VOLA CONSORTIUM

England & Wales · Charity number 1158777

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	08746685
Registered	2014-10-06
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	3rd Floor North Wing Burlington House Crosby Road North Liverpool
Phone	01519200726
Email	info@volamerseyside.org.uk
Website	www.volamerseyside.org.uk

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Activities

Objects: THE CHARITY'S OBJECTS ARE SPECIFICALLY RESTRICTED TO THE FOLLOWING: 2.1 THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING IN SUCH WAYS AS THE TRUSTEES THINK FIT; 2.2 THE PROVISION OF CRIME PREVENTION AND OFFENDER REHABILITATION SERVICES; 2.3 THE PROMOTION OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR IN THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION AND THE SURROUNDING AREAS IN PARTICULAR BY: 2.3.1 BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF CHARITABLE AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS OPERATING WITHIN THE AREA OF BENEFIT AND PROVIDING THEM WITH THE NECESSARY SUPPORT, INFORMATION AND SERVICES TO ENABLE THEM TO PURSUE OR CONTRIBUTE TO ANY CHARITABLE PURPOSE BUT IN PARTICULAR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS; AND 2.3.2 PROMOTING, ORGANISING AND FACILITATING CO-OPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING BETWEEN CHARITABLE AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND STATUTORY AND OTHER RELEVANT BODIES WITHIN THE AREA OF BENEFIT. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS CLAUSE, "THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR" MEANS CHARITIES AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS DEFINED AS FOLLOWS: "CHARITIES ARE ORGANISATIONS, WHICH ARE ESTABLISHED FOR EXCLUSIVELY CHARITABLE PURPOSES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW OF ENGLAND AND WALES. VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS ARE INDEPENDENT ORGANISATIONS, WHICH ARE ESTABLISHED FOR PURPOSES THAT ADD VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE, OR A SIGNIFICANT SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY, AND WHICH ARE NOT PERMITTED BY THEIR CONSTITUTION TO MAKE A PROFIT FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION. VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS DO NOT INCLUDE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OR OTHER STATUTORY AUTHORITIES; AND 2.4 TO FURTHER SUCH PURPOSES AS ARE CHARTABLE WITHIN THE LAWS OF ENGLAND AND WALES AS THE TRUSTEES SHALL FROM TIME TO TIME DETERMINE

Activities: Advancement of education & lifelong learningProvision of crime prevention & offender rehabilitation services;Promotion of the vol sector in Lpool City Region & surrounding areas, by:- Building capacity of charitable & voluntary orgs operating in area- Promoting, organising & facilitating co-operation & partnership working between charitable & voluntary orgs, statutory & other bodies

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** LOCAL
- Halton
- Knowsley
- Liverpool City
- Sefton
- St Helens
- Wirral

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Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£1,391,857	£1,392,521	£44,289	0
2024-03-31	£453,954	£591,412	-	-
2023-03-31	£522,934	£379,211	£182,411	0
2022-03-31	£150,305	£140,824	-	-
2021-03-31	£74,744	£66,424	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Damian France	Chair	2018-09-04
ANGELA WHITE		2013-10-24
Andrew Coulson		2024-12-11
Claire Cook		2018-05-22
Debbie Gayle		2020-11-10
JAMES BRETT		2019-11-26
Mark William Ord		2013-10-24
Nicola Jane Crosby		2018-05-22
Raymond Moore		2022-12-13

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VOLA CONSORTIUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1158777

Accounts

Company Number: 08746685
Charity Number: 1158777

VOLA Consortium

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Annual Report

&

Audited Financial Statements

For the year ended

31 March 2025

VOLA Consortium
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VOLA Consortium
Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)
For the year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act, present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The Charity

VOLA Consortium is constituted as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. The company is registered in England and Wales No. 08746685. The charity is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1158777. The principal governing document is the Company Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 25th September 2014.

Objectives and Activities

The charity's objects are:

a) the advancement of education and lifelong learning in such ways as the trustees think fit;

b) the provision of crime prevention and offender rehabilitation services;

c) the promotion of the voluntary sector in the Liverpool City Region and the surrounding areas in particular by:

> i) building the capacity of charitable and voluntary organisations operating within the area of benefit and providing them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose but in particular the advancement of education and the rehabilitation of offenders; and
>
> ii) promoting, organising and facilitating co-operation and partnership working between charitable and voluntary organisations and statutory and other relevant bodies within the area of benefit.
>
> *For the purposes of this clause, "the voluntary sector" means charities and voluntary organisations defined as follows: "Charities are organisations, which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the law of England and Wales. "Voluntary Organisations" are whole or a significant section of the community, and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory authorities"*

d) To further such purposes as are charitable within the laws of England and Wales as the Trustees shall from time to time determine.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Consortium Membership

In its eleventh year of operation as a registered charity, as at 31st March 2025, VOLA Consortium's membership stands at 66 voluntary sector organisations (67 last year); with one former member unfortunately ceasing trading in September 2024.

Activities and Services

Over the last twelve months, the charity's operations have focused on providing employment support to economically inactive people and continued support for the local digital inclusion agenda. This has been enabled by investment from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), delivered through two key projects:

- Continued delivery of the *'Digital Connectivity For Local Community Facilities'* grants programme;
- *'The Progress Partnership'* - a new Community-Led Employment Support project.

The Progress Partnership

The Progress Partnership project commenced in April 2024, initially funded until March 2025, with the aim of supporting 680 economically inactive city region residents into or closer to employment, with a target of 50% into paid work, education or training.

A 14-strong delivery partnership was formed, comprising consortium members with expertise in working with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, women, disability, and neurological/neurodivergent conditions, amongst others; all groups represented disproportionally in terms of economic inactivity.

A team of experienced Key Workers support people in a holistic manner, through individually tailored packages of support, to help them overcome the challenges that prevent them actively looking for work.

The project uses a blend of one-to-one and small group work to help participants to access support services and opportunities to build confidence and create pathways for progression. In addition to signposting and encouraging individuals to access complementary 'barrier removal' services, Key Workers draw on their wealth of experience in providing tailored employability support such as coaching, confidence building, CV writing, job-search skills and interview techniques; which are introduced at the right point in people's journeys.

In addition to the primary Key Worker support service, most project delivery partners provide other 'in-house' barrier removal services (e.g. recreation, advice, health/wellbeing, food banks/pantries, clothes-banks and training services), with embedded links to other such services where not delivered in-house. Proactive referral to complementary activities and services is a key feature and clear strength of the delivery model, supporting people's personal and social development.

Contractual recruitment targets were exceeded by 12%, with 764 local people engaged and supported, 84% of whom identified as being socially excluded.

The partnership has been highly successful in reaching the priority groups it set out to engage. 56% of participants were female; 47% disclosed a disability or long-term health condition, 37% were from ethnic minority backgrounds (both far surpassing their respective 25% targets); 21% were aged over 50 and 3% over 65.

During the year, 419 people completed their programme of support, with 93 continuing on programme into the subsequently announced Year-2 extension of the project.

59% of 764 participants progressed to a positive destination following the support they received, including 153 people in employment or self-employment, 160 in education/training and 172 moving from economic inactivity into active job-search. In addition, 154 people indicated an improvement in basic skills on exit, with 76 achieving basic skills qualifications.

Beyond the 'hard' job and progression outcomes, the project is helping to bring about significant improvements in personal development, aspiration & motivation, health & wellbeing and employability, with clear success in building personal capacity and supporting transformational growth. These underpinning enablers and softer skills lay sustainable foundations for future employability, particularly among those facing multiple disadvantage.

A robust, independent evaluation took place in February and March 2025, with a comprehensive report produced that detailed the varied successes of the project, including a suite of heart-warming case studies highlighting the real-life stories and positive impacts on the people it supported. This is available on the charity's website (www.volamerseyside.org.uk).

'Digital Connectivity For Local Community Facilities' Grants Programme

In its third year, this £1.3 million grants programme is available to LCR-based, voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector organisations that provide, or are planning to provide public-access digital facilities to their communities. These include both facilities that are 'open-access' to the general public and those targeted at specific client groups. The primary focus is on supporting places where people can go to 'get online' and that support LCRCA Digital Inclusion priorities.

The overall purpose of the grants programme is to support VCFSE sector organisations to:

- Create new facilities in areas of need (spatial and thematic); and
- Improve or expand existing facilities.

In addition to the 117 grants made in the first three funding rounds, a further 65 grants were awarded over two more funding rounds in this financial year, taking the total investment to £1,314,849 through 182 individual grant awards.

In total, over the five funding rounds 161 individual organisations received funding, covering 170 different sites. 21 organisations were funded more than once (19 twice and 1 three times); 12 of which for the same site and 8 for different sites. 83 completely new facilities were created, with 87 existing facilities either upgraded and/or expanded in terms of capacity.

Funding has been awarded to a wide variety of organisations, including 76 registered charities, 19 CIOs and 66 other not-for-profit organisations (46 CICs, 11 CLGs, plus 9 others), including 12 Churches and a Mosque.

Beneficiary organisations possess a wide nature of functions, activities and target groups. General purpose community centres/hubs accounted for the largest proportion of grant recipients (35%), providing open-access digital facilities to their local communities. Advice, education, training & employment support providers accounted for a significant proportion (16%), as did organisations working with children & young people (19%), minority ethnic communities (11%), disability (9%), and mental health (6%).

A multitude of other organisations with different remits, specialisms, and target groups have also benefited from the funding, including health, mental health, advice agencies (e.g. CABs), youth centres, older people, carers, family support, domestic violence services, addiction recovery, homelessness support, veterans' organisations, LGBTQ+ groups, sports clubs, creative arts initiatives, and even an urban farm and local community allotment.

As a result of the investment, 93 facilities reported improved digital connectivity through faster broadband/internet speeds, and 162 reported increased usage of their IT facilities.

Beneficiary Organisations reported an overall increase of 4,373 weekly IT users, with an average rise of 26 per facility. Increases ranged from single figures for some organisations to more than 50 for others, depending on the size and nature of the organisation and its IT facilities.

A comprehensive, independent evaluation of the grants programme took place in early 2025 whereby 97 out of 161 funded organisations responded. This was an excellent response rate, with universally high levels of satisfaction reported in relation to all elements of the Programme's application process and guidance, as well as the support they received individually from the Grants Team at VOLA.

A detailed evaluation report is available on the charity's website. It analyses programme design and rationale, delivery and performance, positive impacts for beneficiary organisations and their service users, key success factors, and recommendations for future development.

Future Opportunities and Developments

Following the announcement by government in the Autumn Budget of a transition year for UKSPF, in February 2025 the LCRCA confirmed a one-year extension to both of VOLA's UKSPF projects until March 2026. This secures the charity's future for the coming twelve months, whilst the government's new plans for skills, employment support and communities unfold.

The Progress Partnership (TPP) received £668k to support a minimum of 442 economically inactive residents to move into or closer to employment. Additionally, the *Digital Connectivity For Local Community Facilities* grant programme received a further £284k, with a target of distributing 32 grants to support local facilities. Despite a 25% reduction in revenue funding (applied consistently across all LCRCA UKSPF projects), through careful budget planning, we have managed to retain all TPP project delivery partners and sustain staffing at 2024/25 levels, both key priorities of the Board.

Originally planned to end in March 2025, the twelve month UKSPF extension was the result of political pressure from within the sector, together with local and mayoral combined authorities across the UK, in which VOLA played an active role, alongside its partners in VS6. The aim of this transition period is to provide more certainty ahead of wider funding reforms over the coming twelve months, planned to facilitate a smooth transition from the current UKSPF programme to a new funding framework in the future; details of which are as yet unknown.

With funding in place to ensure the charity's immediate sustainability until March 2026, and negotiations currently under way concerning the extension of a more recently secured funding stream until March 2027 (see Financial Review section), further new sources will be identified in the coming year to support the charity's longer-term sustainability. The Consortium Manager will continue to work closely with key stakeholders, including VS6 and the LCR Combined Authority, to influence policy and strategy and to stay alert to emerging opportunities.

Of particular interest is the government's *Get Britain Working* (GBW) White Paper, published in November 2024, which presents both risks and opportunities to the wider employment support sector and to the charity itself. Our priority for the coming year is to proactively engage in the emerging local GBW landscape to influence its design and, ultimately, to ensure we position the consortium and wider VCFSE sector to capitalise on the opportunities it presents. The new *Connect to Work* employment support programme for economically inactive people and the *Youth Guarantee* Trailblazer for inactive young people aged 18-21 have been identified as key funding priorities for the charity.

Financial Review

During the 2024/25 financial year, charitable activity generated an income of £1,391,857 to be used to further the organisation's objectives.

Following a slight reduction in unrestricted reserves of £3,567 last year, unrestricted reserves increased significantly this year, by £11,998, leaving a carry forward balance of £44,289. A modest (£5,750) underspend on The Progress Partnership project over the year, against total advance grant payments received from our funder (LCR Combined Authority), was held by the charity at financial year-end, and has since been returned to the funder.

As of 31st March 2025, the charity maintained a healthy balance sheet, with sufficient cash at bank (£64,035) and accrued income (£30,627) to more than cover all accrued expenditure relating to the financial year (£50,373).

With the charity's forecast income from the two UKSPF-funded projects in relation to anticipated levels of expenditure, current financial projections provide the Board of Trustees with strong confidence in the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for the coming 2025/26 financial year.

Further to this, a new contract has recently been secured from the LCR Combined Authority (September 2025) to manage a Youth Guarantee Trailblazer Community Grants programme. The initial contract runs until March 2026, with a potential three-year extension clause. Central government has since confirmed additional funding for the Trailblazer programme in 2026/27; and we are currently in negotiations with the LCR Combined Authority concerning the 2026/27 funding level. This provides assurance of the charity's ability to continue as a going concern until at least March 2027, with potential for an even longer period of financial stability.

Reserves

Unrestricted cash reserves are ample to cover anticipated financial liabilities in the event of the charity's closure.

The charity maintains a reserves policy of £5,000 to cover the costs anticipated (e.g. financial and legal costs) in the event of the charitable company being wound up. This policy reflects the charity's continued position in relation to staffing and fixed assets, in that it does not directly employ any staff and, therefore, has no direct employment or redundancy liabilities, nor does it have any loans or other liabilities in relation to buildings either owned or leased.

This policy has been reviewed again this year and will continue to be reviewed annually, subject to amendment should the charity's risk profile change, for example, if the charity began to directly employ staff or secure premises.

The charity has no subsidiary undertakings, nor is any fund within the charity's accounts materially in deficit.

Reference and administrative details

Charity number:	1158777
Company number:	08746685
Registered Office:	Burlington House, Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 0LG

Our advisors

Auditors:	Anita Mason BA(Hons) BFP FCA, Mitchell Charlesworth, Suites C, D, E & F, The Plaza, 100 Old Hall Street, Liverpool, L3 9QJ
Bankers:	Unity Trust Bank Plc, 9 Brindleyplace, Birmingham. B1 2HB
Solicitors:	Brabners, Horton House, Exchange Flags, Liverpool. L2 3YL

Directors and trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year-end were as follows:

Trustees

James Brett
Andrew Coulson (Appointed 11 December 2024)
Damian France (Chair of Trustees)
Raymond Moore
Angela White OBE
Claire Cook
Nicola Crosby
Debbie Gayle
Mark Ord

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

VOLA Consortium is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association amended on 25th September 2014. It is registered with the Charity Commission. Anyone over the age of 16 can become a member of the Company and there are currently 9 trustee members (8 in 2023/24), each of whom agrees to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up. In addition to the trustees, the charity had 66 membership organisations as at 31st March 2025, who also agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the Articles of Association the trustees are elected by members of the charitable company attending the Annual General Meeting. The longest service one third of trustees retires each year and are able to offer themselves for re-election.

Structure, Governance and Management *(Continued)*

Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on: their legal obligations under charity and company law, the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and inform them of the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role.

Organisation

The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity. The board normally meets quarterly. A Manager is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations the Manager has delegated authority, within the terms of delegation approved by the trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment, and service delivery activity. The Manager and other members of the staff team are employed by Sefton Council for Voluntary Service, a VOLA membership organisation, with VOLA Consortium being recharged for any staff time incurred in the operation of its projects. A written membership agreement is in place outlining the terms of this staffing relationship.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receives remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity and any client or supplier is disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

Risk Management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces;
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

This work has identified that financial sustainability is the major financial risk for the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, regular liaison with the bank and active management of trade debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital by the charity.

Attention has also been focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety of clients and data protection. These risks are managed by ensuring accreditation is up to date, having robust policies and procedures in place and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of VOLA Consortium for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity 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 that year. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

1) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
2) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
3) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
4) state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
5) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditor
In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

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

Small company provisions
This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the board of trustees on **16 December 2025** and signed on their behalf.



Damian France
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report
To the members of VOLA Consortium
For the year ended 31 March 2025

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Vola Consortium for the Period ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and the 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 charity's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the Period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

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 Vola Consortium 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.

Please note that the previous year's comparative figures are unaudited as an independent examination of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 was performed.

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 Vola Consortium's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or - the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees 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 directors 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 Vola Consortium'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 cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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

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

The extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Charities Act 2011, taxation legislation and data protection, anti-bribery, employment and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit
- We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:
- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations. To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:
- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions. In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:
    - agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
    - reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
    - enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

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

Other matters

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements 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)" (as amended) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with current Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited.

Anita Mason BA (Hons) BFP FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited,

Statutory Auditor and Accountants

Suites C, D, E & F,

14th Floor The Plaza,

100 Old Hall Street,

Liverpool,

L3 9QJ

Date 16 December 2025

VOLA Consortium

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Current Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income and endowments from:					
Charitable activities	2	-	**1,391,857**	**1,391,857**	453,954
Total Income		-	**1,391,857**	**1,391,857**	453,954
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	3, 4	**10,997**	**1,381,524**	**1,392,521**	591,412
Total expenditure		**10,997**	**1,381,524**	**1,392,521**	591,412
Net income/(expenditure)		**(10,997)**	**10,333**	**(664)**	(137,458)
Transfers between funds	12	**22,995**	**(22,995)**	-	-
Net movement in funds		**11,998**	**(12,662)**	**(664)**	(137,458)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Funds b/fwd		32,291	12,662	44,953	182,411
Funds c/fwd		**44,289**	-	**44,289**	44,953

The Statement of Financial Activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2025

Previous Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2024 £
Income and endowments from:				
Charitable activities	3	2,600	451,354	453,954
Total Income		2,600	451,354	453,954
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	4, 5	6,167	585,245	591,412
Total expenditure		6,167	585,245	591,412
Net income/(expenditure)		(3,567)	(133,891)	(137,458)
Transfers between funds	13	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(3,567)	(133,891)	(137,458)
Reconciliation of funds:				
Funds b/fwd		35,858	146,553	182,411
Funds c/fwd		32,291	12,662	44,953

The notes on pages 19 to 27 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2025

Company Number: 08746685

	Note	2025 £	£	2024 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	8	30,627		618
Cash at bank and in hand	9	64,035		87,944
		94,662		88,562
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	10	50,373		43,608
Net Current Assets			44,289	44,953
Total Net Assets	13		44,289	44,953
Funds of the charity				
Designated Funds			-	-
General Fund			44,289	32,291
Total Unrestricted Funds	11		44,289	32,291
Restricted Fund			0	12,662
Total Restricted Fund	12		0	12,662
Total Funds			44,289	44,953

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees 16 December 2025.

Damian France
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 19 to 27 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Cash flows
For the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income per Statement of Financial Activities	(664)	(137,458)
Adjustments for:		
Decrease/(Increase) in trade and other receivables	(30,009)	474,382
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other payables	6,765	(291,393)
Net cash (used in) /provided by operating activities	(23,908)	45,531
Net cash from investing activities	-	-
Net cash from financing activities	-	-
Net (decrease) /increase in cash and cash equivalents	(23,908)	45,531
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	87,944	42,413
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	64,035	87,944
Components of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and bank balances	64,035	87,944
	64,035	87,944

VOLA Consortium
Notes to the Accounts
For the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting Policies

1a. Basis of preparation

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 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), and the Companies Act 2006 and the UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016.

VOLA Consortium meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The functional currency used by VOLA Consortium is the £ Sterling.

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

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

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

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

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

1b. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

On assessment of income streams and the required fixed and variable overheads required to complete the ongoing projects successfully, the trustees consider that the accounts should be prepared on a going concern basis.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1c. Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1d. Deferred income

Income from donations and grants, including capital grants are deferred when the following conditions are met:

a) when donors specify that donations and grants given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods

b) when donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in incoming resources until the preconditions for use have been met.

1e. Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time is not recognised and refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1f. Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

a) Expenditure on charitable activities includes the educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

b) Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1g. Funds Accounting

All income and expenditure together with gains and losses are allocated to a specific charitable fund.

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be used solely for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.
Further details of restricted funds together with their purposes are set out in note 12.

1h. 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.

1i. 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.

1j. 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 normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1k. Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

2. Charitable Activity Income

Current year ended 31 March 2025	**Restricted 2025 £**	**Unrestricted 2025 £**	**Total 2025 £**
LCRCA - UKSPF The Progress Partnership	830,907	-	830,907
LCRCA - UKSPF Digital Connectivity Grants	560,950	-	560,950
VSNW - VS6 representative roles	-	-	-
WEA - Multiply Steering Group	-	-	-
	1,391,857	-	1,391,857

Previous year ended 31 March 2024	*Restricted 2024 £*	*Unrestricted 2024 £*	*Total 2024 £*
LCRCA - UKSPF The Progress Partnership	-	-	-
LCRCA - UKSPF Digital Connectivity Grants	*451,354*	-	*451,354*
VSNW - VS6 representative roles	-	*2,500*	*2,500*
WEA - Multiply Steering Group	-	*100*	*100*
	451,354	*2,600*	*453,954*

3. Charitable activities

	General Funds	VCF Capacity Building	Education and Training	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Direct staff costs	2,200	39,459	69,599	111,258	48,321
Project costs	-	521,271	750,286	1,271,557	539,663
Share of support costs (see note 4)	997	212	698	1,907	932
Share of governance costs (see note 4)	7,800	-	-	7,800	2,496
	10,997	560,942	820,583	1,392,521	591,412

The direct staff costs are the total seconded staff costs charged to VOLA.
The average number of seconded employees for the year was 5.

Analysis by fund					
Restricted funds	-	560,942	820,582	1,381,524	
Unrestricted funds	10,997	-	-	10,997	
	10,997	560,942	820,582	1,392,521	
Previous year ended 31 March 2024					
Restricted funds	-	*585,245*	-		*585,245*
Unrestricted funds	*6,167*	-	-		*6,167*
	6,167	*585,245*	-		*591,412*

4. Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2025	2024	Basis of allocation
	£	£	£	£	
Contribution to overheads	1,907	-	1,907	932	Allocated across all 3 funds
Independent examiners fees	-	-	-	2,496	Allocated to General Funds
Independent audit fees	-	7,800	7,800	-	Allocated to General Funds
	1,907	7,800	9,707	3,428	

5. Financial instruments

	2025 £	2024 £
Carrying amount of financial assets		
Debt instruments measured at amortised cost	94,662	88,562
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Measured at amortised cost	50,373	43,608

6. Trustees

No remuneration was paid to trustees during the year (2024 - nil)

No Expenses were reimbursed to trustees during the year (2024 - nil)

7. Related Party transactions

During the year, a large number of consortium members participated in the charitable projects led by VOLA. The purpose of VOLA's operations is to lead charitable projects on behalf of its consortium members and other associated charities, hence, multiple consortium members received payments from VOLA in the period, which have been recognised as restricted expenditure in the statement of financial activity. For further detail on which related parties received funding and amounts they received please contact stuart.mcgrory@volamerseyside.org.uk.

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Aggregate compensation	40,408	29,165
	40,408	29,165

8. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	-	-
Accrued Income	30,627	618
	30,627	618

9. Cash at bank and in hand

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash at bank	64,035	87,944
	64,035	87,944

10. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Grants Payable	6,929	19,995
Trade creditors	29,894	21,117
Accruals and deferred income	7,800	2,496
Unallocated grant funds repayable	5,750	-
	50,373	43,608

11. Unrestricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2024

	Balance brought forward £	*Income £*	*Expenditure £*	*Transfers between funds £*	*Balance Carried forward 2024 £*
General Fund	*35,858*	*-*	*(6,167)*	*2,600*	*32,291*
General Fund – VSNW/ VS6 representative roles	*-*	*2,500*	*-*	*(2,500)*	*-*
General Fund – WEA, Multiply Steering Group	*-*	*100*	*-*	*(100)*	
Total Funds (previous year)	*35,858*	*2,600*	*(6,167)*	*-*	*32,291*

Current year ended 31 March 2025

	Balance brought forward £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance Carried forward 2025 £**
General Fund	32,291	-	(10,997)	22,995	44,289
Total Funds (current year)	32,291	-	(10,997)	22,995	44,289

The transfer between funds relates to a surplus generated over the last two financial years resulting from the simplified cost option applied to the two UKSPF projects by funders, in relation to overheads contributions, which are paid at a flat rate of 15% of project staff costs attributable to these projects.

12. Restricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2024	*Balance brought forward £*	*Income £*	*Expenditure £*	*Transfers between funds £*	*Balance Carried Forward 2024 £*
UKSPF – Digital Grants	*146,553*	*451,354*	*(585,245)*	*-*	*12,662*
Total Funds (current year)	*146,553*	*451,354*	*(585,245)*	*-*	*12,662*

Current year ended 31 March 2025	**Balance brought forward £**	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance Carried Forward 2025 £**
* UKSPF – Digital Grants	12,662	560,950	(560,942)	(12,670)	-
** UKSPF – The Progress Partnership	-	830,907	(820,582)	(10,325)	-
Total Funds (current year)	12,662	1,391,857	(1,381,524)	(22,995)	-

* UKSPF – Digital Grants project *(Digital Connectivity for Local Community Facilities)* provides grants and support for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector to improve public-facing IT facilities & create new facilities in priority areas.

** UKSPF - The Progress Partnership is a community-led employment support initiative that provides Key Worker support to economically inactive residents of the Liverpool City Region to help them to overcome barriers that prevent them from actively looking for work.

Both projects are funded by the UK Government through the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

13. Analysis of Net Assets

Previous year ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	*Restricted Funds £*	*Total Funds £*
Net Current Assets	*32,291*	*12,662*	*44,953*
	32,291	*12,662*	*44,953*

Current year ended 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Restricted Funds £**	**Total Funds £**
Net Current Assets	44,289	-	44,289
	44,289	-	44,289

14. Company Limited by Guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee, not having a share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1 each in the event of winding up.

VOLA CONSORTIUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1158777

Accounts

Company Number: 08746685
Charity Number: 1158777

VOLA Consortium

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Annual Report

&

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended

31 March 2024

Vola Consortium
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VOLA Consortium
Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)
For the year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act, present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The Charity

VOLA Consortium is constituted as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. The company is registered in England and Wales No. 08746685. The charity is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1158777. The principal governing document is the Company Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 25th September 2014.

Objectives and Activities

The charity's objects are:

a) the advancement of education and lifelong learning in such ways as the trustees think fit;

b) the provision of crime prevention and offender rehabilitation services;

c) the promotion of the voluntary sector in the Liverpool City Region and the surrounding areas in particular by:

> i) building the capacity of charitable and voluntary organisations operating within the area of benefit and providing them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose but in particular the advancement of education and the rehabilitation of offenders; and
>
> ii) promoting, organising and facilitating co-operation and partnership working between charitable and voluntary organisations and statutory and other relevant bodies within the area of benefit.
>
> *For the purposes of this clause, "the voluntary sector" means charities and voluntary organisations defined as follows: "Charities are organisations, which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the law of England and Wales. "Voluntary Organisations" are whole or a significant section of the community, and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory authorities"*

d) To further such purposes as are charitable within the laws of England and Wales as the Trustees shall from time to time determine.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Membership

In its tenth year of operation as a registered charity, as at 31st March 2024, VOLA Consortium's membership stands at 67 voluntary sector organisations (60 last year); having accepted eight new membership applications during the year, along with one former member that unfortunately ceased trading in December 2023.

Activities and Services

Following the closure of the European Social Fund programme and with the 'People and Skills' element of its successor, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) not commencing until April 2024, no new skills/employment support focussed projects were secured during the 2023/24 financial year, with other previous projects having concluded in the previous year. Over the last twelve months, the charity's operations concentrated on continued delivery of its digital connectivity grants programme.

'Digital Connectivity For Local Community Facilities' Grants Programme

Funded by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) through its UKSPF investment plan, £1.3 million grant funding has been made available to LCR-based, VCFSE sector organisations that provide, or are planning to provide public-access digital facilities to their communities. These include both facilities that are 'open-access' to the general public and those targeted at specific client groups.

The overall purpose of the grants programme is to support VCFSE sector organisations to:

- Create new facilities in areas of need (spatial and thematic); and
- Improve or expand existing facilities.

The programme provides funding and support to:

1. Target neighbourhoods where there is a lack of public-access digital resources to help local community-based organisations to set up new facilities;
2. Upgrade outdated and poor-quality computer devices, associated hardware and/or improve broadband connectivity, where current connections are poor; and
3. Increase capacity, where current facilities are insufficient to meet demand, by providing funding to purchase more digital devices.

In addition to the 46 organisations (£299,122) funded in the first grant round in March 2023, a further 71 grants were awarded over two funding rounds this year (£519,448), with an additional £1,711 provided in 'top-up' funding to a small number of Round 1 grant recipients.

In total, to date, £820,281 has been allocated through 117 grant awards. 107 organisations have benefited, 10 of which receiving multiple grants, supporting the establishment or improvement of 113 digital facilities.

71 funded facilities were known to be open by the end of March 2024, with the remainder in process. Round 3 grant recipients received their funding in late March and won't be open until later in the year. So far, 28 have reported increased use of their computer facilities and 18 have reported improved digital connectivity (broadband speed) as a result of the investment. Core impact indicators will increase considerably over the course of the coming year.

Beyond contractual output and outcome targets, the wider social value generated by providing funding to organisations to support digital inclusion, with all the other wider 'spin-off' benefits that it facilitates cannot be

under-estimated, though is inherently difficult. To capture this, we aim to develop a social value measurement methodology in order to estimate the impact of the grants programme, which will form part of next year's end-of-project evaluation.

The following table shows the breakdown of grant awards made, by location, nature of the investment and financial value:

Borough	New Facility	Upgraded Facility	Increased Capacity	Increased Capacity & Upgraded	Total No. of Grant Awards	Total Value
Halton	4	0	3	0	**7**	£69,382
Knowsley	7	2	2	0	**11**	£78,020
Liverpool	14	12	16	4	**46**	£302,904
Sefton	**15**	1	3	3	**22**	£139,368
St Helens	**3**	3	3	2	**11**	£71,259
Wirral	13	0	6	1	**20**	£159,349
Total LCR	**56**	**18**	**33**	**10**	**117**	**£820,281**

In terms of legal status, the majority of funded organisations are registered charities and CIOs (64), with 26 Community Interest Companies, 9 Companies Limited By Guarantee, 10 Churches, a Mosque and 7 other constituted community groups also receiving grants.

Grant recipients possess a wide nature of functions, activities and target groups. Community centres/ hubs account for the largest proportion (38%) of funded organisations, providing open-access digital facilities to their respective local communities. 16% specialise in providing education/training and employment support; 17% in working with children and young people; 10% with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including refugees and asylum seekers; and 5% with women.

A whole host of other organisations with different remits and specialisms have also benefitted from the funding, including: health; mental health; disability (physical and learning); autism; advice agencies (CABs); youth centres; older people; carers; family support; domestic violence; addiction recovery; homelessness; veterans; LGBTQ+; sports clubs/groups; creative arts; and even an urban farm and local allotment group!

The remaining £483,000 will be allocated through two further grant rounds scheduled for 2024, distributing all funding to successful applicants by the end of December, with facilities up and running and required monitoring evidence in place by the project's March 2025 end date.

Computer Recycling and Loan/ Gifting Scheme

In addition to the existing bank of laptops donated by Jaguar Land Rover in 2021 and WSP in March 2022, a further 76 decommissioned and refurbished laptops and desktop PCs were donated by Moore & Smalley Accountants in June 2023, to whom the Trustee Board and management team are extremely grateful.

We continue to loan, and increasingly gift computers to our member organisations, learners engaged in our digital skills training courses, other charities, community groups, individuals and families in need, including requests from other service providers on behalf of their clients, such as Afghan and Ukrainian support agencies and community-based cancer support services.

Examples include donations made to a local deaf charity, an environmental charity, two special educational needs education providers, local amateur boxing club, Parent Teacher Association, local community hubs, advice centres, training organisations refugee families and people fighting cancer.

Future Opportunities and Developments

Following the November 2023 announcement by the LCRCA of a 'Call For Projects' funded under the UKSPF Community-Led Employment Support investment priority, a consortium delivery partnership was quickly formed and an ambitious project plan devised to support the aims of the Call.

A true team effort, with support from the Trustee Board and consortium members enabled the submission of a strong funding application, which was confirmed as being successful in February, with a planned project start date of 1st April 2024.

During this period, the management team underwent significant change, with two long-standing and extremely valuable members of the team moving on to pastures new. The Trustee Board, Consortium Manager and member organisations would like to thank Andy Coulson and Josie Barrow for their diligent work and commitment over the years and wish them well in their new ventures.

Although temporary, the impact on the management team was significant, but strong endeavours, teamwork and support from the Board saw us through this difficult period of change. We are delighted to have brought on board three new team members in April to replace outgoing staff and add additional resource to the team to support the management and administration of the consortium's expanded portfolio of projects.

The UKSPF Community-Led Employment Support project, christened *The Progress Partnership*, runs until March 2025, aiming to support 680 economically inactive city region residents into or closer to employment, with a target of 50% into paid work, education or training.

The 14-strong delivery partnership comprises providers with expertise in working with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, women, disability, neurological and neurodivergent conditions, amongst others, all groups disproportionally represented in terms of economic inactivity. We are extremely excited about what we can collectively achieve through this project in supporting the city region's ambitions for economic growth, employment, health and inclusion.

With funding in place to secure the charity's immediate sustainability until March 2025, new funding sources will need to be identified and secured in the coming year to secure medium and longer-term sustainability. The Consortium Manager will continue to work closely with key stakeholders, including VS6 and the LCR Combined Authority to influence policy and strategy and keep abreast of emerging opportunities.

The outcome of the summer 2024 general election, with its resulting changes to the political landscape, policy, strategy and public funding are all key influencers to our future planning, including succession plans for the UKSPF programme, which we need to carefully understand, navigate and capitalise on.

Financial Review

During the 2023/24 financial year, charitable activity generated an income of £453,954 to be used to further the organisation's objectives.

Following an increase in unrestricted reserves of £12,367 last year, unrestricted reserves reduced slightly this year, by £3,567, leaving a carry forward balance of £32,291. Last year's unusually large restricted funding surplus (£146,553), relating to up-front funding from the UKSPF digital grants programme, has been paid out in grants this year, leaving a modest, restricted carry forward balance of £12,662, which will be spent next financial year.

As of 31st March 2024, the charity maintained a healthy balance sheet, with sufficient cash at bank (£87,944) to more than cover all accrued expenditure relating to the financial year.

With the charity's forecast income from the two UKSPF-funded projects in relation to anticipated levels of expenditure, current financial projections provide the Board of Trustees with strong confidence in the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for the coming financial year. However, new funding streams need to be secured to ensure the charity's longer-term future post March 2025.

Reserves

Unrestricted cash reserves are ample to cover anticipated financial liabilities in the event of the charity's closure.

The charity maintains a reserves policy of £5,000 to cover the costs anticipated (e.g. financial and legal costs) in the event of the charitable company being wound up. This policy reflects the charity's continued position in relation to staffing and fixed assets, in that it does not directly employ any staff and, therefore, has no direct employment or redundancy liabilities, nor does it have any loans or other liabilities in relation to buildings either owned or leased.

This policy has been reviewed again this year and will continue to be reviewed annually, subject to amendment should the charity's risk profile change, for example, if the charity began to directly employ staff or secure premises.

The charity has no subsidiary undertakings, nor is any fund within the charity's accounts materially in deficit.

VOLA Consortium
Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Reference and administrative details

Charity number:	1158777
Company number:	08746685
Registered Office:	Burlington House, Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 0LG

Our advisors

Independent Examiner:	Anita Mason BA(Hons) BFP FCA, Mitchell Charlesworth, Suite 5.1 Tempest, 12 Tithebarn Street, Liverpool, L2 2DT
Bankers:	Unity Trust Bank Plc, 9 Brindleyplace, Birmingham. B1 2HB
Solicitors:	Brabners, Horton House, Exchange Flags, Liverpool. L2 3YL

Directors and trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year-end were as follows:

Trustees

James Brett
Nicola Crosby
Debbie Gayle
Mark Ord
Helen Stephens (resigned at AGM 15/12/23)
Claire Cook
Damian France (Chair of Trustees)
Raymond Moore
David Roberts (resigned at AGM 15/12/23)
Angela White OBE

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

VOLA Consortium is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association amended on 25th September 2014. It is registered with the Charity Commission. Anyone over the age of 16 can become a member of the Company and there are currently 8 trustee members (10 in 2022/23), each of whom agrees to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up. In addition to the trustees, the charity had 67 membership organisations as at 31st March 2024, who also agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the Articles of Association the trustees are elected by members of the charitable company attending the Annual General Meeting. The longest service one third of trustees retires each year and are able to offer themselves for re-election.

Structure, Governance and Management *(Continued)*

Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on: their legal obligations under charity and company law, the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and inform them of the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role.

Organisation

The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity. The board normally meets quarterly. A Manager is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations the Manager has delegated authority, within the terms of delegation approved by the trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment, and service delivery activity. The Manager and other members of the staff team are employed by Sefton Council for Voluntary Service, a VOLA membership organisation, with VOLA Consortium being recharged for any staff time incurred in the operation of its projects. A written membership agreement is in place outlining the terms of this staffing relationship.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receives remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity and any client or supplier is disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

Risk Management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces;
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

This work has identified that financial sustainability is the major financial risk for the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, regular liaison with the bank and active management of trade debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital by the charity.

Attention has also been focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety of clients and data protection. These risks are managed by ensuring accreditation is up to date, having robust policies and procedures in place and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of VOLA Consortium for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity 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 that year. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

1) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
2) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
3) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
4) state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
5) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

This report was approved by the board of trustees on 12 November 2024 and signed on their behalf.



Damian France
Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report
To the trustees of VOLA Consortium
For the year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of VOLA Consortium for the year ended 31 March 2024.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My examination has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my examination, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of VOLA Consortium (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

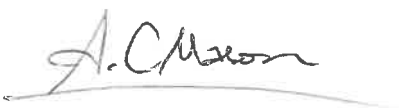
Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I can confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Anita Mason BA(Hons) BFP FCA
Mitchell Charlesworth
Suite 5.1, Tempest
12 Tithebarn Street
Liverpool
L2 2DT



Date:

VOLA Consortium

Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Current Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and Legacies	2	-	-	-	8,473
Charitable activities	3	2,600	451,354	453,954	514,461
Total Income		2,600	451,354	453,954	522,934
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	4, 5	**6,167**	**585,245**	**591,412**	379,211
Total expenditure		**6,167**	**585,245**	**591,412**	379,211
Net income/(expenditure)		**(3,567)**	**(133,891)**	**(137,458)**	143,723
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		**(3,567)**	**(133,891)**	**(137,458)**	143,723
Reconciliation of funds:					
Funds b/fwd		35,858	146,553	182,411	38,688
Funds c/fwd		**32,291**	**12,662**	**44,953**	182,411

The Statement of Financial Activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Previous Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2023 £
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and Legacies	2	8,473	-	8,473
Charitable activities	3	37,743	476,718	514,461
Total Income		46,216	476,718	522,934
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	4, 5	33,849	345,362	379,211
Total expenditure		33,849	345,362	379,211
Net income/(expenditure)		12,367	131,356	143,723
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		12,367	131,356	143,723
Reconciliation of funds:				
Funds b/fwd		23,491	15,197	38,688
Funds c/fwd		35,858	146,553	182,411

The notes on pages 16 to 25 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2024

Company Number: 08746685

	Note	2024 £	£	2023 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	9	618		475,000
Cash at bank and in hand	10	87,944		42,413
		88,562		517,413
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	**43,608**		335,002
Net Current Assets			**44,953**	182,411
Total Net Assets	15		**44,953**	182,411
Funds of the charity				
Designated Funds			-	-
General Fund			**32,291**	35,858
Total Unrestricted Funds	13		**32,291**	35,858
Restricted Fund			**12,662**	146,553
Total Restricted Fund	14		**12,662**	146,553
Total Funds			**44,953**	182,411

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees 12 November 2024.

Damian France
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 16 to 25 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Cash flows
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income per Statement of Financial Activities	(137,458)	143,723
Adjustments for:		
Decrease/(Increase) in trade and other receivables	474,382	(469,485)
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other payables	(291,393)	298,905
Net cash (used in) /provided by operating activities	45,531	(26,857)
Net cash from investing activities	-	-
Net cash from financing activities	-	-
Net (decrease) /increase in cash and cash equivalents	45,531	(26,857)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	42,413	69,270
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	87,944	42,413
Components of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and bank balances	87,944	42,413
	87,944	42,413

VOLA Consortium
Notes to the Accounts
For the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting Policies

1a. Basis of preparation

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 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), and the Companies Act 2006 and the UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016.

VOLA Consortium meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The functional currency used by VOLA Consortium is the £ Sterling.

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

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

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

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

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

1b. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

On assessment of income streams and the required fixed and variable overheads required to complete the ongoing projects successfully, the trustees consider that the accounts should be prepared on a going concern basis.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1c. Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1d. Deferred income

Income from donations and grants, including capital grants are deferred when the following conditions are met:

a) when donors specify that donations and grants given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods

b) when donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in incoming resources until the preconditions for use have been met.

1e. Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time is not recognised and refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1f. Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

a) Expenditure on charitable activities includes the educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

b) Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1g. Funds Accounting

All income and expenditure together with gains and losses are allocated to a specific charitable fund.

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be used solely for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.
Further details of restricted funds together with their purposes are set out in note 14.

1h. 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.

1i. 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.

1j. 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 normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1k. Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

2. Donations & Legacies

	2024	Unrestricted 2023
	£	£
Donations	-	8,473
	-	8,473

3. Charitable Activity Income

	Restricted 2024	Unrestricted 2024	2023
	£	£	£
LCRCA - UKSPF Digital Connectivity Grants	451,354		475,000
VSNW - VS6 representative roles	-	2,500	-
WEA - Multiply Steering Group	-	100	-
Greenbank College – New Futures	-	-	27,993
LCR CA – Digital Mapping	-	-	9,750
DWP – Kickstart Intermediary	-		1,718
	451,354	2,600	514,461

4. Charitable activities

	General Funds	VCF Capacity Building	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Direct staff costs	3,314	45,007	48,321	48,017
Project costs	1,921	537,742	539,663	321,990
Share of support costs (see note 5)	932	-	932	6,731
Share of governance costs (see note 5)	-	2,496	2,496	2,376
Bad debt	-	-	-	97
	6,167	585,245	591,412	379,211

The direct staff costs are the total seconded staff costs charged to VOLA

Analysis by fund

Restricted funds	-	585,245	585,245	
Unrestricted funds	6,167	-	6,167	
	6,167	585,245	591,412	

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Restricted funds	11,061	334,301		345,362
Unrestricted funds	25,995	7,854		33,849
	37,056	342,155		379,211

5. Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2024	2023	Basis of allocation
	£	£	£	£	
Contribution to overheads	932	-	932	6,731	Allocated to General Funds
Independent examiners fees	-	2,496	2,496	2,376	Allocated to VCF Capacity Building
	932	2,496	3,428	9,107	

6. Financial instruments

	2024	2023
	£	£
Carrying amount of financial assets		
Debt instruments measured at amortised cost	88,562	517,413
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Measured at amortised cost	43,608	333,573

7. Trustees

No remuneration was paid to trustees during the year (2023 - nil)

No Expenses were reimbursed to trustees during the year (2023 - nil)

8. Related Party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	£29,165	21,605
	£29,165	21,605

There were no other related party transactions during the year

9. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	-	-
Accrued Income	618	475,000
	618	475,000

10. Cash at bank and in hand

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash at bank	87,944	42,413
	87,944	42,413

11. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Grants Payable	19,995	299,234
Trade creditors	21,117	31,963
Accruals and deferred income	2,496	2,376
Funds held as Agent	0	1,429
	43,608	335,002

12. Funds held as agent

VOLA Consortium no longer holds any funds as agent (2023: £1,429) that is payable to third parties.

Previous year ended 31 March 2023

Funder	*Balance brought forward £*	*Received £*	*Spent £*	*Balance carried forward 2023 £*
DWP - Kickstart	*-*	*121,595*	*(121,595)*	*-*
Greenbank College New Futures Programme	*(3)*	*242,990*	*(241,558)*	*1,429*
Total funds held as agent (previous year)	*(3)*	*364,585*	*(363,153)*	*1,429*

Current year ended 31 March 2024

Funder	**Balance brought forward £**	***Received £***	***Spent £***	**Balance carried forward 2024 £**
Greenbank College *New Futures Programme*	1,429	0	(1,429)	0
Total funds held as agent (current year)	1,429	0	(1,429)	0

13. Unrestricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2023

	Balance brought forward £	*Income £*	*Expenditure £*	*Transfers between funds £*	*Balance carried forward 2023 £*
General Fund	*22,497*	*8,473*	*(3,617)*	*8,505*	*35,858*
General Fund - New Futures	*994*	*27,993*	*(22,378)*	*(6,609)*	*-*
LCR CA DI Mapping	*-*	*9,750*	*(7,854)*	*(1,896)*	
Total Funds (current year)	*23,491*	*46,216*	*(33,849)*	*-*	*35,858*

Current year ended 31 March 2024

	Balance brought forward £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2024 £**
General Fund	35,858	-	(6,167)	2,600	32,291
General Fund – VSNW/ VS6 representative roles	-	2,500	-	(2,500)	-
General Fund – WEA, Multiply Steering Group	-	100	-	(100)	
Total Funds (current year)	35,858	2,600	(6,167)	-	32,291

14. Restricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2023	*Balance brought forward £*	*Income £*	*Expenditure £*	*Transfers between funds £*	*Balance carried forward 2023 £*
DWP - Kickstart	*9,343*	*1,718*	*(11,061)*	-	-
TNLCF – TFOP	*5,854*		*(5,854)*	-	-
UKSPF – Digital Grants	-	*475,000*	*(328,447)*	-	*146,553*
Total Funds (current year)	*15,197*	*476,718*	*(345,362)*	-	*146,553*

Current year ended 31 March 2024	**Balance brought forward £**	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2024 £**
UKSPF – Digital Grants	146,553	451,354	(585,245)	-	12,662
Total Funds (current year)	146,553	451,354	(585,245)	-	12,662

* UKSPF – Digital Grants project provides grants and support for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector to improve public-facing IT facilities & create new facilities in priority areas. The *Digital Connectivity for Local Community Facilities* Grants project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority as the lead authority.

15. Analysis of Net Assets

Previous year ended 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	*Restricted Funds £*	*Total Funds £*
Net Current Assets	*35,858*	*146,553*	*182,411*
	35,858	*146,553*	*182,411*

Current year ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Restricted Funds £**	**Total Funds £**
Net Current Assets	32,291	12,662	44,953
	32,291	12,662	44,953

VOLA CONSORTIUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1158777

Accounts

Company Number: 08746685
Charity Number: 1158777

VOLA Consortium

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Annual Report

&

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended

31 March 2023

Vola Consortium
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VOLA Consortium
Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)
For the year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act, present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (effective 1 January 2019).

The Charity

VOLA Consortium is constituted as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. The company is registered in England and Wales No. 08746685. The charity is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1158777. The principal governing document is the Company Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 25th September 2014.

Objectives and Activities

The charity's objects are:

a) the advancement of education and lifelong learning in such ways as the trustees think fit;

b) the provision of crime prevention and offender rehabilitation services;

c) the promotion of the voluntary sector in the Liverpool City Region and the surrounding areas in particular by:

> i) building the capacity of charitable and voluntary organisations operating within the area of benefit and providing them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose but in particular the advancement of education and the rehabilitation of offenders; and
>
> ii) promoting, organising and facilitating co-operation and partnership working between charitable and voluntary organisations and statutory and other relevant bodies within the area of benefit.
>
> *For the purposes of this clause, "the voluntary sector" means charities and voluntary organisations defined as follows: "Charities are organisations, which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the law of England and Wales. "Voluntary Organisations" are whole or a significant section of the community, and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory authorities"*

d) To further such purposes as are charitable within the laws of England and Wales as the Trustees shall from time to time determine.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Membership

In its ninth year of operation as a registered charity, as at 31st March 2023, VOLA Consortium's membership stands at 60 voluntary sector organisations (60 last year); having accepted one new membership application along with one former member withdrawing their membership during the year.

Kickstart (Department for Work and Pensions)

The Government's Kickstart scheme provided funding to employers to create 6-month, 25 hour per week, paid work placements for unemployed 16 to 24 year olds in receipt of Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. Between February 2021 and September 2022, VOLA acted as Kickstart Gateway Body on behalf of a group of 20 local voluntary sector employers, the majority of which VOLA members, to help them create and fill job placements and put in place a comprehensive wraparound package of training and support.

As a Kickstart Gateway, VOLA acted as an intermediary between the DWP, the scheme's funders, and city region employers to help them to manage their Kickstart grant. The key purpose of our Gateway role was to ensure that participants were well supported, trained and developed to enable their onward progression to paid employment following their involvement with the scheme.

The project was delivered in partnership with consortium member, Career Connect who, on behalf of VOLA, provided participants with careers advice and guidance, training and employability support. Working directly with employers, VOLA's central team assisted with the advertisement and filling of placements, ensuring the provision of adequate capacity and capability to effectively support the young people placed with them. Over £400,000 in DWP grant payments were passed on to employers to cover participant salaries and other associated costs.

Between April 2021 and September 2022, the project successfully placed 71 young people into placements with 21 employers. The scheme closed to new starters in March 2022, so no new recruitment took place during this financial year, however, 28 of the 71 previous recruits remained on programme, with the final cohort completing in September 2022.

In terms of outcomes, the project was extremely successful, with high retention, completion and progression rates, as demonstrated by the following key performance indicators:

- 76% of participants completed their placement, with a further 14% leaving early to progress to employment or Apprenticeships.
- 70% progressed to a positive destination, comprising 11 Apprenticeships, 37 jobs (12 full-time and 25 part-time) and 2 higher education outcomes.

These performance indicators reinforce the claim that, although these types of job creation schemes are relatively expensive in comparison to other Government-funded employability programmes, they are highly successful in achieving positive outcomes for young, unemployed people.

New Futures Project (Education and Skills Funding Agency/ European Social Fund co-finance)

Led by Greenbank College (VOLA member) since its April 2019 launch, and delivered in partnership with 12 other VOLA consortium members, the New Futures project provided targeted support to young people aged 15-24 who were Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), or at risk of becoming NEET, to help them to progress

towards their learning and work goals. Learners were provided with a flexible, tailored programme to help improve their employability skills, personal, social and emotional development, comprising accredited and non-accredited training, mentoring, pastoral and wider wrap-around support. The project's ultimate aim was to support onward progression to work or education.

Despite the voluntary, early release from the contract in July 2022, significantly curtailing the recruitment window, the delivery partnership was able to enrol a substantial 301 new recruits during the 2021/22 academic year, increasing the total number of learners supported over the lifetime of the project to 1,226.

Analysis of participant demographic data clearly demonstrates the partnership's collective strength in engaging a diverse range of people, the majority of whom commonly recognised as disadvantaged in relation to educational attainment and employment prospects. For example, on joining the project, 44% of learners declared a disability, learning difficulty or long-term health condition; 93% lacked basic skills in either English or maths, the vast majority lacking in both disciplines; 12% were young, single parents; and 10% were from a minority ethnic background.

Indeed, 97% of learners declared at least one recognised barrier to progression (disability, lacking basic skills, low educational attainment, single parent, ethnic minority, workless household), many experiencing multiple and often complex barriers.

In terms of gender equality, the proportion of young women engaged by the project stood at 40%, moderately below the 46% national ESFA/ESF target.

Notwithstanding the long-term, adverse impact of the Covid pandemic on project deliverability, the partnership's continued endeavours resulted in respectable levels of performance, in terms of achievement of outcomes and results. Retention and achievement rates stood at 85% and 78% respectively, with 647, or 53% of learners progressing to an eligible, positive destination of employment, education, Apprenticeship or Traineeship, vs 54% contractual target.

Contractual complexities and targets aside, the project has enabled a large volume of disengaged learners, often with multiple barriers to inclusion and progression, a solid entry point in moving towards further education and employment, providing essential life skills, confidence and self-esteem; which is something we are extremely proud of!

The number of NEET/ 'at risk of NEET' young people supported by the consortium through its collaborative partnership projects now stands at close to 5,700, which is a commendable accomplishment.

Together for our Planet (National Lottery Community Fund)

Through grant funding secured from The National Lottery Community Fund's "*Together for our Planet*" initiative in November 2021, this project provided free building energy assessments to voluntary sector organisations across the Liverpool City Region.

In addition to an energy assessment and efficiency rating for each property, recipient organisations received a recommendations report containing practical proposals of actions they could take to improve their energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and energy bills.

Between April and June 2022, the project completed 12 surveys across 9 voluntary sector organisations, taking the total number conducted over the lifespan of the project to 22 surveys across 17 organisations.

Community-Based Digital Inclusion Research (Liverpool City Region Combined Authority)

VOLA Consortium was commissioned by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) in April 2022 to undertake a research project focused on mapping community-based Digital Inclusion provision, priorities and practices across the city region.

The research took place between June and September 2022 and included engagement with a wide range of Voluntary Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector organisations – with 35 attending the 'listening' event in June and 137 providing information about their services.

A survey was sent to over 500 community organisations. 111 of 137 responding organisations indicated that they deliver Digital Inclusion services. Survey responses identified:

- 143 public spaces across the city region providing computer and internet access.
- 57 community-based organisations providing digital skills training at 119 venues.
- 29 organisations providing IT equipment to people to use in their own home, either through loan, gifting or discounted sale schemes.
- 32 organisations engaging over 110 Digital Champions in the delivery of Digital Inclusion services.

A key outcome of the research has been the creation and publication of a live, online map of Digital Inclusion services; open-access for public use and a useful resource to help cross-sector service providers in advising their clients on places to go to access digital services. A planning version, overlaid to a Digital Exclusion heat map has also been produced to identify service supply against places of high need and identify potential gaps in provision.

The data collected has provided the LCRCA with a rich source of information, with research findings and recommendations helping to inform the city region's refreshed Digital Inclusion strategy and associated investment decisions.

Digital Connectivity Grants Programme (UK Shared Prosperity Fund)

In December 2022, VOLA was appointed to manage a new digital grants fund that will run until March 2025. The *'Digital connectivity for local community facilities'* grants programme is funded by the LCR Combined Authority as part of its UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme, the UK government's successor to EU Structural funds and part of its Levelling Up strategy. The £1.3 million fund is open to VCFSE sector organisations across the city region who provide, or are planning to provide public access digital facilities in their communities.

The aim of the fund is to provide funding and support to:

1. Target neighbourhoods where there is currently a lack of community-based digital facilities to help local community-based organisations to set up new digital drop-ins;
2. Upgrade outdated and poor-quality digital kit and/or improve broadband connectivity where current connections are poor; and
3. Increase capacity, by providing funding to purchase more devices, where current facilities are insufficient to meet demand.

Following the agreement of eligibility criteria and development of grant management systems, processes and procedures, the first funding round ran from January to March 2023. £300,000 was allocated to 46 successful applicant organisations, creating 20 new facilities and upgrading and/or increasing capacity of 26 existing sites. Four further funding rounds are planned over the next two years, the first of which is due to launch June 2023.

Computer Recycling and Loan Scheme

In March 2022, 10 decommissioned and refurbished laptops were received from WSP, a large international engineering and environmental consultancy business, via an introduction from Sefton Council, for use across the Sefton area. This followed the previous donation and refurbishment of 50 decommissioned laptops from Jaguar Land Rover in 2021, with funding and technical support from LCR Connect.

Our growing bank of laptops are now being loaned to learners, member organisations and other voluntary sector organisations that currently don't have sufficient access to IT equipment.

The Trustee Board, management team and members extend their gratitude to WPS for their kind donation, and to Sefton Council for making the connection.

Social Value

We continue to use the HACT wellbeing calculator to quantify the added social value of activities undertaken by the charity, over and above the direct monetary benefits to the public purse, by way of increased tax revenue, reduced welfare benefits and other cost savings derived from supporting people into employment and further education.

In the past year, we have created a conservatively estimated (*) social value, by way of a wellbeing, totalling £777,000. It should be noted that this relates to only a relatively small number of participants, compared to recent years, with the two main delivery programmes coming to an end early in the financial year; hence its lower than usual value. However, over their full duration, the New Futures and Kickstart programmes have collectively created an estimated (*) social value of £3,671,000.

Indeed, since the initial formation of the VOLA partnership, including collaborative delivery prior to its incorporation as a legal entity, consortium activity has generated an estimated (*) social value of £33.4 million.

** There are a number of key reasons why it is important to stress that the above values are considered conservative estimates:*

1. *Due to rules within the HACT social value calculation methodology, values of many of the progression outcomes achieved on New Futures and other historic NEET programmes cannot be counted in addition to the value counted for learners' initial participation in the programme. For example, prevention of NEET, by way of reengagement in mainstream school/education, progression to Traineeships, vocational training and general education all cannot be counted. Therefore, this significantly under-values the true wider social value generated. Furthermore, the old (lower) values from v4 of the HACT calculator are still used, as more recent versions are no longer free for Charities to access.*

2. *There have been many other wider outcomes achieved to which a social value can legitimately be attributed that have not been consistently measured and so we have not been able to include them in our calculations. For example, improved health, mental health and confidence; family, crime, social and environmental benefits and improvements.*

3. *The social value of early projects was not routinely measured, particularly in the pre-incorporation phase of the consortium. Where possible, retrospective estimates have since been made, based on available historic monitoring data, but we know this to be incomplete and so significantly under-estimates the wider social value of our work in the early years.*

In respect of the new UKSPF Digital Grants programme, we are currently exploring potential ways to calculate its social value. It aims to support 130 voluntary sector organisations, who, in turn, will provide great social benefit to their respective communities and clients groups by way of improving digital inclusion.

Future Opportunities and Developments

Having achieved the primary aim of securing the charity's immediate, 'post-ESF' future through the UKSPF grant award, which provides short to medium term sustainability until March 2025, we plan to capitalise on any further suitable funding opportunities that emerge through the fund in the coming two years.

The Consortium Manager will continue to work closely with key stakeholders, including VS6 and the LCR Combined Authority to influence policy and strategy and keep abreast of emerging opportunities.

Unfortunately, the New Futures project was not allocated 'ESF cliff edge' funding to extend its delivery in the coming year due to an overall lack of funding. We will, therefore, prioritise the exploration of alternative funding for replacement NEET provision, which has been a long-standing cornerstone of the consortium's core business for almost 13 years. Potential funding opportunities to establish another Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) programme may also be explored, following the resounding success of the recent Kickstart programme.

Another primary aim is to consolidate our increasing role and reputation in the local digital inclusion arena. The highly successful, Sefton CVS led Include-IT Mersey digital inclusion project - part of the VOLA family, comprising a delivery partnership of exclusively VOLA member organisations - has been successfully awarded UKSPF funding to extend its 'post-ESF' delivery for a further two years, until March 2025.

We will continue to explore other opportunities in the digital inclusion space, including work to attract new donations of digital equipment from local business for repurpose and onward distribution, or loan to consortium members, learners and the wider sector.

Finally, we also plan to invest in the development of a new website to improve the charity's online image and presence, as the current platform is dated and under-used.

Financial Review

During the 2022/23 financial year, charitable activity generated an income of £522,934 to be used to further the organisation's objectives. Following a modest surplus made last year, this year the charity is again able to report an operating surplus of £143,723. The surplus primarily relates to unspent UKSPF grant funding which will be allocated in upcoming rounds taking place in summer and winter 2023. However, positively, unrestricted reserves increased £12,367.

In addition to the charity's direct income and expenditure, note 12 to the accounts details 'agent' funds held and distributed by VOLA Consortium on behalf of Greenbank College ('principal') to third party New Futures delivery partners; and similar 'agent' funds distributed to Kickstart employers on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). VOLA has no discretion or control over the use to which these funds are put by the third-party organisations, as the charity simply distributes them in line with the instructions given by Greenbank and the DWP. As such, they are not recognised as an asset in the charity's accounts, in accordance with Module 19 of the SORP.

As of 31st March 2023, the charity maintained a healthy balance sheet, comprising sufficient cash at bank (£42,413) and payment due from debtors (£475,000). The charity's liquid assets and forecast income, combined with prudent financial management and future funding plans are forecast to cover planned activities and financial liabilities for the coming financial year.

Reserves

Currently, the charity has a reserves policy of £5,000 to cover the costs anticipated (e.g. financial and legal costs) in the event of the charitable company being wound up. Unrestricted reserves at year-end stood at £35,858, with ample cash at bank to cover anticipated financial liabilities in the event of the charity's closure.

This policy reflects the charity's continued position in relation to staffing and fixed assets, in that it does not directly employ any staff and, therefore, has no direct employment or redundancy liabilities, nor does it have any loans or other liabilities in relation to buildings either owned or leased.

The policy has been reviewed again this year and will continue to be reviewed annually, subject to amendment should the charity's risk profile change, for example, if the charity began to directly employ staff or secure premises.

The charity has no subsidiary undertakings, nor is any fund within the charity's accounts materially in deficit.

With forecast income from the UKSPF Digital Connectivity grants programme in relation to anticipated levels of expenditure, current financial projections provide the Board of Trustees with a high degree of confidence in the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for the coming two financial years.

Reference and administrative details

Charity number:	1158777
Company number:	08746685
Registered Office:	Burlington House, Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 0LG

Our advisors

Independent Examiner:	Anita Mason BA(Hons) BFP FCA, BWM Chartered Accountants, Suite 5.1 Tempest, 12 Tithebarn Street, Liverpool, L2 2DT
Bankers:	Unity Trust Bank Plc, 9 Brindley Place, Birmingham. B1 2JB
Solicitors:	Brabners, Horton House, Exchange Flags, Liverpool. L2 3YL

Directors and trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year-end were as follows:

Trustees

James Brett	Claire Cook
Nicola Crosby	Damian France (Chair of Trustees)
Debbie Gayle	Raymond Moore (Appointed 13 December 2022)
Mark Ord	David Roberts
Helen Stephens	Angela White OBE

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

VOLA Consortium is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association amended on 25th September 2014. It is registered with the Charity Commission. Anyone over the age of 16 can become a member of the Company and there are currently 10 trustee members (9 in 2021/22), each of whom agrees to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up. In addition to the trustees, the charity had 60 membership organisations as at 31st March 2023, who also agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the Articles of Association the trustees are elected by members of the charitable company attending the Annual General Meeting. The longest service one third of trustees retires each year and are able to offer themselves for re-election.

Structure, Governance and Management *(Continued)*

Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on: their legal obligations under charity and company law, the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and inform them of the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role.

Organisation

The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity. The board normally meets quarterly. A Manager is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations the Manager has delegated authority, within the terms of delegation approved by the trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment, and service delivery activity. The Manager and other members of the staff team are employed by Sefton Council for Voluntary Service, a VOLA membership organisation, with VOLA Consortium being recharged for any staff time incurred in the operation of projects. A written membership agreement is in place outlining the terms of this staffing relationship.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receives remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity and any client or supplier is disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

Risk Management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces;
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

This work has identified that financial sustainability is the major financial risk for the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, regular liaison with the bank and active management of trade debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital by the charity.

Attention has also been focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety of clients and data protection. These risks are managed by ensuring accreditation is up to date, having robust policies and procedures in place and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of VOLA Consortium for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity 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 that year. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

1) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
2) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
3) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
4) state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
5) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

This report was approved by the board of trustees on 15th December 2023 and signed on their behalf.



Damian France
Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report
To the trustees of VOLA Consortium
For the year ended 31 March 2023

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of VOLA Consortium for the year ended 31 March 2023.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My examination has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my examination, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of VOLA Consortium (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I can confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner's Report
To the trustees of VOLA Consortium
For the year ended 31 March 2023



Anita Mason BA(Hons) BFP FCA
BWM Chartered Accountants
Suite 5.1, Tempest
12 Tithebarn Street
Liverpool
L2 2DT

Date: 15 December 2023

VOLA Consortium

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Current Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and Legacies	2	8,473	-	8,473	-
Charitable activities	3	37,743	476,718	514,461	150,305
Total Income		46,216	476,718	522,934	150,305
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	4, 5	33,849	345,362	379,211	140,824
Total expenditure		33,849	345,362	379,211	140,824
Net income/(expenditure)		12,367	131,356	143,723	9,481
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		12,367	131,356	143,723	9,481
Reconciliation of funds:					
Funds b/fwd		23,491	15,197	38,688	29,207
Funds c/fwd		35,858	146,553	182,411	38,688

The Statement of Financial Activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

VOLA Consortium

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Previous Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2022 £
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and Legacies	2	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3	50,613	99,692	150,305
Total Income		50,613	99,692	150,305
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	4, 5	56,329	84,495	140,824
Total expenditure		56,329	84,495	140,824
Net income/(expenditure)		(5,716)	15,197	9,481
Transfers between funds		-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(5,716)	15,197	9,481
Reconciliation of funds:				
Funds b/fwd		29,207	-	29,207
Funds c/fwd		23,491	15,197	38,688

The notes on pages 18 to 29 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2023

Company Number: 08746685

	Note	2023 £	£	2022 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	9	475,000		5,515
Cash at bank and in hand	10	42,413		69,270
		517,413		74,785
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	335,002		36,097
Net Current Assets			182,411	38,688
Total Net Assets	15		182,411	38,688
Funds of the charity				
Designated Funds			-	-
General Fund			35,858	23,491
Total Unrestricted Funds	13		35,858	23,491
Restricted Fund			146,553	15,197
Total Restricted Fund	14		146,553	15,197
Total Funds			182,411	38,688

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees 15th December 2023.

Damian France
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 19 to 29 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Cash flows
For the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income per Statement of Financial Activities	143,723	9,481
Adjustments for:		
Increase in trade and other receivables	(469,485)	(799)
Increase in trade and other payables	289,905	22,267
Net cash (used in) /provided by operating activities	(26,857)	30,949
Net cash from investing activities	-	-
Net cash from financing activities	-	-
Net (decrease) /increase in cash and cash equivalents	(26,857)	30,949
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	69,270	38,321
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	42,413	69,270
Components of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash and bank balances	42,413	69,270
	42,413	69,270

VOLA Consortium
Notes to the Accounts
For the year ended 31 March 2023

1 Accounting Policies

1a. Basis of preparation

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 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), and the Companies Act 2006 and the UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019.

VOLA Consortium meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The functional currency used by VOLA Consortium is the £ Sterling.

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

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

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

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

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods. There were considered to be no critical accounting estimates or judgements applied in the preparation of these financial statements.

1b. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

An assessment of income streams and the required fixed and variable overheads required to complete the ongoing projects successfully, the trustees consider that the accounts should be prepared on a going concern basis.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1c. Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1d. Deferred income

Income from donations and grants, including capital grants are deferred when the following conditions are met:

a) when donors specify that donations and grants given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods

b) when donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in incoming resources until the preconditions for use have been met.

1e. Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time is not recognised and refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1f. Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

a) Expenditure on charitable activities includes the educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

b) Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1g. Funds Accounting

All income and expenditure together with gains and losses are allocated to a specific charitable fund.

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be used solely for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.
Further details of restricted funds together with their purposes are set out in note 14.

1h. 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.

1i. 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.

1j. 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 normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1k. Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

2. Donations & Legacies

	Unrestricted 2023 £	2022 £
Donations	8,473	-
	8,473	-

3. Charitable Activity Income

	Restricted 2023 £	Unrestricted 2023 £	2022 £
Greenbank College – New Futures		27,993	50,613
LCR CA – Digital Mapping		9,750	-
UKSPF – Digital Connectivity Grants	475,000		-
The National Lottery Community Fund – Together for our Planet	-		9,947
DWP – Kickstart Intermediary	1,718		86,745
LCR Connect		-	3,000
	476,718	37,743	150,305

4. Charitable activities

	Education and training	VCF Capacity Building	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Direct staff costs	23,097	24,920	48,017	71,759
Project costs	7,917	314,073	321,990	53,569
Share of support costs (see note 5)	3,569	3,162	6,731	13,336
Share of governance costs (see note 5)	2,376	-	2,376	2,160
Bad Debt	97	-	97	-
	37,056	342,155	379,211	140,824

The direct staff costs are the total seconded staff costs charged to VOLA

Analysis by fund				
Restricted funds	11,061	334,301	345,362	
Unrestricted funds	25,995	7,854	33,849	
	37,056	342,155	379,211	
For the year ended 31 March 2022				
Restricted funds	80,401	4,094		84,495
Unrestricted funds	56,329	-		56,329
	136,730	4,094		140,824

5. Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	2022	Basis of allocation
	£	£	£	£	
Contribution to overheads	6,731	-	6,731	13,336	Allocated to education & training, VCF Capacity Building
Independent examiners fees	-	2,376	2,376	2,160	Allocated to education & training, VCF Capacity Building
	6,731	2,376	9,107	15,496	

6. Financial instruments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Carrying amount of financial assets		
Debt instruments measured at amortised cost	517,413	74,785
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Measured at amortised cost	333,573	36,097

7. Trustees

No remuneration was paid to trustees during the year (2022 - nil)

No Expenses were reimbursed to trustees during the year (2022 - nil)

8. Related Party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	21,605	19,624
	21,605	19,624

There were no other related party transactions during the year

9. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	-	5,515
Accrued Income	475,000	-
	475,000	5,515

10. Cash at bank and in hand

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash at bank	42,413	69,270
	42,413	69,270

11. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Grants Payable	299,234	
Trade creditors	31,963	33,937
Accruals and deferred income	2,376	2,160
Funds held as Agent	1,429	-
	335,002	36,097

12. Funds held as agent

VOLA Consortium holds £1,429 funds as agent (2022: £3), in a bank account operated by the charitable company, which is payable to third parties. The bank balance and an equivalent amount payable to third parties are excluded from these accounts.

Previous year ended 31 March 2022

Funder	Balance brought forward £	*Received* £	*Spent* £	Balance carried forward 2022 £
DWP - Kickstart	-	271,810	(271,810)	-
Greenbank College *New Futures Programme*	528	403,208	(403,739)	(3)
Total funds held as agent (previous year)	528	675,018	(675,549)	(3)

Current year ended 31 March 2023

Funder	**Balance brought forward £**	***Received* £**	***Spent* £**	**Balance carried forward 2023 £**
DWP - Kickstart	-	121,595	(121,595)	-
Greenbank College *New Futures Programme*	(3)	242,990	(241,558)	1,429
Total funds held as agent (current year)	(3)	364,585	(363,153)	1,429

13. Unrestricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2022

	Balance brought forward £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	Transfers between funds £	Balance carried forward 2022 £
General Fund	26,784	-	(4,287)	-	22,497
General Fund – New Futures	2,423	50,613	(52,042)	-	994
Total Funds (previous year)	29,207	50,613	(56,329)	-	23,491

Current year ended 31 March 2023

	Balance brought forward £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2023 £**
General Fund	22,497	8,473	(3,617)	8,505	35,858
General Fund - New Futures	994	27,993	(22,378)	(6,609)	-
LCR CA DI Mapping	-	9,750	(7,854)	(1,896)	
Total Funds (current year)	23,491	46,216	(33,849)	-	35,858

14. Restricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2022	Balance brought forward £	*Income £*	*Expenditure £*	Transfers between funds £	Balance carried forward 2022 £
DWP - Kickstart	-	*86,745*	*(77,402)*	-	*9,343*
TNLCF – TFOP	-	*9,948*	*(4,094)*	-	*5,854*
LCR – Charity Digital	-	*3,000*	*3,000*	-	-
Total Funds (previous year)	-	*99,693*	*(84,496)*	-	*15,197*

Current year ended 31 March 2023	**Balance brought forward £**	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2023 £**
DWP - Kickstart	9,343	1,718	(11,061)	-	-
TNLCF – TFOP	5,854		(5,854)	-	-
UKSPF – Digital Grants	-	475,000	(328,447)	-	146,553
Total Funds (current year)	15,197	476,718	(345,362)	-	146,553

* The Governments Kickstart scheme provided funding to employers to create 6-month job placements for unemployed 16 to 24 year olds in receipt of Universal Credit. As a Gateway Body, VOLA acted as an intermediary between the DWP and local employers to help them to manage their Kickstart grant and ensure that participants were well trained and supported while engaged in the scheme to enable their onward progression to paid employment.

* The National Lottery Community Fund's "Together for our Planet" (TFOP) fund provided free energy assessments to voluntary sector organisations. VOLA coordinated this small project across the Liverpool City Region (LCR).

* UKSPF – Digital Grants project provides grants and support for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector to improve public-facing IT facilities & create new facilities in priority areas. The *Digital Connectivity for Local Community Facilities* Grants project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority as the lead authority.

15. Analysis of Net Assets

Previous year ended 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted Funds	*Restricted Funds*	*Total Funds*
	£	£	£
Net Current Assets	23,491	15,197	38,688
	23,491	15,197	38,688

Current year ended 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds	**Restricted Funds**	**Total Funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Net Current Assets	35,858	146,553	182,411
	35,858	146,553	182,411

VOLA CONSORTIUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1158777

Accounts

Company Number: 08746685
Charity Number: 1158777

VOLA Consortium

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Annual Report

&

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended

31 March 2022

Vola Consortium
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VOLA Consortium
Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)
For the year ended 31 March 2022

The trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act, present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The Charity

VOLA Consortium is constituted as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. The company is registered in England and Wales No. 08746685. The charity is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1158777. The principal governing document is the Company Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 25th September 2014.

Objectives and Activities

The charity's objects are:

a) the advancement of education and lifelong learning in such ways as the trustees think fit;

b) the provision of crime prevention and offender rehabilitation services;

c) the promotion of the voluntary sector in the Liverpool City Region and the surrounding areas in particular by:

> i) building the capacity of charitable and voluntary organisations operating within the area of benefit and providing them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose but in particular the advancement of education and the rehabilitation of offenders; and
>
> ii) promoting, organising and facilitating co-operation and partnership working between charitable and voluntary organisations and statutory and other relevant bodies within the area of benefit.
>
> *For the purposes of this clause, "the voluntary sector" means charities and voluntary organisations defined as follows: "Charities are organisations, which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the law of England and Wales. "Voluntary Organisations" are whole or a significant section of the community, and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory authorities"*

d) To further such purposes as are charitable within the laws of England and Wales as the Trustees shall from time to time determine.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Membership

In its eighth year of operation as a registered charity, as at 31st March 2022, VOLA Consortium's membership stands at 60 voluntary sector organisations (60 last year); having approved two new membership applications during the year, with two former members withdrawing their membership as part of the review undertaken in March 2022.

Kickstart (DWP)

The Governments Kickstart scheme provides funding to employers to create 6-month, 25 hours per week job placements for unemployed 16 to 24 year olds in receipt of Universal Credit. In February 2021 VOLA was successful in its application to become a Kickstart scheme Gateway Body on behalf of a group of 20 local voluntary sector employers to help them create job placements and put in place a wraparound training and support package for young people at risk of long-term unemployment. The initial target was to create and fill 64 job placements, which increased to 73 on the addition of 5 further employers to the partnership in October 2021.

As a Kickstart Gateway, VOLA acts as an intermediary between the DWP and employers across the city region to help them to manage their Kickstart grant and ensure that participants are well trained and supported to enable their onward progression to paid employment following their participation in the scheme.

The project is being delivered in partnership with Career Connect (member organisation), who, on behalf of VOLA, provide careers advice and guidance, training and employability support to participants of the scheme. VOLA also works directly with employers to help them advertise and fill their placements and to ensure that they have the capacity and capability to adequately support participants placed with them, passing on DWP grant payments to employers for placement salaries and other associated project costs.

Between April 2021 and March 2022 the project successfully placed 71 young people into placements with 21 employers. Three further employers subsequently withdrew from the scheme and one unfortunately failed to fill their placements. To date, over £270,000 grant funding has been distributed to these 21 employers in respect of direct staff and support costs associated with the placements.

As of 31 March 2022, 43 of the 71 participants had exited the scheme, 29 of which completed their six-month placement, with 8 leaving early to progress to alternative employment (positive outcome) and 6 unfortunately disengaging and returning to unemployment. Currently, 28 participants remain on programme, planned to complete between April and September 2022.

Aside from some negative employer feedback regarding structural difficulties with the scheme, most notably the recruitment and appointment process, overall, feedback from employers and participants alike has been overwhelmingly positive. The vast majority of participants have highly rated the training and support package provided to them, likewise employers have commented positively on VOLA's the guidance and support throughout the process. This positive feedback is borne out by the extremely promising performance results to date.

Of the 43 leavers to date, an encouraging 32 (74%) have progressed to a positive destination, comprising 7 full-time and 17 part-time jobs, 7 full-time Apprenticeships and one progression to Higher Education. 23 of the job outcomes, including 6 Apprenticeships are based with the original Kickstart employer, with 8 moving to roles with new employers. Indeed, to date, 11 out of 14 employers have kept on one or more of their Kickstart participants on completion of the programme, which is a commendable achievement!

These performance indicators provide early proof that although these types of job creation schemes are relatively expensive in comparison to other Government funded employability programmes, they are highly successful in achieving positive outcomes for young unemployed people.

New Futures Project (ESFA/ ESF co-finance)

Led by Greenbank College (VOLA member) and delivered in partnership with 10 other VOLA member organisations, the New Futures project provides targeted support to young people aged 15-24 who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), or at risk of becoming NEET, to help them to progress towards their learning and work goals. Learners are provided with a flexible, tailored programme to help improve their employability skills, personal, social and emotional development, comprising accredited and non-accredited training, mentoring, pastoral and wider wrap-around support. The ultimate aim of the project is to support onward progression to work or education.

By the 31st March 2022, the project had supported 1125 disengaged young people across the city region (365 new starts this year), 468 of whom had progressed to education or work (71 jobs, 8 Apprenticeships, 37 Traineeships and 352 in to other Further Education courses), with 190 learners still on programme.

Analysis of participant demographic data clearly demonstrates the partnership's continued ability to engage a diverse range of people, the majority of whom are commonly recognised as disadvantaged in one or more ways. For example, on joining the project, 45% of learners declared a disability, learning difficulty or long-term health condition. 94% lacked basic skills in either English or maths, the vast majority lacking in both disciplines.

Overall, 97% declared at least one recognised barrier to progression (disability, lacking basic skills, low educational attainment, single parent, ethnic minority, workless household).

In terms of gender equality, the proportion of young women engaged by the project to the end of March stood at 41%, slightly below the ESFA's national target of 46%.

The long-lasting impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and its resulting restrictions on society continued to effect delivery of the project in 2021/22, particularly earlier in the year, though to a lesser extent than in the previous year when the pandemic was at its height. However, the project struggled to sufficiently recover the performance and earnings deficit resulting from the devastating impact of the pandemic in the previous year. This caused Greenbank to review the continued financial viability of delivering the project until its planned March 2023 conclusion, leading to the difficult decision to make a formal request to the ESFA to bring the end date of the contract forward to 31 July 2022. This request was subsequently approved by the ESFA in April 2022.

Despite the unprecedented difficulties encountered throughout the majority of the project's lifespan, adversely impacting its deliverability and resulting financial viability, there is no questioning the partnership's valiant efforts to make the best of a difficult situation, ensuring the continued delivery of much needed support to young, disengaged learners at a time when they needed it more than ever. We will endeavour to maximise delivery and performance in the remaining months on the contract and ensure its orderly closure when the contract ends in July 2022.

Together for our Planet (The National Lottery Community Fund)

In November 2021 VOLA secured funding from The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) through the "Together for our Planet" fund to provide free energy assessments to voluntary sector organisations across the Liverpool City Region.

In addition to receiving an energy assessment, which provides their buildings with an energy efficiency rating (A-F), recipient organisations receive a recommendations report containing practical proposals of actions they could take to improve their energy efficiency, reduce their carbon emissions and their energy bills.

Between April 2021 and March 2022, the project completed 10 surveys across 8 voluntary sector organisations with a further 12 surveys to be conducted by the summer.

Laptop Loan (LCR Connect Social Value Programme)

LCR Connect is a £30m Joint venture between the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and two private companies, ICS Digital and NGE, to develop a 212km full-fibre, ultrafast, gigabit-capable network spanning the Liverpool City Region. As a part of this innovative project, the joint venture committed to the development of a Social Value to support local initiatives.

Following introductions by the LCR Combined Authority, VOLA received £3,000 from the LCR Connect Social Value Fund and technical support from the team at ITS Digital to refurbish 50 laptops previously gifted to the consortium by Jaguar Land Rover. The funding was used to purchase the required operating system and software licenses at heavily discounted rates from the Charity Digital Exchange. The decommissioned laptops were then reconfigured by the technical support team at ITS Digital ready for use by learners and member organisations who currently don't have access to IT equipment.

The Trustee Board, management team and members extend their wholehearted gratitude to the team at LCR Connect and ITS Digital for their philanthropy and support to the charity.

Social Value

We continue to use the HACT wellbeing calculator to quantify the added social value of activities undertaken by the charity. In the past year alone, we have created a conservatively estimated (*) social value, by way of a wellbeing totalling £1,970,733, attributed to:

- £572,000 value through providing general employability training to 365 young people
- £845,000 through supporting 71 young people (<25s) on a Government training scheme
- £491,000 through supporting 34 young people into full time employment
- £45,000 through supporting 37 young people into part time employment
- £16,000 through supporting 7 young people into Apprenticeships

** Due to rules within the calculation methodology of the HACT social value model, values of many of the progression outcomes achieved on the New Futures project (general education, prevention of NEET, Apprenticeships, Traineeships and vocational training) cannot be counted in addition to the value counted for learners' initial participation in the programme. Furthermore, there are many other wider outcomes that can be measured and a social value attributed that we do not yet consistently measure, for example, exercise, health, mental health, confidence, family, crime, social and environmental improvements.*

Future Opportunities

Whilst no new funding streams have yet been secured for the 2022/23 financial year, the Board and management team are currently exploring potential opportunities within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF), the UK's replacement for the EU's European Social Fund. A key aim is to secure funding for a successor to the New Futures project, though current understanding is that this would be unlikely to begin before April 2023. Likewise, opportunities to further enhance the consortium's position in the Digital Inclusion arena are also being pursued in partnership with Sefton CVS, who currently lead on the Include-IT Mersey digital inclusion project, which includes a delivery partnership of VOLA member organisations.

Financial Review

During the 2021/22 financial year, charitable activity generated an income of £150,305 to be used to further the organisation's objectives. Following a modest surplus made last year, this year the charity is again able to report another modest surplus of £10,275. Although lower than original financial forecasts formulated prior to the commencement of the financial year, to report a surplus is a welcome achievement in the context of the enduring impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and broader economic environment the charity has been required to operate in.

In addition to the charity's direct income and expenditure, note 12 to the accounts details 'agent' funds held and distributed by VOLA Consortium on behalf of Greenbank College ('principal') to third party New Futures delivery partners; and similar 'agent' funds distributed to Kickstart employers on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). VOLA has no discretion or control over the use to which these funds are put by the third-party organisations, as the charity simply distributes them in line with the instructions given by Greenbank and the DWP. As such, they are not recognised as an asset in the charity's accounts, in accordance with Module 19 of the SORP.

As of 31st March 2022, the charity maintained a relatively healthy balance sheet, comprising sufficient cash at bank (£69,270) and payment due from debtors (£5,515). The charity's liquid assets and anticipated grant and contract income, combined with tight financial management, staff redeployment plans on the conclusion of the New Futures project and funding diversification aims, are forecast to cover planned activities and financial liabilities for the coming financial year. Current projections provide confidence the charity will sustain itself as a going concern for the coming financial year.

Reserves

Currently, the charity has a reserves policy of £5,000 to cover the costs anticipated (e.g. financial and legal costs) in the event of the charitable company being wound up. The unrestricted reserves at year end stood at £23,491, with ample cash at bank to cover anticipated financial liabilities in the event of the charity's closure.

This policy reflects the charity's continued position in relation to staffing and fixed assets, in that it does not directly employ any staff and, therefore, has no direct employment or redundancy liabilities, nor does it have any loans or other liabilities in relation to buildings either owned or leased.

The policy has been reviewed again this year and will continue to be reviewed annually, subject to amendment should the charity's risk profile change, for example, if the charity began to directly employ staff or secure premises.

The charity has no subsidiary undertakings, nor is any fund within the charity's accounts materially in deficit.

With forecast income from the New Futures and Kickstart projects and contingency plans to end the New Futures project early and redeploy management team staff currently seconded from Sefton CVS to VOLA Consortium business, the Board of Trustees remains confident in the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Reference and administrative details

Charity number:	1158777
Company number:	08746685
Registered Office:	Burlington House, Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 0LG

Our advisors

Independent Examiner:	Anita Mason BA(Hons) BFP FCA, BWM Chartered Accountants, Suite 5.1 Tempest, 12 Tithebarn Street, Liverpool, L2 2DT
Bankers:	Unity Trust Bank Plc, 9 Brindleyplace, Birmingham. B1 2HB
Solicitors:	Brabners, Horton House, Exchange Flags, Liverpool. L2 3YL

Directors and trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year-end were as follows:

Trustees

James Brett
Claire Cook
Nicola Crosby
Damian France (Chair of Trustees)
Debbie Gayle
Mark Ord
David Roberts
Helen Stephens
Angela White OBE

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

VOLA Consortium is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association amended on 25th September 2014. It is registered with the Charity Commission. Anyone over the age of 16 can become a member of the Company and there are currently 9 trustee members (9 in 2020/21), each of whom agrees to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up. In addition to the trustees, the charity had 60 membership organisations as at 31st March 2022, who also agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Structure, Governance and Management *(Continued)*

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the Articles of Association the trustees are elected by members of the charitable company attending the Annual General Meeting. The longest service one third of trustees retires each year and are able to offer themselves for re-election.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on: their legal obligations under charity and company law, the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and inform them of the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role.

Organisation

The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity. The board normally meets quarterly. A Manager is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations the Manager has delegated authority, within the terms of delegation approved by the trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment, and service delivery activity. The Manager and other members of the staff team are employed by Sefton Council for Voluntary Services, a VOLA membership organisation, with VOLA Consortium being recharged for any staff time incurred in the operation of projects. A written membership agreement is in place outlining the terms of this staffing relationship.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receives remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity and any client or supplier is disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

Risk Management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces;
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

This work has identified that financial sustainability is the major financial risk for the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, regular liaison with the bank and active management of trade debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital by the charity.

Risk Management *(continued)*

Attention has also been focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety of clients and data protection. These risks are managed by ensuring accreditation is up to date, having robust policies and procedures in place and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of VOLA Consortium for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity 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 that year. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

1) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
2) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
3) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
4) state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
5) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

This report was approved by the board of trustees on 5th December 2022 and signed on their behalf.



Damian France
Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report
To the trustees of VOLA Consortium
For the year ended 31 March 2022

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of VOLA Consortium for the year ended 31 March 2022.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My examination has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my examination, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of VOLA Consortium (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I can confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

BWM

Anita Mason BA(Hons) BFP FCA
BWM Chartered Accountants
Suite 5.1, Tempest
12 Tithebarn Street
Liverpool
L2 2DT

Date: 8 December 2022

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2022

Current Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and Legacies	2		-		-
Charitable activities	3	50,613	99,693	150,305	74,744
Total Income		50,613	99,693	150,305	74,744
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	4, 5	56,329	84,495	140,824	66,484
Total expenditure		56,329	84,495	140,824	66,484
Net income/(expenditure)		(5,716)	15,197	9,481	8,260
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(5,716)	15,197	9,481	8,260
Reconciliation of funds:					
Funds b/fwd		29,207	-	29,207	20,947
Funds c/fwd		23,491	15,197	38,688	29,207

The Statement of Financial Activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2022

Previous Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2021 £
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and Legacies	2		-	
Charitable activities	3	35,782	38,962	74,744
Total Income		35,782	38,962	74,744
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	4, 5	27,034	39,450	66,484
Total expenditure		27,034	39,450	66,484
Net income/(expenditure)		8,748	(488)	8,260
Transfers between funds		(488)	488	-
Net movement in funds		8,260	-	8,260
Reconciliation of funds:				
Funds b/fwd		20,947	-	20,947
Funds c/fwd		29,207	-	29,207

The notes on pages 15 to 24 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2022

Company Number: 08746685

	Note	2022 £	£	2021 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	9	5,515		4,716
Cash at bank and in hand	10	69,270		38,321
		74,785		43,037
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	36,097		13,830
Net Current Assets			38,688	29,207
Total Net Assets	15		38,688	29,207
Funds of the charity				
Designated Funds			-	-
General Fund			23,491	29,207
Total Unrestricted Funds	13		23,491	29,207
Restricted Fund			15,197	-
Total Restricted Fund	14		15,197	-
Total Funds			38,688	29,207

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees 5th December 2022.

Damian France
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 15 to 24 form part of these financial statements

1 Accounting Policies

1a. Basis of preparation

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 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), and the Companies Act 2006 and the UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016.

VOLA Consortium meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The Charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The functional currency used by VOLA Consortium is the £ Sterling.

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

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

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

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

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

1b. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

An assessment of income streams and the required fixed and variable overheads required to complete the ongoing projects successfully, the trustees consider that the accounts should be prepared on a going concern basis.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1c. Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1d. Deferred income

Income from donations and grants, including capital grants are deferred when the following conditions are met:

a) when donors specify that donations and grants given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods

b) when donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in incoming resources until the preconditions for use have been met.

1e. Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time is not recognised and refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1f. Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

a) Expenditure on charitable activities includes the educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

b) Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1g. Funds Accounting

All income and expenditure together with gains and losses are allocated to a specific charitable fund.

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be used solely for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.
Further details of restricted funds together with their purposes are set out in note 14.

1h. 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.

1i. 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.

1j. 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 normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1k. Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

2. Donations & Legacies

	2022	2021
	£	£
Donations	-	-
	-	-

3. Charitable Activity Income

	2022	2021
	£	£
Greenbank College – New Futures	50,613	35,782
LCR Cares Fund – Get Yourself Online	-	5,000
The National Lottery Community Fund – Covid Response	-	33,962
The National Lottery Community Fund – Together for our Planet	9,948	-
DWP – Kickstart Intermediary	86,745	-
LCR Connect	3,000	-
	150,306	74,744

4. Charitable activities

	Education and training	VCF Capacity Building	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£
Direct staff costs	70,617	1,142	71,759	52,098
Project costs	50,617	2,952	53,569	4,449
Share of support costs (see note 5)	13,336	-	13,336	7,957
Share of governance costs (see note 5)	2,160	-	2,160	1,980
	136,730	4,094	140,824	66,484

The direct staff costs are the total seconded staff costs charged to VOLA

Analysis by fund				
Restricted funds	80,401	4,094	84,495	
Unrestricted funds	56,329	-	56,329	
	136,730	4,094	140,824	
For the year ended 31 March 2021				
Restricted funds	39,450	-	-	39,450
Unrestricted funds	27,034	-	-	27,034
	66,484	-	-	66,484

5. Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022	2021	Basis of allocation
	£	£	£	£	
Contribution to overheads	13,336	-	13,336	7,957	Allocated to educatio and training
Independent examiners fees	-	2,160	2,160	1,980	Allocated to educatio and training
	13,336	2,160	15,496	9,937	

6. Financial instruments

	2022	2021
	£	£
Carrying amount of financial assets		
Debt instruments measured at amortised cost	74,785	43,037
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Measured at amortised cost	36,097	13,830

7. Trustees

No remuneration was paid to trustees during the year (2021 - nil)

No Expenses were reimbursed to trustees during the year (2021 - nil)

8. Related Party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	19,624	18,690
	19,624	18,690

There were no other related party transactions during the year

9. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	5,515	4,716
	5,515	4,716

10. Cash at bank and in hand

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cash at bank	69,270	38,321
	69,270	38,321

11. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	33,937	11,850
Accruals and deferred income	2,160	1,980
	36,097	13,830

12. Funds held as agent

VOLA Consortium holds no funds as agent (2021: £528), in a bank account operated by the charitable company, which is payable to third parties. The bank balance and an equivalent amount payable to third parties are excluded from these accounts.

Previous year ended 31 March 2021

Funder	Balance brought forward £	*Received* £	*Spent* £	Balance carried forward 2021 £
Greenbank College				
New Futures Programme	484	282,360	(282,316)	528
Total funds held as agent (previous year)	484	282,360	(282,316)	528

Current year ended 31 March 2022

Funder	**Balance brought forward £**	***Received*** **£**	***Spent*** **£**	**Balance carried forward 2022 £**
DWP - Kickstart	-	271,810	(271,810)	-
Greenbank College				
New Futures Programme	528	403,208	(403,739)	(3)
Total funds held as agent (current year)	528	675,018	(675,549)	(3)

13. Unrestricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2021

	Balance brought forward £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	Transfers between funds £	Balance carried forward 2021 £
General Fund	33,456	-	(6,184)	(488)	26,784
General Fund – New Futures	(12,509)	35,782	(20,850)	-	2,423
Total Funds (previous year)	20,947	35,782	(27,034)	(488)	29,207

Current year ended 31 March 2022

	Balance brought forward £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2022 £**
General Fund	26,784	-	(4,287)	-	22,497
General Fund - New Futures	2,423	50,613	(52,042)	-	994
Total Funds (current year)	29,207	50,613	(56,329)	-	23,491

14. Restricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2021	Balance brought forward £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	Transfers between funds £	Balance carried forward 2021 £
LCR Cares – GYO	-	5,000	(5,488)	488	-
TNLCF – Covid Response	-	33,962	(33,962)	-	-
Total funds (previous year)	-	38,962	(39,450)	488	-

Current year ended 31 March 2022	**Balance brought forward £**	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2022 £**
DWP - Kickstart	-	86,745	(77,402)	-	9,343
TNLCF – TFOP	-	9,948	(4,094)	-	5,854
LCR – Charity Digital	-	3,000	3,000	-	-
Total Funds (current year)	-	99,693	(84,496)	-	15,197

* The Governments Kickstart scheme provides funding to employers to create 6-month job placements for unemployed 16 to 24 year olds in receipt of Universal Credit. As a Gateway Body, VOLA acts as an intermediary between the DWP and local employers to help them to manage their Kickstart grant and ensure that participants are well trained and supported while engaged in the scheme to enable their onward progression to paid employment.

* The National Lottery Community Fund's "Together for our Planet" fund provides free energy assessments to voluntary sector organisations. VOLA coordinates this small project across the Liverpool City Region (LCR).

* LCR Connect is the LCR's Combined Authority's, innovative, flagship digital infrastructure/ ultrafast broadband connectivity project, delivered through a joint venture with two private companies, ICS Digital and NGE, developing a 212km network spanning the LCR. The joint venture/ project committed to the development of a Social Value fund to support local initiatives, which VOLA has been a recipient of. Funding and technical support was received to refurbish 50 laptops previously gifted to the charity by Jaguar Land Rover to establish a laptop loan scheme for member organisations and their learners.

15. Analysis of Net Assets

Previous year ended 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted Funds	*Restricted Funds*	*Total Funds*
	£	£	£
Net Current Assets	29,207	-	29,207
	29,207	-	29,207

Current year ended 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted Funds	**Restricted Funds**	**Total Funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Net Current Assets	23,491	15,197	38,688
	23,491	15,197	38,688

VOLA CONSORTIUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1158777

Accounts

Company Number: 08746685
Charity Number: 1158777

VOLA Consortium

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Annual Report

&

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended

31 March 2021

Vola Consortium
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VOLA Consortium
Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)
For the year ended 31 March 2021

The trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act, present their annual report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The Charity

VOLA Consortium is constituted as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. The company is registered in England and Wales No. 08746685. The charity is registered with the Charity Commission No. 1158777. The principal governing document is the Company Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 25th September 2014.

Objectives and Activities

The charity's objects are:

a) the advancement of education and lifelong learning in such ways as the trustees think fit;

b) the provision of crime prevention and offender rehabilitation services;

c) the promotion of the voluntary sector in the Liverpool City Region and the surrounding areas in particular by:

> i) building the capacity of charitable and voluntary organisations operating within the area of benefit and providing them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose but in particular the advancement of education and the rehabilitation of offenders; and
>
> ii) promoting, organising and facilitating co-operation and partnership working between charitable and voluntary organisations and statutory and other relevant bodies within the area of benefit.
>
> *For the purposes of this clause, "the voluntary sector" means charities and voluntary organisations defined as follows: "Charities are organisations, which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the law of England and Wales. "Voluntary Organisations" are whole or a significant section of the community, and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory authorities"*

d) To further such purposes as are charitable within the laws of England and Wales as the Trustees shall from time to time determine.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

VOLA Consortium
Trustees' Annual Report (including Directors' Report)
For the year ended 31 March 2021

Membership

In its seventh year of operation as a registered charity, as at 31st March 2021, VOLA Consortium's membership stands at 60 voluntary sector organisations (56 last year); having approved five new applications for membership during the year, with one former member unfortunately ceasing trading.

New Futures Project (ESFA/ ESF co-finance)

Led by Greenbank College (VOLA member) and delivered in partnership with 12 other VOLA member organisations, the New Futures project provides targeted support to young people aged 15-24 who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), or at risk of becoming NEET, to help them to progress towards their learning and work goals. Learners are provided with a flexible, tailored programme to help improve their employability skills, personal, social and emotional development, comprising accredited and non-accredited training, mentoring, pastoral and wider wrap-around support. The ultimate aim of the project is to support onward progression to work or education.

The Covid 19 pandemic and resulting lockdown restrictions enforced for the majority of the 2020 and 2021 made delivery of the project extremely challenging over the last 12 months. Despite the difficulties that government-imposed lockdowns presented to recruitment and delivery, the project continued to successfully support disengaged 15-24 year olds across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) to upskill and move forward in life.

By the 31st March 2021, the project had supported 760 disengaged young people across the city region (293 new starts this year), 272 of whom had progressed to education or work (24 jobs, 8 Apprenticeships, 24 Traineeships and 216 in to other Further Education courses), with 224 learners still on programme.

Analysis of participant demographic data clearly demonstrates the partnership's continued ability to engage a diverse range of people, the majority of whom are commonly recognised as disadvantaged in one or more ways. For example, on joining the project, 46% of learners declared a disability, learning difficulty or long-term health condition. 93% lacked basic skills in either English or maths, the vast majority lacking in both disciplines.

Overall, 98% declared at least one recognised barrier to progression (disability, lacking basic skills, low educational attainment, single parent, ethnic minority, workless household); 61% declaring multiple and often complex barriers.

In terms of gender equality, the proportion of young women engaged by the project to the end of March stood at 42%, slightly below the ESFA's national target of 46%.

The Covid 19 pandemic led to an inevitable and significant decline across all key performance indicators compared to target, including learner volumes, achievement and onward progression, due to multiple and prolonged periods of lock-down and stringent social distancing requirements that endured in between. Covid restrictions severely constricted common referral routes into the project and limited the partnership's ability to undertake outreach engagement activities, thereby affecting recruitment. However, we rapidly adapted to remote and blended learning models to replace traditional face-to-face delivery methods and worked to find solutions to the high prevalence of digital exclusion amongst learners to enable their continued engagement and learning from home.

Despite the unprecedented difficulties encountered throughout the year, the partnership made the best of a difficult situation, continuing to deliver much needed support to learners, despite large parts of society grinding to a halt around us. Partners provided a range of wider practical and pastoral support to learners over the year including delivery of food and hygiene parcels, home visits to check on welfare of more vulnerable learners, loan of laptops/ tablets to aid remote learning, etc. Although none of this supplementary wraparound support directly contributes

achievement of contractual targets or draw-down of contract funding, it was clearly the right thing to do and we are proud of the caring and often, selfless nature of our members who have worked hard to ensure the continued provision of support for learners at a time when they arguably needed it most.

Encouragingly, during the year, Greenbank received formal notification from the ESFA of the project's extension until March 2023, with 50% growth awarded to the Halton element of the contract and potential to grow the Merseyside element by up to 50% at a future review point, subject to ongoing performance. Regardless of whether additional funding will later be allocated for Merseyside, the time extension alone will allow us the opportunity to improve performance and maximise income generation and, ultimately, support more young people over a longer period, which will help to offset some of the detrimental impacts of COVID-19 on our local young people.

LCRCares Fund – Get Yourself Online Project

Established by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCR CA) and managed by the Community Foundation for Merseyside (CFM), LCRCares was a crowdfunding campaign established out the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020 to support community and voluntary organisations on the frontline of helping the city region's communities cope with the impact of Coronavirus.

Under VOLA's leadership, £55,000 of LCRCares funding was successfully secured through a series of 11 linked applications to provide tablet computers and time-limited internet access to digitally excluded, households/ residents across the city region. Get Yourself Online was delivered by a partnership of 10 VOLA member organisations, all experienced in delivering digital inclusion interventions, each of whom received a £5,000 grant, with VOLA acting in its usual consortium and project management role.

The partnership distributed equipment to 320 households (totalling approximately 600 people), who were provided with a tablet and 3-month sim card to enable them to get online, with basic IT skills support and 'how to' guides provided to enable recipients to use their equipment. The project supported access to online public services, shopping and health advice and has helped to reduce isolation by enabling people to connect with family and friends; it also supported online learning and home-schooling.

The project was developed to benefit digitally and socially excluded households, often the most vulnerable in society, with no internet access and who couldn't afford to buy a device and/or internet connectivity. Specific target groups *(and the percentages achieved)* included older people *(21% aged 70+, rising to 32% for 65+)*; shielded groups advised to self-isolate *(34%)*; low income families *(56%)*; long-term, work-limiting health conditions *(31%)*; disabilities *(32%)* / learning difficulties *(10%)*; and socially isolated with no local social support networks *(68%)*.

The National Lottery Community Fund Covid Response Fund

Early in the summer, VOLA was successful in its application to the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) Covid-19 Response Fund, awarded nearly £34,000 in grant funding to enable us to continue to support our members during the pandemic. This funding was crucial to ensuring continued operations over the seven month period, August 2020 to February 2021. Through this funding we were able to provide invaluable support to our members, in areas such as:

- Dissemination of Government guidance on social distancing restrictions in relation to the delivery of education and training services.
- Help to review and redesign training delivery models to ensure continued provision.

- Capacity building support, through a suite of online webinars, to aid service delivery planning in light of Covid restrictions. Topics covered Health and Safety, safeguarding, blended learning and cyber security. 28 member organisations (75 individuals, totalling 142 individual attendances) benefited from this support.
- Engagement in voluntary sector and wider city region responses to the pandemic.
- Preparation for Kickstart (Government job creation scheme), raising awareness and delivering briefing sessions to local voluntary sector employers, ultimately leading a successful partnership bid to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in February.

Social Value

Continuing from the work we undertook and reported in last year's annual report, we have continued to use the HACT wellbeing calculator to quantify the social value of activities undertaken during the year. In the past year alone we have created a conservatively estimated social value totalling £1,401,728, attributed to:

- £460,000 value through providing general employability training to 293 young people
- £158,000 through supporting 11 young people into full time employment
- £12,000 through supporting 5 young people into Apprenticeships
- £772,000 through supporting 320 adults who weren't able to access the internet to become digitally included.

Future Opportunities

While there remains some uncertainty about how the Covid 19 pandemic will continue to impact the delivery of the New Futures project, the mass rollout of the vaccine across the UK has led to a renewed hope that life can begin to return to somewhere near 'normal'. All our partners have adapted their delivery models, moving to a blended learning approach, with an improved ability to rapidly react to changing social circumstances.

As we begin to emerge from the pandemic, we are anticipating contract performance will return to 'pre-Covid' levels. A revised delivery/ target forecast has recently been agreed by the ESFA and we will continue to support our members to maximise the achievement of contract targets.

Our recent application to the DWP to become a Kickstart 'Gateway' organisation was successful. Kickstart provides funding to employers to create six-month paid work placements for unemployed young people, aged 16-24, who are in receipt of Universal Credit. As a Gateway organisation, VOLA acts as an intermediary between the DWP and approved employers, with a target of creating/ filling 64 jobs by December 2021. VOLA administers the funding and, in partnership with CareerConnect (VOLA member), provides integrated training, careers advice and support to ensure participants gain useful skills and knowledge, alongside the invaluable work experience, to better position them for securing longer term employment when the six-month period ends.

2022 will see the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF), the UK's successor to the European Social Fund, following our recent departure from the EU. A key strategic objective for 2021/22 is to ensure our involvement in emerging discussions and local planning processes to help shape thinking on how the scheme could work in the city region and how VOLA could contribute to the new agenda.

Financial Review

During the 2020/21 financial year, charitable activity generated an income of £74,744 to be used to further the organisation's objectives. Following a predicted annual operating deficit in the previous financial year, this year the charity is able to report a modest surplus of £8,260. Although lower than originally forecast prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, to report a surplus is an encouraging achievement considering the broader context of the operating environment over year.

In addition to the charity's direct income and expenditure, note 12 to the accounts details 'agent' funds held and distributed by VOLA Consortium on behalf of Greenbank College ('principal') to third party delivery partners involved in the New Futures project. VOLA has no discretion or control over the use to which these funds are put by the third-party delivery partners, as the charity simply distributes them in line with the instructions given by Greenbank. As such, they are not recognised as an asset in the charity's accounts, in accordance with Module 19 of the SORP.

Performance income from the New Futures contract was significantly impacted by the COVID pandemic, however, the Board of Trustees and Consortium Manager worked diligently to implement contingency plans and were successful in securing sufficient funding from other sources to secure a modest surplus.

As of 31st March 2021, the charity maintained a relatively healthy balance sheet, comprising sufficient cash at bank and payment due from debtors. The charity's liquid assets and anticipated grant and contract income, combined with tight financial management and plans to diversify funding, are forecast to cover planned activities and financial liabilities for the coming financial year. Current projections provide confidence the charity will sustain itself as a going concern for the coming financial year.

Reserves

Currently, the charity has a reserves policy of £5,000 to cover the costs anticipated (e.g. financial and legal costs) in the event of the charitable company being wound up. The unrestricted reserves at year end stood at £29,207, with ample cash at bank to cover anticipated financial liabilities in the event of the charity's closure.

This policy reflects the charity's continued position in relation to staffing and fixed assets, in that it does not directly employ any staff and, therefore, has no direct employment or redundancy liabilities, nor does it have any loans or other liabilities in relation to buildings either owned or leased.

The policy has been reviewed again this year and will continue to be reviewed annually, subject to amendment should the charity's risk profile change, for example, if the charity began to directly employ staff or secure premises.

The charity has no subsidiary undertakings, nor is any fund within the charity's accounts materially in deficit.

With forecast income from the New Futures and Kickstart projects and contingency plans to reduce expenditure in the event of any further deficit in New Futures project income, the Board of Trustees remains confident in the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Reference and administrative details

Charity number:	1158777
Company number:	08746685
Registered Office:	Burlington House, Crosby Road North, Waterloo, Liverpool, L22 0LG

Our advisors

Independent Examiner:	Peter Taaffe FCA CTA DChA, BWM Chartered Accountants, Castle Chambers, Liverpool.
Bankers:	Unity Trust Bank Plc, 9 Brindleyplace, Birmingham. B1 2HB
Solicitors:	Brabners, Horton House, Exchange Flags, Liverpool. L2 3YL

Directors and trustees

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year-end were as follows:

Trustees

James Brett - appointed at AGM, 10 November 2020, following co-option by the Board 26 November 2019
Claire Cook
Gregory Coyne - resigned at AGM, 10 November 2020
Nicola Crosby
Damian France (Chair of Trustees)
Debbie Gayle - appointed at AGM, 10 November 2020
Mark Ord
David Roberts
Helen Stephens
Angela White OBE

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

VOLA Consortium is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association amended on 25th September 2014. It is registered with the Charity Commission. Anyone over the age of 16 can become a member of the Company and there are currently 9 trustee members (9 in 2019/20), each of whom agrees to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up. In addition to the trustees, the charity had 60 membership organisations as at 31st March 2021, who also agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Structure, Governance and Management *(Continued)*

Appointment of trustees

As set out in the Articles of Association the trustees are elected by members of the charitable company attending the Annual General Meeting. The longest service one third of trustees retires each year and are able to offer themselves for re-election.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on: their legal obligations under charity and company law, the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and inform them of the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance of the charity. During the induction process they meet key employees and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role.

Organisation

The board of trustees, which can have up to 12 members, administers the charity. The board normally meets quarterly. A Manager is appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations the Manager has delegated authority, within the terms of delegation approved by the trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment, and service delivery activity. The Manager and other members of the staff team are employed by Sefton Council for Voluntary Services, a VOLA membership organisation, with VOLA Consortium being recharged for any staff time incurred in the operation of projects. A written membership agreement is in place outlining the terms of this staffing relationship.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receives remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity and any client or supplier is disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

Risk Management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces;
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

This work has identified that financial sustainability is the major financial risk for the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available liquid funds to settle debts as they fall due, regular liaison with the bank and active management of trade debtors and creditors balances to ensure sufficient working capital by the charity.

Risk Management *(continued)*

Attention has also been focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety of clients and data protection. These risks are managed by ensuring accreditation is up to date, having robust policies and procedures in place and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees, who are also the directors of VOLA Consortium for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity 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 that year. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

1) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
2) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
3) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
4) state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
5) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

This report was approved by the board of trustees on 28th September 2021 and signed on their behalf.

Damian France
Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report
To the trustees of VOLA Consortium
For the year ended 31 March 2021

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of VOLA Consortium for the year ended 31 March 2021.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My examination has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my examination, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of VOLA Consortium (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I can confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

BWM

Mr Peter Taaffe FCA CTA DChA
BWM
Chartered Accountants
Castle Chambers
43 Castle Street
Liverpool
L2 9SH

Date: 28.09.2021

VOLA Consortium

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Current Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and Legacies	2		-		300
Charitable activities	3	35,782	38,962	74,744	36,949
Total Income		35,782	38,962	74,744	37,249
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	4, 5	27,034	39,450	66,484	59,047
Total expenditure		27,034	39,450	66,424	59,047
Net income/(expenditure)		8,748	-488	8,260	-21,798
Transfers between funds	14	(488)	488	-	-
Net movement in funds		8,260	-	8,260	-21,798
Reconciliation of funds:					
Funds b/fwd		20,947	-	20,947	42,745
Funds c/fwd		29,207	-	29,207	20,947

The Statement of Financial Activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

VOLA Consortium
Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating Income & Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31 March 2021

Previous Year Ended 31 March 2020

	Note	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2020 £
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and Legacies	2	300	-	300
Charitable activities	3	36,949	-	36,949
Total Income		37,249	-	37,249
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	4,5	59,047	-	59,047
Total expenditure		59,047	-	59,047
Net income/(expenditure)		-21,798		-21,798
Transfers between funds		-	-	-
Net movement in funds		-21,798	-	-21,798
Reconciliation of funds:				
Funds b/fwd		42,745	-	42,745
Funds c/fwd		20,947	-	20,947

The notes on pages 15 to 24 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Balance Sheet
As at 31 March 2021

Company Number: 08746685

	Note	2021 £	£	2020 £
Current Assets				
Debtors	9	4,716		9,733
Cash at bank and in hand	10	38,321		28,638
		43,037		38,371
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	13,830		17,424
Net Current Assets			29,207	20,947
Total Net Assets	15		29,207	20,947
Funds of the charity				
Designated Funds			-	-
General Fund			29,207	20,947
Total Unrestricted Funds	13		29,207	20,947
Restricted Fund			-	-
Total Restricted Fund	14		-	-
Total Funds			29,207	20,947

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees 28th September 2021

Damian France
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 15 to 24 form part of these financial statements

VOLA Consortium
Notes to the Accounts
For the year ended 31 March 2021

1 Accounting Policies

1a. Basis of preparation

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 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), and the Companies Act 2006 and the UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016.

VOLA Consortium meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The Charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The functional currency used by VOLA Consortium is the £ Sterling.

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

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

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

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

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

1b. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

An assessment of income streams and the required fixed and variable overheads required to complete the ongoing projects successfully, the trustees consider that the accounts should be prepared on a going concern basis.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1c. Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1d. Deferred income

Income from donations and grants, including capital grants are deferred when the following conditions are met:

a) when donors specify that donations and grants given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods

b) when donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in incoming resources until the preconditions for use have been met.

1e. Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the general volunteer time is not recognised and refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1f. Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

a) Expenditure on charitable activities includes the educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

b) Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1 Accounting Policies (cont.)

1g. Funds Accounting

All income and expenditure together with gains and losses are allocated to a specific charitable fund.

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be used solely for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.
Further details of restricted funds together with their purposes are set out in note 14.

1h. 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.

1i. 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.

1j. 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 normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1k. Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

2. Donations & Legacies

	2021	2020
	£	£
Donations	-	300
	-	300

3. Charitable Activity Income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Greenbank College – New Futures	35,782	36,949
LCR Cares Fund – Get Yourself Online	5,000	-
The National Lottery Community Fund – Covid Response	33,962	-
	74,744	36,949

4. Charitable activities

	Education and training	**Total 2021**	Total 2020
	£	**£**	£
Direct staff costs	52,098	52,098	50,708
Project costs	4,449	4,449	2,750
Share of support costs (see note 5)	7,957	7,957	3,669
Share of governance costs (see note 5)	1980	1980	1920
	66,484	66,484	59,047

The direct staff costs are the total seconded staff costs charged to VOLA

Analysis by fund			
Restricted funds	39,450		-
Unrestricted funds	27,034		-
	66,484,		-

For the year ended 31 March 2020			
Restricted funds	-	-	-
Unrestricted funds	59,047	-	59,047
	59,047	-	59,047

5. Support costs

	Support costs	**Governance costs**	**2021**	2020	**Basis of allocation**
	£	**£**	**£**	£	
Contribution to overheads	7,957	-	7,957	3,669	Allocated to education and training
Independent examiners fees	-	1,980	1,980	1,920	Allocated to education and training
	7,957	1980	9,937	5,589	

6. Financial instruments

	2021	2020
	£	£
Carrying amount of financial assets		
Debt instruments measured at amortised cost	43,037	38,371
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Measured at amortised cost	13,830	17,424

7. Trustees

No remuneration was paid to trustees during the year (2020 - nil)

No Expenses were reimbursed to trustees during the year (2020 - nil)

8. Related Party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	18,690	21,159
	18,690	21,159

There were no other related party transactions during the year

9. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	4,716	9,733
	4,716	9,733

10. Cash at bank and in hand

	2021	2020
	£	£
Cash at bank	38,321	28,638
	38,321	28,638

11. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	11,850	15,504
Accruals and deferred income	1,980	1,920
	13,830	17,424

12. Funds held as agent

VOLA Consortium holds funds as agent totalling £528 (2020: £484), in a bank account operated by the charitable company, which is payable to third parties. The bank balance and an equivalent amount payable to third parties are excluded from these accounts.

Previous year ended 31 March 2020

Funder	Balance brought forward £	*Received* £	*Spent* £	Balance carried forward 2020 £
Greenbank College				
New Futures Programme		289,177	(288,693)	484
Total funds held as agent (previous year)		289,177	(288,693)	484

Current year ended 31 March 2021

Funder	**Balance brought forward £**	***Received* £**	***Spent* £**	**Balance carried forward 2020 £**
Greenbank College				
New Futures Programme	484	282,360	(282,316)	528
Total funds held as agent (current year)	484	282,360	(282,316)	528

13. Unrestricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2020

	Balance brought forward £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	Transfers between funds £	Balance carried forward 2020 £
General Fund	42,745	300	(9,589)		33,456
General Fund – New Futures		36,949	(49,458)		(12,509)
Total Funds (previous year)	42,745	37,249	(59,047)		20,947

Current year ended 31 March 2021

	Balance brought forward £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2021 £**
General Fund	33,456	-	(6,184)	(488)	26,784
General Fund - New Futures	(12,509)	35,782	(20,850)	-	2,423
Total Funds (current year)	20,947	35,782	(27,034	(488)	29,207

14. Restricted Funds

Previous year ended 31 March 2020	Balance brought forward £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	Transfers between funds £	Balance carried forward 2020 £
-	-	-	-	-	-
Total funds (previous year)	-	-	-	-	-

Current year ended 31 March 2021	**Balance brought forward £**	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers between funds £**	**Balance carried forward 2021 £**
LCR Cares – GYO	-	5,000	(5,488)	488	-
TNLCF – Covid Response	-	33,962	(33,962)	-	-
Total Funds (current year)	-	38,962	(39,450)	488	-

The LCR Cares – Get Yourself Online project, was a £5,000 grant to enable Vola to provide a consortium and project management role for a city region wide project delivered by partners, providing tablet computers and time-limited internet access to digitally excluded, households/ residents. The shortfall in funding was funded out of unrestricted funds.

The National Lottery Community Fund Covid Response grant of £33,962 was awarded to enable Vola to continue to support its members during the pandemic.

15. Analysis of Net Assets

Previous year ended 31 March 2020

	Unrestricted Funds	*Restricted Funds*	*Total Funds*
	£	£	£
Net Current Assets	20,947	-	20,947
	20,947	-	20,947

Current year ended 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted Funds	**Restricted Funds**	**Total Funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Net Current Assets	29,207	-	29,207
	29,207	-	29,207