



Annual Report of the Trustees
From 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Registered Charity No. 1156672

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1. Background and Details

Charity Name: Careers Springboard West Berkshire

Charity Number: 1156672

Careers Springboard West Berkshire (CSWB) is a volunteer-led support organisation that offers help and advice to out-of-work managers and professionals, especially older and more experienced workers. It started operating in September 2006, taking over the work of the Newbury Executive Job Club. CSWB became a registered charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) on 14th April 2014.

CSWB is a founder member of The Foundation for Job Seekers (Charity No. 1136534), a network of four job clubs in the Thames Valley.

Trustees and Officers

Under the terms of our constitution one third of our trustees retire in rotation but are eligible for re-election. At our AGM on 16th August 2023 David Skyrme retired as Treasurer and trustee although will continue as a volunteer. We thank him for his many years of support. The trustees of the Charity at the end of the year were therefore:

Name of Trustee	Role	Date of Appointment	Next Retirement / Re-election (at AGM)
Adrian Foster-Fletcher	Chairman	23 rd October 2013	2025
James Gardiner	Treasurer	27 th July 2022	2025
Charles Fowler	Trustee	8 th August 2017	2026
Ian Vickerage	Trustee	25 th July 2018	2024
Peter Adams	Trustee	29 th June 2021	2024
Dorothy Nesbit	Trustee	27 th July 2022	2025

Address

Although most communications with the charity is via email or phone, postal correspondence can be sent to our face-to-face meeting address which is:

c/o Broadway House
4-8 The Broadway
Northbrook Street
NEWBURY
RG14 1BA.

This is retrieved only periodically. Therefore please use the contact details below and on our website.

Email: enquiries@careerswestberks.org.uk

Website: www.careerswestberks.org.uk

2. Structure, Governance and Management

CSWB started as an unincorporated association in September 2006. It was registered as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) on 14th April 2014. The governing document is its Constitution based on the CIO model constitution for a membership organisation. The date of the Constitution is 7th April 2014.

Trustees are elected by its members (our volunteers). One third retire in rotation at the AGM, though are eligible for re-election. Our Trustees themselves are all volunteers, most of them involved on our weekly job seeker meetings.

The trustees and volunteer members receive no remuneration, advances, credit or guarantees. The Charity employs no staff and does not own real estate. Our administration is decentralised and uses a cloud-based platform (membermojo.co.uk) through which our volunteers can update records. This resulted in a significant reduction in administration costs from its previous level.

Day-to-day oversight of the operations of the Charity takes place through regular communication via email, phone or Zoom.

The Charity's trustees have a risk management policy, which is reviewed annually. The ongoing risks identified and discussed at the AGM were the same as in the previous year:

- Surge in job seekers - high risk, high impact (initially due to COVID-19 impact, but more recently threat of recession); we developed plan of running 2 session a week; in fact our job seeker numbers declined and we continue to offer one session per week.
- Succession planning – high risk, medium impact; we are taking action to recruit new trustees to share the administrative burden while keeping running of the charity as simple as possible.
- Lack of volunteers – medium risk, medium impact; plans to recruit former job seekers. We continue to seek new volunteers both from job seekers and elsewhere, and have recruited one since the year end.

3. Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

From Clause 3 of our Constitution:

"The primary objective of CSWB is to the relief of unemployment for the public benefit in such ways as may be thought fit, including the provision of support, advice and assistance on job-seeking and career-change skills, primarily for managers and professionals in West Berkshire."

The main activities that CSWB undertake in pursuit of its public benefit are:

- running of weekly meetings that include workshops to help job seekers acquire and improve their job-seeking skills
- provision of help and support on a 1-to-1 basis to help job seekers succeed in their next career move
- provision of guidance material on specific job-seeking topics, including CV writing, career choices, networking, using LinkedIn to get a job, and making direct approaches to potential employers.

In delivering these services the Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. The benefit to those out of work is that our services help them re-enter the workplace, start earning and contribute to the economy sooner than they might otherwise have done without the support and the improvement in skills received through their participation in CSWB activities.

4. Activities and Performance

Meetings held this year were mostly held face-to-face reflecting a full post-pandemic recovery and increasing attendance. Sessions held on Zoom were generally associated with the LinkedIn session with the presenter being remote and/or the need to follow the class on-screen. The figures below are estimates based on termly new registrations cohort data; date of leavers is not recorded so cannot be provided accurately by term, and so active jobseeker numbers are a likely underestimate.

	Apr-Jul 2023	Sep-Dec 2023	Jan-Mar 2024
Jobseekers at start	2	7	16
New registrations	9	21	15
Leavers into Jobs	4	7	5
Leavers (other reasons)	0	5	12
Active jobseekers at end	7	16	14

Average jobseekers/meeting	3.2	5.1	5.8
Average age new joiners	50.3	50.0	51.0

Our highest meeting attendance was 9 with a couple more apologies received so an increase against 2022-23 reflecting tighter employment conditions. A summary of our meetings is shown in the table below:

	Apr-Jul 2023	Sep-Dec 2023	Jan-Mar 2024
Planned Meetings	11	12	10
No Face-to-face	10	11	9
No on Zoom	1	1	0

In summary, the job market appears to have become tighter during the year with increasing numbers of attendees as the year has progressed. In addition we continued to provide ongoing 1-on-1 support, including reviewing CVs, LinkedIn profiles and also holding individual advice sessions.

The number of our volunteers reduced to 7 at Christmas following the retirement of John Newell. Efforts are being made to identify a couple of new volunteers and to expand female and minority representation. However, as with so many volunteer organisations, we are constrained by the limited number of those with time and interest to commit beside family and working lives.

5. Financial Review

The accounts for the financial year 2023-24 are shown in section 7 below.

Normally we receive grants from The Foundation for Job Seekers, but none were received during the financial year.

Our expenditure for the year was significantly up compared to the previous year when significantly more of our meetings were on Zoom. Our principal cost is room hire at Broadway House. As before our professional indemnity insurance accounts for a significant chunk of our expenditure. The renewal quote from our existing supplier was 12% higher than the previous year reflecting the insurance market generally. As this was retendered last year, no changes to the policy provider were made.

Our reserves policy is to have reserves that will cover at least two years running costs. Our projected rate of expenditure is likely to increase to around £2,000 a year due to more face-to-face meetings in future. Even without a resumption of grants from the Foundation for Job Seekers, it is estimated that we could operate for another four years. Therefore, seeking additional sources of funds is not a priority for the trustees for the foreseeable future although the trustees are aware of potential grant funding sources.

The Trustees believe that the financial statement gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and that appropriate accounting policies have been applied.

6. Other Information

In normal times CSWB uses facilities provided by The Greenham Trust, a West Berkshire based charity that uses funds generated by rents at Greenham Business Park to support local charitable and community causes. They offer such organisations facilities at their building Broadway House in central Newbury at a favourable rate. As a result of moving our meetings to Broadway House in September 2014, CSWB reduced its expenditure for meeting room hire from over £4,500 to around £1,500.

We send out a leaver's survey to job seekers who leave us, whether that is for a new job or for other reasons. Data from these surveys provide useful feedback on the usefulness and quality of our services. This feedback is used to adjust content and format of meetings.

During the year, we were well supported by our volunteers. We are grateful for their hard work and dedication to helping our job seekers. We continue to receive thanks and appreciation from job seekers whom we have helped back into work.

We believe that the current meetings programme and ongoing 1-on-1 support provides our older job seekers with the skills and resources they need to successfully re-enter the workplace and contribute their extensive experience to the vibrancy of the local and regional economy.

Further information on the activities of Careers Springboard West Berkshire can be found on our website at:

www.careerswestberks.org.uk

7. Financial Accounts

Careers Springboard West Berkshire Balance Sheet - 31 March 2024

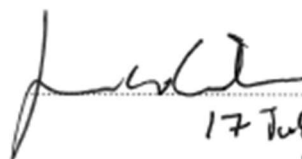
	Note	31 Mar 2024 £	31 Mar 2023 £
ASSETS			
Bank Account - current		177.70	(110.08)
Bank Account - savings		9,069.26	10,451.83
TOTAL ASSETS		9,246.96	10,341.75
LIABILITIES			
Accrued Expenditure		356.64	1.07
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year			
TOTAL LIABILITIES		356.64	1.07
NET ASSETS		8,890.32	10,340.68
CSWB FUNDS			
Unrestricted Funds - prior year		10,340.68	11,066.11
Surplus - current year		(1,450.36)	(725.43)
TOTAL FUNDS		8,890.32	10,340.68

Income and Expenditure - 1 April 2023 to 31st March 2024


		2023-24 £	2022-23 £
INCOME			
Grants Received		-	-
Donations		-	-
Bank Interest		117.43	23.15
Other Income		-	-
TOTAL INCOME		117.43	23.15
EXPENDITURE			
Meeting Expenses	1	1,204.10	390.47
Administration & Office Services	2	40.00	40.00
Stationery, Supplies & Postage		3.75	0.68
Website and Publicity	3	14.14	43.16
Insurance	4	305.80	273.20
Bank charges		0.00	1.07
		1,567.79	748.58
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)		(1,450.36)	(725.43)

ACCOUNTS APPROVED

Trustee Signature and Date


17 July 2024

Trustee Signature and Date


17th July 2024

Notes to the Accounts 2023-24

1 Room rental, Zoom subscription, consumables etc.

2 Subscription for online membership system

3 Web hosting and domain renewals

4 This is for public liability, trustees liability and professional indemnity. It does not cover equipment.

8. Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the Trustee's report and accounts above.

Signed 

Adrian Foster-Fletcher

Date 17/7/24

Adrian Foster-Fletcher

Chairman

On behalf of the trustees.