



(A company limited by guarantee)

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 September 2020

Charity Number 1125877
Company Number 06681475

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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 McGuinness (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	<p>Simon Elliott</p> <p>Anne Bonner</p> <p>Nitin Shukla</p> <p>Steve Nash</p> <p>Kate Israel</p> <p>Martin Horrocks</p> <p>John Litherland</p> <p>Dawn Redhead</p> <p>Rosie Lewis</p> <p>Elaine Slater</p> <p>Paula Park</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>(Term ended 2 March 2020)</p> <p>Vice Chair</p> <p>Treasurer</p> <p>(Resigned 2 March 2020)</p> <p>(Appointed 29 April 2020 and Resigned 31 December 2020)</p> <p>(Appointed 29 April 2020)</p> <p>(Appointed 29 April 2020)</p> <p>(Appointed 29 April 2020)</p>
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Chief Executive	Lisa Goodwin
Principal Office	Higham House Higham Place Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8AF
Auditors	Haines Watts 17 Queens Lane Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1RN
Bankers	Yorkshire Bank Plc 29-31 Pilgrim Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6RL Unity Trust Bank Plc Four Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB
Investment Manager	Tilney Private Wealth Management 130 St Vincent Street Glasgow 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 on19/04/2021..... and signed on behalf by:



.....
Simon Elliott – Chair

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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.

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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
		£	£	£	£	£
<u>Income from:</u>						
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
<u>Expenditure on:</u>						
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)
<u>Reconciliation of funds</u>						
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.

BALANCE SHEET

As at 30 September 2020

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2020 £	2019 £	2020 £	2019 £
<u>Fixed assets</u>					
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
<u>Current assets</u>					
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
<u>Funds of the charity</u>					
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

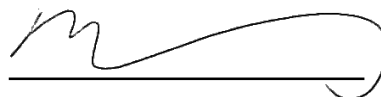
The notes on pages 26 to 41 form an integral part of these accounts.

These financial statements were approved by the Board on:

19/04/2021

and are signed on its behalf by:

Martin Horrocks
Treasurer



CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

	Notes	2020 £	2019 £
<u>Cash flows from operating activities</u>			
Net movement in funds		108,263	(124,160)
<u>Add back:</u>			
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)
<i>Cash generated from operations</i>		173,623	(346,450)
<i>Net cash from operating activities</i>		173,623	(346,450)
<u>Cash flow from investing activities</u>			
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
<i>Net cash used in investing activities</i>		(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
<i>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</i>		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.

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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.

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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 basis. 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.

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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.

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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

CONNECTED VOICE

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

Analysis of income continued

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
10 Other trading activities				
<u>Subsidiary income</u>				
Accountancy services to the charity sector	179,272	-	179,272	250,196
	<u>179,272</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>179,272</u>	<u>250,196</u>
 <u>Other trading income</u>				
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
	<u>12,740</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,740</u>	<u>14,730</u>
 11 Investments				
Interest receivable	246	-	246	284
Income on investments	10,695	-	10,695	18,787
	<u>10,941</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,941</u>	<u>19,071</u>

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
	<u>179,475</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>179,475</u>	<u>247,042</u>
 Investment management costs	3,137	-	3,137	5,766
	<u>3,137</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,137</u>	<u>5,766</u>

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Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities continued

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
13 Charitable activities				
<u>Direct costs</u>				
Project staff salaries	648,737	145,189	793,926	1,226,167
Direct project costs	32,393	19,837	52,230	87,858
<u>Support costs</u>				
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
<u>Governance costs</u>				
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

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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)
<u>Income</u>				
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

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

33 Analysis of charitable funds

Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds

Year ended 30 September 2020

	Fund balances brought forward £	Incoming resource £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Gains / (losses) £	Fund balances carried forward £
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	587,925	1,108,993	(1,028,060)	(52,173)	(17,825)	598,860
	<u>587,925</u>	<u>1,108,993</u>	<u>(1,028,060)</u>	<u>(52,173)</u>	<u>(17,825)</u>	<u>598,860</u>
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)	-	-
	<u>150,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(51,529)</u>	<u>51,529</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>150,000</u>

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

	Fund balances brought forward £	Incoming resource £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Gains / (losses) £	Fund balances carried forward £
Unrestricted funds						
General funds	808,271	1,522,177	(1,609,270)	(150,000)	16,747	587,925
	<u>808,271</u>	<u>1,522,177</u>	<u>(1,609,270)</u>	<u>(150,000)</u>	<u>16,747</u>	<u>587,925</u>
Designated funds						
Business development	-	-	-	100,000	-	100,000
Charity restructuring	-	-	-	50,000	-	50,000
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>150,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>150,000</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

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.

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For the year ended 30 September 2020

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

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2020

33 Analysis of charitable funds continued

Year ended 30 September 2019

Analysis of movement in restricted funds

Restricted funds	Fund 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