement in the Mental Health Transformation in Gateshead.

**UKSPF Local community Partnership**
Building VCSE sector capacity with organisations in the outer west and north of Newcastle.

**VCSE Resilience Fund**
To provide support packages comprising business resilience and management support for community sector organisations based in Newcastle.

**Waiting Well (VONNE)**
An ICB NHS funded project offering targeted support to certain groups of patients waiting for surgery in the North East and North Cumbria.

26 **Restricted funds** **(Continued)**

**UKSPF Digital Inclusion**
Funding to support constituted groups and charities in Gateshead through tailored approaches, in order to develop their digital infrastructure and capability.

**Gateshead Mental Health**
The NENC ICB provide funds for Connected Voice to administer as grant applications to develop community-based activity which supports children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing in Gateshead..

**Awards for All**
Funding for Haref to support our work with ethnically marginalised communities in Newcastle and Gateshead, in order to collaborate with health services to improve accessibility.

**Gateshead Council**
Funding to support Haref's engagement work in Gateshead with ethnically marginalised communities on health access needs, and ensuring links to key strategic health meetings.

**Community Foundation**
Funding for Haref to support our work with ethnically marginalised communities in Newcastle and Gateshead, in order to collaborate with health services to improve accessibility.

**NIHAR HAREF COVID**
NIHR funded research project working with community partners to look at health messaging in the age of Covid.

**UKSPF North of Tyne Volunteering**
Project to enhance support for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations in Newcastle.

## 27 Unrestricted funds - designated

These are unrestricted funds which are material to the charity's activities.

| | At 1 October 2023 | Resources expended | Transfers | At 30 September 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Digital Transformation | 31,718 | (10,065) | - | 21,653 |
| HAREF | 2,795 | - | (2,795) | - |
| Office move | 21,320 | (1,817) | (19,503) | - |
| Advocacy | 21,434 | (10,442) | (10,992) | - |
| | 77,267 | (22,324) | (33,290) | 21,653 |

| Previous year: | At 1 October 2022 | Resources expended | Transfers | At 30 September 2023 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Digital Transformatiom | 57,656 | (40,938) | 15,000 | 31,718 |
| HAREF | 25,000 | (22,205) | - | 2,795 |
| Office move | 50,000 | (14,475) | (14,205) | 21,320 |
| Workforce Statagy | 35,150 | - | (35,150) | - |
| Advocacy | 42,036 | (20,602) | - | 21,434 |
| Governance | 13,000 | (13,539) | 539 | - |
| | 222,842 | (111,759) | (33,816) | 77,267 |

**Digital Transformation**
For new digital infrastructure including new telephony, software and processes.

**HAREF**
To extend the ongoing Haref Allies Project It is expected that this fund will be utilised by 30 September 2023.

**Office Move**
To cover additional costs associated with the office move to One Strawberry Lane. The move took place in January 2023.

**Advocacy**
Development and restructuring of the advocacy service.

## 28 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

| | At 1 October 2023 | Incoming resources | Resources expended | Transfers | Gains and losses | At 30 September 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| General funds | 425,629 | 954,550 | (1,051,172) | 32,884 | 3,926 | 365,817 |

| Previous year - as restated: | At 1 October 2022 | Incoming resources | Resources expended | Transfers | Gains and losses | At 30 September 2023 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| General funds | 582,271 | 823,931 | (1,055,078) | 24,817 | 49,688 | 425,629 |

## 29 Analysis of net assets between funds

| | Unrestricted funds general 2024 | Unrestricted funds designated 2024 | Restricted funds 2024 | Total 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **At 30 September 2024:** | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 15,399 | - | - | 15,399 |
| Current assets/(liabilities) | 350,418 | 21,653 | 339,995 | 712,066 |
| | 365,817 | 21,653 | 339,995 | 727,465 |

| | Unrestricted funds general 2023 | Unrestricted funds designated 2023 | Restricted funds 2023 | Total As restated 2023 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **At 30 September 2023:** | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 15,019 | - | 3,845 | 18,864 |
| Investments | 460,065 | - | - | 460,065 |
| Current assets/(liabilities) | (49,455) | 77,267 | 234,571 | 262,383 |
| | 425,629 | 77,267 | 238,416 | 741,312 |

## 30 Operating lease commitments

**Lessee**
At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Within one year | 33,080 | 29,142 |
| Between two and five years | 121,273 | 109,275 |
| In over five years | 63,000 | 90,000 |
| | 217,353 | 228,417 |

## 31 Related party transactions

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary, Connected Voice Business Services Limited was dissolved on 3 September 2024. Connected Voice has written off the inter company debtor and the resulting loss on investment of £231,811 is included within the prior year SOFA.

There were no other disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023: none).

## 32 Subsidiaries

Connected Voice Business Services Limited was dissolved and disposed of during the year on 3 September 2024, which resulted in a loss on disposal as described in notes 10 and 31.

## 33 Cash generated from operations

| | 2024 | As restated 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Deficit for the year | (13,847) | (503,459) |
| Adjustments for: | | |
| Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities | (36,961) | (3,955) |
| Gain on disposal of investments | (3,502) | - |
| Fair value gains and losses on investments | (424) | (49,688) |
| Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets | 5,281 | 8,580 |
| Movements in working capital: | | |
| (Increase)/decrease in stocks | (11,610) | 11,975 |
| (Increase)/decrease in debtors | (303,260) | 159,490 |
| (Decrease)/increase in creditors | (18,115) | 70,108 |
| Increase/(decrease) in deferred income | 664,821 | (9,315) |
| **Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations** | 282,383 | (316,264) |

## 34 Prior period adjustment

The following 2023 balances have been restated to reflect the write off of the intercompany trade debtor balance not deemed recoverable on the wind up of Connected Voice Business Services Limited.

**Changes to the balance sheet**

| | At 30 September 2023 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | As previously reported | Adjustment | As restated |
| | £ | £ | £ |
| **Current assets** | | | |
| Debtors due within one year | 589,678 | (213,283) | 376,395 |
| **Funds of the charity** | | | |
| Restricted funds | 238,416 | - | 238,416 |
| Designated funds | 77,267 | - | 77,267 |
| Unrestricted funds | 638,912 | (213,283) | 425,629 |
| **Total funds** | 954,595 | (213,283) | 741,312 |

**Changes to the statement of financial activities**

| | Period ended 30 September 2023 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | As previously reported | Adjustment | As restated |
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Charitable activities | 1,832,298 | 213,283 | 2,045,581 |
| Net movement in funds | (290,176) | (213,283) | (503,459) |

**Connected Voice**

England & Wales - Charity number 1125877

# Accounts

Company number: 06681475 (England and Wales)
Charity number: 1125877

# Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**Report and Financial Statements**

**For the Year Ended 30 September 2023**

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023***

The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 30 September 2023, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Accounting and, Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard's applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

**Chair's Report**

Writing my last Chair's report after 9 years is a bittersweet thing. I have been the latest in a long line of Chairs of this organisation and its predecessors, stretching back to 1929 and it has been a privilege Each of us has had the responsibility to enable it to survive and thrive and, in due course, hand on that responsibility I want to start, therefore, by welcoming the Chair Designate, Peter Deans, who will be supported by the two Vice Chairs, Elaine Slater and Hannah Owens. I know that Connected Voice will mean to you what it has meant to me and that you will take care of it for the people who come after you.

Within Connected Voice, 2022/23 has been a year of focus on making sure that our Business Services function has the leadership, systems, skills and investment that it needs for the future and that has been difficult. I'm glad that we have been able to welcome Blanche Phillips as Head of Business Services and her planning and dedication are already proving vital. The accomplishments and impact of Advocacy, Support & Development, Haref and Volunteering are well covered elsewhere in this document and I want to particularly thank Giovanni Spatuzzi and Jane Kingston for all their work through the year

The Sector has had another difficult 12 months, with many organisations experiencing an increase in demand at the same time as costs have gone up and funding sources have been overwhelmed. It is an unfortunate fact that the most visited pages on the Connected Voice website have been those advising on winding up charities. Sometimes, despite everyone's best efforts, a managed closure is the right thing to do, even while helping beneficiaries to seek support from other sources. Connected Voice has helped that occur – and at the same time has helped new charities and community interest companies start up. As ever, just as there are endings, there are also beginnings.

At the time of writing, we are in an election period, for local authorities and the newly established regional mayor. We all know democracy matters (and everyone should always vote, if only because of the battles fought and sacrifices made over centuries so that we all could vote), but equally we have to be realistic about how much elected representatives locally can change things. Our local authorities have had significant year-on- year cuts which have forced them to make difficult choices. At a national level, a different government might mean a change of attitude, but the economic picture may not alter much in the first few years. So, the context for the Sector in the region may continue much as today, regardless, for the foreseeable future. Even then, there are grounds for hope.

So, what does hope look like? To me, it looks like the grass roots leaders who step up within the Sector itself. Time and time again over the last 9 years, I've seen community groups spring to life and change the world for the people who need them Covid 19 was terrible, of course, but it reminded all of us that personal action matters and the hope represented then by generous voluntary action undoubtably saved lives. This Sector in Newcastle & Gateshead created and provided not just food, but community and companionship, even if from several feet away! Looking ahead, none of us ever want that specific challenge again, but if we hold onto the sense that each of us can and will make a difference to the community we live or work in – as a volunteer, a Trustee or a worker in the Sector - the future really can be better than the past.

Before I close, I want to make special acknowledgement of Martin Horrocks who has served as Trustee and Treasurer for more than 9 years and also steps down at this AGM. Martin has been a calm and wise voice, particularly on finance matters. He has dedicated many, many hours and has served Connected Voice with distinction. Keith Proudfoot has big shoes to fill and I know he will.

Last but not least I want to thank my fellow Trustees, both past and present, for all they have done and all I have learned from them. I want to specifically thank Lisa Goodwin, for her talent, her dedication and her compassion – and for embodying the qualities of a long line of exemplary Chief Executives. I cannot fail to mention Judith Temple, who has served Connected Voice for over 30 years and administered so much of the organisation and the Board so smoothly. Inevitably, my final gratitude has to go to the extraordinary staff of Connected Voice and the brilliant members. Together you touch the lives of so many people and make more difference than anything that could be measured. I want to wish all of you the very best for the years to come.

Simon Elliott
Chair, Connected Voice
April 2024

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objectives of Connected Voice are, 'to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of any locality or community in the County of Northumberland and in the neighbourhood of the River Tyne.'

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 having due regard to the general guidance of the Charity Commission with respect to public benefit when reviewing the Connected Voice aims and objectives and in planning future activities In particular, the trustees considered how the planned activities would contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Connected Voice has the following values:

**We amplify voices**
From individuals to organisations, we believe everyone has a right to be heard. Trusted to listen, understand and advocate, we strive for excellence. We're open and honest, we stick by people and give our support to ensure their voices are heard.

**We champion equality**
We believe that diversity should be celebrated and valued, and everyone deserves equality Working towards a fairer future for all, we won't stand still. By making an impact on causes big and small, we want to improve the quality of life across the region.

**We inspire change**
Courageous, resourceful and determined, we will challenge unfairness and ask difficult questions. Working effectively and accountably to instil confidence. We aim to become stronger and more sustainable to inspire positive and lasting change throughout our community

**We support action**
We understand from our own experiences the challenges people face. We truly value people and we won't judge or dictate. Leading independently and side by side with our communities and partners, we share our resources, skills and expertise to enable people to take meaningful action.

**We connect people**
At the heart of voluntary and community action for 90 years, we are immersed and rooted in the North East We work collectively and inclusively to connect, grow and strengthen our society. We are warm and approachable, and we create opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from and empower one another

Connected Voice exists in service of organisations committed to voluntary and social action in Newcastle & Gateshead and beyond. We work to support the enduring mission of those organisations to benefit society by reducing inequality and enriching lives.

Over the year we contributed to our overall purpose in the following ways:

- As a high performing and well led organisation - providing a voice for individuals and the voluntary and community sector.
- By championing the value and importance of voluntary and community action
- By strengthening voluntary and community organisations through our advice and training services
- By ensuring VCSE organisations had multiple opportunities to come together for peer support, networking and working collectively
- By being proactive in tailoring our support to VCSE organisations as they met the additional needs caused by the cost of living crisis
- By continuing work to transform finance support for the VCSE sector within Connected Voice Business Services; and by starting the process to bring this work in-house as part of the main charity
- By highlighting issues around health inequality in Newcastle and Gateshead, and addressing these through our work, including the work of Haref with ethnically marginalised communities
- By growing engagement with our health equity work through Haref, the Haref Allies programme, and developing our Health Equity team
- By continuing work on our EDI action plan, working towards ensuring our membership and staff team reflect the communities we serve
- By growing our work in directly supporting people to volunteer with VCSE organisations
- By providing a wide range of advocacy services and support to vulnerable people

**Our Volunteers**

We value the unique contribution of our volunteers and the added value they bring. It is our intention that all volunteers are supported and respected. We encourage volunteers to fulfil their potential and aim to provide meaningful roles where both the organisation and the volunteer mutually benefit.

This year, a higher number of staff benefitted from our volunteering policy, which allows staff two paid days off per year to volunteer locally. We share examples of staff volunteering experiences within our team meetings. We have policies and procedures in place to support our volunteers, and work closely with our partner, Volunteer Centre Newcastle, to ensure we follow best practice in volunteering.

**Our Staff**

We recognise the value and expertise of our staff, and we strive to put in place appropriate support as a good employer. We have a range of staff engagement and involvement activities, including a staff council and ideas forum and an annual staff away day We hold the Better Health at Work award, Gold level. We are an accredited Living Wage Employer. We provide drop-ins and support for staff on topics which they have identified as important, such as menopause and mental health We hold the Investors In People accreditation. We hold the North of Tyne Good Work Pledge, making commitments to support the five pillars of the scheme This year we implemented financial support sessions for our staff, following feedback from our annual staff survey.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Connected Voice enables and promotes voluntary and community action, providing voluntary sector organisations with services that enable them to be well run, fulfil their aims and objectives and provide them with the opportunity to extend their influence in Newcastle and Gateshead through the sector's collective voice.

We do this by providing expert advice on governance, on the policies and practices that voluntary organisations need to have to ensure they are safe and securely run, and by providing funding advice based on experience and knowledge of what funders are seeking in a good application.

We hold regular events and training to keep the sector informed, and to enable them to learn from and connect with each other. We provide opportunities for VCSE organisations to increase their reach and influence.

Connected Voice leads on local VCSE involvement, enabling engagement directly with public sector agencies and acting as a voice for the sector within multi-sector partnerships. During this year we continued to develop our role in representation and voice - to ensure we are making the most of the limited time we have available to do this work, and to fill the gaps have emerged as more and more of our day to day work focuses directly on advice and support, rather than wider policy issues.

We engage in local authority-wide, sub-regional, regional and national activities because we want to be able to promote, share and deliver best practice. We work with a wide range of public sector partners – local authorities, NHS trusts, Local NHS, health and care systems, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities and many others.

Our Haref project is a network of 90+ ethnically marginalised-led community organisations who work together to tackle health inequalities. Haref continued to see an increase in membership and people undertaking cultural competency training. Through Haref, we continue to raise the voices of those communities, and to share key public health messages and health information

The Connected Voice Advocacy team reduced in size due to the loss of a local authority contract We continued our pioneering work on Hate Relationships with Durham University, maintained our focus on securing resource to meet gaps in advocacy support - including work with refugees and asylum seekers. We developed our work on service user engagement within the service.

Below is a summary of how we delivered against our strategic objectives:

- **Embed the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework and action plan in our work.** We continued our programme of EDI training across the organisation, involving both staff and trustees Topics included general EDI training, English Unlocked, cultural competency, Jewish Cultural Awareness, menopause and neurodiversity awareness. Our EDI group monitored our progress against the framework. We sustained our delivery of EDI training and cultural competency training and take up across the VCSE sector has been good. We launched a new staff EDI survey to better understand staff needs and demographics.

- **Work closely as a commercial team to achieve our annual income targets.** We achieved our income targets in Advocacy and Haref. We did not meet income targets in Support and Development, which we feel is a result of VCSE organisations having higher running costs due to inflation and cost of living crisis. Connected Voice Business Services had a significant investment in new software, systems and staffing, and as such did not meet their income target.

- **Provide leadership on climate emergency – both in terms of our actions as an organisation, and our work with VCSE organisations.** During the year, we moved to our much more eco-friendly office space, with facilities supporting increased recycling and active travel. We worked towards Investors in the Environment Accreditation. Our climate action group continued to meet and monitor our progress against our action plan. We continued to promote support for the VCSE sector in addressing the climate emergency. This included energy efficiency advice for buildings via our Sector Connector project.

- **Embed partnership working and collaboration across all of our work, and support VCSE organisations to work collaboratively wherever possible.** We continued to bring VCSE organisations together regularly to share information and collaborate, growing the numbers of people involved in themed networking events. We continued to run a Gateshead Youth and Community Network, a Women and Girls Network and a Volunteer Co-ordinators network. We strengthened our partnership working on volunteering through a new volunteering initiative across the North of Tyne area. Our advocacy team continue to play an active role in the Advocacy Leaders Network at a national level. The Haref team work collaboratively with the network members and the cultural competency training offer is co-produced with network members.

During the year we consulted across our management team and board, and used information from our evaluations and members survey to review our strategy, with a plan to agree an updated strategy from March 2024.

**Connected Voice Support and Development**
Support and Development works with community organisations, charities and social enterprises working in Newcastle and Gateshead. We provide advice and guidance on all aspects of running an organisation, a comprehensive training package and opportunities to network and share best practice

**Support and Guidance**
The Support and Development team worked with **234** organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead across the year, providing advice and guidance on topics including legal structures, governance, funding, policies and procedures, and organisational development.

*"I feel so much better from talking to you - just to have aired my thoughts and concerns to someone who is informed and objective has helped enormously "*

**Funding**
We helped VCSE organisations to secure **£1,407,168** of grant funding and organised the annual Newcastle and Gateshead Funding Fair, attracting 18 funders and 87 VCSE organisations.

*"The funding fair is an excellent event it allows me to talk to funders and not only get insight to the application process but to network too "*

**Networking Events**
We delivered five successful VCSE Networking Events during the period, attended by 105 different organisations and over 250 delegates The themes were as follows:

- Men's Wellbeing
- Women and Girls #Embrace Equity
- Welcome to One Strawberry Lane
- Volunteering
- Youth Wellbeing

*"I have attended a range of events and never been disappointed. Staff are very friendly, knowledgeable and really great at connecting organisations. They have had a positive direct impact...especially in regards to networking "*

**Training**
We delivered 46 training courses over the year to 123 organisations

Sessions included· Funding Strategy, Effective Bid-Writing, Monitoring and Evaluation, Using Social Media Effectively and an Introduction to Safeguarding Moreover, we worked with other Connected Voice departments to support training on Finance, Advocacy and Health Inequalities. The feedback from these was overwhelmingly positive

We continue to work with two other local infrastructure organisations (North Tyneside VODA and Northumberland CVA) to offer an eLearning platform called Elements. To date 459 people have completed the courses on offer

*"Meet the Funder Sessions training sessions are fantastic Very helpful in directing me to which funding applications are worth spending my time on. When time is such a limited resource sometimes hearing a little comment in the session about the funder's particular interests can save so much on a potentially wasted application"*

**OurGateshead**
During the year we implemented a significant new update to OurGateshead making it more welcoming and easier to use Feedback about the new version has been extremely positive.

*"I'm really impressed by the 'Volunteer' page on Our Gateshead - the options to filter by location and topic make searching for a role really effective. If only job advertisement sites were this simple and intuitive!"*

The number of people using the site continued to grow, with 158,699 visits over the year, an increase of 6%.

**Premium Services**
During the year we provided our Premium Services to 35 organisations. These are specialised pieces of work that take us a significant time to complete They include
organisational and governance reviews, charity registration, policy writing and our bespoke training courses.

*"We have recently changed our legal status to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation We could not have done this challenging task without the excellent help from Connected Voice "*

**Information**
We are a key source of information for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Newcastle and Gateshead. In the reporting period we:

- Distributed fortnightly electronic news bulletins to 1,400 plus subscribers
- Distributed a monthly health and social care bulletin to the sector (Formerly called On the Hoof, now renamed the Health Bulletin)
- Produced 4 quarterly magazines shared with around 1,500 members and key contacts, magazine themes·
    - Poverty
    - Volunteering
    - Social Enterprise
    - Health Equity
- Developed our Twitter/X following from 4,799 followers in October 2022 to 5,016
- Increased our followers on LinkedIn from 1,000 to 1,522
- Increased our followers on Facebook from 1,400 to 1, 565

**Connected Voice Haref**

Connected Voice Haref works with ethnically marginalised communities to identify their key issues around health and improve the health information available to them We help health services gain a better understanding of what communities need and we build confidence within communities so they can talk to health services about their cultural needs

**Haref Network**

In the Haref network we have 70 organisations with 100 people representing ethnically marginalised community groups and projects.

We ran 3 Haref Network meetings with discussions about:

- The impact of increasing costs and what support would help.
- The new ethnicity/religion/language census data and what it tell us about our local and changing population.
- Improving access to interpreters for the VCSE, in health settings and improving the complaint pathways

We developed a work plan with the Haref Network linked to the 4 key health priorities:

- Health information and accessing health services
- Interpreters/translator provision in health settings
- Mental health
- Asylum seeker/refugee healthcare

**Haref Allies**

By the end of September 2023, we had 87 organisations as Haref Allies members with 96 individual Allies.

We held 3 Haref Allies meetings on the following themes:

- How to support colleagues whose first language isn't English
- Responding to issues raised by Haref Network around trust, accessibility, culturally competent care, health information.
- Interpreters and translation in Health Services

**Cultural Competency Training**

- For the Newcastle City Council Public Health contract, we delivered training to 286 attendees. The contract has been extended until July 2023.
- We delivered 17 paid-for Cultural Competency training over the year which generated £7,000 income for our premium target

**Research projects**

- Haref is co-delivering the Comfrey Project's Wellbeing Champions to look at opinions on mental health services for refugees and asylum-seekers and identify good practice. This project is due to end in December 2023.
- Haref worked with the NIHR Bio Resource on a campaign to increase representation from diverse communities in research. Haref attended bi-weekly meetings with 8 different community organisations across the country and the BioResource to plan this campaign
- Haref are a partner in the research project, led by Newcastle University, to look at the experiences of Roma women in maternity services. We produced a resource with the women to highlight their experiences when using maternity services with practitioners
- Haref are a partner in the research project, led by Newcastle University, which is looking at mental health services in the in North East and Manchester and the Cultural barriers to these services We have helped to recruit participants into this study. We are also part of the PPI group and recruited a Haref member to be part of the PPI.
- Haref was awarded the 'Dialogue for Change' award for our 'Health Inequalities in the Age of COVID-19- Towards Fairer Health for Disadvantaged Communities' research. This recognised our engagement of community partners in all aspects of the research

**Review of terminology**
In 2021, we reviewed the terminology we use in relation to the communities we support. At the time, the preferred collective term from the Haref Network was 'ethnically minoritised' communities, but we agreed to review everything in 12 months' time. In October 2022, we began a thorough consultation process with our Haref Network that ran until March 2023 We brought in external consultants to facilitate discussions and find inclusive terminology for our Haref Network members, which also describes what Haref is and what we do. Following two discussion sessions and a survey, the consensus, with a significant number of votes, is 'ethnically marginalised'.

**Ramadan Calendars with safe fasting messages**
Haref worked with 11 mosques across North Tyneside, Gateshead and Newcastle and with the NHS Diabetes Centre, Glaucoma UK and Diabetes UK to get the right health information relating to fasting for the calendars. We printed 3500 calendars, which were distributed to 11 mosques and to community-facing buildings and health services, including GPs.

**Newcastle Urgent Treatment Centre Review**
Haref are working with NENC ICS on their Newcastle Urgent Treatment centre review. We have assisted in developing materials for their sense checking and public meetings. We ran focus groups with 3 Haref network groups. We supported the delivery of 3 general public meetings. This consultation will continue through 2024.

**Connected Voice Health Equity**
A new Connected Voice service area for Health Equity was created in March 2023. This includes Connected Voice projects: Haref, Mental Health Transformation in Gateshead, Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care in Gateshead, Social Prescribing in Newcastle, Waiting Well programme, and involvement in the NENC VCSE Partnership programme. This work is underpinned by the Health bulletin which goes out to a wide range of VCSE organisations

This work is managed by the Heath Equity and Involvement Manager a post created in March 2023, whicd replaced the Haref Coordinator post.

We developed a Health Equity logo, webpages and content for the service area, and sent out communications to external partners and included this in all our bulletins.

**VCSE Engagement in Mental Health Transformation in Gateshead**
We recruited the VCSE Engagement Coordinator: Mental Health Transformation and they started on 6 June, in a 21-hour per week post. This role has started work with smaller-sized voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations that support people with mental health issues in Gateshead, to ensure they have a direct role in influencing and benefiting from the borough's NHS Community Mental Health transformation plans.

**Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care in Gateshead**
We recruited a Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care Project Manager, who they started on 11 April 2023 in a full-time post. This project works across Gateshead to improve digital inclusion in the area in collaborations with local communities and stakeholders It coordinates the Gateshead Digital Inclusion Steering Group, which includes local NHS partners, Gateshead Council, voluntary and community organisations, researchers, and tech firms.

**Healthy Communities & Social Prescribing Place Based Engagement in Newcastle**
From March 2023 Connected Voice began supporting VCSE capacity with Social Prescribing within Newcastle. We are working with ICB Newcastle place officer for personalised care, and the NCC officer for locality working to deliver this work.

We will be running Health and Wellbeing events for the VCSE in Newcastle and Gateshead. These will include information about health service delivery and local updates about the Integrated Care Boards (NHS). We will work with VONNE to feed in relevant information from the wider regional VCSE involvement structures.

**Waiting Well**
From March 2023 the Heath Equity and Involvement Manager supported the Waiting Well agenda for Newcastle and Gateshead. Waiting Well is a programme offering targeted support to certain groups of patients waiting for surgery in the North East and North Cumbria.

**North East and North Cumbria VCSE Partnership Programme**
The North East and North Cumbria VCSE Partnership Programme is facilitated by VONNE and its aim is to ensure that the VCSE sector is embedded at all levels of the Integrated Care System (ICS) The VCSE sector is able to provide extensive expertise and reach into the communities that receive health and care services, particularly those that the NHS can find it difficult to connect with. Our Chief Executive and the Heath Equity and Involvement Manager attend and represent Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE at a number of key meetings, including the Executive Group and various work streams.

**NENC ICS Health Literacy Co-Production Advisory Group**
The Heath Equity and Involvement Manager is a member of the Health Literacy Co-Production Advisory Group. The group's purpose is to give advice on how to support a positive change in how the North-East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System does things by making sure to involve people and their communities in how it develops and deliver the actions in the health literacy work plan.

**Communications**
In September 2023, we revamped our monthly Health bulletin, which was previously known as 'On the Hoof'. This health bulletin covers

- Updates on Connected Voice Health Equity projects
- Information for the Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE sector about the local NHS, council services and multi-agency structures
- Information for the Newcastle and Gateshead VCSE sector about local, regional and national health policy
- Information about local health events and activities
- Information about current consultations, research and reports

**Connected Voice Business Services**

Our trading subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd continued to provide payroll, accounting and bookkeeping services, supporting many VCSE organisations across the region

CVBS continued to support organisations to switch to digital finance, providing training as Quickbooks Pro certified advisors We brought in a highly qualified staff team and invested in new systems and technology to improve our processes Following the board decision to wind up the separate company, we did all the necessary work on this and closed the company bank accounts. We will be in a position to apply for strike off of the trading company in 2024.

**Connected Voice Advocacy**

Connected Voice Advocacy aims to improve the quality of life for people living in the North East of England by advocating for people from marginalised communities, who experience disadvantage or discrimination, supporting people to have voices heard, rights upheld, access to services they are entitled to and supporting decision making and facilitating self-advocacy and influencing decision makers at local, regional and national level to achieve positive change. Each year we write an annual work plan together as a team and set strategic goals around delivery, quality, communication, sustainability, developing equity and effective systems. We review our data and research to identify which communities need advocacy support the most that year and then fundraise to ensure we can deliver advocacy for them.

**Celebrations**

We were awarded the Outstanding Equality Diversity and Equity award 2023 at the National Advocacy Awards.This was in recognition of the progress towards creating a diverse workforce, with robust EDI framework and targeting support to individuals through hate crime, EDI strategy, small grants for refugees and LGBTQIA + communities. This follows two other awards for Outstanding Advocacy service in 2022 and 2018 and we are proud of the team's work and the recognition that Connected Voice Advocacy receives nationally, as a small provider in the advocacy sector.

**Developing our services**

During this year we were delighted to secure more funding to expand our services·

We were awarded Community Foundation grants to widen the support we offer to **Refugee and Asylum Seekers** and to develop a **Self-advocacy Toolkit** for people who use advocacy services, we tested this toolkit with them to ensure that it meets their needs and is user tested. Feedback includes: *"after the session I feel more confident to speak up and put my point across more clearly" " I now have more of an idea on how to be more prepared, ready and confident for meetings"* .We have multilingual advocates in the team so we were able to facilitate Farsi speaking workshops to reduce communication barriers to some communities attending

Help through Crisis launched in April 2023. Our long five-year partnership project with North East Law Centre and Changing Lives was re-awarded 3-year grant from the National Lottery Fund to widen its support to people in financial crisis in Newcastle.

The Northumbria Office for Police and Crime Commissioner continued to fund Hate Crime Advocacy, which we have pioneered for the last five years We sat on the Victim and Witness Service Improvement Board to influence policy and bring the learning from day-to-day practice to the wider criminal justice system. This year we collaborated again with the research team from Northumbria and Durham Universities to update the 2021 research around Hate Relationships to see impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on people's experience of hate. The research team spent this year developing a toolkit for professionals to identify and address support needs around repeated incidents of hate We were re-commissioned by NHS Integrated Care Board to deliver our long-standing Health and Social Care advocacy in Newcastle and Gateshead

We grew our range of individual contracts by 20% this year to support more people with acquired brain injury from life changing accidents, and child protection hearings.

Sadly, in May 2023 our team reduced in size. After six years delivering statutory advocacy for Gateshead Council the contract was recommissioned to a new provider and we said goodbye to four advocates who transferred in the process. We continue to provide statutory advocacy through our spot contracts in the region and we are the national provider of Independent Mental Health Advocacy in Mitford National Autistic Unit in Northgate Hospital.

**Listening and learning**
Our new system to capture feedback from stakeholders continues to be a success in reaching more people's views and we have recorded highs of a 90 on the Net Promoter Score this year (anything above 75 is world classl). This has been effective in hearing what people gain from advocacy as well as suggestions to improve our service. During this year the Connected Voice board invested in a project to lead on Service User engagement We have had a Service User Engagement Strategy for a while, so it helped this year to have having dedicated staff time to make things happen. This enabled us to bring service users together to consult with them on key elements of the service. They provided feedback on what it is like to experience advocacy from us which helps us to improve the experience for others We consulted them on our website, on our priorities for delivery, and chances to meet with the trustees

**Influencing**
We continued to advocate strategically. We play a role in the Advocacy Leaders Network and contribute to national campaigning and research, which this year focused on Closed Settings for people with Learning Disability and Autism and the long-awaited changes to the Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act, which are key to our work. We fed into national policy changes around the Lasting Power of Attorney, we continued to sit in Safeguarding Adult boards in Newcastle and Gateshead and raised awareness of the then-new NICE Guidelines for advocacy to the board membership, commissioning and adult social care teams.

**Year in numbers**
In 2022/23 we:

- Supported 1350 people and worked with them on 2070 issues, providing 19,840 hours of direct advocacy support
- Supported 69 people who had safeguarding alerts or concerns raised about them
- Supported 37 people to take challenges to the Court of Protection to review restrictions causing their deprivation of liberty e.g. where they lived
- Supported 31 families in Child Protection hearings
- Provided Hate Crime Advocacy to 37 victim/survivors of hate relationships
- Gained over £4,732 for people's awards/claims
- Employed 22 people – 16 advocates managed and supervised by our 3 Senior Advocate management team and our 3 admin/duty staff
- Trained 5 advocates through the National Advocacy Qualification
- Worked in over 35 ethnically marginalised communities across 29 languages and employed 2 bilingual Advocates
- Delivered 6 training sessions to the VCSE on advocacy, safeguarding and the mental capacity act

**Connected Voice Volunteering**
We continued to develop an independent volunteer centre in Gateshead, which started in April 2022, after many years of absence. The centre's primary objective is to support residents with additional needs and volunteer-involving organisations across the borough. Additionally, we continued working collaboratively with corporate and private sector partners to develop Sector Connector, which provides a pathway for employees to share their time and skills to support VCSE organisations in both Newcastle and Gateshead.

**Gateshead Volunteer Centre**

The Volunteer Centre:

- Screened **284** people expressing an interest to volunteer on the OurGateshead website for advertised volunteering opportunities.

- Supported **59** people with additional needs into volunteering opportunities in organisations ranging from Active Kidz, Tanfield Railway to Digital Voice for Communities.
- Worked with **110** VCSE organisations to develop and implement their volunteering policies and procedures, recruitment and retention practices, supporting general enquiries, and including OurGateshead
- Continued to develop the Gateshead Volunteer Coordinators' Network. The Volunteer Centre organised and facilitated **4** quarterly meetings in various community venues across the borough. At the March 31st, 2023, meeting, the Gateshead Council Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey, attended and presented about the importance of volunteering in Gateshead. The network grew its membership to 103 individuals over the year and attracts an average attendance of between 25 to 30 organisations
- Continued to work out of **5** community bases across Gateshead
- Improved and promoted the volunteer brokerage service on the OurGateshead website, which led to an increase in page views over the year. From 1 July to 31 September 2023, OurGateshead recorded its largest number of quarterly page views for volunteering opportunities at **13,811**.

**Sector Connector**

- Built relationships with **30** small and medium-sized businesses operating across Newcastle and Gateshead.
- Delivered **5** Sector Connector workshop on WordPress Websites, Brand Strategy, Storytelling for VCSE Organisations, Non-Profit Recruitment, and Introduction to Social Investment by private sector companies to a total of 30 VCSE organisations.
- Brokered **5** one to one support opportunities with Cleardata, Ryder Architects, Glass Digital, Kore Health & Safety, and facetofaceHR with 5 VCSE organisations.
- During Small Charities Week (19th to 26th June, 2023), collaborated with Muckle LLP to deliver a weeklong programme of free legal advice clinics to small and medium-sized VCSE organisations. Muckle LPP supported **12** organisations, including Twisting Ducks Theatre Company, Road to Recovery Trust, Peace of Mind and Search.
- Contributed to the development of the North of Tyne Volunteering Project by working in partnership with Volunteer Centre Newcastle, VODA North Tyneside, and Northumberland CVA to share skills, knowledge and experience to develop joint volunteering resources.

**Acknowledgements**

**Connected Voice records its appreciation to all our funders and supporters.**
Connected Voice is a member of NCVO, NAVCA, ACEVO, the Community Foundation (Tyne, Wear and Northumberland), the North East Chamber of Commerce, Tyne and Wear Citizens, VONNE, the Advocacy Action Alliance, and OPAAL (Older People's Advocacy Alliance) We work closely with our sister infrastructure organisations across the North East and we are members of and contribute to appropriate local partnerships, initiatives, boards and committees.

**Social Value**
Connected Voice acts in a socially responsible manner. We use other VCSE facilities and services wherever possible. We use sustainable products as far as possible. We try to use local suppliers. We use fair trade products. We take climate change seriously, and we aim to reduce our environmental impact through the development of a climate change action plan, and regular staff meetings on this theme. The ratio of pay of the lowest earner to the pay of the top earner will never exceed 1:5 We are a Living Wage employer, accredited by the Living Wage Foundation, including apprentices and interns During the year we have benefitted from thirteen active trustees who all volunteered their skills, knowledge and expertise.

## CONNECTED VOICE – STRATEGIC AIMS

We began work on developing our new strategy in December 2023 and plan to publish this in April 2024.

Each of our service areas has a work plan including SMART objectives, which link to the overall strategic aims of the organisation.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

Connected Voice holds contracts from the NHS and local authorities, as well as applying for grants from charitable trusts and foundations. We are growing our self-generated income through development of paid-for services. A substantial part of our income comes through contracts. In the current year this was three contracts. Connected Voice is assiduous in looking for appropriate sources of funding, and as an organisation responsible for advising the voluntary sector on funding sources, is well placed to know what opportunities are available We use a full cost recovery model, which enables us to estimate the actual costs of a service and its true cost to Connected Voice. As the value of public sector contracts continues to decrease in light of inflation, this is an essential tool for us to use in deciding whether or not to bid for a service.

Senior managers and the board meet to set budgets annually. The management team reviews financial performance monthly, and the board reviews it quarterly via a finance sub committee and the board meetings. Day to day financial management and reporting is managed by our finance arm – Connected Voice Business Services.

Our trustees are clear about our aims and mission and that we need to be sustainable, but keep to our vision and values Connected Voice will not enter into partnerships and contracts which are contrary to our aims and objectives and we recognise that we need to stay within our agreed budget limits for the year.

### Assets

The charity's assets are being held to enable them to carry out its objectives. The movements in fixed assets during the year are set out in note 16 to the accounts

### Trading activities

The results of Connected Voice Charity Business Services, our trading company, are summarised in note 17 of the accounts. A deficit was generated during the period of £177,675 (2022· £32,608). The decision was taken by the board in 2022 to bring the subsidiary back into the main charity and wind up the separate company Steps towards this have now been taken and the final strike off is anticipated to happen in the next few months.

### Financial dependency

The charity in order to meet its objectives is financially dependent on grants from the Local Authorities, government programmes and charitable trusts.

Additional funds are derived from smaller grants and charitable donations made by a variety of organisations and individuals

### Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

Connected Voice and its subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services provides payroll and bookkeeping services and holds monies for this purpose. Further detail is given in note 21.

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees regularly review levels of reserves and have agreed again this year that reserves equivalent to between three and five months running costs are appropriate for the organisation.
Three months running costs would equate to around £210,000 and five months £350,000, based on the accounts for the 12 months to 30 September 2023. The reserves should not fall below this level in order to support good governance of the organisation.

The Reserve Policy allows for the use of funds in excess of the level required to be spent in furtherance of the organisation's vision and mission. Any proposal should be presented as an individual business case to the Trustees for review and approval

As at 30 September 2023 free reserves (unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets) are £405,381 (2022: £531,483). The Trustees monitor the level of reserves regularly and the Reserves Policy is reviewed annually with the support of the Finance Sub Group.

**Review of transactions and financial position**

The consolidated balance sheet on page 24 indicates that at 30 September 2023 the total funds of the group are £741,312 (2022 £1,209,163) This was represented by tangible fixed assets of £20,248 (2022 £15,180), investments of £453,255 (2022 £420,136) and net current assets of £267,809 (2022 £773,847). Unrestricted funds of £425,629 (2022 £546,663) represent the reserves available to the organisation to fulfil its many existing commitments over the long term Restricted funds of £238,416 (2022 £439,658) represent specific earmarked projects as detailed in note 23 of the accounts.

**Investment income**

Connected Voice is usually in the position of having to fund a considerable proportion of its core running costs each year and the income it derives from its invested reserves is an essential component of that strategy, alongside donations, earnings and other provisions.

Tilney are the appointed wealth investment organisation managing the Connected Voice investment portfolio. The Finance Sub-Group monitors the performance of the portfolio, reviewing the quarterly financial investment reports provided by Tilney and reporting into the board meetings. Trustees support the investment objective for Connected Voice which is to yield the best financial return within the level of risk considered to be acceptable This return can then be spent on the charity's aims and further continuance of its objectives. The Trustees are comfortable that the investments held are a diversified portfolio in order to mitigate the capital risk. The Finance Sub-Group has put forward an Investment Strategy Policy The investment balances as at the 30 September 2023 are £453,255 (2022 £420,136). No additional funds were added to the investment portfolio in the year, all dividends and income are reinvested.

**Political contributions**

The charity made no political contributions.

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Registered Charity Number** | 1125877 |
| **Company Number** | 06681475 |
| **Trustees** | Simon Elliott<br>Martin Horrocks<br>Elaine Slater<br>Paula Park (resigned 25 April 2023)<br>Hannah Owens<br>Tracy Huitson<br>Amanda Lee<br>Colette Harrison<br>Busola Afolabi<br>Keith Proudfoot<br>Salha Kaitesi (elected 25 April 2023)<br>Peter Elliott OBE (co-opted 25 April 2023)<br>Peter Deans (co-opted 25 April 2023)<br>Sam Cooper (elected 25 April 2023) |
| **Chief Executive** | Lisa Goodwin |
| **Principal Office** | One Strawberry Lane<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 4BX |
| **Auditors** | Haines Watts North East Audit LLP<br>17 Queens Lane<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 1 RN |
| **Bankers** | Yorkshire Bank Plc<br>Newcastle Business Centre<br>29-31 Pilgrim Street<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 6RL<br><br>Unity Trust Bank Plc<br>PO Box 7193<br>Planetary Road<br>Willenhall<br>WV1 9DG |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Investment Manager** | Evelyn Partners<br>Private Wealth Management<br>130 St Vincent Street<br>Glasgow<br>G2 5SE |

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The charity's full name is Connected Voice. It is an incorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 1125877) and a company limited by guarantee (number 06681475).

**Governing documents**

The charity's governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Connected Voice is an independent charity working with the voluntary sector primarily in Newcastle and Gateshead. It is run by a Board of Trustees elected annually by its member organisations, and by co-opted members. The Board controls the direction and policy of the work, and met five times during this financial year. It holds a special away day meeting with senior managers, once a year, in order to look at opportunities and define strategy for the coming year.

Connected Voice is a membership organisation with over 750 members.

**Recruitment of trustees**

Trustees are elected from the membership. Notice is sent to all members, and if a ballot is required, it is conducted prior to the Annual General Meeting Trustees may only serve for a set period of time. The skills and experience of existing trustees are audited regularly and new trustees are recruited in order to complement the existing trustees ensuring a wide set of skills and knowledge is reflected in the overall board. If the Board feels there are particular skills lacking, they are able to promote these during the recruitment process The governance document allows for co-opted trustees so that specialist skills can be brought onto the board. The Chair has experience of business and Human Resources and is not from the voluntary sector, although he chairs another voluntary organisation. The treasurer is an accountant with extensive experience of the charity sector. With the current Chair's term of office due to come to an end at the 2024 AGM, a chair designate was appointed following the 2023 AGM, and handover meetings are under way.

**Organisational structure**

The Board of trustees, which can have up to fourteen members, has control of the charity, including its property and its funds. The Board normally meets four times per year and there are three sub groups covering finance, advocacy, and volunteering, which report into the Board. Task and Finish groups of the trustees are also created as necessary. This year we closed the Task and Finish group for workforce development, after the agreement of our new pay policy, and created one for trustee recruitment. We have staff-led groups who take forward our EDI and Climate emergency action plans, and these report into the board. The Chief Executive is appointed by the trustees to manage the charity and has delegated authority for all operational matters.

### Pay policy for senior staff

The Chief Executive implements the pay policy on an ongoing basis and is responsible for pay reviews and setting salaries for senior staff. The Board reviews the Chief Executive's salary annually and is responsible for making any decisions about remuneration of the Chief Executive. Remuneration is benchmarked against similar roles within voluntary and community sector organisations of similar size in the North East.
We understand that in light of increasing inflation and a difficult employment market, pay should continue to be reviewed regularly. Our workforce strategy task and finish group of the board developed and implemented a new pay policy during the year.

Connected Voice's new Pay Policy covers all staff. Senior staff are not treated differently to other staff and all benefits (including pension contributions) are applied equally across all staff groups. The pay policy allows for staff progression within pay bands, based on performance.

### Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between trustees or senior managers of the charity with suppliers must be disclosed to the full Board of trustees In the current year no such related party transactions were reported. Trustees are asked to declare their interests before each board meeting and there is a Register of Interests.

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary, Connected Voice Business Services Ltd, was established to operate as a commercial accountancy service and gift aids all of its profits to the charity (see note 17 to the accounts). The decision was taken by the board in 2022 to bring the subsidiary back into the main charity and wind up the separate company. Steps towards this have now been taken and the final strike off is anticipated to happen in the next few months

### Risk management

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The Board reviews the strategic risk assessment annually and the full report is discussed at a Board meeting annually where mitigating actions identified and taken. Health and Safety information is presented on a quarterly basis to the Board

### Indemnity Insurance

The charity has Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in respect of the Trustees and Officers of the charity.

**Statement of Trustees Responsibilities**

The Trustees (who are also directors of Connected Voice for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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, which 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 the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently; observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- 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 charitable company will continue in business.

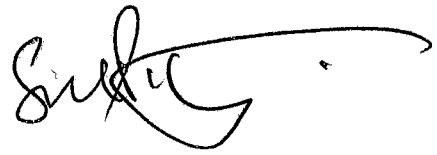
The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware.

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

In accordance with the Companies Act 2006 a resolution proposing the appointment of Haines Watts North East Audit LLP as auditor for the year ending 30 September 2024 will be put to the members.



Simon Elliott
Chair

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE
## *FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023*

### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Connected Voice (the 'charitable company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 30 September 2023 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Consolidated Balance Sheet and Charitable Company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and charitable company's affairs as at 30 September 2023, and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report

### Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements, and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**
In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the group and parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.
We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made, or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

**Responsibilities of trustees**
As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 19, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or taken together, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to both the company itself and the industry in which it operates. We identified areas of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our sector experience and through discussion with the directors and other management. The most significant were identified as the Companies Act 2006, UK GAAP (FRS102) and relevant tax legislation We considered the extent of compliance with those laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statements. Our audit procedures included:

- confirming with the directors and management whether they have any knowledge or suspicion of fraud;
- obtaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- assessing the risk of management override including identifying and testing a sample of journal entries;
- reviewing appropriateness of allocation of income and expenditure within restricted funds.

Our audit did not identify any key audit matters relating to the detection of irregularities including fraud. However, despite the audit being planned and conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) there remains an unavoidable risk that material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected owing to inherent limitations of the audit, and that by their very nature, any such instances of fraud or irregularity likely involve collusion, forgery, intentional misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our audit report.

**Use of our report**
This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed

C Henderson

**Craig Henderson (Senior Statutory Auditor)**
**for and on behalf of Haines Watts North East LLP**

...29th April 2024...

**Statutory Auditor**

17 Queens Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1RN

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (including consolidated income and expenditure account)**
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023***

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds | Designated funds | Restricted funds | Total 2023 | As restated Total 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Income from:** | | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 4 | 18,542 | - | - | 18,542 | 8,531 |
| Charitable activities | 5 | | | | | |
| Grants and contracts | | 445,483 | - | 679,995 | 1,125,478 | 1,310,141 |
| Chargeable services | | 289,696 | - | - | 289,696 | 270,846 |
| Other trading activities | | | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | 6 | 291,006 | - | - | 291,006 | 258,951 |
| Other trading income | 6 | 66,255 | - | - | 66,255 | 9,369 |
| Investments | 7 | 3,955 | - | - | 3,955 | 10,701 |
| **Total income** | | 1,114,937 | - | 679,995 | 1,794,932 | 1,868,539 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | | |
| Costs of raising funds | 8 | | | | | |
| Subsidiary expenditure | | 468,681 | - | - | 468,681 | 248,230 |
| Investment management fees | | 11,492 | - | - | 11,492 | 3,899 |
| **Charitable activities** | 9 | | | | | |
| Operation of the charity | | 830,303 | 111,759 | 890,236 | 1,832,298 | 1,361,026 |
| **Total expenditure** | | 1,310,476 | 111,759 | 890,236 | 2,312,471 | 1,613,155 |
| **Net movement before investment gains/(losses)** | | ( 195,539 ) | ( 111,759 ) | ( 210,241 ) | ( 517,539 ) | 255,384 |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | | 49,688 | - | - | 49,688 | ( 61,248 ) |
| Transfers between funds | 23 | 24,817 | ( 33,816 ) | 8,999 | - | - |
| **Net movement in funds** | | ( 121,034 ) | ( 145,575 ) | ( 201,242 ) | ( 467,851 ) | 194,136 |
| **Reconciliation of funds** | | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 546,663 | 222,842 | 439,658 | 1,209,163 | 1,015,027 |
| **Total funds carried forward** | | 425,629 | 77,267 | 238,416 | 741,312 | 1,209,163 |

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
***AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023***

| | Notes | £ | 2023 £ | £ | As restated 2022 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **16** | | 20,248 | | 15,180 |
| Investments | **17** | | 453,255 | | 420,136 |
| | | | 473,503 | | 435,316 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Stock | **18** | 39,979 | | 30,968 | |
| Debtors | **19** | 394,688 | | 403,982 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 454,544 | | 940,901 | |
| | | 889,211 | | 1,375,851 | |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **20** | ( 621,402 ) | | ( 602,004 ) | |
| **Net current assets** | | | 267,809 | 773,847 | |
| **Net assets** | | | 741,312 | | 1,209,163 |
| **Funds** | **23** | | | | |
| Unrestricted funds | | | 425,629 | | 546,663 |
| Designated funds | | | 77,267 | | 222,842 |
| Restricted funds | | | 238,416 | | 439,658 |
| | | | 741,312 | | 1,209,163 |

The notes on pages 27 to 47 form part of these financial statements

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on ..25 April.. 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Keith Proudfoot
Treasurer

*Company Number: 06681475*

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
***AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023***

| | Notes | £ | 2023<br>£ | £ | As restated<br>2022<br>£ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **16** | | 18,864 | | 13,239 |
| Investments | **17** | | 453,257 | | 420,138 |
| | | | 472,121 | | 433,377 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Stocks | **18** | 10,081 | | 22,056 | |
| Debtors | **19** | 589,678 | | 535,885 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 76,801 | | 386,746 | |
| | | 676,560 | | 944,687 | |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **20** | ( 194,086 ) | | ( 133,293 ) | |
| **Net current assets** | | | 482,474 | | 811,394 |
| **Net assets** | | | 954,595 | | 1,244,771 |
| **Funds** | **23** | | | | |
| Unrestricted funds | | | 638,912 | | 582,271 |
| Designated funds | | | 77,267 | | 222,842 |
| Restricted funds | | | 238,416 | | 439,658 |
| | | | 954,595 | | 1,241,771 |

The notes on pages 27 to 47 form part of these financial statements

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 25 April 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Keith Proudfoot
Treasurer

*Company Number: 06681475*

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## CONSOLIDATED CASH FLOW STATEMENT
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023***

| | Note | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Net cash flow from operating activities:** | | | |
| ***Net cash provided (used in) by operating activities*** | **29** | ( 458,179 ) | 138,294 |
| **Cash flows from investing activities** | | | |
| Purchase of tangible assets | | ( 14,205 ) | ( 2,228 ) |
| Purchase of fixed asset investments | | ( 17,928 ) | ( 22,229 ) |
| Investment income received | | 3,955 | 10,701 |
| ***Net cash flow from investing activities*** | | ( 28,178 ) | ( 13,756 ) |
| **Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents** | | ( 486,357 ) | 124,538 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year | | 940,901 | 816,363 |
| **Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year** | | 454,544 | 940,901 |
| **Cash and cash equivalents consist of:** | | | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 54,552 | 504,919 |
| Cash held as a custodian | | 399,992 | 435,982 |

## 1. Accounting policies

Connected Voice is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, (number 06681475) and not having a share capital. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity.

### 1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

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) (effective January 2019), 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.

Connected Voice meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s). The financial statements are prepared in Sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £

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.

### 1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the results of Connected Voice and its wholly owned subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd on a line-by-line basis. A separate Statement of Financial Activities and Income and Expenditure Account for the charity has not been presented because Connected Voice has taken advantage of the exemption afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

### 1.3 Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist.

As reported in the accounts to 30 September 2022, on 14 February 2023 the board of Connected Voice, the parent company of Connected Voice Business Services Limited, passed a special resolution. They resolved to integrate the trade and assets of Connected Voice Business Services Ltd into Connected Voice by 30 September 2023 Since 1 October 2023, Business Services has run as a division of the charity. This allows for more direct governance and control of the division, whose activities are wholly in line with the primary purposes of the charity.

The Trustees have considered the level of funds and forecast income and expenditure for a period of 12 months after the date of approval of these financial statements, the budgeted income and expenditure is considered sufficient given the levels of reserves held by the Charity. Therefore, the Trustees have adopted the going concern basis of preparation for these financial statements.

**1.4 Funds**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the charity for a particular purpose. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

**1.5 Income**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when the trust becomes entitled. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts. Assets donated are recognised in full as donations and fixed assets.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Incoming resources from charitable trading activities are accounted for when earned.
- Income is deferred only where the criteria for recognition as incoming resources in the Statement of Financial Activities does not exist at the balance sheet date.
- Income from commercial trading activities is recognised as earned (as the related services are provided)

No amount is included within the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102).

**1.6 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with the commercial trading activities of the company's subsidiary.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the expenditure when incurred.

**1.7 Tangible fixed assets**

Individual fixed assets costing over £1,000 are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their expected useful economic lives as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Electronic office equipment | 25% straight line basis |
| Restricted office equipment | 25% straight line basis |

**1.8 Investments**

Fixed asset investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at fair value at the year end. The same treatment is applied to unlisted investments unless fair value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment.

**1.9 Stock**

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

**1.10 Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**1.11 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

**1.12 Holding accounts**

The charity and subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations as part of their payroll service The balances held by the charity are included within the balance sheet in accordance with SORP 2019; the balances of the subsidiary are recognised as an asset with the corresponding liability.

**1.13 Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at their settlement after allowing for any trade discounts due

**1.14 Pensions**

The charity operates a money purchase pension scheme. Amounts payable are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the related salary is paid. Unremitted amounts are included in creditors

**1.15 Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**1.16 Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

## 2. Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the charitable company's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no significant accounting estimates which are considered to materially impact the financial statements.

## 3. Statement of financial activities from the prior year as restated

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds £ | Designated funds £ | Restricted funds £ | Total 2022 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income from:** | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 4 | 8,531 | - | - | 8,351 |
| Charitable activities | 5 | | | | |
| Grants and contracts | | 471,215 | - | 838,926 | 1,310,141 |
| Chargeable services | | 270,846 | - | - | 270,846 |
| Other trading activities | | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | 6 | 258,951 | - | - | 258,951 |
| Other trading income | 6 | 9,369 | - | - | 9,369 |
| Investments | 7 | 10,701 | - | - | 10,701 |
| **Total income** | | 1,029,613 | - | 838,926 | 1,868,539 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | |
| Costs of raising funds | 8 | | | | |
| Subsidiary expenditure | | 248,230 | - | - | 248,230 |
| Investment management fees | | 3,899 | - | - | 3,899 |
| **Charitable activities** | 9 | | | | |
| Operation of the charity | | 762,402 | 53,802 | 544,822 | 1,361,026 |
| **Total expenditure** | | 1,014,531 | 53,802 | 544,822 | 1,613,155 |
| **Net movement before investment gains/(losses)** | | 15,082 | ( 53,802 ) | 294,104 | 255,384 |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | | ( 61,248 ) | - | - | ( 61,248 ) |
| Transfers between funds | 23 | - | - | - | - |
| **Net movement in funds** | | ( 46,166 ) | ( 53,802 ) | 294,104 | 194,136 |
| **Reconciliation of funds** | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 592,829 | 276,644 | 145,554 | 1,015,027 |
| **Total funds carried forward** | | 546,663 | 222,842 | 439,658 | 1,209,163 |

## 4. Donations and legacies

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Sir James Knott Trust | 7,000 | 7,000 |
| Durham University | - | 1,491 |
| NAVCA | 10,000 | - |
| Other donations | 1,542 | 40 |
| | 18,542 | 8,531 |

## 5. Income from grants and contracts

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| **Summary of grants** | | |
| CNTW NHS Foundation Trust | - | 4,880 |
| Barbour Foundation | 15,000 | 5,000 |
| Community Foundation | - | 10,000 |
| Newcastle Gateshead CCG VCS | - | 300,000 |
| Newcastle University School of Pharmacy | - | 1,000 |
| Newcastle City Council | 141,750 | 147,000 |
| Gateshead Council | 153,667 | 142,167 |
| NHS ICB | 43,337 | 42,000 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via VODA | 30,386 | 29,500 |
| Newcastle City Council – BME Health & Wellbeing Development Support | 45,000 | 45,000 |
| Gateshead Council - Volunteer Centre | 62,166 | 43,333 |
| Community Renewal Fund via Gateshead Council | - | 29,987 |
| Gateshead Council - VCSE Digital Transformation | - | 15,000 |
| Police & Crime Commissioner Northumbria | 69,249 | 47,710 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via North East Law Centre | 25,763 | 30,000 |
| Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council | 106,608 | 159,912 |
| NHS Newcastle and Gateshead ICB | 241,929 | 234,400 |
| Community Foundation | - | 8,999 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via VONNE | - | 2,890 |
| NIHR | - | 11,363 |
| Newcastle City Council – community Champion | 7,625 | - |
| Community Foundation – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | 5,481 | - |
| Community Foundation via Linden Family Fund | 5,000 | - |
| Gateshead Council- UKSPF Digital Inclusion Project | 87,500 | - |
| NIHR - Mental Health | 3,463 | - |
| Newcastle University – Engaging Roma Women | 2,500 | - |
| NHS/ICS via VONNE | 19,064 | - |
| NHS/ICB Gateshead | 50,000 | - |
| OPCC WSIPP | 9,990 | - |
| | 1,125,478 | 1,310,141 |

## 6. Other trading activities

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Income from trading subsidiary | 291,006 | 258,951 |
| Other trading income | 66,255 | 9,369 |
| | 357,261 | 268,320 |

## 7. Investment income

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Income from investments | 3,955 | 10,701 |

## 8. Raising funds

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| **Trading subsidiary costs** | | |
| Staff costs | 320,423 | 212,908 |
| Overheads | 148,258 | 38,322 |
| | 468,681 | 251,230 |
| **Other trading activities** | | |
| Investment management fees | 11,492 | 3,899 |
| | 480,173 | 252,129 |

## 9. Charitable activities expenditure

| | Activities undertaken directly | Support costs | Total 2023 | Total 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Voluntary Sector Support | 932,845 | 169,789 | 1,102,634 | 665,826 |
| Advocacy | 596,258 | 133,406 | 729,664 | 695,200 |
| | 1,529,103 | 303,195 | 1,832,298 | 1,361,026 |

## 10. Support costs

| | Total 2023 | Total 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Management & admin staff salaries | 67,247 | 99,280 |
| Facility costs | 43,103 | 47,837 |
| Office costs | 102,101 | 49,112 |
| Professional fees | 59,884 | 34,235 |
| Depreciation | 8,580 | 8,291 |
| | 280,915 | 238,755 |

## 11. Governance costs

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Auditors and accountancy costs | 19,899 | 12,000 |
| Annual Review, AGM & trustee planning | 2,381 | 1,933 |
| | 22,280 | 13,933 |

## 12. Net income for the year

Net income is stated after charging;

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Depreciation | 9,137 | 8,578 |
| Operating lease rentals | 228,417 | 248,554 |

## 13. Auditors remuneration

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Auditors fees | 13,500 | 10,000 |
| | 13,500 | 10,000 |

## 14. Financial performance of the charitable company

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities includes the results of the wholly owned subsidiary

The summary financial performance of the charity alone is;

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Income | 1,503,926 | 1,652,917 |
| Expenditure | ( 1,843,790 ) | ( 1,364,925 ) |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | ( 49,688 ) | ( 61,248 ) |
| **Net income** | 389,552 | 226,744 |

## 15. Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

The total staff costs and employees benefits were as follows:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Wages and salaries | 1,512,762 | 1,152,155 |
| Social security costs | 123,864 | 101,811 |
| Other pension costs | 61,030 | 51,202 |
| | 1,697,656 | 1,305,168 |

The average number of employees during the year was as follows:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number |
| Advocacy | 17 | 22 |
| HAREF | 7 | 4 |
| Business Services | 11 | 10 |
| Support & Development | 9 | 8 |
| Commercial | 1 | 1 |
| Core | 3 | 3 |
| Marketing | 1 | 1 |
| | 49 | 49 |

One employee received remuneration of more than £0 (2022 - £60,00)

The Trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment in the year (2022 – £nil). No Trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2022 - £nil).

There were 6 expenses paid to trustees during the year totalling £50 (2022 – £6)

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Chief Executive. The total employee benefits of the Management Team of the charity were £ 68,350 (2022 - £52,823).

## 16. Tangible fixed assets

### Group

| | Equipment, fixtures & fittings £ | Restricted office equipment £ | Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cost** | | | |
| At 1 October 2022 | 46,721 | 19,771 | 66,492 |
| Additions | 14,205 | - | 14,205 |
| At 30 September 2023 | 60,926 | 19,771 | 80,697 |
| **Depreciation** | | | |
| At 1 April 2022 | 40,328 | 10,984 | 51,312 |
| Charge for the year | 4,195 | 4,942 | 9,137 |
| At 30 September 2023 | 44,523 | 15,926 | 60,449 |
| **Net book value** | | | |
| At 30 September 2023 | 16,403 | 3,845 | 20,248 |
| At 30 September 2022 | 6,393 | 8,787 | 15,180 |

### Charity

| | Equipment, fixtures & fittings £ | Restricted office equipment £ | Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cost** | | | |
| At 1 October 2022 | 44,493 | 19,771 | 64,264 |
| Additions | 14,205 | - | 14,205 |
| At 30 September 2023 | 58,698 | 19,771 | 78,469 |
| **Depreciation** | | | |
| At 1 April 2022 | 40,041 | 10,984 | 51,025 |
| Charge for the year | 3,638 | 4,942 | 8,580 |
| At 30 September 2023 | 43,679 | 15,926 | 59,605 |
| **Net book value** | | | |
| At 30 September 2023 | 15,019 | 3,845 | 18,864 |
| At 30 September 2022 | 4,452 | 8,787 | 13,239 |

## 17. Investments

| | Group 2023 | Charity 2023 | Group 2022 | Charity 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Listed investments | 453,255 | 453,255 | 420,136 | 420,136 |
| Investment in subsidiary undertaking | - | 2 | - | 2 |
| | 453,255 | 453,257 | 420,136 | 420,138 |

| Company | Country | Percentage Shareholding | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| Connected Voice Business Services Ltd | England and Wales | 100% | Ordinary |

Connected Voice Business Services Ltd whose principle activity is the provision of financial and administrative services for charitable organisations. The results and summary of assets and liabilities of the company are as follows:

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Turnover | 291,006 | 258,951 |
| Administration costs | ( 468,681 ) | ( 294,559 ) |
| Profit for the year | ( 177,675 ) | ( 35,608 ) |
| Distribution to Connected Voice | - | - |

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Total assets | 453,020 | 614,733 |
| Total liabilities | ( 666,301 ) | ( 650,339 ) |
| Shareholders' funds | ( 213,281 ) | ( 35,606 ) |

**Fixed assets listed investments**

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Market value at 1 October 2022 | 420,136 |
| Additions to investments at cost | 352,125 |
| Disposals at carrying value | ( 334,197 ) |
| Revaluation of investments to market value | 15,191 |
| Market value at 30 September 2023 | 453,255 |
| Historical cost | 438,505 |

## 18. Stocks

| | Group 2023 | Group 2022 | Charity 2023 | Charity 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Work in progress | 39,979 | 30,968 | 10,081 | 22,056 |

## 19. Debtors

| | Group 2023 | Group 2022 | Charity 2023 | Charity 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Trade debtors | 234,899 | 354,183 | 190,904 | 380,139 |
| Prepayments | 159,789 | 49,799 | 159,789 | 48,902 |
| Amounts due from subsidiary undertaking | - | - | 238,985 | 106,844 |
| | 394,688 | 403,982 | 589,678 | 535,885 |

## 20. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

| | Group 2023 | Group 2022 | Charity 2023 | Charity 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Trade creditors | 19,728 | 16,368 | 19,728 | 27,921 |
| Social security and other taxes | 53,170 | 81,887 | 28,846 | 38,434 |
| Accruals and other creditors | 141,116 | 51,056 | 138,116 | 50,227 |
| Holding accounts | 399,992 | 435,982 | - | - |
| Deferred Income | 7,396 | 16,711 | 7,396 | 16,711 |
| | 621,402 | 602,004 | 194,086 | 133,293 |

### Deferred income

| | £ |
|---|---|
| At 1 October 2022 | 16,711 |
| Released to incoming resources | ( 16,711 ) |
| Amounts deferred during the year | 7,396 |
| | 7,396 |

## 21. Holding Accounts

| | Opening balance as at 1 Oct 2023 | Receipts | Payments | Closing balance 30 Sept 23 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Connected Voice Business Services Ltd | 435,982 | 14,684,779 | ( 14,720,769 ) | 399,992 |
| | 435,982 | 14,684,779 | ( 14,720,769 ) | 399,992 |

During the year Connected Voice' subsidiary held monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services Ltd provides a payroll and bookkeeping service to a number of small organisations and holds monies for this purpose. Holding account balances are included in cash, but are also held as a creditor as these amounts are technically repayable to clients.

## 22. Prior period adjustment

A prior period adjustment has been made in respect of;

(1) Reallocation of the Gateshead Infrastructure Support, Gateshead Volunteer Centre and Newcastle Infrastructure Support fund, incorrectly disclosed as a unrestricted funds.

**Change to the balance sheet**

| | As previously reported | Adjustment | As restated At 30 September 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| **Funds** | | | |
| Unrestricted funds | 600,436 | ( 53,773 ) | 546,663 |
| Restricted funds | 385,885 | 53,773 | 439,658 |
| Designated funds | 222,842 | - | 222,842 |
| | 1,209,163 | - | 1,209,163 |

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023***

**23. Analysis of funds**

| *Year ended 30 September 2023* | Balance 1 October 2022 £ | Incoming resources £ | Resources expended £ | Transfers £ | Gain/ (loss) £ | Balance 30 Sept 2023 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Unrestricted funds** | | | | | | |
| General fund | 546,663 | 1,114,937 | ( 1,310,476) | 24,817 | 49,688 | 425,629 |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Digital transformation | 57,656 | - | ( 40,938) | 15,000 | - | 31,718 |
| Haref | 25,000 | - | ( 22,205) | - | - | 2,795 |
| Office Move | 50,000 | - | ( 14,475) | ( 14,205 ) | - | 21,320 |
| Workforce Strategy | 35,150 | - | - | ( 35,150 ) | - | - |
| Advocacy | 42,036 | - | ( 20,602) | - | - | 21,434 |
| Governance | 13,000 | - | ( 13,539) | 539 | - | - |
| | 769,505 | 1,114,937 | ( 1,422,235) | ( 8,999 ) | 49,688 | 502,896 |
| **Restricted funds** | | | | | | |
| Restricted IT equipment | 8,787 | - | - | - | - | 8,787 |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | ( 7,295 ) | - | - | - |
| HAREF (Restricted Donation) | 30,372 | - | ( 5,527) | - | - | 24,845 |
| NIHAR HAREF COVID | 3,569 | - | ( 1,128) | - | - | 2,441 |
| Newcastle/Gateshead CCG | 290,258 | - | ( 290,258 ) | | | - |
| NCC Public Health Digital | 21,600 | - | ( 21,600) | - | - | - |
| North of Tyne Volunteering project (VODA) | 24,004 | 30,386 | ( 25,876) | - | - | 28,514 |
| Gateshead Infrastructure | 10,212 | 153,667 | ( 149,733) | - | - | 14,146 |
| Gateshead Volunteer Centre | 33,616 | 62,166 | ( 75,364 ) | - | - | 20,418 |
| Newcastle Infrastructure | 9,945 | 141,750 | ( 141,574 ) | - | - | 10,121 |
| On the Hoof | - | 6,516 | ( 6,057 ) | - | - | 459 |
| National Lottery Community Fund | - | 25,763 | ( 17,766 ) | - | - | 7,997 |
| PCC Hate Crime | - | 69,249 | ( 65,672 ) | - | - | 3,577 |
| Refugees and Asylum Seekers | - | 5,481 | ( 7,520 ) | 2,039 | - | - |
| NIHR Mental Health | - | 3,463 | ( 3,367 ) | - | - | 96 |
| ARC Roma | - | 2,500 | ( 2,699 ) | 199 | - | - |
| HAREF Digital inclusion | - | 87,500 | ( 26,812 ) | - | - | 60,688 |
| Health Equity | - | 19,064 | ( 9,896 ) | - | - | 9,168 |
| Health Equity Mental Health | - | 50,000 | ( 8,537 ) | - | - | 41,463 |
| UKSPF Local community Partnership | - | - | ( 6,671 ) | 6,671 | - | - |
| OPCC WSiPP | - | 9,990 | ( 9,990 ) | - | - | - |
| Waiting Well (VONNE) | - | 2,500 | ( 754 ) | - | - | 1,746 |
| UKSPF North of Tyne Volunteering | - | - | ( 90 ) | 90 | - | - |
| VSCE Resilience Fund | - | 10,000 | ( 6,050 ) | - | - | 3,950 |
| | 439,658 | 679,995 | ( 890,236) | 8,999 | - | 238,416 |
| **Total funds** | 1,209,163 | 1,794,932 | ( 2,312,471) | - | 49,688 | 741,312 |

## 23. Analysis of funds

| | Balance 1 October 2021 | Incoming resources | Resources expended | Transfers | Gain/ (loss) | Balance 30 Sept 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| *Year ended 30 September 2022 as restated* | | | | | | |
| **Unrestricted funds** | | | | | | |
| General fund | 592,829 | 1,029,613 | ( 1,014,531 ) | - | ( 61,248 ) | 546,663 |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Business development | 8,842 | - | ( 8,842 ) | - | - | - |
| Digital transformation | 60,000 | - | ( 2,344 ) | - | - | 57,656 |
| COVID resilience | 12,802 | - | ( 12,802 ) | - | - | - |
| Haref | 25,000 | - | - | - | - | 25,000 |
| Office Move | 50,000 | - | - | - | - | 50,000 |
| Workforce Strategy | 50,000 | - | ( 14,850 ) | - | - | 35,150 |
| Advocacy | 50,000 | - | ( 7,964 ) | - | - | 42,036 |
| Governance | 20,000 | - | ( 7,000 ) | - | - | 13,000 |
| | 276,644 | - | ( 53,802 ) | - | - | 222,842 |
| **Restricted funds** | | | | | | |
| Restricted IT equipment | 13,730 | - | ( 4,943 ) | - | - | 8,787 |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | - | - | - | 7,295 |
| HAREF (restricted donation) | 33,372 | - | ( 3,000 ) | - | - | 30,372 |
| NIHAR HAREF COVID | 3,027 | 12,363 | ( 11,821 ) | - | - | 3,569 |
| Safeguarding Training | 7,529 | 2,890 | ( 10,419 ) | - | - | - |
| Community Foundation | 22,944 | - | ( 22,944 ) | - | - | - |
| NCC Public Health Digital | 33,000 | - | ( 11,400 ) | - | - | 21,600 |
| North of Tyne Volunteering project (VODA) | 17,000 | 29,500 | ( 22,496 ) | - | - | 24,004 |
| Community Foundation | 6,782 | - | ( 6,782 ) | - | - | - |
| Police & Crime Commissioner Northumbria | 875 | 49,201 | ( 50,076 ) | - | - | - |
| Newcastle/Gateshead CCG | - | 300,000 | ( 9,742 ) | - | - | 290,258 |
| Future You Project | - | 29,987 | ( 29,987 ) | - | - | - |
| National Lottery Community Fund | - | 30,000 | ( 30,000 ) | - | - | - |
| Gateshead Council (Digital Transformation) | | 15,000 | ( 15,000 ) | - | - | - |
| Community Foundation | - | 8,999 | ( 8,999 ) | - | - | - |
| NHS Funding | - | 6,250 | ( 6,250 ) | - | - | - |
| Gateshead Infrastructure | - | 142,167 | ( 131,955 ) | - | - | 10,212 |
| Gateshead Volunteer Centre | - | 59,499 | ( 25,883 ) | - | - | 33,616 |
| Newcastle Infrastructure | - | 153,070 | ( 143,125 ) | - | - | 9,945 |
| | 145,554 | 838,926 | ( 544,822 ) | - | - | 439,658 |
| **Total funds** | 1,015,027 | 1,868,539 | ( 1,613,155 ) | - | ( 61,248 ) | 1,209,163 |

Transfers from restricted funds relate to capital grants where all conditions linked to restrictions have been met.

23. **Analysis of funds** ***(Continued)***
**DESIGNATED FUNDS:**

**Digital Transformation**
For new digital infrastructure including new telephony, software and processes.

**HAREF**
To extend the ongoing Haref Allies Project It is expected that this fund will be utilised by 30 September 2023

**Office Move**
To cover additional costs associated with the office move to One Strawberry Lane. The move took place in January 2023.

**Advocacy**
Development and restructuring of the advocacy service.

**Governance**
Governance and associated legal fees.

**Workforce Strategy**
To support work to consider regrading and promotion processes within Connected Voice.

**RESTRICTED FUNDS:**
**Restricted IT equipment**
Providing resources to enable key staff to work from home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

**SkillsBridge**
Facilitating and maintaining a network of professionals, volunteering their time and expertise to support the ongoing development of voluntary organisations in the North East

**HAREF (Restricted Donation)**
An ICB NHS funded project to support engagement with ethnically marginalised communities across Newcastle and Gateshead into health services

**NIHAR HAREF COVID**
NIHR funded research project working with community partners to look at health messaging in the age of Covid

**Newcastle/Gateshead CCG**
Fund to be distributed to VCSE organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead with increasing running costs who tackle health issues, or deliver preventative work around health and wellbeing in order to provide them with additional support during the cost of living crisis.

**NCC Public Health Digital** – To support the sector to improve digital skills through undertaking a digital assessment and recommendations how to improve this.

**23. Analysis of funds *(Continued)***

**North of Tyne Volunteering Project (VODA)**
To create the North of Tyne as a volunteer area of excellence, this is a five year project.

**Gateshead Infrastructure**
VCSE infrastructure support contract for Gateshead.

**Gateshead Volunteer Centre**
To establish and run an independent Volunteer Centre for Gateshead

**Newcastle Infrastructure**
VCSE infrastructure support contract for Newcastle.

**On the Hoof**
To fund On the Hoof health information bulletin.

**National Lottery Community Fund**
To support families through crisis.

**PCC Hate Crime**
Providing Hate Crime Advocacy, supporting people who have experienced, or are at risk of hate crime in the Northumbria area.

**Refugees & Asylum Seekers**
Direct advocacy to refugee and asylum seekers to have voices heard and access to services.

**NIHR Mental Health**
Research project looking at how culturally competent mental health services are for ethnically marginalised communities in Newcastle and Nottingham.

**ARC Roma**
Research project for engaging Roma women in the co-design of an antenatal care information resource.

**HAREF Digital Inclusion**
An ICB NHS funded project to improve Digital Inclusion in Health and Social Care Project in Gateshead.

**Health Equity**
A project for supporting better links between the VCSE and social prescribers in Newcastle and running Health and wellbeing event for the VCSE.

**Health Equity Mental Health**
An ICB NHS funded project improving VCSE Engagement in the Mental Health Transformation in Gateshead.

**UKSPF Local community Partnership**
Building VCSE sector capacity with organisations in the outer west and north of Newcastle

**23. Analysis of funds *(Continued)***

**OPCC WSIPP**
Consulting with young women across the north east about how safe they feel in public places

**Waiting Well (VONNE)**
An ICB NHS funded project offering targeted support to certain groups of patients waiting for surgery in the North East and North Cumbria.

**UKSPF North of Tyne Volunteering**
Project to enhance support for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations in Newcastle.

**VCSE Resilience Fund**
To provide support packages comprising business resilience and management support for community sector organisations based in Newcastle.

**Safeguarding Training**
To make safeguarding resources available at a local level, deliver regular training sessions and create new/build on existing networks.

**Community Foundation NTE DCS Fund**
To deliver finance training, cultural competency training and specialist consultancy support for the VCS in Newcastle and Gateshead.

**Community Foundation**
To develop Haref Allies membership offer.

**Future You Project**
Future You Employability Project

**Gateshead Council (Digital Transformation)**
Funded by Gateshead Council for Digital Transformation VCS.

## 24. Analysis of net assets between funds

*Year ended 30 September 2023*

| | Unrestricted Funds | Designated Funds | Restricted Funds | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Tangible assets | 16,403 | - | 3,845 | 20,248 |
| Investments | 453,255 | - | - | 453,255 |
| Current assets | 219,973 | - | 234,571 | 454,544 |
| Creditors amounts due within one year | ( 264,002 ) | 77,267 | - | ( 186,735 ) |
| | 425,629 | 77,267 | 238,416 | 741,312 |

*Year ended 30 September 2022 as restated*

| | Unrestricted Funds | Designated Funds | Restricted Funds | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Tangible assets | 6,393 | - | 8,787 | 15,180 |
| Investments | 420,136 | - | - | 420,136 |
| Current assets | 722,138 | 222,842 | 430,871 | 1,375,851 |
| Creditors amounts due within one year | ( 602,004 ) | - | - | ( 602,004 ) |
| | 546,663 | 222,842 | 439,658 | 1,209,163 |

## 25. Operating leases

The future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows;

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Not later than one year | 29,142 | 20,140 |
| Later than one and not later than five years | 109,275 | 111,414 |
| | 90,000 | 117,000 |
| | 228,417 | 248,554 |

## 26. Related Party Transactions

There have been no related party transactions during the year (2022 – none).

## 27. Pension Commitments

The charity operates a money purchase pension scheme. The pension scheme cost charge of £61,030 (2022 - £51,202 represent amounts payable by the charity. Unremitted amounts of £13,675 (2022 - £19,327) is included in creditors.

## 28. Capital Commitments

As at 30 September 2023, the charity had no capital commitments (2022 - £nil).

## 29. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

| | 2023<br>£ | 2022<br>£ |
|---|---|---|
| Net income for the year | ( 467,851 ) | 194,136 |
| Adjustments for: | | |
| Investment income | ( 3,955 ) | ( 10,701 ) |
| Depreciation on tangible assets | 9,137 | 8,578 |
| Losses/(Gains) on investments | ( 15,191) | 61,247 |
| Increase in stock | ( 9,011 ) | ( 7,781 ) |
| Decrease in debtors | 9,294 | ( 21,630 ) |
| Increase in creditors | 19,398 | ( 85,555 ) |
| Net cash flow from operating activities | ( 458,179 ) | 138,294 |

## 30. Analysis of net debt

The charitable company had no debt during the year.

**Connected Voice**

England & Wales - Charity number 1125877

# Accounts

Company number: 06681475 (England and Wales)
Charity number: 1125877

# Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**Report and Financial Statements**

**For the Year Ended 30 September 2022**

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 30 September 2022, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Accounting and, Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard's applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

### Chair's Report

The 12 months that ended in September 2022 were some of the most challenging for the VCSE Sector in memory. As society emerged in faltering steps from the pandemic, the human cost continued to grow, measured in terms of the harm to mental wellbeing, the disfunctions of a divided society or the impact of the economic shocks the flowed from Brexit, Covid and the war in Ukraine. In Newcastle and Gateshead, with some of the highest percentages of people living in poverty in the UK, the need for the VCSE Sector was greater than ever. The Sector responded characteristically, doing everything it could, despite an extremely challenging funding environment and it is to the massive credit of everyone who touched the lives of others that they achieved what they did.

The work of Connected Voice over those 12 months is captured in the following pages – and so much of it has made such significant impact to the Sector and the people it serves. I want to devote this Chair's Report, though, to two specific topics: our Staff and our Trustees.

The Staff of Connected Voice have just moved into the wonderful new building at One Strawberry Lane (come & visit, if you haven't already!). Although the building is excellent and we are very grateful to be the tenants of Home Group in it, in one sense the building is entirely irrelevant. Connected Voice isn't an address or a set of offices and meeting rooms – it's simply the sum of all individuals who work in it. In the last 12 months:

- Staff in Support & Development have been at the front line, working with so many in the Sector trying to figure out how to handle increased need at the same time as navigating funding, grants and keeping up to date with training and development.
- Staff in Advocacy have worked with tact and empathy, skill and determination to give a voice to those without one or who might find their voice ignored. Advocacy was recognised nationally in 2022 with the Outstanding Advocacy Award for strategic work on safeguarding and the hate crime advocacy service.
- Staff in CVBS have been at the sharp end of working with organisations trying so hard to make ends meet and navigate the complexities of producing accounts, payroll changes and independent examinations.
- Staff in Harefand Volunteering have been growing their impact, reaching out to communities and harnessing the power of good will – and, as with all their colleagues in the other groups, there just aren't enough hours in the day.

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

Every person who works for Connected Voice has had the same hopes and fears as everyone else in Newcastle and Gateshead in those 12 months – personal worries about the pandemic and its effects on family, friends and neighbours, alarm at the way that bills started to rise and inflation roared back in a way that we haven't seen in 30 years. I'm glad that Connected Voice, along with others in the Sector, was able to provide some Cost of Living Support to Staff in 2022, making those worries a little less. As a Board we were delighted in August that Connected Voice retained its Investors in People award, because it's the Staff of an organisation who truly tell you if it's an organisation that treats Staff well, enables them to find fulfilment in their work and nurtures a culture in which people can speak up and be listened to. A massive 'thank you' to all the Staff of Connected Voice, for everything.

The Trustees of Connected Voice – at time of writing there are 10 – are a diverse group of people with skills and experiences that aim to reflect the communities that Connected Voice serves. Trustees are supporters, a sounding board, a critical friend – even as they challenge and scrutinise and seek to comply with the multitude of regulations and responsibilities that go with the role. Volunteering is the theme of our AGM and Trusteeship is a particular form of volunteering, which I want to acknowledge here. The time a Trustee of Connected Voice donates ranges from about 30 hours per year to over 300 hours per year. In the 12 months covered by this report, Connected Voice Trustees have probably donated over 1,000 hours and brought their experience, insight and networks to serve Connected Voice in a way that that would have been completely unaffordable otherwise. And they have done that on top of everything else in their day jobs, in their family lives and without pay. For all of that, thank you.

In closing, there are two Trustees I would like to mention in particular. Nitin Shukla left the Board during the year to prevent there being a conflict of interest with his role in tackling Hate Crime within the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner. Nitin changed the conversation in Connected Voice and about Equity, Diversity & Inclusion as well as bringing his significant experience of governance. Paula Park retires at the AGM in April this year after serving a 3 year term – and her financial acumen, sharp mind and straight talking have been invaluable. Both leave a big gap and I'm glad that through open recruitment we are welcoming new Trustees at the AGM.

Simon Elliott
Chair, Connected Voice/April 2023

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

### OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objectives of Connected Voice are, 'to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of any locality or community in the County of Northumberland and in the neighbourhood of the River Tyne.'

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 having due regard to the general guidance of the Charity Commission with respect to public benefit when reviewing the Connected Voice aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the trustees considered how the planned activities would contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Connected Voice has the following values:

**We amplify voices**
From individuals to organisations, we believe everyone has a right to be heard. Trusted to listen, understand and advocate, we strive for excellence. We're open and honest, we stick by people and give our support to ensure their voices are heard.

**We champion equality**
We believe that diversity should be celebrated and valued, and everyone deserves equality. Working towards a fairer future for all, we won't stand still. By making an impact on causes big and small, we want to improve the quality of life across the region.

**We inspire change**
Courageous, resourceful and determined, we will challenge unfairness and ask difficult questions. Working effectively and accountably to instil confidence. We aim to become stronger and more sustainable to inspire positive and lasting change throughout our community.

**We support action**
We understand from our own experiences the challenges people face. We truly value people and we won't judge or dictate. Leading independently and side by side with our communities and partners, we share our resources, skills and expertise to enable people to take meaningful action.

**We connect people**
At the heart of voluntary and community action for 90 years, we are immersed and rooted in the North East. We work collectively and inclusively to connect, grow and strengthen our society. We are warm and approachable, and we create opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from and empower one another.

Connected Voice exists in service of organisations committed to voluntary and social action in Newcastle & Gateshead and beyond. We work to support the enduring mission of those organisations to benefit society by reducing inequality and enriching lives.

Over the year we contributed to our overall purpose in the following ways:

- As a high performing and leading organisation - providing a voice for individuals and the voluntary and community sector.
- By providing a wide range of advocacy services and support to vulnerable people
- By championing the value and importance of voluntary and community action
- By strengthening voluntary and community organisations through our advice and training services
- By ensuring VCSE organisations had multiple opportunities to come together for peer support, networking and working collectively
- By being proactive in tailoring our support to VCSE organisations as they met the additional needs caused by the cost of living crisis
- By beginning work to transform finance support for the VCSE sector within our trading arm
- By highlighting issues around health inequality in Newcastle and Gateshead, and addressing these through our work, including the work of Haref with our ethnically minoritised communities
- By growing engagement with our health equality work through Haref Allies and increasing our training offer
- By continuing work on our EDI Framework, working towards ensuring our membership and staff reflect the communities we serve
- By growing our work in directly supporting people to volunteer with VCSE organisations

### Our Volunteers

Connected Voice values the unique contribution of our volunteers and the added value they bring. It is the intention of Connected Voice that all volunteers are supported, respected and valued. We encourage volunteers to fulfil their potential and aim to provide meaningful roles where both the organisation and the volunteer mutually benefit.
We continued with our staff volunteering policy, which allows staff two paid days off per year to volunteer locally. We share examples of staff volunteering regularly within our team meetings. We have policies and procedures in place to support our volunteers, and work closely with our partner, Volunteer Centre Newcastle, to ensure we use best practice in volunteering.

### Our Staff

We recognise the value and expertise of our staff, and we strive to put in place appropriate support as a good employer. We have a range of staff engagement and involvement activities, including a staff council and ideas forum and an annual staff away day. We hold the Better Health at Work award, Gold level. We are an accredited Living Wage Employer. We regularly hold 'time to talk' mental health sessions for staff. During the year we re-awarded the Investors In People accreditation. We hold the North of Tyne Good Work Pledge, making commitments to support the five pillars of the scheme.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Connected Voice enables and promotes voluntary and community action, providing voluntary sector organisations with services that enable them to be well run, fulfil their aims and objectives and provide them with the opportunity to extend their influence in Newcastle and Gateshead through the sector's collective voice.

We do this by providing expert advice on governance, on the policies and practices that voluntary organisations need to have to ensure they are safe and securely run, and by providing funding advice based on experience and knowledge of what funders are seeking in a good application.

We hold regular events and training to keep the sector informed, and to enable them to learn from and connect with each other. We provide opportunities for VCSE organisations to increase their reach and influence.

Connected Voice focuses on VCSE involvement, enabling engagement directly with public sector agencies and acting as a voice for the sector within multi-sector partnerships. During this year we continued to develop our role in representation and voice - to ensure we are making the most of the limited time we have available to do this work, and to fill the gaps have emerged as more and more of our day to day work focuses directly on advice and support, rather than wider policy issues.

We engage in local authority-wide, sub-regional, regional and national activities because we want to be able to promote, share and deliver best practice. We work with a wide range of public sector partners – local authorities, NHS trusts, Local NHS, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities and many others.

Our Haref project is a network of 90+ ethically minoritised-led community organisations who work together to tackle health inequalities. Haref continued to see an increase in membership and people undertaking cultural competency training. Via Haref, we continue to raise the voices of those communities, and to share key public health messages, health information, etc.

The Connected Voice Advocacy team has continued to grow and develop during 2021/22, with new senior advocates in post. We were delighted to launch our research work on Hate Relationships with Durham University, and to secure specific funding for the additional advocacy work we had identified as necessary, including work with refugees and asylum seekers.

We continued to develop our generated income with the support of our Commercial Development Executive, with generated income growing across Advocacy, Haref and Support and Development teams.

Below is a summary of how we delivered against our strategic objectives:

- Embed the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework and action plan in our work.

We continued our programme of EDI training across the organisation, involving both staff and trustees. Topics included general EDI training, digital accessibility, cultural competency, Jewish Cultural Awareness, and LGBTQIA+ awareness. Our EDI group monitored our progress against the framework. We grew our delivery of EDI training and cultural competency training and take up of this has been increasing.

- Work closely as a commercial team to achieve our annual income targets
- We achieved our income targets in all areas with the exception of Connected Voice Business Services – which requires an investment of additional staffing and systems over the next year
- Provide leadership on climate emergency – both in terms of our actions as an organisation, and our work with VCSE organisations

Our staff climate group continued to meet and monitor our progress against our action plan. We trained staff in Going Green Together, Carbon Foot-printing, and we planned our move to a greener and more accessible office space.

- Embed partnership working and collaboration across all of our work, and support VCSE organisations to work collaboratively wherever possible

We continued to bring VCSE organisations together regularly to share information and collaborate, growing the numbers of people involved in our networks. The number of organisations attending our Youth and Community Network, Women's Network and Volunteer Co-ordinators network continues to grow. We strengthened our partnership working on volunteering through the North of Tyne volunteering programme, and on training via the Elements programme. Our advocacy team continue to play an active role in the advocacy leaders network at a national level. Our Haref team work collaboratively with the network and their training offer is co-produced with network members.

**Connected Voice Support and Development**

Support and Development works with community organisations, charities and social enterprises working in Newcastle and Gateshead. We provide advice and guidance on all aspects of running an organisation, a comprehensive training package and opportunities to network and share best practice.

**Support and Guidance**
The Support and Development team worked with **274** organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead across the year, providing advice and guidance on topics including legal structures, governance, funding, policies and procedures, and organisational development.

The team developed a new cost of living resource section on our website which was has been well used and regularly updated.

**Funding**
The Team helped VCSE organisations to secure **£945,806** of grant funding.

Connected Voice secured **£285,000 of funding from the NHS** to pass directly on in grants to VCSE organisations who were struggling to meet increased costs because of the cost of living crisis.

We held the annual Newcastle and Gateshead Funding Fair, which was back in person after a two-year online offer. 17 funders and 134 VCSE organisations attended.

**Networking Events**
We delivered 6 successful VCSE Networking Events during the period, attended by 256 delegates. Topics were:

- Mental Health
- Children, Young People and Families
- Digital Inclusion
- Food
- Men's wellbeing
- Volunteering

**Training**
We continued to grow our training offer significantly, increasing the number of training sessions from 40 last year to 72 this year. Sessions included: Funding Strategy, Effective Bid-Writing, EDI, Cyber Security, Introduction to Safeguarding, Good Governance, and Volunteering. These have continued to be highly valued, well attended and received.

We worked with other Connected Voice departments to support training on finance, Advocacy and Health Inequalities. *"The training is brilliant, especially as sessions are short enough to fit into a working day. Also it's free which for charities with small budgets is very helpful."*

**OurGateshead**
This community website saw usage increase significantly over the year as organisations began 'the new normal'. We had 202,221 page views, up significantly on the previous year. www.OurGateshead.org

**Premium Services**
We increased our income generation through charged for services during the year, seeing an increase in the number of organisations using our services to undertake organisational reviews, governance reviews, write policies and procedures, and complete specialist bespoke training including EDI training.

**Information**
We are a key source of information for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Newcastle and Gateshead. In the reporting period we:

- Distributed fortnightly electronic news bulletins to 1,500 plus subscribers
- Distributed a monthly health and social care bulletin to the sector (On the Hoof)
- Produced 4 quarterly magazines shared with 1,500 plus members and key contacts, magazine themes:
    - The Power of Local
    - Cost Of Living Crisis
    - Children, Young People and Families
    - Meaningful Inclusion
- Developed our Twitter following from 4,225 followers in October 2021 to 4,799
- Increased our followers on LinkedIn from 485 to 1,000 and on Facebook from 995 to 1,400

**Connected Voice Haref**

Connected Voice Haref works with ethnically marginalised communities to identify their key issues around health and improve the health information available to them. We help health services gain a better understanding of what communities need and we build confidence within communities so they can talk to health services about their cultural needs.

**Haref Network**

- We held four meetings for the Haref Network with discussions about:
- How people and organisations were feeling during the pandemic and what concerns about delivering service and opening up
- Support from Connected Voice support & development and advocacy services
- COVID-19 update, the Community Champions program and how to get involved
- NIHR lead discussion on research priorities for the Network
- What type of Health information session community groups wanted

We confirmed the four key health priorities with the Haref Network as:

- Health information on accessing services/ health information sessions
- Interpreters/translator provision in health services
- Asylum seeker/refugee health care
- Mental health

**Haref Allies**

- Our Haref Allies Development officer administrated the launch of our new paid-for Haref Allies membership starting on 1 May 2022. By the end of September 2022, we had 51 organisations signed up with 92 individual Allies.
- We facilitated sessions for the Haref Allies on 'Good practice for delivering health information session to diverse community groups' and 'How to support colleagues whose first language isn't English'.
- We ran our first Allies Networking event with presentations from Haref Network members Suffrage Sisters Alliance, the British Bangladeshi Network, and the Anti-Racism Lead Newcastle University.

**Cultural Competency Training**

- For the Newcastle City Council Public Health contract, we delivered training to 270 attendees. The contract has been extended until July 2023.
- We refreshed the training session both for online and face-to-face delivery. We extended the length of the session, refreshed slides; included new videos developed by Haref Network members, allowed more discussion time and updated the resource pack.
- We continue to receive requests for paid-for Cultural Competency training and delivered 5 paid-for sessions over the year.

**COVID-19 Response and Community Champions**

- Haref regularly cascaded information linked to: access to services; restrictions, key messages and translated documents; and videos in different languages, linking in with local authority communications teams.
- Haref supported the work of the Newcastle champions program by attending the Champions session, the steering group, and raising the profile of being a Community Champion. We ran conversations with the Haref Network about the community champions program, vaccinations and the easing up of restrictions

**Research projects**

- Long COVID research. We have partnered with Sano Genetics on a new research opportunity for patients with Long COVID (ongoing or recovered), which will explore if genetics impact symptoms and recovery.
- Report: Health Inequalities in the Age of COVID-19-Towards Fairer Health for Disadvantaged Communities. Haref launched findings from our 12-month research project funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration North East and North Cumbria. This research looked at the ways of getting health information, including how to use the NHS and avoid illness, to people who need it most and have greatest difficulty accessing it. We used the lens of COVID-19 messaging as a way of better understanding effective information sharing

**Staffing**

- We hosted a NHS Graduate management placement on a 8-week placement at Haref. They supported the launch of our Haref Allies membership scheme, helped with our Ramadan calendars, and provided useful feedback on our Cultural Competency training for health.
- We recruited an Allies Development officer to manage our Haref Allies membership in September 2021.

The Haref Coordinator was accepted to this year's cohort for the 12-month System steward's leadership program hosted by Collaborative Newcastle.

**Haref evaluation**

- In summer 2022 Haref commissioned an external consultant to evaluate all of our work streams. This seemed like the right time to review Haref's work, look at our strengths, what we could do differently, and how we can take our work forward so we can have the greatest impact. The evaluation looked at:
- An outline and evaluation of Haref areas of work: Network; Allies; Cultural Competency Training; Bulletin: Research partnerships
- Review of benefit/value of Haref for Newcastle and Gateshead communities, commissioners and service providers
- Literature review to situate Haref's work in current policy context relating to health and inequalities
- The report was published in September 2022 and it made recommendations on how to develop Haref in the future.

## Connected Voice Business Services

Our trading subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd continued to provide payroll, accounting and bookkeeping services, supporting over 200 VCSE organisations across the region.

CVBS continued to support organisations to switch to digital finance, providing training as Quickbooks Pro certified advisors. As the reporting year drew to a close we said farewell to the long standing CVBS management team, and began the process of recruiting new staff.

## Connected Voice Advocacy

Connected Voice Advocacy team focuses on making people visible, safeguarded and ensuring services are person centred. The 2021/22 year has brought more challenges for the people we support, including the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, people seeking asylum from the Ukraine, and the more recent cost of living crisis.

Each year we review our Business Plan to look at gaps in service provision and identify which people need additional support. We were then successful in securing funding for Refugees and Asylum Seekers and worked more closely with organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead to offer them holistic support. Funding this year also allowed us to explore the particular needs for those with multiple areas of discrimination in society. We delivered a project to reach older people with advocacy needs who identify as LGBTQIA+ or those ethnically minoritized to explore why they may not previously have accessed advocacy services.

We were also commissioned by Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust and Inclusion North to map out the provision of advocacy services across the North East and Cumbria, the report gives a comprehensive picture of the landscape of advocacy provision and themes in the sector around quality, workforce and networking.

An important aspect of advocacy is to help people to self-advocate, by understanding what they are entitled to, how to communicate well, how to negotiate and speak out. This year we developed a comprehensive Self Advocacy Toolkit, which provides a step –by-step guide for someone to take action. This complements our online tool DIY Advocate® which continues to help people take ownership of their self-advocacy as well as helpful resources and how to guides.

We revisited our Service User Engagement strategy this year and acknowledged that one impact of the Covid 19 pandemic was how we became more focused on one-to-one advocacy and had paused the beneficial ways we have invited people who use our service to contribute. So we have invigorated our strategy and invested in staff time to plan new ways we can meaningfully engage and listen to service users. We have implemented a simplified way to receive regular feedback from people who use services, the Net Promoter Score is recognised across sectors and currently sits at 100%.

Systemic advocacy has increased this year through work with local universities to research topics such as Hate Relationships, long term conditions, the Coronavirus Act. Our strong role on Adult Safeguarding Boards has led to effective planning for Care Home closures, concerns raised on providers of adult social care and effective training for professionals on advocacy referrals.

Several national inquiries and reports have placed Adult Health and Social Care in the spotlight this year. We have had to look closely at how we support some of the most vulnerable in society and the role advocacy plays in challenging poor practice and breaches to people's rights. We contributed to consultations to legislation that impact on the people we work with such as Mental Capacity Act, Mental Health Act, and have explored ways we can improve our role in making institutions a safe space for people to be. We continue to be proud of the dedicated team who fight for people's rights in challenging times.

This year brought lots to celebrate for Connected Voice Advocacy. We received the national Outstanding Advocacy Award, nominated several times for our role in safeguarding and the pioneering work we lead on Hate Crime advocacy. We were awarded the Quality Performance Mark in February 2022
*"CVA are a highly values led organisation; with a passionate, skilled and knowledgeable team, underpinned by strong leadership and robust systems and policies"*

We have continued to expand our range of contracts for individuals, aiming to meet people's needs where we can. Next year we look to share our experience through a comprehensive training package on advocacy skills.

This year our service was funded to deliver community-based advocacy in the following areas:

- **Health and Social Care Advocacy** - supported adults across Newcastle and Gateshead with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs and those from ethnically minoritised and LGBTQ+ communities with social care issues
- **Refugees and Asylum Seekers Advocacy** - supported adults seeking asylum or with refugee status
- **Older People from LGBTQIA+ and Ethnically Minoritised Advocacy** - supported people who have experienced multiple inequalities and disadvantage due to their intersectional identities
- **Gateshead Housing Advocacy** - supported tenants of Gateshead Housing Company with welfare rights issues
- **Families Through Crisis** - provided holistic support to Newcastle families in crisis with North East Law Centre and Changing Lives
- **Hate Crime Advocacy** - supported adults who have been a victim of a hate crime or discrimination across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear
- **Safeguarding Advocacy** - supported adults who were particular vulnerable to abuse during the pandemic
- **Spot Contract Advocacy** - supported adults on a bespoke, individually funded basis around a range of topic such as Child Protection Court Hearings, Post Accident Rehabilitation, Specialist Brain Injury support

## Advocacy Statistics

In this year we:

- Supported 1,608 people and worked on 2,061 issues
- Provided 20,000 hours of direct advocacy support
- Employed 25 advocates and a new administration and duty team - all managed and supervised by our Senior Management Team
- Secured employment for 2 volunteers
- Trained 8 advocates through the National Advocacy Qualification and Care Act and Mental Capacity Act legislation
- Worked in over 40 ethnically minoritised communities across at least 30 languages and employed 4 multi-lingual Advocates

In this year our team of advocates:

- Supported 94 people who had safeguarding alerts or concerns raised about them
- Supported 58 people to take challenges to the Court of Protection to review restrictions causing their deprivation of liberty e.g. where they lived
- Supported 29 families in Child Protection proceedings
- Provided Hate Crime Advocacy to 57 people victimised by hate relationships

In addition to our core services to deliver Statutory, Community based, Hate Crime and Families in Crisis advocacy we secured additional funding to:

- Advocate for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, reach out to older people from LGBTQIA+ and minoritised communities, to develop a toolkit to help people self-advocate

Information collated from our grassroots advocacy enabled us to campaign and advocate for change in the following areas:

- Continued to collaborate with advocacy providers nationally at the National Advocacy Leaders network to share good practice and campaign for social justice together
- Campaigned for positive changes in the Mental Health Act Bill
- Supported Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Inquiry into Adult Social Care through local consultation events and a sector response
- Contributed to Social Care reform consultation
- Campaigned for improved training and practice around Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation(DNACPR) orders and responded to national consultation by the ministerial oversight group
- Active member of Newcastle Adult Safeguarding Adults Board and Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board contributing to strategic plan and quality assurance
- Took part in local safeguarding enquiries for provider concerns
- Contributed to Gateshead Council's People at the Heart of Care 5 year vision
- Contributed to development of National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance for Advocacy
- Active member of Victim and Witness Service Improvement Board for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Northumbria
- Partnership with local universities to research into concept of Hate Relationships and development of Toolkit to support partner agencies
- Contributed to a national response to the Liberty Protection Safeguards Code of Practice and legislation guidance
- Supported residents in two local care home closures
- Fed into national consultation on inquiry into services for people with learning disability and autism

**Connected Voice Volunteering**

We were delighted to begin delivery of volunteering supporting during the year, following development activity in the previous year. We brought an independent Volunteer Centre back to life in Gateshead after many years of absence, and we were able to start working with corporate and private sector partners to support VCSE organisations, with the establishment of Sector Connector.

**Gateshead Volunteer Centre**

The Volunteer Centre started in April 2022. In 6 months we:

- Supported **106** people into volunteering opportunities ranging from food banks to community run bowling greens.

- Worked with **14** VCSE organisations to develop and implement their volunteering policies, procedures, recruitment practices and approach.

- Revived Gateshead Volunteer Coordinators' Network: grew a membership of **30** VCSE volunteer professionals and council volunteer leads and organised the **1st** meeting attended by **12** members.

- Developed **4** community bases to operate the Volunteer Centre from on a weekly basis, including St Chads Community Project, Teams Life Centre, Winlaton Community Centre, and @ The Bank Chopwell.

- Improved and promoted the volunteer brokerage service on the OurGateshead website, which led to an increase in page views of **405%** on the previous years, 9,016 vs 1,785 for volunteering pages.

**Sector Connector**

Sector Connector started in January 2022. In 9 months we:

- Built relationships with **14** small and medium sized businesses operating across Newcastle and Gateshead.

- Delivered **1** Sector Connector workshop on Telling Stories That Matter to **8** people from VCSE organisations and received excellent feedback.

- Brokered **2** one to one opportunities with Glass Digital supporting The Friends of Jesmond Library with their marketing strategy, and BrickHouse Media supporting Big River Bakery with a series of blogs.

- Contributed to the development of the North of Tyne Volunteering Project by working in partnership with Volunteer Centre Newcastle, VODA North Tyneside, and Northumberland CVA to share skills, knowledge and experience to develop joint volunteering resources.

**Acknowledgements**

**Connected Voice records its appreciation to all our funders and supporters.**

Connected Voice is a member of NCVO, NAVCA, ACEVO, the Community Foundation (Tyne, Wear and Northumberland), the North East Chamber of Commerce, the Advocacy Action Alliance, and OPAAL (Older People's Advocacy Alliance). We work closely with our sister infrastructure organisations across the North East and we are members of and contribute to appropriate local partnerships, initiatives, boards and committees.

**Social Value**

Connected Voice tries to act in a socially responsible manner. We use other VCSE facilities and services wherever possible. We use sustainable products as far as possible. We try to use local suppliers. We use fair trade products. We take climate change seriously and we aim to reduce our environmental impact through the development of a climate change action plan, and regular staff meetings on this theme. The ratio of pay of the lowest earner to the pay of the top earner will never exceed 1:5. We are a Living Wage employer, accredited by the Living Wage Foundation, including apprentices and interns. During the year we have benefitted from nine active trustees who all volunteered their skills, knowledge and expertise and linked us to helpful networks and useful partners.

## CONNECTED VOICE – STRATEGIC AIMS

We will continue our work on the following strategic aims for the year ahead:

- Embed the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework and action plan in our work.
- Work closely as a commercial team to achieve our annual income targets
- Provide leadership on climate emergency – both in terms of our actions as an organisation, and our work with VCSE organisations
- Embed partnership working and collaboration across all of our work, and support VCSE organisations to work collaboratively wherever possible

Each of our service areas has a work plan including SMART objectives, which link to the overall objectives above.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

Connected Voice bids for funds from statutory sources, as well as applying for grants from charitable trusts and foundations. We are growing our self-generated income through development of paid-for services. A substantial part of our income comes through four main contracts. Connected Voice is assiduous in looking for appropriate sources of funding, and as an organisation responsible for advising the voluntary sector on funding sources, is well placed to know what opportunities are available. We use a full cost recovery model which enables us to estimate the actual costs of a service and its true cost to Connected Voice. As the value of public sector contracts continues to decrease in light of inflation, this is an essential tool for us to use in deciding whether or not to bid for a service.

Senior managers and the finance subcommittee meet to set budgets annually. The management team reviews financial performance monthly, and the board reviews it quarterly. We have a contract with our trading subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services to manage day to day finance and reporting on behalf of the charity.

We hold four key contracts (with Newcastle Council, 2 x Gateshead Council, and North East and North Cumbria ICS) and at the time of writing one of these is currently out to tender and we are in the process of engaging with the relevnt local authority to understand their assessment, and one due to come out soon.

Our trustees are clear about our aims and mission and that we need to be sustainable, but keep to our vision and values. Connected Voice will not enter into partnerships and contracts which are contrary to our aims and objectives and we recognise that we need to stay within our agreed budget limits for the year.

### Assets

The charity's assets are being held to enable them to carry out its objectives. The movements in fixed assets during the year are set out in note 16 to the accounts.

### Trading activities

The results of Connected Voice Charity Business Services, our trading company, are summarised in note 17 of the accounts. A deficit was generated during the period of £32,608 (2021 surplus: £32,533)

### Financial dependency

The charity in order to meet its objectives is financially dependent on grants from the Local Authorities, government programmes and charitable trusts.

Additional funds are derived from smaller grants and charitable donations made by a variety of organisations and individuals.

**Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others**

Connected Voice and its subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services provides payroll and bookkeeping services and holds monies for this purpose. Further detail is given in note 21.

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees regularly review levels of reserves and have agreed again this year that reserves equivalent to between three and five months running costs are appropriate for the organisation.
Three months running costs would equate to around £341,000 and five months £569,000, based on the accounts for the 12 months to 30 September 2022. The reserves should not fall below this level in order to support good governance of the organisation.

The Reserve Policy allows for the use of funds in excess of the level required to be spent in furtherance of the organisation's vision and mission. Any proposal should be presented as an individual business case to the Trustees for review and approval.

As at 30 September 2022 free reserves (unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets) are £582,256 (2021: £571,299). The Trustees monitor the level of reserves regularly and the Reserves Policy is reviewed annually with the support of the Finance Sub Group.

**Review of transactions and financial position**

The consolidated balance sheet on page 23 indicates that at 30 September 2022 the total funds of the group are £1,209,163 (2021: £1,015,027). This was represented by tangible fixed assets of £15,180 (2021: £21,530), investments of £420,136 (2021: £459,154) and net current assets of £773,847 (2021: £534,343). Unrestricted funds of £600,436 (2021: £592,829) represent the reserves available to the organisation to fulfil its many existing commitments over the long term. Restricted funds of £385,885 (2021: £145,554) represent specific earmarked projects as detailed in note 22 of the accounts.

**Investment income**

Connected Voice is usually in the position of having to fund a considerable proportion of its core running costs each year and the income it derives from its invested reserves is an essential component of that strategy, alongside donations, earnings and other provisions.

Tilney are the appointed wealth investment organisation managing the Connected Voice investment portfolio. The Finance Sub-Group monitors the performance of the portfolio, reviewing the quarterly financial investment reports provided by Tilney and reporting into the board meetings. Trustees support the investment objective for Connected Voice which is to yield the best financial return within the level of risk considered to be acceptable. This return can then be spent on the charity's aims and further continuance of its objectives. The Trustees are comfortable that the investments held are a diversified portfolio in order to mitigate the capital risk. The Finance Sub-Group has put forward an Investment Strategy Policy. The investment balances as at the 30 September 2022 are £420,136 (2021: £459,154). No additional funds were added to the investment portfolio in the year, all dividends and income are reinvested.

**Political contributions**

The charity made no political contributions.

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Registered Charity Number** | 1125877 |
| **Company Number** | 06681475 |
| **Trustees** | Simon Elliott<br>Nitin Shukla (resigned 15 June 2022)<br>Martin Horrocks<br>Elaine Slater<br>Paula Park<br>Hannah Owens<br>Tracy Huitson<br>Amanda Lee<br>Colette Harrison<br>Busola Afolabi (appointed 01 March 2022)<br>Keith Proudfoot (appointed 18 January 2023) |
| **Chief Executive** | Lisa Goodwin |
| **Principal Office** | One Strawberry Lane<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 4BX |
| **Auditors** | Haines Watts North East Audit LLP<br>17 Queens Lane<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 1 RN |
| **Bankers** | Yorkshire Bank Plc<br>Newcastle Business Centre<br>29-31 Pilgrim Street<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 6RL<br><br>Unity Trust Bank Plc<br>PO Box 7193<br>Planetary Road<br>Willenhall<br>WV1 9DG |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Investment Manager** | Tilney<br>Private Wealth Management<br>130 St Vincent Street<br>Glasgow<br>G2 5SE |

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity's full name is Connected Voice. It is an incorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 1125877) and a company limited by guarantee (number 06681475).

### Governing documents

The charity's governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Connected Voice is an independent charity working with the voluntary sector primarily in Newcastle and Gateshead. It is run by a Board of Trustees elected annually by its member organisations, and by co-opted members. The Board controls the direction and policy of the work, and met five times during this financial year. It holds a special away day meeting with senior managers, once a year, in order to look at opportunities and define strategy for the coming year.

Connected Voice is a membership organisation with over 750 members.

### Recruitment of trustees

Trustees are elected from the membership annually. Notice is sent to all members, and if a ballot is required, it is conducted prior to the Annual General Meeting. Trustees may only serve for a set period of time. The skills and experience of existing trustees are audited regularly and new trustees are recruited in order to complement the existing trustees ensuring a wide set of skills and knowledge is reflected in the overall board. If the Board feels there are particular skills lacking, they are able to promote these during the recruitment process. The governance document allows for co-opted trustees so that specialist skills can be brought onto the board. The Chair has experience of business and Human Resources and is not from the voluntary sector, although he chairs another voluntary organisation. The treasurer is an accountant with extensive experience of the charity sector.

All trustees have a comprehensive induction session with the Chief Executive. They also complete a form to assess any relevant training they may need and these needs are met as far as is practical. Trustees are given regular opportunities to find out more about Connected Voice and the voluntary and community sector in Newcastle and Gateshead, as well as national issues affecting voluntary organisations. Trustees receive a full induction pack including examples of best practice and guidance produced by the Charity Commission. Trustees are encouraged to be fully involved in the work of Connected Voice. Annually, the Chair carries out a confidential interview with each trustee to identify any challenges, concerns and priorities. These are collated and discussed openly at Board meetings.

### Organisational structure

The Board of trustees, which can have up to twelve members, has control of the charity, including its property and its funds. The Board normally meets four times per year and there are three sub groups covering finance, advocacy, and volunteering, which report into the Board. Task and Finish groups of the trustees are also created as necessary – this year we continued the Task and Finish group for workforce development, and created one for trustee recruitment. The Chief Executive is appointed by the trustees to manage the charity and has delegated authority for all operational matters.

### Pay policy for senior staff

The Chief Executive implements the pay policy on an ongoing basis and is responsible for pay reviews and setting salaries for senior staff. The Board reviews the Chief Executive's salary annually and is responsible for making any decisions about remuneration of the Chief Executive. Remuneration is benchmarked against similar roles within voluntary and community sector organisations of similar size in the North East. The need for major changes to the salary structure may be informed by a number of factors such as changes to the organisation's annual turnover and the number of employees. We understand that in light of increasing inflation and a difficult employment market, pay should continue to be reviewed regularly. During the year the workforce strategy sub group of the board commenced work on the development of a new pay policy for the organisation.

Connected Voice has a Remuneration Policy which covers all staff. Senior staff are not treated differently to other staff and all benefits (including pension contributions) are applied equally across all staff groups.

### Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between trustees or senior managers of the charity with suppliers must be disclosed to the full Board of trustees. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported. Trustees are asked to declare their interests before each board meeting and there is a Register of Interests.

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary, Connected Voice Business Services Ltd, was established to operate as a commercial accountancy service and gift aids all of its profits to the charity (see note 17 to the accounts).

### Risk management

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The Board reviews the strategic risk assessment annually and the full report is discussed at a Board meeting annually where mitigating actions identified and taken. Health and Safety information is presented on a quarterly basis to the Board.

### Indemnity insurance

The charity has Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in respect of the Trustees and Officers of the charity.

**Statement of Trustees Responsibilities**

The Trustees (who are also directors of Connected Voice for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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, which 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 the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently; observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- 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 charitable company will continue in business.

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

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

In accordance with the Companies Act 2006 a resolution proposing the appointment of Haines Watts North East Audit LLP as auditor for the year ending 30 September 2023 will be put to the members

Simon Elliott
Chair

18/4/23

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

### Opinion
We have audited the financial statements of Connected Voice (the 'charitable company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 30 September 2022 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Consolidated Balance Sheet and Charitable Company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and charitable company's affairs as at 30 September 2022, and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

### Basis for opinion
We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Conclusions relating to going concern
In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### Other information
The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**
In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the group and parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.
We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

**Responsibilities of trustees**
As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 18, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or taken together, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to both the company itself and the industry in which it operates. We identified areas of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our sector experience and through discussion with the directors and other management. The most significant were identified as the Companies Act 2006, UK GAAP (FRS102) and relevant tax legislation. We considered the extent of compliance with those laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statements. Our audit procedures included:

- confirming with the directors and management whether they have any knowledge or suspicion of fraud;
- obtaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- assessing the risk of management override including identifying and testing a sample of journal entries;
- reviewing appropriateness of allocation of restricted funds.

Our audit did not identify any key audit matters relating to the detection of irregularities including fraud. However, despite the audit being planned and conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) there remains an unavoidable risk that material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected owing to inherent limitations of the audit, and that by their very nature, any such instances of fraud or irregularity likely involve collusion, forgery, intentional misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our audit report.

**Use of our report**
This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



24 April 2023

**Donna Bulmer BA (Hons) ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor)**
**for and on behalf of Haines Watts North East LLP**

**Statutory Auditor**

17 Queens Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1RN

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (including consolidated income and expenditure account)**
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds | Designated funds | Restricted funds | Total 2022 | Total 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Income from:** | | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 4 | 8,531 | - | - | 8,531 | 19,218 |
| Charitable activities | 5 | | | | | |
| Grants and contracts | | 825,951 | - | 484,190 | 1,310,141 | 1,363,275 |
| Chargeable services | | 270,846 | - | - | 270,846 | 179,698 |
| Other trading activities | | | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | 6 | 258,951 | - | - | 258,951 | 233,672 |
| Other trading income | 6 | 9,369 | - | - | 9,369 | 9,897 |
| Investments | 7 | 10,701 | - | - | 10,701 | 9,848 |
| **Total income** | | 1,384,349 | - | 484,190 | 1,868,539 | 1,815,608 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | | |
| Costs of raising funds | 8 | | | | | |
| Subsidiary expenditure | | 248,230 | - | - | 248,230 | 196,308 |
| Investment management fees | | 3,899 | - | - | 3,899 | 3,536 |
| **Charitable activities** | 9 | | | | | |
| Operation of the charity | | 1,063,365 | 53,802 | 243,859 | 1,361,026 | 1,608,307 |
| **Total expenditure** | | 1,315,494 | 53,802 | 243,859 | 1,613,155 | 1,808,151 |
| **Net movement before investment gains/(losses)** | | 68,855 | ( 53,802 ) | 240,331 | 255,384 | 7,457 |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | | ( 61,248 ) | - | - | ( 61,248 ) | 69,484 |
| Transfers between funds | 22 | - | - | - | - | - |
| **Net movement in funds** | | 7,607 | ( 53,802 ) | 240,331 | 194,136 | 76,941 |
| **Reconciliation of funds** | | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 592,829 | 276,644 | 145,554 | 1,015,027 | 938,086 |
| **Total funds carried forward** | | 600,436 | 222,842 | 385,885 | 1,209,163 | 1,015,027 |

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
***AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

| | Notes | £ | 2022<br>£ | £ | 2021<br>£ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **16** | | 15,180 | | 21,530 |
| Investments | **17** | | 420,136 | | 459,154 |
| | | | 435,316 | | 480,684 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Stock | **18** | 30,968 | | 23,187 | |
| Debtors | **19** | 403,982 | | 382,352 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 940,901 | | 816,363 | |
| | | 1,375,851 | | 1,221,902 | |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **20** | ( 602,004 ) | | ( 687,559 ) | |
| **Net current assets** | | 773,847 | | 534,343 | |
| **Net assets** | | | 1,209,163 | | 1,015,027 |
| **Funds** | **22** | | | | |
| Unrestricted funds | | | 600,436 | | 592,829 |
| Designated funds | | | 222,842 | | 276,644 |
| Restricted funds | | | 385,885 | | 145,554 |
| | | | 1,209,163 | | 1,015,027 |

The notes on pages 26 to 45 form part of these financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 18/4/ ..... 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Martin Horrocks
Treasurer

*Company Number: 06681475*

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
***AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

| | Notes | £ | 2022<br>£ | £ | 2021<br>£ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | **16** | | 13,239 | | 21,530 |
| Investments | **17** | | 420,138 | | 459,156 |
| | | | 433,377 | | 480,686 |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Stocks | **18** | 22,056 | | - | |
| Debtors | **19** | 535,885 | | 447,288 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 386,746 | | 205,880 | |
| | | 944,687 | | 653,168 | |
| **Creditors: amounts falling due within one year** | **20** | ( 136,293 ) | | ( 118,827 ) | |
| **Net current assets** | | | 808,394 | | 534,341 |
| **Net assets** | | | 1,241,771 | | 1,015,027 |
| **Funds** | **22** | | | | |
| Unrestricted funds | | | 633,044 | | 592,829 |
| Designated funds | | | 222,842 | | 276,644 |
| Restricted funds | | | 385,885 | | 145,554 |
| | | | 1,241,771 | | 1,015,027 |

The notes on pages 26 to 45 form part of these financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 18/4 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Martin Horrocks
Treasurer

*Company Number: 06681475*

**Connected Voice**
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

## CONSOLIDATED CASH FLOW STATEMENT
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

| | Note | 2022 £ | 2021 £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Net cash flow from operating activities:** | | | |
| ***Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities*** | **28** | 138,294 | 172,600 |
| **Cash flows from investing activities** | | | |
| Purchase of tangible assets | | ( 2,228 ) | ( 4,097 ) |
| Purchase of fixed asset investments | | ( 22,229 ) | ( 76,143 ) |
| Proceeds from fixed asset investments | | - | 66,633 |
| Investment income received | | 10,701 | 9,848 |
| ***Net cash flow from investing activities*** | | ( 13,756 ) | ( 3,759 ) |
| **Net increase in cash and cash equivalents** | | 124,538 | 168,841 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year | | 816,363 | 647,522 |
| **Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year** | | 940,901 | 816,363 |
| **Cash and cash equivalents consist of:** | | | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 504,919 | 256,606 |
| Cash held as a custodian | | 435,982 | 559,757 |

## 1. Accounting policies

Connected Voice is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, (number 06681475) and not having a share capital. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity.

### 1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

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) (effective January 2019), 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.

Connected Voice meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s). The financial statements are prepared in Sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £.

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.

### 1.2 Basis of consolidation

The financial statements consolidate the results of Connected Voice and its wholly owned subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd on a line-by-line basis. A separate Statement of Financial Activities and Income and Expenditure Account for the charity has not been presented because Connected Voice has taken advantage of the exemption afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

### 1.3 Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist.

On 14 February 2023 the board of Connected Voice, the parent company of Connected Voice Business Services Limited passed a special resolution. They resolve to integrate the trade and assets of Connected Voice Business Services Ltd into Connected Voice where it will run as a division of the charity. This will allow for more direct governance and control of the division, whose activities are wholly in line with the primary purposes of the charity. It was resolved that this transition would be undertaken in the period to 30th September 2023.

The Trustees have considered the level of funds and forecast income and expenditure for a period of 12 months after the date of approval of these financial statements, including considering the impact of the Charity absorbing the trade and assets of Connected Voice Business Services. The budgeted income and expenditure is considered sufficient given the levels of reserves held by the Charity. Therefore the Trustees have adopted the going concern basis of preparation for these financial statements.

### 1.4 Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the charity for a particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

### 1.5 Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when the trust becomes entitled. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts. Assets donated are recognised in full as donations and fixed assets.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Incoming resources from charitable trading activities are accounted for when earned.
- Income is deferred only where the criteria for recognition as incoming resources in the Statement of Financial Activities does not exist at the balance sheet date.
- Income from commercial trading activities is recognised as earned (as the related services are provided)

No amount is included within the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102).

### 1.6 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with the commercial trading activities of the company's subsidiary.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the expenditure when incurred.

**1.7 Tangible fixed assets**

Individual fixed assets costing over £1,000 are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their expected useful economic lives as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Electronic office equipment | 25% straight line basis |
| Restricted office equipment | 25% straight line basis |

**1.8 Investments**

Fixed asset investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at fair value at the year end. The same treatment is applied to unlisted investments unless fair value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment.

**1.9 Stock**

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

**1.10 Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**1.11 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

**1.12 Holding accounts**

The charity and subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations as part of their payroll service. The balances held by the charity are included within the balance sheet in accordance with SORP 2019; the balances of the subsidiary are recognised as an asset with the corresponding liability.

**1.13 Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at their settlement after allowing for any trade discounts due.

**1.14 Pensions**

The charity operates a money purchase pension scheme. Amounts payable are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the related salary is paid. Unremitted amounts are included in creditors.

**1.15 Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**1.16 Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

## 2. Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the charitable company's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no significant accounting estimates which are considered to materially impact the financial statements.

## 3. Statement of financial activities from the prior year

| | Notes | Unrestricted funds | Designated funds | Restricted funds | Total 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Income from:** | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 4 | 18,218 | - | 1,000 | 19,218 |
| Charitable activities | 5 | | | | |
| Grants and contracts | | 820,599 | - | 542,676 | 1,363,275 |
| Chargeable services | | 179,698 | - | - | 179,698 |
| Other trading activities | | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | 6 | 233,672 | - | - | 233,672 |
| Other trading income | 6 | 9,897 | - | - | 9,897 |
| Investments | 7 | 9,848 | - | - | 9,848 |
| **Total income** | | 1,271,932 | - | 543,676 | 1,815,608 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | |
| Costs of raising funds | 8 | | | | |
| Subsidiary expenditure | | 196,308 | - | - | 196,308 |
| Investment management fees | | 3,536 | - | - | 3,536 |
| **Charitable activities** | 9 | | | | |
| Operation of the charity | | 966,700 | 64,259 | 577,348 | 1,608,307 |
| **Total expenditure** | | 1,166,544 | 64,259 | 577,348 | 1,808,151 |
| **Net movement before investment gains/(losses)** | | 105,388 | ( 64,259 ) | ( 33,672 ) | 7,457 |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | 22 | 69,484 | - | - | 69,484 |
| Transfers between funds | | ( 180,903 ) | 190,903 | ( 10,000 ) | - |
| **Net movement in funds** | | ( 6,031 ) | 126,644 | ( 43,672 ) | 76,941 |
| **Reconciliation of funds** | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 598,860 | 150,000 | 189,226 | 938,086 |
| **Total funds carried forward** | | 592,829 | 276,644 | 145,554 | 1,015,027 |

## 4. Donations and legacies

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Sir James Knott Trust | 7,000 | 7,000 |
| The Joicey Trust | - | 3,000 |
| Rothley Trust | - | 800 |
| Amazon Community-UK | - | 2,000 |
| Durham University | 1,491 | 1,000 |
| NAVCA | - | 4,500 |
| Other donations | 40 | 918 |
| | 8,531 | 19,218 |

## 5. Income from charitable activities

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Grants | 1,310,141 | 1,363,275 |
| Chargeable services | 270,846 | 179,698 |
| | 1,580,987 | 1,542,973 |

**Summary of grants**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| NHS Newcastle and Gateshead CCG | 234,400 | 294,958 |
| Community Foundation | 8,999 | 74,237 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via North East Law Centre | 30,000 | 21,108 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via VONNE | 2,890 | 8,637 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via VODA | 29,500 | 17,000 |
| Police & Crime Commissioner Northumbria | 47,710 | 47,710 |
| Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council | 159,912 | 315,079 |
| Newcastle City Council | 147,000 | 203,250 |
| Newcastle City Council Public Health | - | 113,000 |
| Innovation Super Network | - | 5,000 |
| Defra Food Grant | - | 230,920 |
| Cumbria NTW NHS | - | 15,064 |
| HMRC Job retention scheme | - | 2,312 |
| MH Concern – Peer research | - | 15,000 |
| CNTW NHS Foundation Trust | 4,880 | - |
| Barbour Foundation | 5,000 | - |
| Community Foundation | 10,000 | - |
| Newcastle Gateshead CCG VCS | 300,000 | - |
| Newcastle University School of Pharmacy | 1,000 | - |
| Gateshead Council | 142,167 | - |
| NHS CCG | 42,000 | - |
| Gateshead Council | 29,987 | - |
| Gateshead VCSE Digital Transformation | 15,000 | - |
| NIHR | 11,363 | - |
| BME Health & Wellbeing Development Support | 45,000 | - |
| Gateshead Volunteer Centre | 43,333 | - |
| | 1,310,141 | 1,363,275 |

## 6. Other trading activities

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Other trading income | 9,369 | 9,897 |
| Income from trading subsidiary | 258,951 | 233,672 |
| | 268,320 | 243,569 |

## 7. Investment income

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Income from investments | 10,701 | 9,848 |

## 8. Raising funds

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| **Trading subsidiary costs** | | |
| Staff costs | 212,908 | 176,451 |
| Overheads | 35,322 | 19,857 |
| | 248,230 | 196,308 |
| **Other trading activities** | | |
| Investment management fees | 3,899 | 3,536 |
| | 252,129 | 199,844 |

## 9. Charitable activities expenditure

| | Activities undertaken directly | Support costs | Total 2022 | Total 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Voluntary Sector Support | 524,321 | 141,505 | 665,826 | 975,436 |
| Advocacy | 584,017 | 111,183 | 695,200 | 632,871 |
| | 1,108,338 | 252,688 | 1,361,026 | 1,608,307 |

## 10. Support costs

| | Management Costs | Governance costs | Total 2022 | Total 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Management & admin staff salaries | 99,280 | - | 99,280 | 120,869 |
| Facility costs | 47,837 | - | 47,837 | 38,153 |
| Office costs | 49,112 | - | 49,112 | 56,351 |
| Professional fees | 34,235 | 12,000 | 46,235 | 8,699 |
| Annual review, AGM & trustee planning | - | 1,933 | 1,933 | 1,206 |
| Depreciation | 8,291 | - | 8,291 | 7,824 |
| | 238,755 | 13,933 | 252,688 | 233,102 |

## 11. Governance costs

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Auditors fees | 12,000 | 6,720 |
| Annual Review, AGM & trustee planning | 1,933 | 1,206 |
| | 13,933 | 7,926 |

## 12. Net income for the year

Net income is stated after charging;

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Depreciation | 8,291 | 7,824 |
| Operating lease rentals | - | 16,864 |

## 13. Auditors remuneration

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Auditors fees | 10,000 | 5,600 |
| | 10,000 | 5,600 |

## 14. Financial performance of the charitable company

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities includes the results of the wholly owned subsidiary.

The summary financial performance of the charity alone is;

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Income | 1,652,917 | 1,614,469 |
| Expenditure | ( 1,364,925 ) | ( 1,607,012 ) |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | ( 61,248 ) | 69,484 |
| **Net income** | 226,744 | 76,941 |

## 15. Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

The total staff costs and employees benefits were as follows:

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Wages and salaries | 1,152,155 | 1,035,170 |
| Social security costs | 101,811 | 89,942 |
| Other pension costs | 51,202 | 47,368 |
| | 1,305,168 | 1,172,480 |

The average number of employees during the year was as follows:

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number |
| Advocacy | 22 | 23 |
| Advocacy Haref | 4 | 4 |
| Business Services | 10 | 6 |
| Support & Development | 8 | 6 |
| Commercial | 1 | 1 |
| Core | 3 | 4 |
| Marketing | 1 | 1 |
| | 49 | 45 |

One employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 (2021 - 1).

The Trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment in the year (2021 – £nil). No Trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2021 - £nil).

There were no expenses paid to trustees during the year (2021 – nil)

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Chief Executive. The total employee benefits of the Management Team of the charity were £63,743 (2021 - £67,472).

## 16. Tangible fixed assets

### Group

| | Equipment, fixtures & fittings £ | Restricted office equipment £ | Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cost** | | | |
| At 1 October 2021 | 44,493 | 19,771 | 64,264 |
| Additions | 2,228 | - | 2,228 |
| At 30 September 2022 | 46,721 | 19,771 | 66,492 |
| **Depreciation** | | | |
| At 1 April 2021 | 36,693 | 6,041 | 42,734 |
| Charge for the year | 3,635 | 4,943 | 8,578 |
| At 30 September 2022 | 40,328 | 10,984 | 51,312 |
| **Net book value** | | | |
| At 30 September 2022 | 6,393 | 8,787 | 15,180 |
| At 30 September 2021 | 7,800 | 13,730 | 21,530 |

### Charity

| | Equipment, fixtures & fittings £ | Restricted office equipment £ | Total £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cost** | | | |
| At 1 October 2021 | 44,493 | 19,771 | 64,264 |
| Additions | - | - | - |
| At 30 September 2022 | 44,493 | 19,771 | 64,264 |
| **Depreciation** | | | |
| At 1 April 2021 | 36,693 | 6,041 | 42,734 |
| Charge for the year | 3,348 | 4,943 | 8,291 |
| At 30 September 2022 | 40,041 | 10,984 | 51,025 |
| **Net book value** | | | |
| At 30 September 2022 | 4,452 | 8,787 | 13,239 |
| At 30 September 2021 | 7,800 | 13,730 | 21,530 |

## 17. Investments

| | Group 2022 | Charity 2022 | Group 2021 | Charity 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Listed investments | 420,136 | 420,136 | 459,154 | 459,154 |
| Investment in subsidiary undertaking | - | 2 | - | 2 |
| | 420,136 | 420,138 | 459,154 | 459,156 |

| Company | Country | Percentage Shareholding | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| Connected Voice Business Services Ltd | England and Wales | 100% | Ordinary |

Connected Voice Business Services Ltd whose principle activity is the provision of financial and administrative services for charitable organisations. The results and summary of assets and liabilities of the company are as follows:

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Turnover | 258,951 | 261,237 |
| Administration costs | ( 294,559 ) | ( 228,704 ) |
| Profit for the year | ( 35,608 ) | 32,533 |
| Distribution to Connected Voice | - | 7,296 |

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Total assets | 614,733 | 716,743 |
| Total liabilities | ( 650,339 ) | ( 684,208 ) |
| Shareholders' funds | ( 35,606 ) | 32,535 |

**Fixed assets listed investments**

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Market value at 1 October 2021 | 459,154 |
| Additions to investments at cost | 22,229 |
| Disposals at carrying value | - |
| Revaluation of investments to market value | (61,247) |
| Market value at 30 September 2022 | 420,136 |
| Historical cost | 386,588 |

## 18. Stocks

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Work in progress | 30,968 | 23,187 | 22,056 | - |

## 19. Debtors

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Trade debtors | 354,183 | 335,438 | 380,139 | 264,570 |
| Prepayments | 49,799 | 46,914 | 48,902 | 46,914 |
| Amounts due from subsidiary undertaking | - | - | 106,844 | 135,804 |
| | 403,982 | 382,352 | 535,885 | 447,288 |

## 20. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Trade creditors | 16,368 | 11,529 | 27,921 | 11,529 |
| Social security and other taxes | 81,887 | 67,320 | 38,434 | 58,345 |
| Accruals and other creditors | 51,056 | 31,969 | 53,227 | 31,969 |
| Holding accounts | 435,982 | 559,757 | - | - |
| Deferred Income | 16,711 | 16,984 | 16,711 | 16,984 |
| | 602,004 | 687,559 | 136,293 | 118,827 |

### Deferred income

| | £ |
|---|---|
| At 1 October 2021 | 16,984 |
| Released to incoming resources | ( 16,984 ) |
| Amounts deferred during the year | 16,711 |
| | 16,711 |

## 21. Holding Accounts

| | Opening balance as at 1 Oct 2021 | Receipts | Payments | Closing balance 30 Sept 22 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Connected Voice Business Services Ltd | 559,757 | 13,299,285 | ( 13,423,060 ) | 435,982 |
| | 559,757 | 13,299,285 | ( 13,423,060 ) | 435,982 |

During the year Connected Voice' subsidiary held monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services Ltd provides a payroll and bookkeeping service to a number of small organisations and holds monies for this purpose. Holding account balances are included in cash, but are also held as a creditor as these amounts are technically repayable to clients.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2022***

### 22. Analysis of funds

| *Year ended 30 September 2022* | Balance 1 October 2021 £ | Incoming resources £ | Resources expended £ | Transfers £ | Gain/ (loss) £ | Balance 30 Sept 2022 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Unrestricted funds** | | | | | | |
| General fund | 592,829 | 1,384,349 | ( 1,315,494 ) | - | ( 61,248 ) | 600,436 |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Business development | 8,842 | - | ( 8,842 ) | - | - | - |
| Digital transformation | 60,000 | - | ( 2,344 ) | - | - | 57,656 |
| COVID resilience | 12,802 | - | ( 12,802 ) | - | - | - |
| Haref | 25,000 | - | - | - | - | 25,000 |
| Office Move | 50,000 | - | - | - | - | 50,000 |
| Workforce Strategy | 50,000 | - | ( 14,850 ) | - | - | 35,150 |
| Advocacy | 50,000 | - | ( 7,964 ) | - | - | 42,036 |
| Governance | 20,000 | - | ( 7,000 ) | - | - | 13,000 |
| | 276,644 | - | ( 53,802 ) | - | - | 222,842 |
| **Restricted funds** | | | | | | |
| Restricted IT equipment | 13,730 | - | ( 4,943 ) | - | - | 8,787 |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | - | - | - | 7,295 |
| HAREF (restricted donation) | 33,372 | - | ( 3,000 ) | - | - | 30,372 |
| HAREF | 3,027 | 12,363 | ( 11,821 ) | - | - | 3,569 |
| Safeguarding Training | 7,529 | 2,890 | ( 10,419 ) | - | - | - |
| Community Foundation | 22,944 | - | ( 22,944 ) | - | - | - |
| NCC Public Health Digital Resilience | 33,000 | - | ( 11,400 ) | - | - | 21,600 |
| VODA | 17,000 | 29,500 | ( 22,496 ) | - | - | 24,004 |
| Community Foundation | 6,782 | - | ( 6,782 ) | - | - | - |
| Police & Crime Commissioner Northumbria | 875 | 49,201 | ( 50,076 ) | - | - | - |
| Newcastle Gateshead CCG VCS | - | 300,000 | ( 9,742 ) | - | - | 290,258 |
| Future You Project | - | 29,987 | ( 29,987 ) | - | - | - |
| National Lottery Community Fund | - | 30,000 | ( 30,000 ) | - | - | - |
| GHD Digital Transformation | - | 15,000 | ( 15,000 ) | - | - | - |
| Community Foundation | - | 8,999 | ( 8,999 ) | - | - | - |
| NHS Funding | - | 6,250 | ( 6,250 ) | - | - | - |
| | 145,554 | 484,190 | ( 243,859 ) | - | - | 385,885 |
| **Total funds** | 1,015,027 | 1,868,539 | ( 1,613,155 ) | - | ( 61,248 ) | 1,209,163 |

**22. Analysis of funds *(Continued)***

*Year ended 30 September 2021*

| | Balance 1 October 2020 | Incoming resources | Resources expended | Transfers | Gain/ (loss) | Balance 30 Sept 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Unrestricted funds** | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| General fund | 598,860 | 1,271,932 | ( 1,166,544 ) | ( 180,903 ) | 69,484 | 592,829 |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Business development | 68,951 | - | ( 60,109 ) | - | - | 8,842 |
| Digital transformation | 60,000 | - | - | - | - | 60,000 |
| COVID resilience | 21,049 | - | ( 4,150 ) | ( 4,097 ) | - | 12,802 |
| Haref | - | - | - | 25,000 | - | 25,000 |
| Office Move | - | - | - | 50,000 | - | 50,000 |
| Workforce Strategy | - | - | - | 50,000 | - | 50,000 |
| Advocacy | - | - | - | 50,000 | - | 50,000 |
| Governance | - | - | - | 20,000 | - | 20,000 |
| | 150,000 | - | ( 64,259 ) | 190,903 | - | 276,644 |
| **Restricted funds** | | | | | | |
| Restricted IT equipment | 18,673 | - | ( 4,943 ) | - | - | 13,730 |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | - | - | - | 7,295 |
| HAREF (restricted donation) | 33,372 | - | - | - | - | 33,372 |
| HAREF | 17,302 | 30,064 | ( 44,339 ) | - | - | 3,027 |
| Safeguarding Training | 4,855 | 8,637 | ( 5,963 ) | - | - | 7,529 |
| Digital Training | 10,740 | - | ( 10,740 ) | - | - | - |
| VCSE Resilience | 72,123 | - | ( 62,123 ) | ( 10,000 ) | - | - |
| Public Health NCC | - | 75,000 | ( 75,000 ) | - | - | - |
| Community Foundation NET | - | 39,268 | ( 39,268 ) | - | - | - |
| DEFRA Food Grant | - | 230,920 | ( 230,920 ) | - | - | - |
| Community Foundation | - | 25,000 | ( 2,056 ) | - | - | 22,944 |
| NCC Public Health Digital Resilience | - | 38,000 | ( 5,000 ) | - | - | 33,000 |
| VODA | - | 17,000 | - | - | - | 17,000 |
| Advocacy – Families Through Crisis | 7,322 | 21,108 | ( 28,430 ) | - | - | - |
| Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | - | 9,969 | ( 3,187 ) | - | - | 6,782 |
| Advocacy | 10,528 | - | ( 10,528 ) | - | - | - |
| Advocacy – Hate Crime | - | 48,710 | ( 47,835 ) | - | - | 875 |
| Advocacy – Welfare | 4,516 | - | ( 4,516 ) | - | - | - |
| Advocacy – Safeguarding | 2,500 | - | ( 2,500 ) | - | - | - |
| | 758,947 | 543,676 | ( 577,348 ) | - | - | 145,554 |
| **Total funds** | 2,939,671 | 1,815,608 | ( 1,808,151 ) | - | 69,484 | 1,015,027 |

Transfers from restricted funds relate to capital grants where all conditions linked to restrictions have been met.

22. **Analysis of funds** ***(Continued)***

**DESIGNATED FUNDS:**

**Covid Resilience**
For additional costs arising from operating during Covid-19 restrictions.

**Digital Transformation**
For new digital infrastructure including new telephony, software and processes.

**HAREF**
To extend the ongoing Haref Allies Project. It is expected that this fund will be utilised by 30 September 2023.

**Office Move**
To cover additional costs associated with the office move to One Strawberry Lane. The move took place in January 2023.

**Advocacy**
Development and restructuring of the advocacy service.

**Governance**
Governance and associated legal fees.

**Workforce Strategy**
To support work to consider regrading and promotion processes within Connected Voice.

**RESTRICTED FUNDS:**

**Restricted IT equipment**
Providing resources to enable key staff to work from home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

**SkillsBridge**
Facilitating and maintaining a network of professionals, volunteering their time and expertise to support the ongoing development of voluntary organisations in the North East.

**HAREF**
Working to improve the health and wellbeing of BAME communities in Gateshead and Newcastle by providing regular networks, engagement opportunities and information to organisations in the VCS and public sector.

**Safeguarding Training**
To make safeguarding resources available at a local level, deliver regular training sessions and create new/build on existing networks.

**Digital Training**
To expand our traditional support provision by giving people and communities we serve the opportunity to access online training to advance their knowledge and practice.

**VCSE Resilience**
To provide support packages comprising business resilience and management support for community sector organisations based in Newcastle.

**Public Health NCC Covid Grant**
To support the Newcastle VCS with infection control funding to ensure their premises were Covid-19 secure.

**22. Analysis of funds *(Continued)***

**Community Foundation NET DCMS Fund**
To deliver finance training, cultural competency training and specialist consultancy support for the VCS in Newcastle and Gateshead.

**DEFRA Food Grant**
Funds to be distributed in full to VCS organisations.

**Community Foundation**
To develop Haref Allies membership offer.

**NCC Public Health Digital Resilience**
To support the sector to improve digital skills through undertaking a digital assessment and recommendations how to improve this.

**North Of Tyne Volunteering Project (VODA)**
To create the North of Tyne as a volunteer area of excellence, this is a five year project.

**Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers**
Direct advocacy to refugee and asylum seekers to have voices heard and access to services.

**Advocacy – Hate Crime**
Providing Hate Crime Advocacy, supporting people who have experienced, or are at risk of hate crime in the Northumbria area.

**National Lottery Community Fund**
To support families through crisis.

**Community Foundation – Fund from Pargiter Trust Community Foundation**
Advocacy support to older people (65+), focus on ethnically minoritised and LGBTQ+ communities in Newcastle and Gateshead.

**Future you is Community Renewal Fund via Gateshead Council**
Future You Employability project.

**GHD Digital Transformation should be Gateshead Council (Digital Transformation)**
Funded by Gateshead Council for digital transformation VCS.

**NHS NENC ICS (North East North Cumbria Integrated Care System)**
To fund On the Hoof health information bulletin.

**Newcastle Gateshead CCG VCS**
The money in this fund is to be distributed to VCSE organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead with increasing running costs who tackle health issues, or deliver preventative work around health and wellbeing in order to provide them with additional support during the cost of living crisis. The amount carried forward at the end of the year are amounts which are yet to be distributed, and all have been distributed subsequent to the year end.

## 23. Analysis of net assets between funds

*Year ended 30 September 2022*

| | Unrestricted Funds | Designated Funds | Restricted Funds | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Tangible assets | 6,393 | - | 8,787 | 15,180 |
| Investments | 420,136 | - | - | 420,136 |
| Current assets | 775,911 | 222,842 | 377,098 | 1,375,851 |
| Creditors amounts due within one year | ( 602,004 ) | - | - | ( 602,004 ) |
| | 600,436 | 222,842 | 385,885 | 1,209,163 |

*Year ended 30 September 2021*

| | Unrestricted Funds | Designated Funds | Restricted Funds | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Tangible assets | 7,800 | - | 13,730 | 21,530 |
| Investments | 459,154 | - | - | 459,154 |
| Current assets | 813,434 | 276,644 | 131,824 | 1,221,902 |
| Creditors amounts due within one year | ( 687,559 ) | - | - | ( 687,559 ) |
| | 592,829 | 276,644 | 145,554 | 1,015,027 |

## 24. Operating leases

The future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows;

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Not later than one year | 78,492 | 78,492 |
| Later than one and not later than five years | 580,330 | 653,330 |
| | 658,882 | 731,822 |

## 25. Related Party Transactions

There have been no related party transactions during the year (2021 – none).

## 26. Pension Commitments

The charity operates a money purchase pension scheme. The pension scheme cost charge of £51,202 (2021 - £47,368 represent amounts payable by the charity. Unremitted amounts of £19,327 (2021 - £19,117) is included in creditors.

## 27. Capital Commitments

As at 30 September 2022, the charity had no capital commitments (2021 - £nil).

## 28. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

| | 2022<br>£ | 2021<br>£ |
|---|---|---|
| Net income for the year | 194,136 | 76,941 |
| Adjustments for: | | |
| Investment income | ( 10,701 ) | ( 9,848 ) |
| Depreciation on tangible assets | 8,578 | 7,824 |
| Losses/(Gains) on investments | 61,247 | ( 69,484 ) |
| Increase in stock | ( 7,781 ) | ( 6,928 ) |
| (Increase)/decrease in debtors | ( 21,630 ) | ( 49,778 ) |
| (Decease)/Increase in creditors | ( 85,555 ) | 223,873 |
| Net cash flow from operating activities | 138,294 | 172,600 |

## 29. Analysis of net debt

The charitable company had no debt during the year.

## 30. Events after the end of the reporting period

On 14 February 2023 the board of Connected Voice, the parent company of Connected Voice Business Services Limited passed a special resolution. They resolved to integrate the trade and assets of Connected Voice Business Services Ltd into Connected Voice where it will run as a division of the charity. This will allow for more direct governance and control of the division, whose activities are wholly in line with the primary purposes of the charity. It was resolved that this transition would be undertaken in the period to 30th September 2023.

**Connected Voice**

England & Wales - Charity number 1125877

# Accounts

(A company limited by guarantee)

# REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the year ended 30 September 2021

Charity Number 1125877
Company Number 06681475

Connected Voice
Connecting People Supporting Action

(A company limited by guarantee)



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(A company limited by guarantee)



The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 30 September 2021, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Accounting and, Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard's applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

## Chair's Report

Reaching back to October 2020 stretches the memory. We spent the Summer of 2020 with the hope that the worst was behind us after six months of lock downs and then watching anxiously as the case numbers and hospitalisations fell. On average, 40 deaths per day from Covid were being reported, each of whom was an individual and shared grief, but those numbers had fallen dramatically from the Spring. We did not know then that just four months later in January of 2021, more than 1,200 deaths per day from Covid would be reported. We did not know that the restrictions on movement that were brought in would cause families to be barred by law from seeing each other through the darkest months. And if we had known those things, we would have entered that winter all the more concerned for the most vulnerable and marginalised in society, who would be disproportionately impacted.

The voluntary sector in both Newcastle and Gateshead didn't rest. Instead it redoubled its efforts, to provide food, contact, advice and help. Supporting the sector in the midst of the toughest times, Connected Voice partnered with Newcastle and Gateshead Councils to create the "Spirit of Christmas" appeal, raising more than £65,000, which was distributed to 42 grass roots organisations to bring a little hope to some of the people in most need.

On the ground, the voluntary sector saw a number of continuing or emerging trends through this time period:

- online schooling highlighted the digital deficit – this translated into children from some of the poorest homes falling further behind
- lockdowns hid the tragedies of mental health issues, domestic abuse, neglect and addiction
- the scourges of racism and poverty persisted, less in the public eye but as harmful as ever
- refugees, including those from Afghanistan, continued to seek sanctuary

Connected Voice Support and Development worked with the sector to access emergency funding, and provide advice and support to newly-formed groups who met local and neighbourhood needs. Connected Voice Business Services worked with charities navigating the furlough requirements for their payrolls and completing their Year End accounts in some of the most unusual circumstances. Connected Voice Haref attracted more funding to support the ethnically minoritised communities of Newcastle and Gateshead and continued its work in the field of health awareness at a time when it could not be more important. Connected Voice Advocacy

fulfilled its historic role of amplifying the voices of individuals who otherwise would have struggled to be heard. In short, Connected Voice stepped up, as it should.

Spring and Summer 2021 brought hope in the shape of vaccination and by July more than 46 million vaccinations had been delivered. This represented one of the largest mobilisations ever of the voluntary sector and individual volunteering, as hubs were re-purposed through the region. As Summer wore on, massive community outreach work happened locally to educate and inform, to bring vaccination opportunities to everyone. As hope built, it did so because of the inherent belief of our communities that everyone is a neighbour and neighbours are there to help.

2020/21 showed all of us the worst and the best imaginable - and the best was very much a living demonstration of “The Power of Local” and what it means in Newcastle and Gateshead.

Reflecting on a year we hope we will never live through again, I want to offer some words of thanks. First, I want to thank the staff of Connected Voice, both past and present, who have adapted to the extraordinary circumstances so well. In June 2021, our Chief Executive Lisa Goodwin was awarded an MBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List for services to vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were just six MBE’s awarded in Tyne and Wear, so this also represented a wider acknowledgement of the critical role the voluntary sector has played. Next, I want to thank my fellow Trustees and within this particular mention must be made of Hannah Owens, Tracy Huitson, Colette Harrison and Amanda Lee who joined the Board in April 2021. Most important of all, I want to thank the voluntary sector of Newcastle and Gateshead and the many partners who have shown such support to the sector in the period covered by this report. None of us could have foreseen the circumstances we would encounter and the challenges in our own organisations, the stress, the immense feeling of responsibility and at times the exhaustion.

At time of writing, there is a genuine sense that we are moving beyond the pandemic and that gives cause for optimism – but the challenges of how we emerge and how we tackle the long term impacts are proving just as real. I hope next year to be able to write about how we have risen to those and created a better future as a result.

**Simon Elliott**
**Chair, Connected Voice**
**April 2022**

# OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objectives of Connected Voice are, ‘to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of any locality or community in the County of Northumberland and in the neighbourhood of the River Tyne.’

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 having due regard to the general guidance of the Charity Commission with respect to public benefit when reviewing the Connected Voice aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the trustees considered how the planned activities would contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

### Connected Voice has the following values:

### We amplify voices
From individuals to organisations, we believe everyone has a right to be heard. Trusted to listen, understand and advocate, we strive for excellence. We’re open and honest, we stick by people and give our support to ensure their voices are heard.

### We champion equality
We believe that diversity should be celebrated and valued, and everyone deserves equality.
Working towards a fairer future for all, we won't stand still. By making an impact on causes big and small, we want to improve the quality of life across the region.

### We inspire change
Courageous, resourceful and determined, we will challenge unfairness and ask difficult questions.
Working effectively and accountably to instil confidence. We aim to become stronger and more sustainable to inspire positive and lasting change throughout our community

### We support action
We understand from our own experiences the challenges people face. We truly value people and we won't judge or dictate. Leading independently and side by side with our communities and partners, we share our resources, skills and expertise to enable people to take meaningful action.

### We connect people
At the heart of voluntary and community action for 90 years, we are immersed and rooted in the North East.
We work collectively and inclusively to connect, grow and strengthen our society. We are warm and approachable, and we create opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from and empower one another

## Today and for the Future

Our overall aim is to improve quality of life through a broad programme of voluntary action, recognising that priority should be focused on the most disadvantaged communities. During 2020-21 we refreshed our purpose statement, which is:

**Connected Voice exists in service of organisations committed to voluntary and social action in Newcastle and Gateshead and beyond. We work to support the enduring mission of those organisations to benefit society by reducing inequality and enriching lives.**

Over the year we contributed to our overall aim and purpose in the following ways:

- As a high performing and leading organisation - providing a voice for individuals and the voluntary and community sector.
- By providing a wide range of advocacy services and support to vulnerable people
- By championing voluntary and community action
- By strengthening voluntary and community organisations through our advice and training services
- By continuing to adapt our services to ensure that they were appropriate and accessible to our beneficiaries during the current global pandemic
- By being proactive in offering additional support throughout the pandemic – including peer support, new networks, and an increase in training sessions and online events
- By highlighting issues around poverty and inequality in Newcastle and Gateshead, and addressing these through our work, including the work of Haref with our ethnically minoritised communities
- By producing an EDI action plan aligned to our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, to enable us to take a more proactive approach and work towards ensuring our membership and staff reflect the communities we serve
- By beginning work on addressing the gaps in volunteering support for the VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) sector in Gateshead

## Our Volunteers

Connected Voice values the unique contribution of our volunteers and the added value they bring. It is the intention of Connected Voice that all volunteers are supported, respected and valued. We encourage volunteers to fulfil their potential and aim to provide meaningful roles where both the organisation and the volunteer mutually benefit.

We were delighted to again be able to offer some of our advocacy volunteers permanent job roles this year. During the year, a number of our staff took advantage of our staff volunteering policy, which allows them two paid days off per year to volunteer locally. We have policies and procedures in place to support our volunteers, and work closely with our partner, Volunteer Centre Newcastle, to ensure that best practice is applied with respect to volunteering.

### Our staff

We recognise the value and expertise of our staff, and we strive to put in place appropriate support as a good employer. We have a range of staff engagement and involvement activities, including a Staff Council and Ideas Forum. We hold the Better Health at Work award, and maintained Gold level during the year. We are an accredited Living Wage Employer. We regularly hold 'Time to Talk' mental health sessions for staff and we retained our Investors In People accreditation. We hold the North of Tyne Good Work Pledge, making commitments to support the five pillars of the scheme.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Connected Voice enables and promotes voluntary and community action, providing voluntary sector organisations with services that enable them to be well run, fulfil their aims and objectives and provide them with the opportunity to extend their influence in Newcastle and Gateshead through the sector's collective voice.

We do this by providing expert advice on governance, on the policies and practices that voluntary organisations need to have to ensure they are safe and securely run, and by providing funding advice based on experience and knowledge of what funders are seeking in a good application.

We hold regular events to keep the sector informed about new initiatives, and to enable them to learn from and connect with each other. We provide opportunities for VCSE organisations to increase their reach and influence. Connected Voice acts as a broker for VCSE involvement, enabling engagement directly with public sector agencies and acting as a voice for the sector within multi-sector partnerships. During this year we created a working group to look at representation and voice - to ensure we are making the most of the limited time we have available to do this work, and to fill the gaps have emerged as more and more of our day to day work focuses directly on advice and support, rather than wider policy issues.

We engage in local authority-wide, sub-regional, regional and national activities because we want to be able to promote, share and deliver best practice. We work with a wide range of public sector partners – local authorities, NHS trusts, Clinical Commissioning groups, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities and many others.

Our Haref project is a network of 90+ ethically minoritised-led community organisations who work together to tackle health inequalities. Connected Voice Haref continued to see an increase in capacity thanks to success in generating funding. The work of Haref Network members in highlighting the disproportionate effects of the pandemic on ethnically minoritised communities continues to be a vital arm of our work, and we continue to raise the voices of those communities, and to share key public health messages, health information, etc.

Despite the enduring impact of the COVID-19 pandemic Connected Voice Advocacy has continued to deliver and grow during 2020/21. We have worked closely with institutions and service providers to minimise the impact of the restrictions and ensure that people maintained a quality of life and choice and control. The scrutiny role advocates have has been crucial during the pandemic to maintain standards in health and social care and to report crimes for those facing discrimination and abuse. We are so proud of the dedicated team who have continued to fight for people's rights in challenging times.

Our Commercial Development Executive role has proved to be sound investment, and over the year the various parts of our organisation worked together closely on our income generation goals.

Below is a summary of how we delivered against the strategic objectives we outlined in last year's annual report:

- **Embed the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Framework and action plan in our work.**

We delivered an extensive programme of EDI training across the organisation, involving both staff and trustees. Topics included general EDI training, digital accessibility, eating distress awareness, and LGBTQIA+ awareness. Our EDI group set key EDI priorities for the year and monitored our progress. We agreed to have one board meeting each year with an EDI focus, and we introduced new ways to track and monitor the impact of EDI work.

- **Work closely as a commercial team to achieve our annual income targets**

We achieved our income targets in two out of three areas, which we are proud of, considering the ongoing impact of the pandemic both on our capacity to engage with potential customers, and the financial impact it has had on VCSE organisations.

- **Provide leadership on climate emergency – both in terms of our actions as an organisation, and our work with VCSE organisations**

Our staff climate group continued to meet and monitor our progress against our action plan. We held a themed networking event on the topic of climate emergency for the VCSE sector, and we developed and delivered a 'practical tips for tackling climate emergency' training.

- **Embed partnership working and collaboration across all of our work, and support VCSE organisations to work collaboratively wherever possible**

We developed new partnerships during the year, specifically focusing on our new area of work around volunteering. We continued to bring VCSE organisations together regularly to share information and collaborate, building on the closer working relationships that developed during the pandemic.

# Connected Voice Support and Development

Connected Voice Support and Development works with community organisations, charities and social enterprises working in Newcastle and Gateshead. We provide advice and guidance on all aspects of running an organisation, a comprehensive training package and opportunities to network and share best practice.

## Support and Guidance

The Support and Development team worked with **283** organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead across the year, providing advice and guidance on topics including legal structures, governance, funding, policies and procedures, and organisational development.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the team developed risk assessment tools and resources to help organisations return to face to face activities.

## Funding

The Team support 17 organisations with 35 funding bids totalling **£923,545.**

Connected Voice developed and led the Spirit of Christmas Appeal. Collaborating with Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council, it raised over **£63,000** between November and December 2020. The appeal received donations from 160 local businesses and residents through Connected Voice's Virgin Money Donate Page. Connected Voice distributed all the money raised to 47 charities and community organisations across Newcastle and Gateshead.

The second Newcastle and Gateshead Funding Fair was held in June 2021. It was delivered live, via Zoom, over 3 afternoons, producing a total of 9 hours presentations from 16 local, regional and national funders, and attended by **121** organisations.

## Networking Events

We delivered 5 successful VCSE Networking Events during the period. These were delivered virtually as COVID-19 restrictions continued. These were:

- Home Truths: The VCSE and Black Asian and minority ethnic communities
- Doing Things Differently: Our local VCSE and responding to changing needs
- Women and COVID: The VCSE response in Newcastle and Gateshead
- Digital Conference: A day-long conference in partnership with Digital Voice For Communities
- Volunteering and Employment: VCSE responses in Newcastle and Gateshead

Participation at these events was at a record high level, reflecting the need for people and organisations to come together, share good practice, and explore new partnerships and ways of working together toward shared goals.

This period saw our two regular networks become established. Both the Youth and Community Network in Gateshead and the Women's Network across Newcastle and Gateshead met bi-monthly and adopted terms of references. The period also saw the continuation of the Gateshead Voluntary Sector Leader Network, with 3 meetings held. Feedback has been positive from the network members, reflecting the need for these topic specific meetings.

### Training

We increased our training offer significantly, and during this year **40** sessions were held, including: Funding Strategy, Effective Bid-Writing, Cyber Security, Introduction to Safeguarding, Good Governance. These have continued to be highly valued, well attended and received.

We worked with other Connected Voice departments to support raining on: Budgeting and Financial Procedures, Advocacy and Health Inequalities and Volunteering.

We were also able to offer some additional specific sessions around safeguarding with our partners in the Safer Culture NE partnership, covering safeguarding for trustees, designated persons, and volunteers.

Specialist sessions on volunteering were delivered in collaboration with Rob Jackson Consulting.

### OurGateshead

We invested in the Our Gateshead team, employing an Admin Officer. www.OurGateshead.org continued its work to promote organisations working in Gateshead and their services and activities. During this period OurGateshead continued to share the latest COVID-19 advice for the VCSE sector. As organisations were able to start opening, the team supported groups to promote their activities as they moved from virtual to in person.

We were funded by the Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group and GP practices to produce an OurGateshead progressive app and provide slide shows to be shown on the display screens in GP practices. The app development resulted in information being displayed to visitors by locality – the nearest activities to the visitor is shown first.

The site received **96,965** visitors who viewed **116,902** pages of information.

## Premium Services

We increased our income generation through charged for services during the year, seeing an increase in the number of organisations using our services to undertake organisational reviews, write policies and procedures, and complete charity and community interest company registrations.

## Information

We are a key source of information for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Newcastle and Gateshead. In the reporting period we:

- Distributed **23** fortnightly electronic news bulletins to **1,000** plus subscribers
- Distributed a monthly health and social care bulletin to the sector (On the Hoof)
- Produced **4** quarterly magazines shared with **1,500** plus members and key contacts, magazine themes:
    - Adaptation
    - Collaboration
    - Community Action
    - Mental Health
- Developed our Twitter following from 3,937 followers in October 2020 to **4,225** by end September 2021
- Increased our followers on Facebook to **955** and LinkedIn to **485**

## Connected Voice Haref

Connected Voice Haref works with ethnically minoritised communities to identify their key issues around health and improve the health information available to them. We help health services gain a better understanding of what communities need and we build confidence within communities so they can talk to health services about their cultural needs.

Key achievements were:

### Haref Network

- We held meetings for the Haref Network with discussions about:
    - How Haref can help shape mental health service delivery
    - The impact of COVID-19 on local communities
    - Community Champions in Newcastle and Gateshead
    - Opportunities to work with the Haref Allies
- **Terminology discussion.** We ran consultation exercises and discussions with our Haref Network on changing the terminology from the term ‘BAME’. The Network agreed to use the terminology ethnically minoritised communities instead of BAME. We will revisit these discussions in a years’ time.
- **Spotlights.** In our monthly Haref bulletin we have added a spotlight article on one of our Network members that is linked to our website.

### Haref Allies

We held two meetings for the Haref Allies and looked at:

- Training on working with people whose first language isn’t English.

- Good practice for delivering health information sessions to diverse community groups. We worked with HealthWorks and the Comfrey Project to share advice on what works well in delivering health information sessions.
- We secured funding from the Community Foundation to employ a Haref Allies Engagement Officer who will be leading on a paid-for Allies membership offer. They joined Haref in September 2021.

### Cultural Competency Training

- For the Newcastle City Council Public Health contract, we delivered training to **327** attendees. The contract has been extended for another two years to July 2023.
- Our new Training and Development Officer started in July 2021. Their first task was to refresh the online training sessions. We extended the length of the session, refreshed slides, included two new videos developed by Haref Network members, allowed more discussion time and updated the resource pack.
- We continue to receive requests for paid-for Cultural Competency training and delivered 12 paid-for sessions over the year.

### Community Forum

- The Community Forum supported by the Newcastle Gateshead NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), started to meet online again after a break due to COVID- 19. Haref facilitated the meetings with discussions on:
    - Vaccine information
    - One year on in COVID-19 for the VCSE
    - CCG commissioning update

### COVID-19 Response and Community Champions

- Haref regularly cascaded information linked to: access to services; restrictions, key messages and translated documents; and videos in different languages, linking in with local authority communications teams.
- We ran **4 vaccine information sessions** with the Haref Network, the Children's Society and Action Foundation.
- **Newcastle Community Champions meetings**. We have been contracted for 12 months to support the work of the champions including attending the Champions session, the steering group, and raising the profile of being a Community Champion.

### Research projects

Haref has been involved in three research projects:

- **Peer research mental health project 'Experiences and thoughts of mental health'.** This research was initiated and funded by Newcastle Healthy Futures, and Haref led on this research. The peer research team was involved in all aspects of the project, from designing questions, developing methods, collecting responses, and analysing the data. This was a six-month project and was completed in summer 2021 with a report and recommendations produced and disseminated.

- **'Towards fairer health for disadvantaged communities, including those of Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds'** We have worked in partnership with Newcastle University, Riverside Community Health Project, and the West End Family Health hub. This looked at health messages through the lens of the pandemic and how they were acted on, with the aim of identifying effective ways to get people the information they need in the future. This is a year-long project will finish in 2022.
- '**Improving the accessibility of medicines review services in primary care for patients from ethnic minorities'** in partnership with Newcastle University Pharmacy Department which ran for six months until July 2021.

### Evaluation of the Ramadan calendars

In 2021, Haref designed calendars for 11 mosques in Newcastle, North Tyneside and Gateshead. We distributed these by email, social media and our website. After Ramadan, we completed an evaluation with the mosques about the calendars, as we were interested to know how the calendars worked in a digital format, and how the health information was used. We received useful feedback, which we used to develop this year's calendars.

## Connected Voice Business Services

Our trading subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd continued to provide payroll, accounting and bookkeeping services, supporting over **200** VCSE organisations across the region.

During the year Connected Voice Business Services supported a large number of organisations to make the switch to digital finance, providing training as QuickBooks Pro certified advisors. We also supported organisations with furlough, providing regular information and one to one advice, and managing HMRC claims under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme 40 of our payroll customers.

## Connected Voice Advocacy

Despite the enduring impact of the COVID-19 pandemic Connected Voice Advocacy has continued to deliver and grow during 2020/21. We have worked closely with institutions and service providers to minimise the impact of the restrictions and ensure that people maintained a quality of life and choice and control. The scrutiny role advocates have has been crucial during the pandemic to maintain standards in health and social care and to report crimes for those facing discrimination and abuse. We are so proud of the dedicated team who have continued to fight for people's rights in challenging times. We have seen advocates and their families suffer from the virus and the service has experienced times with low staff numbers. Our digital offer through DIY Advocate® has helped us give support to those who can self-advocate, and helped us manage our waiting lists due to high demand. Case work has included disturbing content, so we have supported the staff team during this challenging year with extra financial, emotional support as well as dedicating time to

team building and training. We have continued to develop the advocacy workforce by recruiting our dedicated volunteers and introduced people who haven't been advocates previously to train them in the role.

We are delighted to have secured contracts and grants to enable us to continuing delivering our core services and additional funding to widen our support to people who needed safeguarding in the pandemic, Refugees and Asylum Seekers and older people from the LGBTQIA+ and/or ethnically minoritised communities. The demand for our bespoke contracts rose considerably and we offered expert advocacy to over 30 parents going through child protection hearings this year.

This year our service was funded to deliver community based advocacy in the following areas:

- **Health and Social Care Advocacy** - supported adults across Newcastle and Gateshead with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs and those from ethnically minoritised and LGBTQ+ communities with social care issues
- **Refugees and Asylum Seekers Advocacy** - supported adults seeking asylum or with refugee status
- **Gateshead Housing Advocacy** - supported tenants of Gateshead Housing Company with welfare rights issues
- **Families through Crisis** - provided holistic support to Newcastle families in crisis with North East Law Centre and Changing Lives
- **Hate Crime Advocacy** - supported adults who have been a victim of a hate crime or discrimination across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear
- **Safeguarding Advocacy** - supported adults who were particular vulnerable to abuse during the pandemic
- **Spot Contract Advocacy** - supported adults on a bespoke, individually funded basis around a range of topic such as Child Protection Court Hearings, Post Accident Rehabilitation, Specialist Brain Injury support

We provided statutory advocacy for Gateshead Local Authority, Mitford Unit the National Autism Inpatient Service, and various local authorities with out of area placements in the North East of England in the following roles:

- **Independent Mental Health Advocate** - supported people subject to the Mental Health Act around their care and treatment, ensuring their rights were upheld
- **Independent Mental Capacity Advocate** - helped people who lack capacity, and do not have friends or relatives to support them, to make certain important decisions
- **Independent Care Act Advocate** - supported people's involvement in care and support assessment, planning and review and safeguarding processes
- **Relevant Person's Representatives** - ensured that the rights of people being deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards were protected

We took time to reflect on our services this year as we undertook the national Advocacy Quality Performance Mark, making improvements in our internal systems. We had a team away day to work together on assessing the needs of our communities which has informed our 2022-25 Business Plan. We made a commitment to

address our language when referring to people we work with and avoid labels that some people find offensive or dehumanising.

Using the information collated from our grassroots advocacy we were able to campaign and advocate for change in the following areas:

- Continued to collaborate with advocacy providers nationally at the National Advocacy Leaders network to share good practice and campaign for social justice together
- Collaborated with local advocacy providers to share good practice and reduce competition in the sector
- Developed partnership and improved referral pathways for Headway groups in the region
- Worked in partnership with Durham and Northumbria Universities to help develop their concept of 'hate relationships'
- Developed partnerships with the Newcastle University Student Law Centre Street Law project to simplify legislation and produce tools for people we work with
- Contributed to the learning and support materials for NHS Foundation Trust Life Limiting Illness research programme
- Worked with the Census team to ensure the people we work with were included and counted
- Responded to the national consultation around reforms to the Mental Health Act
- Responded to the national consultation around Ministry of Justice - Victim's Law 'delivering justice for victims'
- Responded to the national consultation on Adult Social Care reform
- Responded to the national consultation by the Ministerial Oversight Group on Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Responded to the national consultation by the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) reform of the Lasting Power Of Attorney process
- Participated in National Development Team on Inclusion (NDTi) review into advocacy provision within inpatient settings for people with learning disability and autism
- Contributed to the development of the Advocacy Leaders' Statement of Intent on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Invited Equality and Human Right's Commission to meet us and consult our views for their Inquiry into challenging decisions about adult social care
- Contributed to the development of the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner – Understanding needs of victims in the Police and Crime plan 2021-25
- Continued to influence local service provision at the Adult Safeguarding Boards in Newcastle and Gateshead
- Represented the voice of victims of hate crime at the Victim & Witness Service Improvement Board of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

### Advocacy statistics

- Supported **1,600** people and worked on **1,900** issues
- Provided **14,700** hours of direct advocacy support
- Employed **21** advocates and a new administration and duty team - all managed and supervised by our Senior Management Team
- Maintained and supported **6** volunteers during pandemic
- Secured employment for **3** volunteers
- Trained 8 advocates through the National Advocacy Qualification and Care Act and Mental Capacity Act legislation
- Worked in over **30** ethnically minoritised communities across at least 29 languages and employed 4 multi-lingual Advocates
- Increased our social media presence with over **1,400** Twitter followers
- Secured employment for two volunteers advocates
- Trained five advocates in the National Independent Advocacy Qualification

### Helped people challenge restrictions:

- **57** were supported by advocates through safeguarding procedures
- **27** people living in care homes were supported by advocates to challenge their placement through the Court of Protection
- **28** families were supported in Child Protection hearings
- **15** people were supported to challenge their mental health sections via Mental Health Tribunals
- **5** people were supported in Welfare Benefit appeals
- **£130,000** was awarded due to our support with appeals challenges

## Acknowledgements

**Connected Voice records its appreciation to all our funders and supporters.**

Connected Voice is a member of NCVO, NAVCA, ACEVO, the Community Foundation (Tyne, Wear and Northumberland), the Advocacy Action Alliance, and OPAAL (Older People's Advocacy Alliance) We work closely with our sister infrastructure organisations across the North East and we are members of and contribute to a number of significant and appropriate local partnerships, initiatives, boards and committees.

### Social Value

Connected Voice tries to act in a socially responsible manner. We use other VCSE facilities and services wherever possible. We use sustainable products as far as possible. We try to use local suppliers. We use fair trade products. We take climate change seriously and we aim to reduce our environmental impact through the development of a climate change action plan, and regular staff meetings on this theme. The ratio of pay of the lowest earner to the pay of the top earner will never exceed 1:5. We are a Living Wage employer, accredited

by the Living Wage Foundation, including apprentices and interns. During the year we have benefitted from nine active trustees who all volunteered their skills, knowledge and expertise and linked us to helpful networks and useful partners.

## CONNECTED VOICE – STRATEGIC AIMS 2021-2022

We agreed to continue our work on the following strategic aims for the year ahead:

- Embed the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework and action plan in our work.
- Work closely as a commercial team to achieve our annual income targets
- Provide leadership on climate emergency – both in terms of our actions as an organisation, and our work with VCSE organisations
- Embed partnership working and collaboration across all of our work, and support VCSE organisations to work collaboratively wherever possible

Each team has a work plan including SMART objectives which link to the overall objectives above.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

Connected Voice bids for funds via statutory sources and charitable trusts and foundations, and generates income through paid-for services. A substantial part of our income comes through contracts. Connected Voice is assiduous in looking for appropriate sources of funding, and as an organisation responsible for advising the voluntary sector on funding sources is well placed to know what is available. We use a full cost recovery model which enables us to estimate the actual costs of a service and its true cost to Connected Voice. As the value of public sector contracts continues to decrease, this is an essential tool for us to use in deciding whether or not to bid for a service.

Senior managers and the Treasurer meet to set budgets annually and during the course of the reporting period financial management for the charity has been reviewed and a new contract developed to clarify how Connected Voice Business Services manages day to day finance and reporting on behalf of the charity.

We hold four key contracts (with Newcastle Council, 2 x Gateshead Council, and Newcastle Gateshead CCG) and anticipate that some of these will go out to tender in the 22-23 financial year. We had extensions confirmed this year on the two infrastructure contracts and statutory advocacy contract. We keep up to speed on contract publication dates and will plan our workload accordingly.

Our trustees are clear about our aims and mission and that we need to be sustainable, but keep to our vision and values. Connected Voice will not enter into partnerships and contracts which are contrary to our aims and objectives and we recognise that we need to stay within our agreed budget limits for the year.

### Assets

The charity's assets are being held to enable them to carry out its objectives. The movements in fixed asset investments during the year are set out in note 23 to the accounts.

### Trading activities

The results of Connected Voice Charity Business Services, our trading company, are summarised in note 24 of the accounts. A surplus was generated during the period of £32,535 (2020: £7,729)

### Financial dependency

The charity in order to meet its objectives is financially dependent on grants from the Local Authorities, government programmes and charitable trusts.

Additional funds are derived from smaller grants and charitable donations made by a variety of organisations and individuals.

### Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

Connected Voice and its subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services provides payroll and bookkeeping services and holds monies for this purpose. Further detail is given in note 30.

### Reserves Policy

The Trustees regularly review levels of reserves and have agreed again this year that reserves equivalent to between three and five months running costs are appropriate for the organisation.
Three months running costs would equate to around £375,000 and five months £625,000, based on the accounts for the 12 months to 30 September 2021. The reserves should not fall below this level in order to support good governance of the organisation.

The Reserve Policy allows for the use of funds in excess of the level required to be spent in furtherance of the organisation's vision and mission. Any proposal should be presented as an individual business case to the Trustees for review and approval.

As at 30 September 2021 free reserves (unrestricted and designated funds not invested in tangible fixed assets) are £861,673, (2020: £742,276) an increase of £119,397. The Trustees monitor the level of reserves regularly and the Reserves Policy is reviewed annually with the support of the Finance Sub Group. The trustees have agreed to designate £276,644 of reserves, further detail is given in note 34.

### Review of transactions and financial position

The consolidated balance sheet on page 27 indicates that at 30 September 2021 the total funds of the group are £1,015,027 (2020: £938,086). This was represented by tangible fixed assets of £21,530 (2020: £25,257), investments of £459,154 (2020: £380,162) and net current assets of £534,343 (2020: £532,669). Unrestricted

and designated funds of £869,473 (2020: £748,860) represent the reserves available to the organisation to fulfil its many existing commitments over the long term. Restricted funds of £145,544 (2020: £189,226) represent specific earmarked projects as detailed in note 34 of the accounts.

### Investment income

Connected Voice is usually in the position of having to fund a considerable proportion of its core running costs each year and the income it derives from its invested reserves is an essential component of that strategy, alongside donations, earnings and other provisions.

Tilney are the appointed wealth investment organisation managing the Connected Voice investment portfolio. The Finance Sub-Group monitors the performance of the portfolio, reviewing the quarterly financial investment reports provided by Tilney and reporting into the board meetings. Trustees support the investment objective for Connected Voice which is to yield the best financial return within the level of risk considered to be acceptable. This return can then be spent on the charity's aims and further continuance of its objectives. The Trustees are comfortable that the investments held are a diversified portfolio in order to mitigate the capital risk. The Finance Sub-Group has put forward an Investment Strategy Policy. The investment balances as at the 30 September 2021 are £459,154 (2020: £380,162). Net additional funds of £9,510 were added to the investment portfolio in the year, all dividends and income are reinvested.

### Political contributions

The charity made no political contributions.

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Registered Charity Number** | 1125877 |
| **Company Number** | 06681475 |
| **Trustees** | Simon Elliott<br>Nitin Shukla<br>Martin Horrocks<br>Elaine Slater<br>Paula Park<br>Hannah Owens (elected 21 April 2021)<br>Tracy Huitson (elected 21 April 2021)<br>Amanda Lee (elected 21 April 2021)<br>Colette Harrison (elected 21 April 2021)<br>Adebusola Afolabi (elected 1 March 2022)<br>Dawn Redhead (resigned 31 December 2020)<br>Steve Nash (resigned 21 April 2021) |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Kate Israel (resigned 21 April 2021)<br>Rosie Lewis (resigned 19 September 2021) |
| **Chief Executive** | Lisa Goodwin |
| **Principal Office** | Higham House<br>Higham Place<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 8AF |
| **Auditors** | Haines Watts<br>17 Queens Lane<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 1 RN |
| **Bankers** | Virgin Money UK<br>132 -134 Northumberland Street<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 7AG<br><br>Unity Trust Bank Plc<br>PO Box 7193<br>Planetary Road<br>Willenhall<br>WV1 9DG |
| **Investment Manager** | Tilney<br>Private Wealth Management<br>130 St Vincent Street<br>Glasgow<br>G2 5SE |

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity's full name is Connected Voice. It is an incorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 1125877) and a company limited by guarantee (number 06681475).

### Governing documents

The charity's governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Connected Voice is an independent charity working with the voluntary sector primarily in Newcastle and Gateshead. It is run by a Board of Trustees elected annually by its member organisations, and by co-opted members. The Board controls the direction and policy of the work, and met five times during this financial year. It holds a special business planning meeting with senior managers, at least once a year, in order to define the priorities for the coming year.

Connected Voice is a membership organisation with over 750 members.

## Recruitment of trustees

Trustees are elected from the membership annually. Notice is sent to all members, and if a ballot is required, it is conducted prior to the Annual General Meeting. Trustees may only serve for a set period of time. The skills and experience of existing trustees are audited regularly and new trustees are recruited in order to complement the existing trustees ensuring a wide set of skills and knowledge is reflected in the overall board. If the Board feels there are particular skills lacking, they are able to promote these during the recruitment process. The governance document allows for co-opted trustees so that specialist skills can be brought onto the board. The Chair has experience of business and Human Resources and is not from the voluntary sector, although he chairs another voluntary organisation. The treasurer is an accountant with extensive experience of the charity sector.

All trustees have a comprehensive induction session with the Chief Executive. They also complete a form to assess any relevant training they may need and these needs are met as far as is practical. Trustees are given regular opportunities to find out more about Connected Voice and the voluntary and community sector in Newcastle and Gateshead, as well as national issues affecting voluntary organisations. Trustees receive a full induction pack including examples of best practice and guidance produced by the Charity Commission. Trustees are encouraged to be fully involved in the work of Connected Voice. Annually, the Chair carries out a confidential interview with each trustee to identify any challenges, concerns and priorities. These are collated into a single document and discussed openly at Board.

## Organisational structure

The Board of trustees, which can have up to twelve members, has control of the charity, including its property and its funds. The Board normally meets four times per year and there are two sub groups covering finance, and advocacy, which report into the Board. Task and finish groups of the trustees are also created as necessary – this year Task and Finish groups were established for workforce development and volunteering. The representation and voice task and finish group continued. The Chief Executive is appointed by the trustees to manage the charity and has delegated authority for all operational matters.

## Pay policy for senior staff

The Chief Executive implements the pay policy on an ongoing basis and is responsible for pay reviews and setting salaries for senior staff. The Board reviews the Chief Executive's salary annually and is responsible for making any decisions about remuneration of the Chief Executive. Remuneration is benchmarked against

similar roles within voluntary and community sector organisations of similar size in the North East. The need for major changes to the salary structure may be informed by a number of factors such as changes to the organisation's annual turnover and the number of employees. This year a salary benchmarking review was conducted which showed that the organisation paid at the expected rate for all job roles.

Connected Voice has a Remuneration Policy which covers all staff. Senior staff are not treated differently to other staff and all benefits (including pension contributions) are applied equally across all staff groups.

### Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between trustees or senior managers of the charity with suppliers must be disclosed to the full Board of trustees. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported. Trustees are asked to declare their interests before each board meeting and there is a Register of Interests.

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary**, Connected Voice Business Services Ltd**, was established to operate as a commercial accountancy service and gift aids all of its profits to the charity (see note 24 to the accounts).

### Risk management

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The Board reviews the strategic risk assessment annually and the full report is discussed at a Board meeting annually where mitigating actions identified and taken. Health and Safety information is presented on a quarterly basis to the Board.

### Indemnity insurance

The charity has Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in respect of the Trustees and Officers of the charity.

## TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENTS

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company, the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources including the income and expenditure of the charitable group for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2016 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards 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 business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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 the group, and hence 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 in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware, and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

Approved by the board of trustees on .....08/06/2022... and signed on behalf by:



.....

**Simon Elliott – Chair**

**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Connected Voice (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year 31 September 2021 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 September 2021, and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

**Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group's or parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

However, not all future events or conditions can be predicted. The COVID-19 viral pandemic is one of the most significant economic events for the UK with unprecedented levels of uncertainty of outcomes. It is therefore difficult to evaluate all of the potential implications on the company's trade,

customers, suppliers and wider economy. The Trustees' view on the impact of COVID-19 is disclosed in the trustees report (page 1) and the accounting policies (page 29)

**Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the group and parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the parent charity's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 20-21, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements which give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group and parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group and parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

We have been appointed auditor under the companies Act 2006 and we report in accordance with this Act.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to both the company itself and the industry in which it operates. We identified areas of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our sector experience and through discussion with the directors and other management. The most significant were identified as the Charities Act 2011, Companies Act 2006, UK GAAP (FRS102) and relevant tax legislation. We considered the extent of compliance with those laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statements. Our audit procedures included:

- confirming with the trustees and management whether they have any knowledge or suspicion of fraud;
- obtaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- assessing the risk of management override including identifying and testing a sample of journal entries;

- confirmation received from the banks to verify the balance as on the last day of the accounting year;
- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
- challenging the assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates.

Our audit did not identify any key audit matters relating to the detection of irregularities including fraud. However, despite the audit being planned and conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) there remains an unavoidable risk that material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected owing to inherent limitations of the audit, and that by their very nature, any such instances of fraud or irregularity likely involve collusion, forgery, intentional misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Donna Bulmer BA (Hons) ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor)** .....

**For and on behalf of Haines Watts North East Audit LLP**

**Statutory Auditors & Chartered Accountants**

17 Queens Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1RN
08/06/2022

**CONNECTED VOICE**
(A company limited by guarantee)

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCLUDING SUMMARY INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
For the year ended 30 September 2021

| | Notes | Unrestricted Funds £ | Designated Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income from:** | | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 8 | 18,218 | - | 1,000 | **19,218** | 51,305 |
| Charitable activities | 9 | | | | | |
| Grants and contracts | | 820,599 | - | 542,676 | **1,363,275** | 997,959 |
| Chargeable services | | 179,698 | - | - | **179,698** | 149,639 |
| Other trading activities | 10 | | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | | 233,672 | - | - | **233,672** | 179,272 |
| Other trading income | | 9,897 | - | - | **9,897** | 12,740 |
| Investments | 11 | 9,848 | - | - | **9,848** | 10,941 |
| ***Total income*** | | 1,271,932 | - | 543,676 | **1,815,608** | 1,401,856 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | | |
| Costs of raising funds | 12 | | | | | |
| Subsidiary expenditure | | 196,308 | - | - | **196,308** | 179,475 |
| Investment management fees | | 3,536 | - | - | **3,536** | 3,137 |
| Charitable activities | | | | | | |
| Operation of the charity | 13 | 966,700 | 64,259 | 577,348 | **1,608,307** | 1,093,156 |
| ***Total expenditure*** | | 1,166,544 | 64,259 | 577,348 | **1,808,151** | 1,275,768 |
| ***Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)*** | | 105,388 | ( 64,259 ) | ( 33,672 ) | **7,457** | 126,088 |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | 25 | 69,484 | - | - | **69,484** | ( 17,825 ) |
| Transfers between funds | | ( 180,903 ) | 190,903 | ( 10,000 ) | **-** | - |
| ***Net movement of funds*** | | ( 6,031 ) | 126,644 | ( 43,672 ) | **76,941** | 108,263 |
| **Reconciliation of funds** | | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 598,860 | 150,000 | 189,226 | **938,086** | 829,823 |
| ***Total funds carried forward*** | | 592,829 | 276,644 | 145,554 | **1,015,027** | 938,086 |

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 29 to 45 form an integral part of these accounts.

**CONNECTED VOICE**
(A company limited by guarantee)

Charity Number 1125877
Company Number 06681475

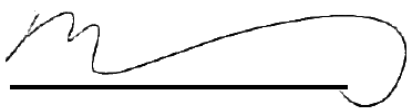
## BALANCE SHEET
As at 30 September 2021

| | Notes | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2021 | Restated 2020 | 2021 | 2020 |
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 22 | 21,530 | 25,257 | 21,530 | 25,257 |
| Investments | 23 | 459,154 | 380,162 | 459,156 | 380,164 |
| ***Total fixed assets*** | | **480,684** | **405,419** | **480,686** | **405,421** |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Stock and work in progress | 26 | 23,187 | 16,259 | - | - |
| Debtors | 27 | 382,352 | 332,574 | 447,288 | 373,462 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 816,363 | 647,522 | 205,880 | 256,842 |
| ***Total current assets*** | | **1,221,902** | **996,355** | **653,168** | **630,304** |
| **Creditors:** amounts falling due within one year | 28 | **( 687,559 )** | **( 463,686 )** | **( 118,827 )** | **( 97,637 )** |
| ***Net current assets*** | | **534,343** | **532,669** | **534,341** | **532,667** |
| ***Total assets less current liabilities*** | | **1,015,027** | **938,088** | **1,015,027** | **938,088** |
| ***Total net assets or liabilities*** | | **1,015,027** | **938,088** | **1,015,027** | **938,088** |
| **Funds of the charity** | | | | | |
| Unrestricted income funds | | 592,829 | 598,860 | 592,829 | 598,860 |
| Designated income funds | | 276,644 | 150,000 | 276,644 | 150,000 |
| Restricted income funds | | 145,554 | 189,226 | 145,554 | 189,226 |
| ***Total funds*** | | **1,015,027** | **938,086** | **1,015,027** | **938,086** |

The notes on pages 29 to 45 form an integral part of these accounts.

These financial statements were approved by the Board on: 08/06/2022

and are signed on its behalf by: Martin Horrocks
Treasurer



**CONNECTED VOICE**
(A company limited by guarantee)

Charity Number 1125877
Company Number 06681475

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
For the year ended 30 September 2021

| | Notes | 2021 £ | Restated 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cash flows from operating activities** | | | |
| Net movement in funds | | 76,941 | 108,263 |
| **Add back:** | | | |
| Depreciation | 13 | 7,824 | 6,125 |
| Interest and dividends received | | 9,848 | 10,941 |
| Gains on investments | | ( 69,484 ) | 17,825 |
| (Increase) / decrease in stock and work in progress" | | ( 6,928 ) | 5,428 |
| (Increase) / decrease in debtors" | | ( 49,778 ) | 54,542 |
| Increase in creditors | | 223,873 | 169,298 |
| ***Cash generated from operations*** | | **192,296** | **372,422** |
| ***Net cash from operating activities*** | | **192,296** | **372,422** |
| **Cash flow from investing activities** | | | |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment | 16 | ( 4,097 ) | ( 29,066 ) |
| Payments to acquire investments | 25 | ( 76,143 ) | - |
| Receipts of sale of investments | 25 | 66,633 | - |
| Interest and dividends received | 25 | ( 9,848 ) | ( 10,941 ) |
| ***Net cash used in investing activities*** | | **( 23,455 )** | **( 40,007 )** |
| **Increase in cash and cash equivalents** | | 168,841 | 332,415 |
| **Cash and cash equivalents at start of year** | | 647,522 | 315,107 |
| ***Cash and cash equivalents at end of year*** | | **816,363** | **647,522** |
| **Cash and cash equivalents consist of:** | | | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 256,606 | 283,375 |
| Cash held as a custodian | | 559,757 | 364,147 |
| | | **816,363** | **647,522** |

The notes on pages 29 to 45 form an integral part of these accounts.

## 1 Accounting Policies

The principle accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

## 2 Basis of accounting

### 2.1 Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts 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) (effective 1 January 2019) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

Connected Voice meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### 2.2 Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. In particular, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trustees have revised their forecasts to take into account the impact on the business of possible scenarios brought on by the impact of COVID-19, alongside the measures that they can take to mitigate the impact. Based on these assessments, given the measures that could be undertaken to mitigate the current adverse conditions, and the current resources available, the Trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

### 2.3 Group financial statements

These financial statements consolidate the results of the charity and its wholly-owned subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd on a line by line basis. A separate Statement of Financial Activities for the charity itself is not presented because the charity has taken advantage of the exemptions afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

## 3 Income

### 3.1 Recognition of income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the resources, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is more likely than not that the resources will be received and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

### 3.2 Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by FRS102 SORP or FRS102.

### 3.3 Trading activities

Income from trading activities is to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred.

3.4 **Grants and donations**

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance or provision of other specified services is deferred until the criteria of income recognition are met.

3.5 **Volunteer help**

The value of volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

3.6 **Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

3.7 **Investment income**

Investment Income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as shares and cash deposits. it includes dividends and interest: and amounts are recognised when the charity's right to receive payment is established

3.8 **Investment gains and losses**

This includes any realised or unrealised gains or losses on the sale of investment and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

3.9 **Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charities' work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

4 **Expenditure and liabilities**

4.1 **Liability recognition**

Liabilities are recognised when it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

4.2 **Charitable activities**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual baisis. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of voluntary sector support, advocacy and other activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

4.3 **Governance and support costs**

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly relate to the charitable activities. Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

4.4 **Holding accounts**

The charity and its subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations as part of their payroll service. The balances held by the charity are included within the balance sheet in accordance with SORP 2019; the balances of the subsidiary are recognised as an asset with the corresponding liability.

4.5 **Operating lease**

Rentals payable and receivable under operating leases are charged to the SoFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease

4.6 **Irrecoverable VAT**

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

4.7 **Creditors**

The charity has creditors which are measured at their settlement amount less any trade discounts due.

4.8 **Provisions for liabilities**

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

4.9 **Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement**

There are no critical accounting estimates, but the one that involves the most estimation is work in progress.

## 5 Assets

### 5.1 Investments

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Electronic office equipment | 25% straight line basis |
| Restricted office equipment | 25% straight line basis |

### 5.2 Investments

Fixed asset investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (their market value) at the year end. The same treatment is applied to unlisted investments unless fair value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment.

### 5.3 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discount due.

## 6 Legal status

Connected Voice is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, (number 06681475) and not having share capital. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity.

## 7 Financial performance of the charity

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities includes the results of the wholly owned subsidiary.

The summary financial performance of the charity alone is:

| | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Income | **1,581,936** | 1,222,584 |
| Gift aid from subsidiary company | **32,533** | 7,728 |
| | **1,614,469** | 1,230,312 |
| Expenditure | **( 1,607,012 )** | ( 1,104,224 ) |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | **69,484** | ( 17,825 ) |
| ***Net movement in funds for the year*** | **76,941** | 108,263 |
| Total funds brought forward | **938,086** | 829,823 |
| ***Total funds carried forward*** | **1,015,027** | 938,086 |
| Represented by: | | |
| Unrestricted income funds | **592,829** | 598,860 |
| Designated income funds | **276,644** | 150,000 |
| Restricted income funds | **145,554** | 189,226 |
| | **1,015,027** | 938,086 |

| **Analysis of income** | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 **Donations and legacies** | | | | |
| Hadrian Trust | - | - | **-** | 3,000 |
| Rothley Trust | 800 | - | **800** | - |
| Amazon Community-UK | 2,000 | - | **2,000** | - |
| Community Foundation | - | - | **-** | 16,860 |
| Durham University | - | 1,000 | **1,000** | - |
| RW Mann Trust | - | - | **-** | 2,000 |
| Sir James Knott Trust | 7,000 | - | **7,000** | 7,000 |
| The Barbour Foundation | - | - | **-** | 10,000 |
| The Joicey Trust | 3,000 | - | **3,000** | 3,000 |
| NAVCA | 4,500 | - | **4,500** | - |
| Newcastle Hospitals | - | - | **-** | 2,500 |
| Other donations | 918 | - | **918** | 6,945 |
| | 18,218 | 1,000 | **19,218** | 51,305 |
| 9 **Charitable activities** | | | | |
| Income from grants and contracts | | | | |
| NHS Newcastle and Gateshead CCG | 294,958 | - | **294,958** | 232,779 |
| Community Foundation | - | 74,237 | **74,237** | - |
| The National Lottery Community Fund | - | - | **-** | 55,711 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via North East Law Centre | - | 21,108 | **21,108** | 26,644 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via VONNE | - | 8,637 | **8,637** | 11,473 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund via VODA | - | 17,000 | **17,000** | - |
| Newcastle East End Partnership | - | - | **-** | 18,838 |
| Police & Crime Commissioner Northumbria | - | 47,710 | **47,710** | 57,242 |
| Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council | 315,079 | - | **315,079** | 307,912 |
| Newcastle City Council | 203,250 | - | **203,250** | 192,000 |
| Newcastle City Council Public Health | | 113,000 | **113,000** | - |
| Innovation Super Network | 5,000 | - | **5,000** | - |
| Defra Food Grant | - | 230,920 | **230,920** | - |
| Cumbria NTW NHS | - | 15,064 | **15,064** | - |
| HMRC Job retention scheme | 2,312 | - | **2,312** | - |
| MH Concern - Peer research | - | 15,000 | **15,000** | - |
| VCSE Resilience | - | - | **-** | 95,360 |
| | 820,599 | 542,676 | **1,363,275** | 997,959 |
| Chargeable services | | | | |
| Individual advocacy client spot contracts | 129,061 | - | **129,061** | 115,986 |
| Paid for services to the voluntary sector | 49,244 | - | **49,244** | 32,613 |
| Other income | 1,393 | - | **1,393** | 1,040 |
| | 179,698 | - | **179,698** | 149,639 |

**Analysis of income** continued

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 **Other trading activities** | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | | | | |
| Accountancy services to the charity sector | 233,672 | - | **233,672** | 179,272 |
| | 233,672 | - | **233,672** | 179,272 |
| Other trading income | | | | |
| Room hire, rent office space | 5,192 | - | **5,192** | 1,200 |
| Advocacy App | 3,000 | - | **3,000** | 10,000 |
| Website advertising and admin services | 1,705 | - | **1,705** | 1,540 |
| | 9,897 | - | **9,897** | 12,740 |
| 11 **Investments** | | | | |
| Interest receivable | - | - | **-** | 246 |
| Income on investments | 9,848 | - | **9,848** | 10,695 |
| | 9,848 | - | **9,848** | 10,941 |

Income was £1,815,608 (2020: £1,401,856) of which £1,271,932 was unrestricted or designated (2020: £1,108,993) and £543,676 was restricted (2020: £292,863).

**Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities**

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 **Raising funds** | | | | |
| Trading subsidiary costs | | | | |
| Staff costs | 176,451 | - | **176,451** | 166,527 |
| Overheads | 19,857 | - | **19,857** | 12,948 |
| | 196,308 | - | **196,308** | 179,475 |
| Investment management costs | 3,536 | - | **3,536** | 3,137 |
| | 3,536 | - | **3,536** | 3,137 |

**Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities** continued

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 **Charitable activities** | | | | |
| Direct costs | | | | |
| Project staff salaries | 742,599 | 132,561 | **875,160** | 793,926 |
| Direct project costs | 80,661 | 419,385 | **500,046** | 52,230 |
| Support costs | | | | |
| Management & admin staff salaries | 110,863 | 10,006 | **120,869** | 140,976 |
| Facility costs | 33,995 | 4,158 | **38,153** | 46,111 |
| Office costs | 50,585 | 5,766 | **56,351** | 45,496 |
| Professional fees | 4,486 | 212 | **4,698** | 2,998 |
| Depreciation | 2,564 | 5,260 | **7,824** | 6,125 |
| Governance costs | | | | |
| Audit fee | 4,000 | - | **4,000** | 4,800 |
| Annual review, AGM and trustee planning | 1,206 | - | **1,206** | 494 |
| | 1,030,959 | 577,348 | **1,608,307** | 1,093,156 |

Expenditure on charitable activities was £1,808,151 (2020: £1,275,768) of which £1,230,803 was unrestricted or designated (2020: £1,079,589) and £577,348 was restricted (2020: £196,179).

**Analysis of charitable activities by activity type**

| | Voluntary Sector Support £ | Advocacy £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 **Expenditure by activity type** | | | | |
| Project staff salaries | 379,710 | 495,450 | **875,160** | 793,926 |
| Direct project costs | 463,754 | 36,291 | **500,045** | 42,221 |
| Support costs | 129,213 | 98,683 | **227,896** | 286,921 |
| Governance costs | 2,759 | 2,447 | **5,206** | 5,294 |
| | 975,436 | 632,871 | **1,608,307** | 1,128,362 |

**Analysis of charitable activities by activity type** continued

| | Voluntary Sector Support £ | Advocacy £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 **Summary analysis of expenditure and related income for charitable activities** | | | | |
| Costs | ( 975,436 ) | ( 632,871 ) | **( 1,608,307 )** | ( 1,128,362 ) |
| Income | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 18,218 | 1,000 | **19,218** | 51,305 |
| Grants and contracts | 891,582 | 471,849 | **1,363,431** | 932,599 |
| Chargeable services | 50,481 | 129,061 | **179,542** | 149,637 |
| Other trading activities | 6,897 | 3,000 | **9,897** | 50,072 |
| | ( 8,258 ) | ( 27,961 ) | **( 36,219 )** | 55,251 |
| Investment income | 9,848 | - | **9,848** | 10,894 |
| Net income/(expenditure) | 1,590 | ( 27,961 ) | **( 26,371 )** | 66,145 |

16 **Net income/(expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging

| | **2021 £** | 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Depreciation on tangible fixed assets | **7,824** | 6,125 |
| Operating lease rentals | **16,864** | 16,864 |
| | **24,688** | 22,989 |

17 **Auditor's remuneration**

| | **2021 £** | 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Fees payable to the charity's auditors for the audit of the groups' annual accounts | **5,600** | 4,700 |
| | **5,600** | 4,700 |

There were no other fees paid to the charity's auditor (2020:£nil).

18 **Analysis of staff costs, and the cost of key management personnel**

| | **2021 £** | 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Salaries and wages | **1,035,170** | 944,160 |
| Social security costs | **89,942** | 79,466 |
| Pension costs | **47,368** | 42,323 |
| Redundancy | **-** | 35,480 |
| | **1,172,480** | 1,101,429 |

18 **Analysis of staff costs, and the cost of key management personnel** continued

| | **2021 Number** | 2020 Number |
|---|---|---|
| *£60.000 to £70,000* | **1** | 1 |

The key management personnel of the charity, comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive . The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £67,662. (2020: £67,472).

19 **Staff Numbers**

The average monthly head count and the average monthly number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees during the year were as follows:

| The parts of the charity in which the employee's work | **2021 Number** | **2021 FTE** | 2020 Number | 2020 FTE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Voluntary sector support | **9.3** | **8.4** | 8.0 | 7.7 |
| Equality and diversity projects | **2.3** | **2.0** | 2.0 | 1.5 |
| Advocacy | **22.7** | **17.3** | 18.0 | 16.0 |
| Accountancy Services | **6.3** | **5.4** | 7.0 | 4.8 |
| Management and support | **4.0** | **3.5** | 3.0 | 2.5 |
| | **44.6** | **36.6** | 38.0 | 32.5 |

20 **Transactions with trustees and related parties**

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity. (2020: none).

**Trustees' expenses**

The following detail the expenses incurred by the trustees.

| | **2021 £** | 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Travel expenses | - | 56 |

**Transaction(s) with related parties**

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period. (2020: none).

21 **Corporation Taxation**

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objectives.

22 **Tangible fixed assets**

| | Restricted Office Equipment | Electronic Office Equipment | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ |
| **Cost** | | | |
| Balance brought forward | 19,771 | 40,396 | **60,167** |
| Additions | - | 4,097 | **4,097** |
| Disposals | - | - | **-** |
| **Balance carried forward** | 19,771 | 44,493 | **64,264** |
| **Depreciation** | | | |
| Basis | SL | SL | |
| Rate | 25% | 25% | |
| Balance brought forward | 1,098 | 33,812 | **34,910** |
| Depreciation charge for year | 4,943 | 2,881 | **7,824** |
| Disposals | - | - | **-** |
| **Balance carried forward** | 6,041 | 36,693 | **42,734** |
| **Net book value** | | | |
| **Brought forward** | 18,673 | 6,584 | **25,257** |
| **Carried forward** | 13,730 | 7,800 | **21,530** |

23 **Fixed asset investments**

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2021** | 2020 | **2021** | 2020 |
| | **£** | £ | **£** | £ |
| Listed investments | **459,154** | 380,162 | **459,154** | 380,162 |
| Investment in subsidiary undertaking at cost | **-** | - | **2** | 2 |
| | **459,154** | 380,162 | **459,156** | 380,164 |

24 **Net income of trading subsidiary**

The charitable company owns two £1 ordinary shares, 100% of the voting capital of Connected Voice Charity Business Services Limited, a company incorporated and registered in England and Wales. The principal activity of this company is the provision of financial and administrative services for charitable organisations.

The audit report for 30 September 2021 was unqualified.

24 **Net income of trading subsidiary** continued

**A summary of the trading results is shown below**

| | **2021** | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | £ |
| Turnover | **261,237** | **224,488** |
| Other income | **-** | **47** |
| Gross income | **261,237** | **224,535** |
| Administration costs | **( 228,704 )** | **( 216,807 )** |
| Net profit/(loss) | **32,533** | **7,728** |
| Amount gift aided to parent charity | **-** | **-** |
| Amount to be gift aided to parent charity | **32,533** | **7,728** |
| Total assets | **716,743** | **533,545** |
| Total liabilities | **( 684,208 )** | **( 525,816 )** |
| Total Equity | **32,535** | **7,729** |

25 **Listed investments**

| | **Charity** |
|---|---|
| | **£** |
| Market value at 1 April 2020 | **380,160** |
| Additions at cost | **76,143** |
| Disposals at open market value | **( 66,633 )** |
| Net unrealised investment gain | **69,484** |
| Market value at 30 September 2021 | **459,154** |
| Original cost | **441,695** |

26 **Stock and work in progress**

| | **Group** | | **Charity** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2021** | **2020** | **2021** | **2020** |
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Work in progress | **23,187** | 16,259 | **-** | - |

27 **Debtors and prepayments (receivable within 1 year)**

| | **Group** | | **Charity** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2021** | **2020** | **2021** | **2020** |
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Trade debtors | **335,438** | 298,825 | **264,570** | 227,366 |
| Prepayments and other debtors | **46,914** | 33,749 | **46,914** | 33,749 |
| Amounts due from subsidiary undertaking | **-** | - | **135,804** | 112,347 |
| | **382,352** | 332,574 | **447,288** | 373,462 |

28 **Creditors and accruals (payable within 1 year)**

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2021** | **2020** | **2021** | **2020** |
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Trade creditors | **11,529** | 5,304 | **11,529** | 5,304 |
| Taxation and social security | **67,320** | 69,642 | **58,345** | 61,860 |
| Accruals and other creditors | **31,969** | 27,873 | **31,969** | 26,673 |
| Holding accounts | **559,757** | 354,147 | **-** | - |
| Deferred income (note 29) | **16,984** | 6,720 | **16,984** | 3,800 |
| | **687,559** | 463,686 | **118,827** | 97,637 |

29 **Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises advance payments from grants that relate to future periods.

| | **2021** |
|---|---|
| | **£** |
| Balance brought forward | **3,800** |
| Amount released to income earned from charitable activities | **( 3,800 )** |
| Amount deferred in year | **16,984** |
| Balance carried forward | **16,984** |

30 **Holding accounts**

During the year Connected Voice' subsidiary held monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services Ltd provides a payroll and bookkeeping service to a number of small organisations and holds monies for this purpose.

| | **Opening Balance at 01.10.20** | | | **Closing Balance at 30.09.21** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **£** | **Receipts £** | **Payments £** | **£** |
| Connected Voice Business Services Ltd | 364,147 | 10,710,704 | 10,515,094 | 559,757 |

31 **Operating Leases**

The future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows;

| | **2021** | **2020** |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | **£** |
| Not later than one year | 6,492 | 20,306 |
| Later than one and not later than five years | 4,330 | 29,395 |
| | **10,822** | **49,701** |

32 **Events after the end of the reporting period**

No events (not requiring adjustment to the accounts) have occurred after the end of the reporting period but before the accounts are authorised which relate to conditions that arose after the end of the reporting period.

33 **Reason for restatement**

Prior period adjustment for treatment of payroll holding account balances.
For the period ended 30 September 2020 the cash at bank and the creditors were misstated as the payroll holding account balances were not recognised in the accounts.

The payroll holding account balances have now been recognised in full and the comparators restated.

| | Group Restated 2020 £ |
|---|---|
| Cash at bank at 1 October 2020 as previously stated | 293,375 |
| Treatment of payroll holding account | 354,147 |
| | 647,522 |
| Creditors at 1 October 2020 as previously stated | ( 109,539 ) |
| Treatment of payroll holding account | ( 354,147 ) |
| | ( 463,686 ) |

34 **Analysis of charitable funds**

**Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds**

**Year ended 30 September 2021**

| **Unrestricted funds** | **Fund balances brought forward £** | **Incoming resource £** | **Resources expended £** | **Transfers £** | **Gains / (losses) £** | **Fund balances carried forward £** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General funds | 598,860 | 1,271,932 | ( 1,166,544 ) | ( 180,903 ) | 69,484 | **592,829** |
| | 598,860 | 1,271,932 | ( 1,166,544 ) | ( 180,903 ) | 69,484 | **592,829** |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Business development | 68,951 | - | ( 60,109 ) | - | - | **8,842** |
| Digital transformation | 60,000 | - | - | - | - | **60,000** |
| COVID resilience | 21,049 | - | ( 4,150 ) | ( 4,097 ) | - | **12,802** |
| Haref | - | - | - | 25,000 | - | **25,000** |
| Office Move | - | - | - | 50,000 | - | **50,000** |
| Workforce Strategy | - | - | - | 50,000 | - | **50,000** |
| Advocacy | - | - | - | 50,000 | - | **50,000** |
| Governance | - | - | - | 20,000 | - | **20,000** |
| | 150,000 | - | ( 64,259 ) | 190,903 | - | **276,644** |

**Purpose of unrestricted and designated funds**

| | |
|---|---|
| General funds | The 'free reserves' after allowing for designated funds. |
| Business development | To develop and improve the chargeable services by the charity and its subsidiary. |
| Digital transformation | For new digital infrastructure including new telephony, software and processes. |

34 **Analysis of charitable funds** continued

**Purpose of unrestricted and designated funds** continued

| | |
|---|---|
| COVID resilience | For additional costs arising from operating during COVID-19 restrictions. |
| Haref | To extend Haref Allies Project from surplus Haref funds generated in 2020/21. |
| Office Move | To cover additional costs associated with a move of offices. |
| Salary transition | To support the outcome of the regrading and promotion process. |
| Advocacy | Development and restructuring of the advocacy service. |
| Governance | Governance and associated legal fees. |

| **Transfers between funds** | **Reason for transfer** | **Amount £** |
|---|---|---|
| From designated funds to general funds | Assets purchased from COVID-19 resilience funds transferred to general funds £4,097. | **( 4,097 )** |
| From general funds to designated funds | The trustees agreed to set aside surplus funds for the following: Haref contracts to extend a Haref Allies Project, Additional costs associated with the office move, salary costs, workforce strategy, development of the advocacy service and governance and legal costs.. | **195,000** |

**Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds**

**Year ended 30 September 2020**

| **Unrestricted funds** | **Fund balances brought forward £** | **Incoming resource £** | **Resources expended £** | **Transfers £** | **Gains / (losses) £** | **Fund balances carried forward £** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General funds | 587,925 | 1,108,993 | ( 1,028,060 ) | ( 52,173 ) | ( 17,825 ) | **598,860** |
| | 587,925 | 1,108,993 | ( 1,028,060 ) | ( 52,173 ) | ( 17,825 ) | **598,860** |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Business development | 100,000 | - | ( 16,049 ) | ( 15,000 ) | - | **68,951** |
| Digital transformation | - | - | - | 60,000 | - | **60,000** |
| COVID resilience | - | - | - | 21,049 | - | **21,049** |
| Charity restructuring | 50,000 | - | ( 35,480 ) | ( 14,520 ) | - | **-** |
| | 150,000 | - | ( 51,529 ) | 51,529 | - | **150,000** |

34 **Analysis of charitable funds** continued

**Analysis of movement in restricted funds**

**Year ended 30 September 2021**

| Restricted funds | Fund balances brought forward £ | Incoming resources £ | Resources expended £ | Transfers £ | Fund balances carried forward £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Restricted IT equipment | 18,673 | - | ( 4,943 ) | - | **13,730** |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | - | - | **7,295** |
| HAREF (restricted donation) | 33,372 | - | - | - | **33,372** |
| HAREF | 17,302 | 30,064 | ( 44,339 ) | - | **3,027** |
| Safeguarding Training | 4,855 | 8,637 | ( 5,963 ) | - | **7,529** |
| Digital Training | 10,740 | - | ( 10,740 ) | - | **-** |
| VCSE Resilience | 72,123 | - | ( 62,123 ) | ( 10,000 ) | **-** |
| Public Health NCC COVID grant | - | 75,000 | ( 75,000 ) | - | **-** |
| Community Foundation NET DCMS Fund | - | 39,268 | ( 39,268 ) | - | **-** |
| DEFRA Food Grant | - | 230,920 | ( 230,920 ) | - | **-** |
| Community Foundation | - | 25,000 | ( 2,056 ) | - | **22,944** |
| NCC Public Health Digital Resilience | - | 38,000 | ( 5,000 ) | - | **33,000** |
| North of Tyne Volunteering Project .(VODA) | - | 17,000 | - | - | **17,000** |
| Advocacy – Families Through Crisis | 7,322 | 21,108 | ( 28,430 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | - | 9,969 | ( 3,187 ) | - | 6,782 |
| Advocacy | 10,528 | - | ( 10,528 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy – Hate Crime | - | 48,710 | ( 47,835 ) | - | **875** |
| Advocacy – Welfare | 4,516 | - | ( 4,516 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy – Safeguarding | 2,500 | - | ( 2,500 ) | - | **-** |
| ***Totals*** | 189,226 | 543,676 | ( 577,348 ) | ( 10,000 ) | **145,554** |

**Purpose of restricted funds**

Restricted funds represent income resources used for a specific purpose within the charity as identified by the donor

| | |
|---|---|
| Restricted IT equipment | Providing resources to enable key staff to work from home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. |
| SkillsBridge | Facilitating and maintaining a network of professionals, volunteering their time and expertise to support the ongoing development of voluntary organisations in the North East. |
| HAREF | Working to improve the health and wellbeing of BAME communities in Gateshead and Newcastle by providing regular networks, engagement opportunities and information to organisations in the VCS and public sector. |

**Purpose of restricted funds** continued

| | |
|---|---|
| Safeguarding Training | To make safeguarding resources available at a local level, deliver regular training sessions and create new/build on existing networks. |
| Digital Training | To expand our traditional support provision by giving people and communities we serve the opportunity to access online training to advance their knowledge and practice. |
| VCSE Resilience | To provide support packages comprising business resilience and management support for community sector organisations based in Newcastle. |
| Public Health NCC COVID grant | To support the Newcastle VCS with infection control funding to ensure their premises were Covid-19 secure. |
| Community Foundation NET DCMS Fund | To deliver finance training, cultural competency training and specialist consultancy support for the VCS in Newcastle and Gateshead. |
| DEFRA Food Grant | Funds to be distributed in full to VCS organisations. |
| Community Foundation | To develop Haref Allies membership offer. |
| NCC Public Health Digital Resilience | To support the sector to improve digital skills through undertaking a digital assessment and recommendations how to improve this. |
| North of Tyne Volunteering Project .(VODA) | To create the North of Tyne as a volunteer area of excellence, this is a five year project. |
| Advocacy – Families Through Crisis | Providing support to families in crisis in Newcastle. |
| Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | direct advocacy to refugee and asylum seekers to have voices heard and access to services. |
| Advocacy | Contribution to providing the overall advocacy service. |
| Advocacy – Hate Crime | Providing Hate Crime Advocacy, supporting people who have experienced, or are at risk of hate crime in the Northumbria area. |
| Advocacy – Welfare | direct advocacy to vulnerable people through benefits, appeals and sanctions process. |
| Advocacy – Safeguarding | Specialist advocacy to provide additional support to vulnerable adults living in Newcastle and Gateshead who may be victims of crime, or at risk of abuse, as a result of their vulnerable circumstances. |

**Transfers between funds**

| | **Reason for transfer** | **Amount £** |
|---|---|---|
| Between restricted and unrestricted funds | From restricted funds £10,000 was the value of consultancy provided by the charity to the VCSE Resilience project. | **10,000** |

34 **Analysis of charitable funds** continued

**Year ended 30 September 2020**

**Analysis of movement in restricted funds**

| **Restricted funds** | **Fund balances balances brought forward** £ | **Incoming resources** £ | **Resources expended** £ | **Transfers** £ | **Fund balances carried forward** **£** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Restricted IT equipment | - | 19,771 | ( 1,098 ) | - | **18,673** |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | - | - | **7,295** |
| BME Health and Wellbeing | 28,893 | - | ( 28,893 ) | - | **-** |
| HAREF (restricted donation) | 33,372 | - | - | - | **33,372** |
| HAREF | - | 38,035 | ( 20,733 ) | - | **17,302** |
| Safeguarding Training | - | 11,473 | ( 6,618 ) | - | **4,855** |
| People's Health Trust | ( 644 ) | - | - | 644 | **-** |
| Newcastle East End Partnership | 3,170 | 18,838 | ( 22,008 ) | - | **-** |
| Digital Training | - | 15,000 | ( 4,260 ) | - | **10,740** |
| VCSE Resilience | - | 95,360 | ( 23,237 ) | - | **72,123** |
| Advocacy – Families Through Crisis | 1,580 | 26,644 | ( 20,902 ) | - | **7,322** |
| Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | 5,000 | - | ( 5,000 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy | 11,136 | 10,500 | ( 11,108 ) | - | **10,528** |
| Advocacy – Hate Crime | 2,096 | 47,242 | ( 49,338 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy – Welfare | - | 5,000 | ( 484 ) | - | **4,516** |
| Advocacy – Safeguarding | - | 5,000 | ( 2,500 ) | - | **2,500** |
| ***Totals*** | 91,898 | 292,863 | ( 196,179 ) | 644 | **189,226** |

35 **Capital commitments**

As at 30 September 2021, the charity had no capital commitments (2020 -£nil)

36 **Analysis of Group assets between funds**

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Designated Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2021 £** | Total 2020 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tangible fixed assets | 7,800 | - | 13,730 | **21,530** | 25,257 |
| Investments | 459,154 | - | - | **459,154** | 380,162 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 684,539 | - | 131,824 | **816,363** | 647,522 |
| Other net current assets/(liabilities) | ( 558,664 ) | 276,644 | - | **( 282,020 )** | ( 114,853 ) |
| | 592,829 | 276,644 | 145,554 | **1,015,027** | 938,088 |

**Connected Voice**

England & Wales - Charity number 1125877

# Accounts

Connected Voice
Connecting People Supporting Action

(A company limited by guarantee)

# REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
## For the year ended 30 September 2020

**Charity Number 1125877**
**Company Number 06681475**

(A company limited by guarantee)



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(A company limited by guarantee)

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**
For the year ended 30 September 2020

The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 30 September 2020, which are also prepared to meet the requirements of a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Accounting and, Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard's applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

## Chair's Report

This report covers a timespan that starts on October 1st, 2019, which seems like a lifetime ago.

At that time, Connected Voice was embarking on an exciting period of renewal – the name of the organisation had just changed from Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service to Connected Voice and Lisa Goodwin was starting on her first day as our new Chief Executive. Between October 2019 and March 2020, Connected Voice continued to be the voice of the sector, challenging, enabling, supporting and helping. Lisa busily set about listening and learning and beginning to shape the direction for the organisation. Then in March 2020 everything changed.

The immediate focus for the organisation at that moment was, as you would expect, to understand the needs of those we support. In a matter of days, Connected Voice went from being a physical organisation in the Higham House office space to a virtual organisation dispersed across the region, and worked diligently to find out what was needed and delivered it. That might have been Connected Voice Business Services being the reliable steward of how to furlough staff through our payroll service. Or Connected Voice Haref working on translating government advice into the many languages of the communities of Newcastle and Gateshead. Or Connected Voice Advocacy making sure that the voices of vulnerable people were heard when it mattered most. Or Connected Voice Support and Development making sure that charities had the support they needed on emergency fundraising, health and safety, governance and so much more.

And with so much need, Connected Voice partnered with Newcastle City Council on CityLife Line, and delivered support to over 2,700 residents. Together, we raised funds of over £50,000 for 13 charities to support residents. We lobbied for and distributed £270,000 of core funding support from North of Tyne Combined Authority to 19 charities in Newcastle. We worked with Gateshead community organisations to secure additional core funding for them and support their community response. Spring and Summer 2020 saw a surge in voluntary work, through informal as well as formal channels, and neighbours helped neighbours as best they could. At the same time, significant conversations happened globally, nationally and locally inspired by Black Lives Matter. That was a vital reminder that even when this pandemic subsides, there are major issues as a society we have to face, including structural inequality, prejudice in all its forms, poverty and climate emergency.

In my report next year, I will cover from October 2020 onwards, which includes the devastating events of December and January, when so many more lives were lost directly or indirectly to the pandemic – and of course I hope to be writing about better days from Spring 2021 onwards.

In closing I want to offer some words of thanks. First, I want to thank the staff of Connected Voice, both past and present, who have adapted to the extraordinary circumstances so well. Next, I want to thank my fellow trustees and within this particular mention must be made of Steve Nash and Kate Israel who have served for many years and whose wisdom and insight have been invaluable to the organisation, to the Board and to me, personally. Last, but not least, I want to thank the voluntary sector of Newcastle and Gateshead and the many partners who have shown such support to the sector in these last 12 months – you have made such an extraordinary difference to the lives of the people who need it most in the most difficult year. You do it without fanfare and without publicity, but you do it day in and day out because you simply believe it's the right thing to do, and for that you deserve the biggest thanks of all.

Simon Elliott,
**Chair, Connected Voice**

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objectives of Connected Voice are, 'to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of any locality or community in the County of Northumberland and in the neighbourhood of the River Tyne.'

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 having due regard to the general guidance of the Charity Commission with respect to public benefit when reviewing the Connected Voice aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the trustees considered how the planned activities would contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. There has been a review of the support given to voluntary and community organisations to improve effectiveness and efficiency, including the introduction of some new services across Newcastle and Gateshead. Our advocacy services extend across the wider North East area.

### Connected Voice has the following values:

#### We amplify voices
From individuals to organisations, we believe everyone has a right to be heard. Trusted to listen, understand and advocate, we strive for excellence. We're open and honest, we stick by people and give our support to ensure their voices are heard.

#### We champion equality
We believe that diversity should be celebrated and valued, and everyone deserves equality.

Working towards a fairer future for all, we won't stand still. By making an impact on causes big and small, we want to improve the quality of life across the region.

### We inspire change

Courageous, resourceful and determined, we will challenge unfairness and ask difficult questions.
Working effectively and accountably to instil confidence. We aim to become stronger and more sustainable to inspire positive and lasting change throughout our community

### We support action

We understand from our own experiences the challenges people face. We truly value people and we won't judge or dictate. Leading independently and side by side with our communities and partners, we share our resources, skills and expertise to enable people to take meaningful action.

### We connect people

At the heart of voluntary and community action for 90 years, we are immersed and rooted in the North East. We work collectively and inclusively to connect, grow and strengthen our society. We are warm and approachable, and we create opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from and empower one another

### Today and for the Future

Our overall strategic aim is to improve quality of life through a broad programme of voluntary action recognising that priority should be focussed on the most disadvantaged communities. During 2019-20 we contributed to this aim in the following ways:

- As a high performing and leading organisation - providing a voice for individuals and the voluntary and community sector.
- By providing a wide range of advocacy services and support to vulnerable people
- By championing voluntary and community action
- By strengthening voluntary and community organisations through our advice and training services
- By adapting our services to ensure that they were appropriate and accessible to our beneficiaries during the current global pandemic
- By being proactive in offering additional support throughout the pandemic – from directly raising funds to support those most in need, to co-ordinating community response
- By highlighting issues around poverty and inequality in Newcastle and Gateshead, and addressing these through our work, including the work of Haref with our BAME communities
- By beginning work on a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework for the organisation, to enable us to take a more proactive approach and work towards ensuring our membership and staff reflect the communities we serve

### Our Volunteers

Connected Voice values the unique contribution of our volunteers and the added value they bring. It is the intention of Connected Voice that all volunteers are supported, respected and valued. We encourage volunteers to fulfil their potential and aim to provide meaningful roles where both the organisation and the volunteer mutually benefit.

We were delighted to be able to offer some of our advocacy volunteers permanent job roles. During the year the board of trustees approved a new staff volunteering policy of two days paid time off per year to enable staff to take advantage of local volunteering opportunities. We have policies and procedures in place to support our volunteers, and work closely with our partner, Volunteer Centre Newcastle, to ensure that best practice is applied with respect to volunteering.

### Our staff

We recognise the value and expertise of our staff, and we strive to put in place appropriate support as a good employer. We have a range of staff engagement and involvement activities, including a Staff Council and Ideas Forum. We hold the Better Health at Work award, and achieved Gold level during the year. We are an accredited Living Wage Employer. We regularly hold 'Time to Talk' mental health sessions for staff and we retained our Investors In People accreditation. We continued to employ an apprentice, and plan to employ another young person as soon as is practical, through the government Kickstart scheme. During this year we signed up to the North of Tyne Good Work Pledge, making commitments to support the five pillars of the scheme.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Connected Voice enables and promotes voluntary and community action, providing voluntary sector organisations with services that enable them to be well run, fulfil their aims and objectives and provide them with the opportunity to extend their influence in Newcastle and Gateshead through the sector's collective voice.

We do this by providing expert advice on governance, on the policies and procedures that voluntary organisations need to have to ensure they are safe and securely run, and by providing funding advice based on experience and knowledge of what funders are seeking in a good application.

We hold regular events to keep the sector informed about new initiatives, and to enable them to learn from and connect with each other. We provide opportunities for VCSE organisations to increase their reach and influence. Connected Voice acts as a broker for VCSE involvement, enabling engagement directly with public sector agencies and acting as a voice for the sector within multi-sector partnerships. During this year we began to re-focus our representation and voice work to ensure we are making the most of the limited time we

have available to do representation work, and that we are doing this work in partnership with others wherever practical.

We engage in area-wide, sub-regional, regional and national activities as we want to be able to promote, share and deliver best practice. We work with a wide range of public sector partners – local authorities, NHS trusts, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG), the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities and many others.

Our Haref project is a network of 80+ BAME-led community organisations who work together to tackle health inequalities. Haref saw a vital increase in capacity during the year with reinstatement of CCG funding and success in generating income in other areas. The work of Haref members in highlighting the disproportionate effects of the pandemic on BAME communities was vital, and we continue to raise the voices of those communities, and to share key public health messages, vaccinations information, etc.

Connected Voice Advocacy underwent a restructure during the year, leading to the loss of some long-serving staff. We thank them for their excellent service and wish them all the best for the future. The new structure for the advocacy team is more cost effective and puts us in a stronger position for the successful delivery of future contracts, while providing the same level of support to our beneficiaries. Our Hate Crime advocacy work and Families Through Crisis partnership work has continued at pace. We have undertaken a review and refresh of our DIY Advocate app and look forward to using it with an increased number of people over the coming year.

We focused our efforts on increasing income from our charged-for services, creating a new Commercial Development Executive role, which works across all of our teams to maximise our ability to generate income. Here is how we performed against the plans we outlined in last year's annual report:

- Successfully embed the new name, brand and values for our organisation

*The Connected Voice brand and values are now embedded across the family of services. We refer to our values in our events and publications.*

- Successful delivery of the Newcastle and Gateshead infrastructure support contracts and re-securing these contracts at the tendering stage

*We have over-achieved on outputs for both contracts. One contract has been re-secured for a further year, and the other is still awaiting confirmation.*

- Increased focus on income generation across the whole organisation – focusing on Premium Services, Financial Services, and the development of DIY Advocate

*We recruited a Commercial Development Executive who has developed our paid-for offer and is working across all teams to develop paid-for services. We have a commercial team which meets regularly to review progress.*

- Developing new partnerships to promote closer working across infrastructure organisations in our region

*We have developed stronger partnerships as a result of the pandemic, and we have been proud to support a range of new partnerships with local members during the year that have emerged as a result of the pandemic. We worked on a new partnership with North Tyneside VODA and Northumberland CVA which will begin delivery of a new five year programme of VCSE support later in 2021.*

- Taking a lead on supporting organisations with practical steps to tackle climate emergency

*We have continued to provide practical support and training sessions for the sector on this theme. Our staff team meet regularly to look at our climate action plan and support positive changes within the organisation.*

- Improving our digital offer and embedding digital ways of working

*This happened at a greater speed than expected due to the fast transition to home-working during the first lockdown. We now have in place new software and systems to make remote and paperless working easier. We have provided regular training and support to our staff to make the transition. We have been proud to offer networking events and training digitally, and this has increased take up.*

- Maintaining core activities and seeking funding for new innovative services which fit in with our ethos and to support Full Cost Recovery, ensuring financial stability

*Our financial position remains stable, and through the focus on paid-for services we are starting to see a return on investment in commercial development activity.*

- Deliver outcomes to an exceptional standard to ensure that Connected Voice Advocacy's reputation as a leading advocacy organisation continues, making a difference to the most people within available resources

*Feedback on advocacy services during the year has remained excellent, and we maintain our quality mark for the service.*

- Ensure our staff have the capacity and the correct skills to provide a high quality service and that we are able to retain our qualified and experienced workers

*We have seen a higher than usual level of staff turnover during the past year due to the senior management review, retirement and some staff moving on to new opportunities. We have continued to ensure we have a staff team which is appropriately experienced and qualified to carry out their roles. We regularly review training and development opportunities with each staff member.*

- Review senior management structure to ensure it is effective

*A review was agreed in March 2020 and has now been fully implemented.*

- Streamline and improve our Financial Services offer to ensure it best meets the needs of our VCSE clients while ensuring improved income generation capacity

*An independent review of staffing within Connected Voice Business Services was carried out and this has led to changes to three roles within the team, to allow for additional income generation capacity.*

## Connected Voice Support and Development

Our Support and Development team worked with **294** organisations in Newcastle and Gateshead across the year, providing advice and guidance on topics including governance, funding sources, legal structures, policies and procedures, and organisational development. As part of this service, the team helped organisations secure grant funding worth approximately **£1.2 million**.

We organised **11** networking events. Themes covered gang culture and youth crime with guest speaker Kim McGuiness (Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner); inspiring women: showcasing women and girls' organisations across Newcastle and Gateshead, and attended by over 120 delegates. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic we made a move to virtual events with a climate emergency focused event on reducing waste, saving money and acting locally. The move to virtual events has increased attendance from our members, and we plan to have a mix of virtual and in person events in the coming years as we begin to move out of the pandemic.

The team delivered **29** training sessions on topics including Good Governance, Good Fundraising, Cyber Security, Climate Emergency and General Data Protection Regulations. The Team also organised a Newcastle and Gateshead Virtual Funding Fair hosted on Connected Voice's website and featuring videos from VCSE organisations and local and national grant funders.

We managed, developed and launched version four of the OurGateshead website, a resource for people to find out about activities and services in Gateshead, which received **147,048** visits and **250,684** page views.

In this period the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and the team were proactive in working with Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council to coordinate response efforts across our area, and to provide organisations with up to the minute public health messages, news on emergency funding programmes, and guidance on safeguarding and volunteering safely. We shifted to providing intensive fundraising support – drafting applications to ensure organisational sustainability while they focused on delivering frontline services.

We worked collaboratively with Newcastle City Council to develop and administer the CityLife Line website supporting vulnerable residents in the city. In addition, we raised over **£50,000** through the CityLife Line Fund Appeal, which we distributed during the summer of 2020 to **19** VCSE Newcastle organisations to support people with food and essential items. We also led on the VCSE resilience programme, supporting key organisations with a mix of core funding and consultancy support to allow them to re-model or re-think services in light of the pandemic.

## Premium Services

We increased our income generation through premium charged for services during the year, seeing an increase in the number of organisations using our services to undertake organisational reviews, and to complete Charity and Community Interest Company registrations.

## Representation

During this period, we continued to ensure representation of the sector throughout Newcastle and Gateshead. We ensured the sector had a voice and represented at key meetings including health and wellbeing boards, adults and children's safeguarding boards, community safety boards, and various strategic multi agency partnerships across Newcastle and Gateshead.

## Information

We are a key source of information for the voluntary and community sector in Newcastle and Gateshead. In the reporting period we:

- Distributed 23 fortnightly electronic news bulletins to 1,000 plus subscribers
- Distributed a monthly Health and Social care bulletin to the sector (On the Hoof)
- Distributed a monthly Haref bulletin with news and updates on health equality issues for BAME communities
- Delivered 4 quarterly magazines to 1,500 plus members and key contacts
- Developed our Twitter following from 3,661 followers by Sept 2019 to approximately 3937 by Oct 2020
- Increased our followers on Facebook to 875 and LinkedIn to 376

## Connected Voice Haref

Haref works with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities to identify their key issues around health and improve the health information available to them. We help health services gain a better understanding of what communities need and we build confidence within communities so they can talk to health services about their cultural needs. Key achievements were:

### Haref Network

- We held two meetings for the Haref Network with discussions about safe surgeries, asylum seeker and refugee healthcare and sexual health.
- We held a meeting in first lockdown with the Network and asked:
    - What were the key issues/concerns locally for BAME communities?
    - What were the concerns for service delivery and for organisations?
- We shared the feedback with funders, statutory and strategic organisations to help inform on what was happening locally and provide a focus for resources and planning.

### Haref Allies

- We held two meetings for the Haref Allies and produced a recorded session with Haref Network members talking about:
    - Chinese cultures, the impact of COVID-19 and how to support Chinese communities.

- Roma/Romanian community and exploring Roma cultures and tradition.
- Culture from a British-Rwandan perspective particularly in terms of women.

### COVID-19 response

- We regularly cascaded relevant information linked to: access to services; restrictions, key messages and translated documents; and videos in different languages, linking in with local authority communications teams.
- We linked members of Haref Network to Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council and helped develop community language videos.
- We inputted into the Newcastle City Council communities COVID-19 response meetings and the Community Champions meetings.

### Ramadan calendars with safe fasting messages

- In 2020, we designed calendars for 11 mosques Newcastle, North Tyneside and Gateshead.
- We distributed these by email, social media and our website. We saw the biggest reach on Facebook for the calendars for anything we have ever done, with 11,000 hits.
- We included information about COVID-19 key messages and staying safe in the emails to all the mosques.

### BAME Cultural competency Training

- For the Newcastle City Council Public health contract, we delivered to 140 attendees over the year.
- During the first lockdown, we redeveloped the training into a 2-hour online session.
- We developed a 'paid-for' session for organisations in other areas, and had significant interest in this as a result of the pandemic.

### Expanding the Haref team

- In September 2020 the extension of a contract and securing of additional core funding meant we were able to recruit a BAME Health, Training and Development officer and a Haref Engagement officer.
- We successfully secured funding for Haref to deliver 3 research projects looking ahead to 2021:
    - A 12-month project in partnership with Newcastle University, Riverside Community Health Project, and the West End Family Health hub: 'Towards fairer health for disadvantaged communities, including those of Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds'.
    - A 6-month project in partnership with Newcastle University: 'Improving the accessibility of medicines review services in primary care for patients from BAME communities'
    - A 4-month project in partnership with Fulfilling Lives: 'BAME Mental Health peer research''

## Connected Voice Business Services

Our trading subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd continued to provide payroll, accounting and bookkeeping services, supporting over 200 VCSE organisations across the region.

During the year CVBS supported a large number of organisations to make the switch to digital finance, providing training as QuickBooks Pro certified advisors. We also supported organisations with furlough, providing regular information and one to one advice, and managing HMRC claims under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme for 40 of our payroll customers.

## Connected Voice Advocacy

We are proud that during 2019/20 Connected Voice Advocacy has continued to deliver all of its services with no interruption despite the impact of the global pandemic. This has led to changes to our delivery with some advocacy being delivered remotely. Advocates have continued to offer telephone and video call support and have attended some meetings or court hearings virtually. Essential statutory advocates have continued to see people in hospitals and care homes where necessary following robust risk assessments and with safety measures in place. Advocates have been creative in delivering services continuing to stand shoulder to shoulder with more people than ever before to provide them with support to have their views heard and needs met. Advocates worked together with service users to achieve significantly improved independence, choice and control, engagement with services, access to services and health and wellbeing.

The key challenges this year have been to ensure our services were accessible to all and that those who were digitally excluded still received a quality advocacy service. We focused our attention to ensure people received the support they needed in the pandemic and that decisions made on behalf of people were done in a person-centred way avoiding any blanket decision making or human rights breaches.

The service noticed an increase in need for support for issues related to lockdown. The referrals for support with safeguarding vulnerable people, mental health issues, domestic violence, neighbour disputes and hate crime have risen considerably during the year. We saw a rise in the need for access to crisis services such as Food Banks, and advocacy around welfare rights and homelessness.

This year our service was funded to deliver community based advocacy in the following areas:

- **Health and Social Care Advocacy** (supported adults with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs with social care issues across Newcastle and Gateshead)
- **BAME Advocacy** (supported adults from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities)
- **Asylum Seekers and Refugee Advocacy** (supported adults seeking asylum or with refugee status)
- **Welfare Advocacy** (supported adults in crisis around poverty and benefits helping them develop skills to navigate the system)

- **Gateshead Housing Advocacy** (supported tenants of Gateshead Housing Company with welfare rights issues)
- **Families Through Crisis** (provided holistic support to Newcastle families in crisis with North East Law Centre and Changing Lives )
- **Hate Crime Advocacy** (supported adults who have been a victim of a hate crime or discrimination across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear)
- **Safeguarding Advocacy** (supported adults who were particular vulnerable to abuse during the pandemic)
- **Bespoke Advocacy** (supported adults on an individually funded basis around a range of topic such as Child Protection Court Hearings, Post Accident Rehabilitation, Specialist Brain Injury support)

We provided statutory advocacy for Gateshead Local Authority, Mitford Unit the National Autism Inpatient Service, and various local authorities with out of area placements in the North East of England in the following roles:

- **Independent Mental Health Advocate -** supported people subject to the Mental Health Act around their care and treatment, ensuring their rights were upheld
- **Independent Mental Capacity Advocate -** helped people who lack capacity, and do not have friends or relatives to support them, to make certain important decisions
- **Independent Care Act Advocate -** supported people's involvement in care and support assessment, planning and review and safeguarding processes
- **Relevant Person's Representatives -** ensured that the rights of people being deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards were protected

Using the information collated from our grassroots advocacy, we were able to campaign and advocate for change in the following areas:

- Supported Care Home residents to vote in general and local elections
- Responded to Coronavirus Bill
- Ensuring institutions made decisions for people during the pandemic that were compliant with the Mental Capacity Act
- Challenging breaches of the Human Rights Act during local lockdown
- Improved referral pathways during pandemic to ensure people were safeguarded and able to challenge mental health sections or continuous control and supervision
- Responded to consultation by Law Commission on Hate Crime legislation changes
- Responded to consultations on changes to the Mental Capacity and Mental Health Acts
- Challenged incidents of institutional abuse
- Collaborated with advocacy providers across the country to dispel myths around advocacy services during the pandemic and co-created:
    - Advocacy Principles
    - Valuing Voices report
    - Templates to challenge  unlawful local authority easements

- Better commissioning processes with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services in England (ADASS)

This year we:

- Provided **16,720 hours of direct advocacy support to 1,560 people**
- Worked on **2,021 issues** with our service users
- Worked with over **22 BAME** communities
- Employed **four bilingual advocates**
- Worked with over people across **40 languages**
- Trained **five advocates in the National Independent Advocacy Qualification**
- Employed apprentice and supported to achieve Level 3 Business Administration qualification
- Service Manager achieved Level 5 National Advocacy Qualification in Managing Advocacy Services
- Secured employment for three volunteers advocates
- Secured business from **17 new contracts** and delivered a total of 30 contracts raising **over £114,000** unrestricted income
- Increased our social media presence with over **1,200 Twitter followers**
- Trained and supported **16 volunteers**
- Re-designed DIY Advocate app the online tool to support problem solving

## Acknowledgements

**Connected Voice records its appreciation to all our funders and supporters.**

Connected Voice is an active member of NCVO, NAVCA, ACEVO, the Community Foundation (Tyne, Wear and Northumberland), the Advocacy Action Alliance, and OPAAL (Older People's Advocacy Alliance) We work closely with our sister infrastructure organisations across the North East and we are members of and contribute to a number of significant and appropriate local partnerships, initiatives, boards and committees.

## Social Value

Connected Voice tries to act in a socially responsible manner. We use other VCSE facilities and services wherever possible. We use sustainable products as far as possible. We try to use local suppliers. We use fair trade products. We take climate change seriously and we aim to reduce our environmental impact through the development of a climate change action plan, and regular staff meetings on this theme. The ratio of pay of the lowest earner to the pay of the top earner will never exceed 1:5. We are a Living Wage employer, accredited by the Living Wage Foundation, including apprentices and interns. During the year we have benefitted from ten active trustees who all volunteered their skills, knowledge and expertise and linked us to helpful networks and useful partners.

## CONNECTED VOICE – STRATEGIC AIMS 2020-2021

We have agreed the following strategic aims for the year ahead:

- Implement a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework for Connected Voice, which gives us a clear focus on how we make EDI a core part of the work we do, and not an add on.
- Work closely as a commercial team to achieve our annual income targets
- Provide leadership on climate emergency – both in terms of our actions as an organisation, and our work with VCSE organisations
- Embed partnership working and collaboration across all of our work, and support VCSE organisations to work collaboratively wherever possible

Each team has a work plan including SMART objectives which link to the overall objectives above.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

Connected Voice bids for funds via statutory sources and charitable trusts and foundations, and generates income through paid-for services. A substantial part of our income comes through contracts. Connected Voice is assiduous in looking for appropriate sources of funding, and as an organisation responsible for advising the voluntary sector on funding sources is well placed to know what is available. We use a full cost recovery model which enables us to estimate the actual costs of a service and its true cost to Connected Voice. As the value of public sector contracts continues to decrease, this is an essential tool for us to use in deciding whether or not to bid for a service.

Senior managers and the Treasurer meet to set budgets annually and during the course of the reporting period the management team have been using a new forecasting template which has helped to improve financial management.

We hold four key contracts (with Newcastle Council, Gateshead Council, and Newcastle Gateshead CCG) and anticipate that one of these will go out to tender in the 21-22 financial year. We have had extensions confirmed on two contracts due to the pandemic meaning it has not been practical to consult and re-commission. We keep up to speed on contract publication dates and will plan our workload accordingly.

Our trustees are clear about our aims and mission and that we need to be sustainable, but keep to our vision and values. Connected Voice will not enter into partnerships and contracts which are contrary to our aims and objectives and we recognise that we need to stay within our agreed budget limits for the year.

### Assets

The charity's assets are being held to enable them to carry out its objectives. The movements in fixed assets during the year are set out in note 23 to the accounts.

## Trading activities

The results of Connected Voice Charity Business Services Ltd, our trading company, are summarised in note 25 of the accounts. A surplus was generated during the period of £7,729 (2019: £13,586)

## Financial dependency

The charity in order to meet its objectives is financially dependent on grants from the Local Authorities, government programmes and charitable trusts.

Additional funds are derived from smaller grants and charitable donations made by a variety of organisations and individuals.

## Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

Connected Voice and its subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services provides payroll and bookkeeping services to a number of small voluntary organisations and holds monies for this purpose. Further detail is given in note 31.

## Reserves Policy

The trustees regularly review levels of reserves and have agreed that reserves equivalent to between three and five months running costs are appropriate for the organisation.
Three months running costs would equate to around £316,000 and five months £527,000, based on the accounts for the 12 months to 30 September 2020. The reserves should not fall below this level in order to support good governance of the organisation.

The Reserve Policy allows for the use of funds in excess of the level required to be spent in furtherance of the organisation's vision and mission. Any proposal should be presented as an individual business case to the trustees for review and approval.

As at 30 September 2020 free reserves (unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets) are £742,276, (2019: £725,255) an increase of £17,021. The trustees monitor the level of reserves regularly and the Reserves Policy is reviewed annually with the support of the Finance Sub Group. The trustees have agreed to designate £68,951 of reserves towards further business development work, and £60,000 towards digital transformation of services, including a new digital telephony system and cloud storage and £21,049 towards additional costs arising from operating during COVID-19 restrictions.

### Review of transactions and financial position

The consolidated balance sheet on page 24 indicates that at 30 September 2020 the total funds of the group are £938,086 (2019: £829,823). This was represented by tangible fixed assets of £25,257 (2019: £2,316), investments of £380,160 (2019: £397,985) and net current assets of £477,319 (2019: £429,522). Unrestricted funds of £748,860 (2019: £737,925) represent the reserves available to the organisation to fulfil its many

existing commitments over the long term. Restricted funds of £189,226 (2019: £91,898) represent specific earmarked projects as detailed in note 33 of the accounts.

### Investment income

Connected Voice is usually in the position of having to fund a considerable proportion of its core running costs each year and the income it derives from its invested reserves is an essential component of that strategy, alongside donations, earnings and other provisions.

Tilney are the appointed wealth investment organisation managing the Connected Voice investment portfolio. The Finance Sub-Group monitors the performance of the portfolio, reviewing the quarterly financial investment reports provided by Tilney and reporting into the board meetings. Trustees support the investment objective for Connected Voice which is to yield the best financial return within the level of risk considered to be acceptable. This return can then be spent on the charity's aims and further continuance of its objectives. The trustees are comfortable that the investments held are a diversified portfolio in order to mitigate the capital risk. The Finance Sub-Group has put forward an Investment Strategy Policy. The investment balances as at the 30 September 2020 are £380,160 (2019: £397,985). No additional funds were added to the investment portfolio in the year, all dividends and income are reinvested.

### Political contributions

The charity made no political contributions.

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Registered Charity Number** | 1125877 | |
| **Company Number** | 06681475 | |
| **Trustees** | Simon Elliott | Chair |
| | Anne Bonner | (Term ended 2 March 2020) |
| | Nitin Shukla | Vice Chair |
| | Steve Nash | |
| | Kate Israel | |
| | Martin Horrocks | Treasurer |
| | John Litherland | (Resigned 2 March 2020) |
| | Dawn Redhead | (Appointed 29 April 2020 and Resigned 31 December 2020) |
| | Rosie Lewis | (Appointed 29 April 2020) |
| | Elaine Slater | (Appointed 29 April 2020) |
| | Paula Park | (Appointed 29 April 2020) |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chief Executive** | Lisa Goodwin |
| **Principal Office** | Higham House<br>Higham Place<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 8AF |
| **Auditors** | Haines Watts<br>17 Queens Lane<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 1RN |
| **Bankers** | Yorkshire Bank Plc<br>29-31 Pilgrim Street<br>Newcastle upon Tyne<br>NE1 6RL<br><br>Unity Trust Bank Plc<br>Four Brindley Place<br>Birmingham<br>B1 2HB |
| **Investment Manager** | Tilney<br>Private Wealth Management<br>130 St Vincent Street<br>Glasgow<br>G2 5SE |

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity's full name is Connected Voice. It is an incorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 1125877) and a company limited by guarantee (number 06681475).

### Governing documents

The charity's governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Connected Voice is an independent charity working with the voluntary sector in Newcastle. It is run by a board of trustees elected annually by its member organisations, and by co-opted members. The Board controls the direction and policy of the work, and met ten times during this financial year. It holds a special business planning meeting with senior managers, at least once a year, in order to define the priorities for the coming year.

Connected Voice is a membership organisation with 750 members as of September 2020.

## Recruitment of trustees

Trustees are elected from the membership annually. Notice is sent to all members and if a ballot is required it is conducted by post prior to the Annual General Meeting. Trustees may only serve for a set period of time. The skills and experience of existing trustees are audited annually and new trustees are recruited in order to complement the existing trustees ensuring a wide set of skills and knowledge is reflected in the overall board. If the Board feels there are particular skills lacking, they are able to promote these during the recruitment process. The governance document allows for co-opted trustees so that specialist skills can be brought onto the board. The Chair has experience of business and Human Resources and is not from the voluntary sector, although he chairs another voluntary organisation. The treasurer is a qualified accountant who works in the public sector.
All trustees have a comprehensive induction session with the Chief Executive. They also complete a form to assess any relevant training they may need and these needs are met as far as is practical. Trustees are offered opportunities to find out more about Connected Voice and the voluntary and community sector in Newcastle and Gateshead, as well as national issues affecting voluntary organisations. Trustees receive a full induction pack including examples of best practice and guidance produced by the Charity Commission. Trustees are encouraged to be fully involved in the work of Connected Voice. Annually, the Chair carries out a confidential interview with each trustee to identify any challenges, concerns and priorities. These are collated into a single document and discussed openly at Board.

## Organisational structure

The board of trustees, which can have up to twelve members, has control of the charity, including its property and its funds. The Board normally meets five times per year and there are two sub groups covering finance, and advocacy, which report into the Board. Task and finish groups of the trustees are also created as necessary – this year there were Task and Finish groups for trustee recruitment, and representation and voice. The Chief Executive is appointed by the trustees to manage the charity and has delegated authority for all operational matters.

## Pay policy for senior staff

The Chief Executive implements the pay policy on an ongoing basis and is responsible for pay reviews and setting salaries for senior staff. The Board reviews the Chief Executive's salary annually and is responsible for making any decisions about remuneration of the Chief Executive. Remuneration is benchmarked against similar roles within voluntary and community sector organisations of similar size in the North East. The need for major changes to the salary structure may be informed by a number of factors such as changes to the organisation's annual turnover and the number of employees.

Connected Voice has a Remuneration Policy which covers all staff. Senior staff are not treated differently to other staff and all benefits (including pension contributions) are applied equally across all staff groups.

### Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between trustees or senior managers of the charity with suppliers must be disclosed to the full Board of trustees. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported. Trustees are asked to declare their interests before each board meeting and there is a Register of Interests.

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary**, Connected Voice Business Services Ltd**, was established to operate as a commercial accountancy service and gift aids all of its profits to the charity (see note 25 to the accounts).

### Risk management

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The Board review these risks on a regular basis and a full report is discussed at a Board meeting annually where mitigating actions identified and taken. Health and Safety information is presented on a quarterly basis to the Board.

### Indemnity insurance

The charity has Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in respect of the Trustees and Officers of the charity.

## TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENTS

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company, the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources including the income and expenditure of the charitable group for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2016 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK accounting standards 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 business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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 the group, and hence 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 in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware, and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

Approved by the board of trustees on 19/04/2021 and signed on behalf by:

.....

**Simon Elliott – Chair**

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Connected Voice (the 'charitable company') and its subsidiary (the group') for the period ended 30 September 2020 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and charitable company's affairs as at 30 September 2020, and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

However, not all future events or conditions can be predicted. The COVID-19 viral pandemic is one of the most significant economic events for the UK with unprecedented levels of uncertainty of outcomes. It is therefore difficult to evaluate all of the potential implications on the charitable company's trade, customers, suppliers and wider economy. The trustees' view on the impact of COVID-19 is disclosed in the accounting policies note 2.2.

**Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the group and parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 18-19 the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the

trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group's and parent charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

We have been appointed auditor under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with this Act.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of Our Report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Donna Bulmer BA (Hons) ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor)**
**For and on behalf of Haines Watts**

**Statutory Auditors**
19/04/2021

17 Queens Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1RN

**CONNECTED VOICE**
(A company limited by guarantee)

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCLUDING SUMMARY INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
For the year ended 30 September 2020

| | Notes | Unrestricted Funds | Designated Funds | Restricted Funds | **Total 2020** | Total 1-Apr-18 to 30-Sep-19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | **£** | £ |
| **Income from:** | | | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 8 | 24,570 | - | 26,735 | **51,305** | 49,896 |
| Charitable activities | 9 | | | | | |
| Grants and contracts | | 732,691 | - | 265,268 | **997,959** | 1,356,682 |
| Chargeable services | | 148,779 | - | 860 | **149,639** | 160,998 |
| Other trading activities | 10 | | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | | 179,272 | - | - | **179,272** | 250,196 |
| Other trading income | | 12,740 | - | - | **12,740** | 14,730 |
| Investments | 11 | 10,941 | - | - | **10,941** | 19,071 |
| ***Total income*** | | 1,108,993 | - | 292,863 | **1,401,856** | 1,851,573 |
| **Expenditure on:** | | | | | | |
| Costs of raising funds | 12 | | | | | |
| Subsidiary expenditure | | 179,475 | - | - | **179,475** | 247,042 |
| Investment management fees | | 3,137 | - | - | **3,137** | 5,766 |
| Charitable activities | | | | | | |
| Operation of the charity | 13 | 845,448 | 51,529 | 196,179 | **1,093,156** | 1,647,759 |
| Exceptional item | | | | | | |
| Pension deficit | 14 | - | - | - | **-** | 91,913 |
| ***Total expenditure*** | | 1,028,060 | 51,529 | 196,179 | **1,275,768** | 1,992,480 |
| ***Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)*** | | 80,933 | ( 51,529 ) | 96,684 | **126,088** | ( 140,907 ) |
| Net (losses)/gains on investments | 26 | ( 17,825 ) | - | - | **( 17,825 )** | 16,747 |
| Transfers between funds | | ( 52,173 ) | 51,529 | 644 | **-** | - |
| ***Net movement of funds*** | | 10,935 | - | 97,328 | **108,263** | ( 124,160 ) |
| **Reconciliation of funds** | | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | | 587,925 | 150,000 | 91,898 | **829,823** | 953,983 |
| ***Total funds carried forward*** | | 598,860 | 150,000 | 189,226 | **938,086** | 829,823 |

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 26 to 41 form an integral part of these accounts.

**CONNECTED VOICE**
(A company limited by guarantee)

Charity Number 1125877
Company Number 06681475

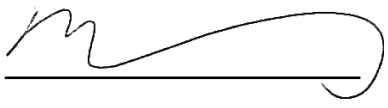
## BALANCE SHEET
As at 30 September 2020

| | Notes | Group 2020 £ | Group 2019 £ | Charity 2020 £ | Charity 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Fixed assets** | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 23 | 25,257 | 2,316 | 25,257 | 2,316 |
| Investments | 24 | 380,160 | 397,985 | 380,162 | 397,987 |
| ***Total fixed assets*** | | **405,417** | **400,301** | **405,419** | **400,303** |
| **Current assets** | | | | | |
| Stock and work in progress | 27 | 16,259 | 21,687 | - | - |
| Debtors | 28 | 332,574 | 387,116 | 373,462 | 399,221 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | 293,375 | 137,877 | 256,842 | 146,969 |
| ***Total current assets*** | | **642,208** | **546,680** | **630,304** | **546,190** |
| **Creditors:** amounts falling due within one year | 29 | **( 109,539 )** | **( 117,158 )** | **( 97,637 )** | **( 116,670 )** |
| ***Net current assets*** | | **532,669** | **429,522** | **532,667** | **429,520** |
| ***Total assets less current liabilities*** | | **938,086** | **829,823** | **938,086** | **829,823** |
| ***Total net assets or liabilities*** | | **938,086** | **829,823** | **938,086** | **829,823** |
| **Funds of the charity** | | | | | |
| Unrestricted income funds | | 598,860 | 587,925 | 598,860 | 587,925 |
| Designated income funds | | 150,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 |
| Restricted income funds | | 189,226 | 91,898 | 189,226 | 91,898 |
| ***Total funds*** | | **938,086** | **829,823** | **938,086** | **829,823** |

The notes on pages 26 to 41 form an integral part of these accounts.

These financial statements were approved by the Board on: 19/04/2021

and are signed on its behalf by: Martin Horrocks
Treasurer



**CONNECTED VOICE**
(A company limited by guarantee)

Charity Number 1125877
Company Number 06681475

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
For the year ended 30 September 2020

| | Notes | 2020 £ | 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cash flows from operating activities** | | | |
| Net movement in funds | | 108,263 | ( 124,160 ) |
| **Add back:** | | | |
| Depreciation | | 6,125 | 3,015 |
| Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets | | - | - |
| Interest and dividends received | | ( 10,941 ) | ( 19,071 ) |
| Losses on investments | | 17,825 | ( 16,747 ) |
| Decrease in stock and work in progress | | 5,428 | ( 18,832 ) |
| Decrease in debtors | | 54,542 | ( 118,224 ) |
| Decrease in creditors | | ( 7,619 ) | ( 52,431 ) |
| ***Cash generated from operations*** | | **173,623** | **( 346,450 )** |
| ***Net cash from operating activities*** | | **173,623** | **( 346,450 )** |
| **Cash flow from investing activities** | | | |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment | | ( 29,066 ) | - |
| Payments to acquire investments | | - | ( 123,349 ) |
| Receipts of sale of investments | | - | 222,866 |
| Interest and dividends received | | 10,941 | 19,071 |
| ***Net cash used in investing activities*** | | **( 18,125 )** | **118,588** |
| **Increase in cash and cash equivalents** | | 155,498 | ( 373,862 ) |
| **Cash and cash equivalents at start of year** | | 137,877 | 511,739 |
| ***Cash and cash equivalents at end of year*** | | **293,375** | **137,877** |
| **Cash and cash equivalents consist of:** | | | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | **293,375** | **137,877** |

The notes on pages 26 to 41 form an integral part of these accounts.

## 1 Accounting Policies

The principle accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

## 2 Basis of accounting

### 2.1 Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts 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) (effective 1 January 2019) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

Connected Voice meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### 2.2 Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. In particular, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trustees have revised their forecasts to take into account the impact on the business of possible scenarios brought on by the impact of COVID-19, alongside the measures that they can take to mitigate the impact. Based on these assessments, given the measures that could be undertaken to mitigate the current adverse conditions, and the current resources available, the Trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

### 2.3 Group financial statements

These financial statements consolidate the results of the charity and its wholly-owned subsidiary Connected Voice Business Services Ltd on a line by line basis. A separate Statement of Financial Activities for the charity itself is not presented because the charity has taken advantage of the exemptions afforded by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

## 3 Income

### 3.1 Recognition of income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the resources, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is more likely than not that the resources will be received and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

### 3.2 Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by FRS102 SORP or FRS102.

### 3.3 Trading activities

Income from trading activities is to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred.

3.4 **Grants and donations**

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance or provision of other specified services is deferred until the criteria of income recognition are met.

3.5 **Volunteer help**

The value of volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

3.6 **Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

3.7 **Investment income**

Investment Income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as shares and cash deposits. it includes dividends and interest: and amounts are recognised when the charity's right to receive payment is established

3.8 **Investment gains and losses**

This includes any realised or unrealised gains or losses on the sale of investment and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

3.9 **Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charities' work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

4 **Expenditure and liabilities**

4.1 **Liability recognition**

Liabilities are recognised when it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

4.2 **Charitable activities**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual baisis. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of voluntary sector support, advocacy and other activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

### 4.3 Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly relate to the charitable activities. Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

### 4.4 Holding accounts

The charity and its subsidiary hold monies on behalf of other organisations as part of their payroll service. The balances held by the charity are not included within the balance sheet in accordance with SORP 2015; the balances of the subsidiary are recognised as an asset with the corresponding liability.

### 4.5 Operating lease

Rentals payable and receivable under operating leases are charged to the SoFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease

### 4.6 Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

### 4.7 Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at their settlement amount less any trade discounts due.

### 4.8 Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

## 5 Assets

### 5.1 Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Electronic office equipment | 25% straight line basis |
| Restricted office equipment | 25% straight line basis |

### 5.2 Investments

Fixed asset investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (their market value) at the year end. The same treatment is applied to unlisted investments unless fair value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment.

### 5.3 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discount due.

6 **Legal status**

Connected Voice is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, (number 06681475) and not having share capital. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity.

7 **Financial performance of the charity**

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities includes the results of the wholly owned subsidiary.

The summary financial performance of the charity alone is:

| | **Total 2020** | Total 1-Apr-18 to 30-Sep-19 |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | £ |
| Income | **1,222,584** | 1,601,377 |
| Gift aid from subsidiary company | **7,728** | 13,584 |
| | **1,230,312** | 1,614,961 |
| Expenditure | **( 1,104,224 )** | ( 1,755,868 ) |
| Net gains/(losses) on investments | **( 17,825 )** | 16,747 |
| ***Net movement in funds for the year*** | **108,263** | ( 124,160 ) |
| Total funds brought forward | **829,823** | 953,983 |
| ***Total funds carried forward*** | **938,086** | 829,823 |
| Represented by: | | |
| Unrestricted income funds | **598,860** | 587,925 |
| Designated income funds | **150,000** | 150,000 |
| Restricted income funds | **189,226** | 91,898 |
| | **938,086** | 829,823 |

**Analysis of income**

| | | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2020 £** | Total 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | **Donations and legacies** | | | | |
| | Hadrian Trust | 3,000 | - | **3,000** | 3,000 |
| | Community Foundation | 10,000 | 6,860 | **16,860** | - |
| | Northern Neuro Alliance | - | - | **-** | 3,765 |
| | RW Mann Trust | 1,000 | 1,000 | **2,000** | 1,000 |
| | Sir James Knott Trust | 7,000 | - | **7,000** | 7,000 |
| | The Barbour Foundation | - | 10,000 | **10,000** | 15,000 |
| | The Joicey Trust | 3,000 | - | **3,000** | 3,000 |
| | NAVCA | - | - | **-** | 500 |
| | NECC Your Homes Newcastle | - | - | **-** | 5,000 |
| | Community Fund | - | - | **-** | 5,000 |
| | Newcastle Hospitals | - | 2,500 | **2,500** | - |
| | Other donations | 570 | 6,375 | **6,945** | 6,631 |
| | | 24,570 | 26,735 | **51,305** | 49,896 |
| 9 | **Charitable activities** | | | | |
| | Income from grants and contracts | | | | |
| | NHS Newcastle and Gateshead CCG | 232,779 | - | **232,779** | 365,764 |
| | The National Lottery Community Fund – Neurological | - | - | **-** | 48,933 |
| | The National Lottery Community Fund | - | 35,501 | **35,501** | - |
| | The National Lottery Community Fund via North East Law Centre | - | 46,854 | **46,854** | 38,934 |
| | Newcastle East End Partnership | - | 18,838 | **18,838** | 7,905 |
| | Police & Crime Commissioner Northumbria | - | 57,242 | **57,242** | 73,341 |
| | Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council | 307,912 | - | **307,912** | 475,368 |
| | Newcastle City Council | 192,000 | - | **192,000** | 327,917 |
| | MECC (Making Every Second Count) | - | - | **-** | 14,320 |
| | Peoples Health Trust | - | - | **-** | 4,200 |
| | VONNE | - | 11,473 | **11,473** | - |
| | VCSE Resilience | - | 95,360 | **95,360** | - |
| | | 732,691 | 265,268 | **997,959** | 1,356,682 |
| | Chargeable services | | | | |
| | Individual advocacy client spot contracts | 115,986 | - | **115,986** | 121,977 |
| | Paid for services to the voluntary sector | 32,253 | 360 | **32,613** | 24,956 |
| | Other income | 540 | 500 | **1,040** | - |
| | Training and events | - | - | **-** | 14,065 |
| | | 148,779 | 860 | **149,639** | 160,998 |

**Analysis of income** continued

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2020 £** | Total 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 **Other trading activities** | | | | |
| Subsidiary income | | | | |
| Accountancy services to the charity sector | 179,272 | - | **179,272** | 250,196 |
| | 179,272 | - | **179,272** | 250,196 |
| Other trading income | | | | |
| Room hire, rent office space | 1,200 | - | **1,200** | - |
| Advocacy App | 10,000 | - | **10,000** | 10,825 |
| Website advertising and admin services | 1,540 | - | **1,540** | 3,905 |
| | 12,740 | - | **12,740** | 14,730 |
| 11 **Investments** | | | | |
| Interest receivable | 246 | - | **246** | 284 |
| Income on investments | 10,695 | - | **10,695** | 18,787 |
| | 10,941 | - | **10,941** | 19,071 |

Income was £1,401,856 (2019: £1,851,573) of which £1,108,993 was unrestricted or designated (2019: £1,522,177) and £292,863 was restricted (2019: £329,396).

**Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities**

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2020 £** | Total 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 **Raising funds** | | | | |
| Trading subsidiary costs | | | | |
| Staff costs | 166,527 | - | **166,527** | 228,473 |
| Overheads | 12,948 | - | **12,948** | 18,569 |
| | 179,475 | - | **179,475** | 247,042 |
| Investment management costs | 3,137 | - | **3,137** | 5,766 |
| | 3,137 | - | **3,137** | 5,766 |

**Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities** continued

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2020 £** | Total 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 **Charitable activities** | | | | |
| Direct costs | | | | |
| Project staff salaries | 648,737 | 145,189 | **793,926** | 1,226,167 |
| Direct project costs | 32,393 | 19,837 | **52,230** | 87,858 |
| Support costs | | | | |
| Management & admin staff salaries | 126,751 | 14,225 | **140,976** | 155,050 |
| Facility costs | 38,778 | 7,333 | **46,111** | 62,386 |
| Office costs | 38,275 | 7,221 | **45,496** | 73,292 |
| Professional fees | 2,521 | 477 | **2,998** | 31,271 |
| Depreciation | 4,228 | 1,897 | **6,125** | 3,015 |
| Loss on disposal | - | - | **-** | 2,320 |
| Governance costs | | | | |
| Audit fee | 4,800 | - | **4,800** | 4,100 |
| Annual review, AGM and trustee planning | 494 | - | **494** | 2,300 |
| | 896,977 | 196,179 | **1,093,156** | 1,647,759 |

Expenditure on charitable activities was £1,275,768 (2019: £1,992,480) of which £1,028,060 was unrestricted or designated (2019: £1,609,270) and £196,179 was restricted (2019: £383,210).

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 **Exceptional item** | | | | |
| Pension deficit | - | - | **-** | 91,913 |
| | - | - | **-** | 91,913 |

On the 19 December 2018 the trustees paid of a significant liability to TPT Retirement Solutions when the charity left its defined benefit pension scheme. The payment also included the £146,000 creditor payable after more than 1 year.

**Analysis of charitable activities by activity type**

| | Voluntary Sector Support £ | Advocacy £ | **Total 2020 £** | Total 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 **Expenditure by activity type** | | | | |
| Project staff salaries | 311,091 | 482,835 | **793,926** | 1,226,167 |
| Direct project costs | 32,647 | 19,584 | **52,231** | 87,858 |
| Support costs | 146,839 | 94,866 | **241,705** | 327,334 |
| Governance costs | 3,089 | 2,205 | **5,294** | 6,400 |
| | 493,666 | 599,490 | **1,093,156** | 1,647,759 |

**Analysis of charitable activities by activity type** continued

| | Voluntary Sector Support £ | Advocacy £ | **Total 2020 £** | Total 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16 **Summary analysis of expenditure and related income for charitable activities** | | | | |
| Costs | ( 493,666 ) | ( 599,490 ) | **( 1,093,156 )** | ( 1,647,759 ) |
| Income | | | | |
| Donations and legacies | 36,289 | 15,016 | **51,305** | 49,897 |
| Grants and contracts | 532,586 | 465,373 | **997,959** | 1,356,682 |
| Chargeable services | 32,653 | 116,986 | **149,639** | 160,998 |
| Other trading activities | 2,740 | 10,000 | **12,740** | 14,729 |
| | 110,602 | 7,885 | **118,487** | ( 65,453 ) |
| Investment income | 10,941 | - | **10,941** | 19,071 |
| Net income/(expenditure) | 121,543 | 7,885 | **129,428** | ( 46,382 ) |

17 **Net income/(expenditure) for the year**

This is stated after charging

| | **2020 £** | 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Depreciation on tangible fixed assets | **6,125** | 3,014 |
| Operating lease rentals | **16,864** | 24,302 |
| | **22,989** | 27,316 |

18 **Auditor's remuneration**

| | **2020 £** | 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Fees payable to the charity's auditors for the audit of the groups' annual accounts | **4,800** | 4,100 |
| | **4,800** | 4,100 |

There were no other fees paid to the charity's auditor (2019:£nil).

19 **Analysis of staff costs, and the cost of key management personnel**

| | **2020 £** | 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Salaries and wages | **944,160** | 1,390,895 |
| Social security costs | **79,466** | 117,137 |
| Pension costs | **42,323** | 57,965 |
| Redundancy | **35,480** | 46,154 |
| | **1,101,429** | 1,612,151 |

19 **Analysis of staff costs, and the cost of key management personnel** continued

No employees had a gross salary in excess of £60,000 per annum (2019: nil)

The key management personnel of the charity, comprise the trustees, the Chief Executive . The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £67,472. (2019: £93,049).

20 **Staff Numbers**

The average monthly head count and the average monthly number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees during the year were as follows:

| The parts of the charity in which the employee's work | **2020 Number** | **2020 FTE** | 2019 Number | 2019 FTE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Voluntary sector support | **8.0** | **7.7** | 8.0 | 7.2 |
| Equality and diversity projects | **2.0** | **1.5** | 2.0 | 1.6 |
| Advocacy | **18.0** | **16.0** | 22.0 | 16.5 |
| Charity Business Services | **7.0** | **4.8** | 7.0 | 4.8 |
| Management and support | **3.0** | **2.5** | 3.0 | 2.4 |
| | **38.0** | **32.5** | 42.0 | 32.5 |

21 **Transactions with trustees and related parties**

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity. (2019: none).

**Trustees' expenses**

The following detail the expenses incurred by the trustees.

| | **2020 £** | 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|
| Travel expenses | 56 | 174 |

**Transaction(s) with related parties**

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period. (2019: none).

22 **Corporation Taxation**

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objectives.

## 23 Tangible fixed assets

| | Restricted Office Equipment | Electronic Office Equipment | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ |
| **Cost** | | | |
| Balance brought forward | - | 31,101 | **31,101** |
| Additions | 19,771 | 9,295 | **29,066** |
| Disposals | - | - | **-** |
| **Balance carried forward** | 19,771 | 40,396 | **60,167** |
| **Depreciation** | | | |
| Basis | SL | SL | |
| Rate | 25% | 25% | |
| Balance brought forward | - | 28,785 | **28,785** |
| Depreciation charge for year | 1,098 | 5,027 | **6,125** |
| Disposals | - | - | **-** |
| **Balance carried forward** | 1,098 | 33,812 | **34,910** |
| **Net book value** | | | |
| **Brought forward** | - | 2,316 | **2,316** |
| **Carried forward** | 18,673 | 6,584 | **25,257** |

## 24 Fixed asset investments

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2020** | 2019 | **2020** | 2019 |
| | **£** | £ | **£** | £ |
| Listed investments | **380,160** | 397,985 | **380,160** | 397,985 |
| Investment in subsidiary undertaking at cost | **-** | - | **2** | 2 |
| | **380,160** | 397,985 | **380,162** | 397,987 |

## 25 Net income of trading subsidiary

The charitable company owns two £1 ordinary shares, 100% of the voting capital of Connected Voice Charity Business Services Limited, a company incorporated and registered in England and Wales. The principal activity of this company is the provision of financial and administrative services for charitable organisations.

The audit report for 30 September 2020 was unqualified.

25 **Net income of trading subsidiary** continued

**A summary of the trading results is shown below**

| | 2020 | 1-Apr-18 to 30-Sep-19 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Turnover | **224,488** | **298,911** |
| Other income | **47** | **284** |
| Gross income | **224,535** | **299,195** |
| Administration costs | **( 216,807 )** | **( 285,611 )** |
| Net profit/(loss) | **7,728** | **13,584** |
| Amount gift aided to parent charity | **-** | **-** |
| Amount to be gift aided to parent charity | **7,728** | **13,584** |
| Total assets | **530,625** | **237,465** |
| Total liabilities | **( 522,896 )** | **( 223,879 )** |
| Total Equity | **7,729** | **13,586** |

26 **Listed investments**

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Market value at 1 April 2019 | **397,985** |
| Additions at cost | **-** |
| Disposals at open market value | **-** |
| Net unrealised investment loss | **( 17,825 )** |
| Market value at 30 September 2020 | **380,160** |
| Original cost | **441,695** |

27 **Stock and work in progress**

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Work in progress | **16,259** | 21,687 | **-** | - |

28 **Debtors and prepayments (receivable within 1 year)**

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Trade debtors | **298,825** | 352,046 | **227,366** | 311,330 |
| Prepayments and other debtors | **33,749** | 35,070 | **33,749** | 35,070 |
| Amounts due from subsidiary undertaking | **-** | - | **112,347** | 52,821 |
| | **332,574** | 387,116 | **373,462** | 399,221 |

29 **Creditors and accruals (payable within 1 year)**

| | Group | | Charity | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **2020** | **2019** | **2020** | **2019** |
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Trade creditors | **5,304** | 9,755 | **5,304** | 16,679 |
| Taxation and social security | **69,642** | 88,200 | **61,860** | 81,988 |
| Accruals and other creditors | **27,873** | 18,203 | **26,673** | 17,003 |
| Deferred income (note 30) | **6,720** | 1,000 | **3,800** | 1,000 |
| | **109,539** | 117,158 | **97,637** | 116,670 |

30 **Deferred income**

Deferred income comprises advance payments from grants that relate to future periods.

| | **2020** |
|---|---|
| | **£** |
| Balance brought forward | **1,000** |
| Amount released to income earned from charitable activities | **( 1,000 )** |
| Amount deferred in year | **6,720** |
| Balance carried forward | **6,720** |

31 **Holding accounts**

During the year Connected Voice' subsidiary held monies on behalf of other organisations. Connected Voice Business Services Ltd provides a payroll and bookkeeping service to a number of small organisations and holds monies for this purpose.

| | **Balance at 01.10.19** | **Receipts** | **Payments** | **Balance at 30.09.20** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Connected Voice Business Services Ltd | 177,229 | 8,796,136 | 8,762,116 | 211,249 |

32 **Operating Leases**

The future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows;

| | **2020** | **2019** |
|---|---|---|
| | **£** | **£** |
| Not later than one year | 20,306 | 20,306 |
| Later than one and not later than five years | 29,395 | 29,395 |
| | **49,701** | **49,701** |

32 **Events after the end of the reporting period**

No events (not requiring adjustment to the accounts) have occurred after the end of the reporting period but before the accounts are authorised which relate to conditions that arose after the end of the reporting period.

33 **Analysis of charitable funds**

**Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds**

**Year ended 30 September 2020**

| Unrestricted funds | Fund balances brought forward £ | Incoming resource £ | Resources expended £ | Transfers £ | Gains / (losses) £ | Fund balances carried forward £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General funds | 587,925 | 1,108,993 | ( 1,028,060 ) | ( 52,173 ) | ( 17,825 ) | **598,860** |
| | 587,925 | 1,108,993 | ( 1,028,060 ) | ( 52,173 ) | ( 17,825 ) | **598,860** |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Business development | 100,000 | - | ( 16,049 ) | ( 15,000 ) | - | **68,951** |
| Digital transformation | - | - | - | 60,000 | - | **60,000** |
| COVID resilience | - | - | - | 21,049 | - | **21,049** |
| Charity restructuring | 50,000 | - | ( 35,480 ) | ( 14,520 ) | - | **-** |
| | 150,000 | - | ( 51,529 ) | 51,529 | - | **150,000** |

**Purpose of unrestricted funds**

| | |
|---|---|
| General funds | The 'free reserves' after allowing for designated funds. |
| Business development | To develop and improve the chargeable services by the charity and its subsidiary. |
| Digital transformation | For new digital infrastructure including new telephony, software and processes. |
| COVID resilience | For additional costs arising from operating during COVID-19 restrictions. |
| Charity restructuring | To change the management structure of the charity. |

**Transfers between funds**

| | Reason for transfer | Amount £ |
|---|---|---|
| From designated funds to general funds | Internal re-charge of £15,000 for business development. Management re-structure complete, £14,520 balance transferred to general funds. | **29,520** |
| From general funds to designated funds | The trustees agreed to set aside funds for digital transformation £60,000 and COVID resilience £22,149. | **81,049** |

**Year ended 30 September 2019**

| Unrestricted funds | Fund balances brought forward £ | Incoming resource £ | Resources expended £ | Transfers £ | Gains / (losses) £ | Fund balances carried forward £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General funds | 808,271 | 1,522,177 | ( 1,609,270 ) | ( 150,000 ) | 16,747 | **587,925** |
| | 808,271 | 1,522,177 | ( 1,609,270 ) | ( 150,000 ) | 16,747 | **587,925** |
| **Designated funds** | | | | | | |
| Business development | - | - | - | 100,000 | - | **100,000** |
| Charity restructuring | - | - | - | 50,000 | - | **50,000** |
| | - | - | - | 150,000 | - | **150,000** |

33 **Analysis of charitable funds** continued

**Analysis of movement in restricted funds**

**Year ended 30 September 2020**

| Restricted funds | Fund balances brought forward £ | Incoming resources £ | Resources expended £ | Transfers £ | Fund balances carried forward £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Restricted IT equipment | - | 19,771 | ( 1,098 ) | - | **18,673** |
| SkillsBridge | 7,295 | - | - | - | **7,295** |
| BME Health and Wellbeing | 28,893 | - | ( 28,893 ) | - | **-** |
| HAREF (restricted donation) | 33,372 | - | - | - | **33,372** |
| HAREF | - | 38,035 | ( 20,733 ) | - | **17,302** |
| Safeguarding Training | - | 11,473 | ( 6,618 ) | - | **4,855** |
| People's Health Trust | ( 644 ) | - | - | 644 | **-** |
| Newcastle East End Partnership | 3,170 | 18,838 | ( 22,008 ) | - | **-** |
| Digital Training | - | 15,000 | ( 4,260 ) | - | **10,740** |
| VCSE Resilience | - | 95,360 | ( 23,237 ) | - | **72,123** |
| Advocacy – Families Through Crisis | 1,580 | 26,644 | ( 20,902 ) | - | **7,322** |
| Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | 5,000 | - | ( 5,000 ) | - | - |
| Advocacy | 11,136 | 10,500 | ( 11,108 ) | - | **10,528** |
| Advocacy – Hate Crime | 2,096 | 47,242 | ( 49,338 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy – Welfare | - | 5,000 | ( 484 ) | - | **4,516** |
| Advocacy – Safeguarding | - | 5,000 | ( 2,500 ) | - | **2,500** |
| ***Totals*** | 91,898 | 292,863 | ( 196,179 ) | 644 | **189,226** |

**Purpose of restricted funds**

Restricted funds represent income resources used for a specific purpose within the charity as identified by the donor

| | |
|---|---|
| Restricted IT equipment | Providing resources to enable key staff to work from home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. |
| SkillsBridge | Facilitating and maintaining a network of professionals, volunteering their time and expertise to support the ongoing development of voluntary organisations in the North East. |
| BME Health and Wellbeing | Providing a structured programme of cultural competency training, primarily for staff working in health services so the BAME communities have improved access to health services in Newcastle. |
| HAREF | Working to improve the health and wellbeing of BAME communities in Gateshead and Newcastle by providing regular networks, engagement opportunities and information to organisations in the VCS and public sector. |
| Safeguarding Training | To make safeguarding resources available at a local level, deliver regular training sessions and create new/build on existing networks. |

**Purpose of restricted funds** continued

| | |
|---|---|
| Newcastle East End Partnership | Facilitation of the east end partnership of community buildings with the objective of it becoming independent and self-sufficient, and support across individual partner organisations with the objective of increasing capacity. |
| Digital Training | To expand our traditional support provision by giving people and communities we serve the opportunity to access online training to advance their knowledge and practice. |
| VCSE Resilience | To provide support packages comprising business resilience and management support for community sector organisations based in Newcastle. |
| Advocacy – Families Through Crisis | Providing support to families in crisis in Newcastle. |
| Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | direct advocacy to refugee and asylum seekers to have voices heard and access to services. |
| Advocacy | Contribution to providing the overall advocacy service. |
| Advocacy – Hate Crime | Providing Hate Crime Advocacy, supporting people who have experienced, or are at risk of hate crime in the Northumbria area. |
| Advocacy – Welfare | direct advocacy to vulnerable people through benefits, appeals and sanctions process. |
| Advocacy – Safeguarding | Specialist advocacy to provide additional support to vulnerable adults living in Newcastle and Gateshead who may be victims of crime, or at risk of abuse, as a result of their vulnerable circumstances. |

**Transfers between funds**

| | **Reason for transfer** | **Amount £** |
|---|---|---|
| Between restricted and unrestricted funds | From unrestricted funds £644 was allocated to the People's Health Trust project to cover a small overspend the previous year. | **644** |

33 **Analysis of charitable funds** continued

**Year ended 30 September 2019**

**Analysis of movement in restricted funds**

| Restricted funds | Fund balances balances brought forward £ | Incoming resources £ | Resources expended £ | Gains / (losses) £ | Fund balances carried forward £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Building Stronger Britain Together | 4,921 | - | ( 4,921 ) | - | **-** |
| SkillsBridge | 13,955 | - | ( 6,660 ) | - | **7,295** |
| BME Health and Wellbeing | 15,247 | 71,250 | ( 57,604 ) | - | **28,893** |
| HAREF (restricted donation) | 66,711 | - | ( 33,339 ) | - | **33,372** |
| HAREF | - | 46,843 | ( 46,843 ) | - | **-** |
| MECC (Making Every Contact Count) | - | 14,321 | ( 14,321 ) | - | **-** |
| People's Health Trust | - | 4,200 | ( 4,844 ) | - | **( 644 )** |
| Newcastle East End Partnership | - | 7,905 | ( 4,735 ) | - | **3,170** |
| Advocacy – Neurological | 17,833 | 48,973 | ( 66,806 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy – Partners in Health | 8,130 | 3,343 | ( 11,473 ) | - | **-** |
| Advocacy – Families Through Crisis | 3,915 | 38,957 | ( 41,292 ) | - | **1,580** |
| Advocacy – Refugees & Asylum Seekers | - | 5,000 | - | - | **5,000** |
| Advocacy | - | 15,210 | ( 4,074 ) | - | **11,136** |
| Advocacy – Hate Crime | - | 73,382 | ( 71,286 ) | - | **2,096** |
| Advocacy – Welfare | 15,000 | 12 | ( 15,012 ) | - | **-** |
| ***Totals*** | 145,712 | 329,396 | ( 383,210 ) | - | **91,898** |

34 **Capital commitments**

As at 30 September 2020, the charity had no capital commitments (2019 -£nil)

35 **Analysis of Group assets between funds**

| | Unrestricted Funds £ | Designated Funds £ | Restricted Funds £ | **Total 2020 £** | Total 2019 £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tangible fixed assets | 6,584 | - | 18,673 | **25,257** | 2,316 |
| Investments | 380,160 | - | - | **380,160** | 397,985 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 122,822 | - | 170,553 | **293,375** | 137,877 |
| Other net current assets/(liabilities) | 89,294 | 150,000 | - | **239,294** | 291,645 |
| | 598,860 | 150,000 | 189,226 | **938,086** | 829,823 |