

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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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.

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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 undoubtedly 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

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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.

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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.

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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.

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- **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 "

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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

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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 tells 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 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

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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 Health Equity and Involvement Manager a post created in March 2023, which 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.

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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 Health 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 Health 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 Health 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.

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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.

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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 class!). 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.

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- 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.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

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.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

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.

Connected Voice
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

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
Martin Horrocks
Elaine Slater
Paula Park (resigned 25 April 2023)
Hannah Owens
Tracy Huitson
Amanda Lee
Colette Harrison
Busola Afolabi
Keith Proudfoot
Salha Kaiteisi (elected 25 April 2023)
Peter Elliott OBE (co-opted 25 April 2023)
Peter Deans (co-opted 25 April 2023)
Sam Cooper (elected 25 April 2023)

Chief Executive Lisa Goodwin

Principal Office One Strawberry Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4BX

Auditors Haines Watts North East Audit LLP
17 Queens Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1 RN

Bankers Yorkshire Bank Plc
Newcastle Business Centre
29-31 Pilgrim Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 6RL

Unity Trust Bank Plc
PO Box 7193
Planetary Road
Willenhall
WV1 9DG

Connected Voice
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

Investment Manager	Evelyn Partners Private Wealth Management 130 St Vincent Street Glasgow G2 5SE
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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.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

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.

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

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

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECTED VOICE (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

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.

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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



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

Statutory Auditor

...29th April 2024...

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**

		Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total 2023	As restated Total 2022
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£
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		<u>1,114,937</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>679,995</u>	<u>1,794,932</u>	<u>1,868,539</u>
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		<u>1,310,476</u>	<u>111,759</u>	<u>890,236</u>	<u>2,312,471</u>	<u>1,613,155</u>
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		<u>(121,034)</u>	<u>(145,575)</u>	<u>(201,242)</u>	<u>(467,851)</u>	<u>194,136</u>
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		546,663	222,842	439,658	1,209,163	1,015,027
Total funds carried forward		<u>425,629</u>	<u>77,267</u>	<u>238,416</u>	<u>741,312</u>	<u>1,209,163</u>

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)

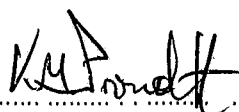
CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

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

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

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:			
<i>Net cash provided (used in) by operating activities</i>	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
<i>Net cash flow from investing activities</i>		(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		<u>454,544</u>	<u>940,901</u>
Cash and cash equivalents consist of:			
Cash at bank and in hand		54,552	504,919
Cash held as a custodian		<u>399,992</u>	<u>435,982</u>

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

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.

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

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.

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

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.

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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.

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

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

		Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022
	Notes	£	£	£	£
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		<u>1,029,613</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>838,926</u>	<u>1,868,539</u>
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		<u>1,014,531</u>	<u>53,802</u>	<u>544,822</u>	<u>1,613,155</u>
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		<u>(46,166)</u>	<u>(53,802)</u>	<u>294,104</u>	<u>194,136</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		592,829	276,644	145,554	1,015,027
Total funds carried forward		<u>546,663</u>	<u>222,842</u>	<u>439,658</u>	<u>1,209,163</u>

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023****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
	<u>18,542</u>	<u>8,531</u>

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	-
	<u>1,125,478</u>	<u>1,310,141</u>

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

6. Other trading activities	2023	2022
	£	£
Income from trading subsidiary	291,006	258,951
Other trading income	66,255	9,369
	<u>357,261</u>	<u>268,320</u>
	<u><u>357,261</u></u>	<u><u>268,320</u></u>
7. Investment income	2023	2022
	£	£
Income from investments	3,955	10,701
	<u>3,955</u>	<u>10,701</u>
	<u><u>3,955</u></u>	<u><u>10,701</u></u>
8. Raising funds	2023	2022
	£	£
Trading subsidiary costs		
Staff costs	320,423	212,908
Overheads	148,258	38,322
	<u>468,681</u>	<u>251,230</u>
	<u><u>468,681</u></u>	<u><u>251,230</u></u>
Other trading activities		
Investment management fees	11,492	3,899
	<u>11,492</u>	<u>3,899</u>
	<u><u>11,492</u></u>	<u><u>3,899</u></u>

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023****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
	<u>1,529,103</u>	<u>303,195</u>	<u>1,832,298</u>	<u>1,361,026</u>

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
	<u>280,915</u>	<u>238,755</u>

11. Governance costs

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

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

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
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

13. Auditors remuneration

Auditors fees	13,500	10,000
	<u>13,500</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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)
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net income	389,552	226,744
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023****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
	<u>1,697,656</u>	<u>1,305,168</u>

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
	<u>49</u>	<u>49</u>

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).

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

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

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

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
	<u>453,255</u>	<u>453,257</u>	<u>420,136</u>	<u>420,138</u>

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	<u>(177,675)</u>	<u>(35,608)</u>
Distribution to Connected Voice	-	-
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£
Total assets	453,020	614,733
Total liabilities	(666,301)	(650,339)
Shareholders' funds	<u>(213,281)</u>	<u>(35,606)</u>

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	<u>453,255</u>
Historical cost	<u>438,505</u>

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

18. Stocks

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

19. Debtors

	Group	Group	Charity	Charity
	2023	2022	2023	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
	<u>394,688</u>	<u>403,982</u>	<u>589,678</u>	<u>535,885</u>

20. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group	Group	Charity	Charity
	2023	2022	2023	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
	<u>621,402</u>	<u>602,004</u>	<u>194,086</u>	<u>133,293</u>

Deferred income

	£
At 1 October 2022	16,711
Released to incoming resources	(16,711)
Amounts deferred during the year	7,396
	<u>7,396</u>

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

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
	<u>435,982</u>	<u>14,684,779</u>	<u>(14,720,769)</u>	<u>399,992</u>

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
	<u>1,209,163</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,209,163</u>

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

23. Analysis of funds

	Balance 1 October 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gain/ (loss)	Balance 30 Sept 2023
<i>Year ended 30 September 2023</i>	£	£	£	£	£	£
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	-	-
	<u>769,505</u>	<u>1,114,937</u>	<u>(1,422,235)</u>	<u>(8,999)</u>	<u>49,688</u>	<u>502,896</u>
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
	<u>439,658</u>	<u>679,995</u>	<u>(890,236)</u>	<u>8,999</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>238,416</u>
Total funds	<u>1,209,163</u>	<u>1,794,932</u>	<u>(2,312,471)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>49,688</u>	<u>741,312</u>

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023****23. Analysis of funds**

	Balance 1 October 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Gain/ (loss) £	Balance 30 Sept 2022 £
<i>Year ended 30 September 2022 as restated</i>						
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

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

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.

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

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

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

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.

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

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)
	<u>425,629</u>	<u>77,267</u>	<u>238,416</u>	<u>741,312</u>

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)
	<u>546,663</u>	<u>222,842</u>	<u>439,658</u>	<u>1,209,163</u>

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
	<u>90,000</u>	<u>117,000</u>
	<u>228,417</u>	<u>248,554</u>

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.

Connected Voice

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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 £	2022 £
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	<u>(458,179)</u>	<u>138,294</u>

30. Analysis of net debt

The charitable company had no debt during the year.

