

Charity registration number 1176429

Company registration number 10729008 (England and Wales)

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mr G Hartley Mr P Rossiter Ms E L Price Miss C Jones Mrs S Taylor Ms A V Gill Mr A Kerr Mrs J M Hinnigan Ms C Diggory Ms P Massey Mr Alan Sieber	(Appointed 18 May 2022) (Appointed 4 October 2022) (Appointed 4 October 2022) (Appointed 4 October 2022)
Patron	David Briggs MBE KStJ	
Chief Executive Officer	Ceri George	
Charity number	1176429	
Company number	10729008	
Registered office	Unit 8 Parade Enterprise Centre The Parade Blacon Chester CH1 5HN	
Independent examiner	Champion Allwoods Ltd 2nd Floor Refuge House 33-37 Watergate Row Chester CH1 2LE	

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees' report	1 - 7
Independent examiner's report	8
Statement of financial activities	9
Balance sheet	10
Notes to the financial statements	11 - 19

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements 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 financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

The charitable objectives of Platform for Life agreed with the Charity Commission are:

1. To enable the treatment and care of parents, parents-to-be and carers who experience individual, societal, economic or relationship psychological stress by the provision of counselling to enable them to provide safe, secure and nurturing environments for their children.
2. To enable the treatment and care of children and young people who are in families where psychological stress could be impairing their normal emotional development by the provision of play therapy and counselling.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities and setting the strategy for the year.

Working in communities with high levels of deprivation the charity provides counselling that is:

- Local and Community based, working where clients live so there are no transport problems for them to address or children to pull out of school.
- Flexible, working around clients and not restricting the number of sessions they can access or penalising them if they do not attend every session. The charity understands the challenges clients face and tries to be as flexible as possible to their needs and situation at any given time.
- Accessible. The charity aims for short referral times so clients can access support quickly and operates without the usual levels of bureaucracy or thresholds that screen out the majority of those seeking help to address mental health issues.
- Tailored to the needs of each client, providing support for as long as they require it rather than the usual fixed number of sessions (6-8) offered by mainstream mental health services.
- Preventative, with an aim of breaking the cycle of poor mental health being passed down from one generation to the next.
- Family focused, recognising that parental trauma can have a profound effect on children. This means the charity may sometimes work with a parent(s), child or both to make a difference for the family.
- Free of charge to clients.

Platform for Life's work was recognised by NHS Cheshire Wirral Partnership in 2023 through a Community Star award. Whilst no part of the charity's work is currently commissioned by Cheshire Wirral Partnership, this award provides an important endorsement of the services it offers and their impact at a local community level.

Platform for Life works in three locations in Chester; Blacon, Lache and Kingsway, areas which fall within the bottom 10% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. A significant number of families in these communities have one or more family members who are struggling with mental health issues and social deprivation makes this more acute. The charity's client group have experienced many life challenges that encompass traumas (often in childhood), abuse and other adversities. These include domestic violence, substance misuse, difficult family relationships including absent/missing parents, different forms of abuse, being a young carer for parent and/or siblings, imprisonment of family members, bereavement and loss in all its forms, neglect and financial hardship. Such experiences not only shape and impact clients' own lives and mental wellbeing, but also that of other family members. In the case of children and young people, when they go on to have their own family, this can be passed down to the next generation, continuing the negative cycle.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Clients that Platform for Life works with often feel invisible and forgotten in society and the difficulties they have accessing help with mental health issues from mainstream services, only serves to reinforce this. Before Covid, clients in these communities often struggled to access and engage with primary care services. These set high thresholds for access, offered inflexible and time limited provision that penalised them if they could not attend every appointment and failed to properly accommodate any special needs they might have. Post Covid, the situation has become more acute, with access thresholds raised yet further and wait times to be seen by a therapist often exceeding one or more years. This means only those who can afford to pay for private therapy are able to access timely support. Without services like Platform for Life, clients on low incomes are left to struggle on alone. Their mental health issues go untreated affecting not only their own life chances but those of any children they have or may go on to have in the future.

Platform for Life works really hard to ensure every client feels visible, valued and cared for. It offers a variety of therapeutic services including counselling, art therapy, play therapy and parent work. Decisions on how to work with a client are considered on an individual, family and situation basis and the charity's aim is always to help bring about positive change for the client and by association, their family. Referrals come from a wide range of agencies that families in these communities interact with. These include schools, GPs, health visitors, midwives, social workers, family intervention workers as well as other charities operating locally. As part of the charity's family focused approach, all referrers are offered the opportunity to make referrals for children and young people, as well as adults (parents and carers). There is also an option for adults to refer themselves or another family member directly into Platform for Life and over the last year this option has been extended further to include young people in a local high school. Clients are contacted as soon as their referral is received to tell them a bit more about the service, let them know the wait time and to answer any questions they might have. The charity's aim is to build a relationship of trust with clients that can then carry on into their work with a therapist.

Platform for Life is an advocate for early intervention and does not set a threshold for how severe a client's mental health issues need to be before they can access support. The aim is to work with clients as early as possible when they experience poor mental health to avoid it becoming a long-term issue that negatively impacts their life chances. Clients present with a range of mild to more complex mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation, behavioural issues, low self-esteem, stress, sleep disturbances and PTSD. The majority of referrals made into the service are for complex mental health issues and alongside significant growth in the number of referrals, the charity has observed increased level of complexity these over the last two years.

Demand for the charity's service continues to be strong and referrals over the last 2 years have grown by 50%. This growth has not been linear and there have been significant peaks at the start of each new academic and calendar years. For the second year running, referrals for children and young people have been higher (53%) than those for adults (47%) and the charity expects this to continue.

Over 35% of all referrals came from schools, with self-referrals accounting for a further 29% (6% of these were parental referrals for a child into Platform for Life). Referrals from Medical Centres, Health visitors and Starting Well teams contributed a further 21% and Social Services 7%. The growth of self-referrals is a testament to the charity's focus on making the service easily accessible to all clients.

Having taken steps to expand its counselling capacity in the previous year, the charity has largely been able to respond to the continued growth in demand, although there has been increased pressure on wait times in the second half of the year. Whilst Platform for Life currently serves 3 areas of high deprivation within Chester, it has noticed an increasing number of referrals being made for low-income clients in other parts of the City. Because of high demand in its 3 focus areas and a need to ensure the service does not become overwhelmed, it has not been possible to accept these referrals, but the charity has an ambition to extend its services to the whole of Chester, subject to funding.

There is currently a national shortage of qualified therapists who can work with children, and this has made the recruitment and retention of employed and sessional therapists more challenging than pre-Covid. The charity benefits from a team of experienced and highly qualified counsellors, art and play therapists, a mix of employed and sessional roles. Overall, the team is very committed to the charity, and it does its best to be a fair employer in terms of salary, working conditions and benefits such as flexible working. Platform for Life has recently been accredited as a Living Wage Employer. Nevertheless, there has been some therapist turnover, mainly on the sessional side which the charity has sought to fill each time.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Achievements and performance

Key achievements

- Client referrals remained strong and the number of agencies making referrals continued to grow. 86% of referrers surveyed in 2022 believe there are no other agencies offering a service like Platform for Life to children and 100% believe there is nothing similar for parents/carers.
- 310 clients actively engaged with Platform for Life's service.
- Offered 3,205 therapy sessions between April 2022 and March 2023 with a client attendance rate of 80%. Given the challenges many clients face, this level of engagement is extremely positive.
- Maintained counselling capacity despite a very competitive labour market.
- Ensured the charity's income level grew to cover increase in expenditure.
- Raised the charity's profile locally through presentations, meetings with key stakeholders and fundraising activities.
- Charity was recognised with an award in the Community Service Category from Cheshire Wirral Partnership at their Community Mental Health Awards.
- Developed Platform for Life theory of change model with support from Westminster Foundation.
- Accredited as a Living Wage Employer.

Impact of the Charity's work

Platform for Life captures a mix of quantitative and qualitative data to assess the impact of its service on clients at an individual, family and sometimes community level. Positive changes to a person's mental health can have significant benefit for the rest of their family, meaning the impact of its service on people's lives can be further amplified by 3-4x. Based on the charity's support for 310 active clients over the last year, this means up to 1,240 further family members have been impacted by its service.

The charity uses CORE Standardised Assessment Tool to measure risk and wellbeing of adult and young person clients at the beginning, middle and end of therapy. Data suggests that 84% of adults and 85% young people recorded improvements in their wellbeing by the end of their work with Platform for Life. For children the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is used. This is completed by either a parent/carer or teacher and assesses before, middle and after therapy emotional health needs. Data shows that 80% of parents observed improvements in their child's wellbeing.

Through an end of counselling feedback form Platform for Life also asks adult and young person clients to rank how they feel and capture changes they have noticed since having therapy. A simplified version of this form which is more pictorial is used with children.

Statement	Adult	Young person	Child
I feel more able to cope	91%	79%	90%
I feel more positive about myself	86%	72%	80%
I am more positive about my future	91%	76%	N/A
I feel happier after counselling	N/A	N/A	76%

"If I hadn't accessed your service I don't know how I would have avoided going back on drugs because it's a way of taking away the feelings of what you feel like, to be in another place. I've really loved the service. It's helped a lot." **Adult**

"The sessions have changed not only my life but my son's too." **Adult**

"My counsellor's kindness and understanding calmed me and helped me realise how to help myself. Being able to express my emotions was very helpful." **Young person**

"When I started counselling, I was in a different school and unhappy. I then never went to school for about 4 months but I had my sessions. I'm now in a new school and I'm happy and have learned some strategies along the way." **Young person**

"I love my counsellor. They made me happier." **Child**

"It's fun to be around her and it's easier to talk about my feelings. She helped me shrink my problems and worries. It's made me feel better about myself." **Child**

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Progress on priorities in last year's report:

The charity agreed to continue addressing the strategic objectives set in 2021 which were as follows:-

Build and develop community partnerships with other agencies on the basis of mutual benefit, to ensure optimal referral, co-working and post-counselling support.

Good progress. The charity continues to build relationships with local community groups and agencies offering support. In particular, a strong relationship has been forged with Koala North- West (another family-focused charity operating in the area) which makes referrals into Platform for Life's service and accepts introductions from its clients into their service.

Ensure that the charity scopes and finds ways to diversify its client base and ensure it is easy to reach for those who have most to benefit from its service.

Good progress. The charity continues to identify areas of need in the communities we work in and evolve its service to address these and ensure it is easy to access. An example of this is the Young Person self-referrals pilot which has moved into next phase and been opened up to all pupils in local high school.

Use qualitative and quantitative data to raise the charity's profile and demonstrate impact

Very good progress. The charity has strengthened its quantitative assessments and piloted capturing longer term feedback from clients. It has also produced an annual social impact report in 2021 and 2022, telling its story, the families that were supported and the impact this had on their lives. This has been well received by funders and other key stakeholders and has helped the charity demonstrate the difference it makes.

Continuously reflect and refine on how the charity can improve its service to clients and be at the forefront of best practice and innovation in this area

Very good progress. Over the last year the charity has developed its theory of change model, benefitting from expertise kindly provided by Westminster Foundation. This articulates the change it wants to make in people's lives and identify ways to make most effective use of its resources and activities to achieve this. Different client personas have been put through the model to identify how/if the charity meets their needs and ways in which its service can be further improved. This has generated a number of actions which the charity will pursue in the next year.

Recruit, train, develop and retain the highest quality of staff possible and for staff to feel highly valued and recognised in their work.

Very good progress. The charity has increased the number of training opportunities staff have at both an individual and group level and introduced more on the job training options. The Charity works hard to be a fair employer as evidenced in the steps it has taken to support staff during cost of living crisis and the flexibility it has shown with regards to work patterns. Platform for Life has recently been accredited as a Living Wage Employer.

Ensure sustainable funding and support for the charity through diverse means and sources and which support its vision and strategic objectives

Progress. The charity has been successful in growing its funding and nearly 12% of this came from fundraising activities and donations. It still remained largely dependent on trusts and foundations which accounted for 79% of income. The adoption of the new Health and Social Care Bill from July 2022 has meant substantial changes to the commissioning/delivery of NHS services and some delays in implementing these. Many contacts previously made have moved onto other roles or have left the NHS which has meant starting again to build relationships. The charity is a member of Cheshire West Mental Health Alliance and was recently recognised by Cheshire Wirral Partnership in their Mental Health Awards. Whilst these have both helped raise Platform for Life's visibility with statutory bodies, becoming a commissioned service remains an unmet goal.

Ensure that the charity's board of trustees have the necessary expertise, structures and systems to provide necessary support, governance and challenges to allow it to achieve its vision and strategic objectives

Good progress. The charity benefits from a committed Chair and Board of trustees. A skills audit in 2022 showed an excellent and varied range of skills and expertise amongst trustees. These have been especially helpful to the charity as it navigates through a changing landscape and the management team have been able to rely on active support from trustees in a number of areas, not least fundraising.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Financial Review

The trustees believe that the current financial position is healthy with sufficient funds to continue to deliver the current levels of service and for prudent expansion, reflecting the increase in demand for our services seen over the past year.

During the past year, we received income of £314,930. Of this, 84% took the form of unrestricted grants and donations, 6% were restricted grants with the other 10% derived from the provision of counselling services.

Our reserves policy continues to require that our free reserves balance should be sufficient to undertake an orderly wind-up of the charity over a six month period. This policy is a prudent approach and would allow us to safely finish therapy without damaging our clients' mental health.

During the year, the Board approved a revised methodology of how this amount should be calculated given the charity is now a more mature organisation than when the earlier calculation method was devised. The new calculation methodology recognised that not all costs would be continued to be incurred over a full six month period in the event of an orderly wind-up. This has resulted in a modest reduction in the calculated required amount of reserves (compared to the previous approach). We ended the year with free reserves of 148% of the amount required to undertake an orderly wind-up over a six month period. Given that the amounts of income received can be "lumpy", this represents a prudent level of reserves. As in the previous year this year-end balance is somewhat inflated due to nearly 60% of our income being credited in the second half of the year.

The charity's expenditure has continued to grow steadily throughout the year, reflecting both the success of our fundraising efforts and the increasing demand for services referred to earlier. The charity is very conscious of the need to ensure that resources are focused on the provision of services to our clients. In this context, support service costs amounted to 36% of total expenditure. This is a similar percentage to last year and one which the Board believes compares favourably with similar charities. Recent infrastructure investments – the Lamplight clinical database and the Sage financial and accounting software – have continued to bring benefits and have been instrumental in improving clinical and financial management information.

One of our objectives for the last financial year was to enhance our fundraising efforts, both in terms of the overall amount raised and to diversify the sources of funding. In terms of the former, the amount raised in 2022/23 was an increase of 46% compared to the previous year. In terms of diversifying our sources of funding, charitable trusts and foundations continue to provide the bulk of our funds (80%). In this context, we are particularly grateful for the five year strategic partnership with the Westminster Foundation. During the year we have significantly increased the amounts received through donations due to a range of successful initiatives.

Another objective for the last financial year was to diversify our cash deposits between a number of financial institutions in order to ensure our funds enjoy a better level of protection from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. This has been achieved, with new arrangements put into place ahead of the mainly USA banking scares seen this year.

Our key financial objective for the year ahead is to build on the momentum achieved in 2022/23 to increase our income, thereby allowing the charity to meet the increased demand for services. Given the cost of living crisis, to which the charity is not immune, more effective fundraising is required in order to cover increased costs. In doing this, we will continue to seek to diversify further our sources of funds.

Funding sources

The charity is very grateful to its principal grant funders:

Avenue Services
Cheshire Freemasons
Chester Bluecoat Charity
Development Youth of Chester Fund
Earl of Chester Fund
Kelly Family Charitable Trust
Sanctuary Housing
Severn Trent Foundation
Westminster Foundation

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Future Plans

With change occurring at an exponential rate and increased levels of uncertainty in recent years, the charity believes it needs to be agile and able to respond quickly to outside events. Rather than set long-term objectives, it was agreed that the charity should identify a series of projects that enable it to move forward. Once these are complete or are no longer valid because of external events, a further set should be identified. The projects the charity has agreed to focus on:-

- Diversifying funding sources
- Trauma informed leadership
- Becoming a Centre of excellence in the provision of mental health services, meeting client needs and evidencing impact.
- Pilot project to open up referrals to a key referrer operating in other pockets of deprivation in Chester.
- More fully measuring the charity's impact, especially over the longer term.

The charity has recently secured funding to appoint a Family Support Worker to help clients address some of the more practical needs they have, which can sometimes hinder progress with their therapist. This role is currently being recruited and will be in place in the second half of the financial year.

Structure, governance and management

The trustees, who are also directors for the purpose of company law, who were the charity's trustees on the date the report was approved or who served as a trustee in the reporting period were:

Mr G Hartley	
Cllr T Richards	(Resigned 29 June 2022)
Mr P Rossiter	
Ms E L Price	
Ms B Hook	(Resigned 29 June 2022)
Miss C Jones	
Mrs L Hill	(Resigned 29 June 2022)
Mrs S Taylor	
Ms A V Gill	
Mr A Kerr	
Mrs J M Hinnigan	(Appointed 18 May 2022)
Ms C Diggory	(Appointed 4 October 2022)
Ms P Massey	(Appointed 4 October 2022)
Mr Alan Sieber	(Appointed 4 October 2022)

The Board is effective and supportive of the staff and has been strengthened with three new trustees, adding skills and experience in education, counselling and charity management.

The Board meets quarterly for routine business. The CEO Ceri George and Clinical Lead Shelagh Hatton are in attendance and other members of staff are invited to attend as appropriate. The management of the counselling discipline, together with day- to-day management of clients and associated case management matters, is undertaken by Clinical Lead Shelagh Hatton, who reports to the CEO.

Further oversight is provided by 3 subcommittees chaired and led by trustees, covering Finance and Risk, HR and Governance and Professional Standards. These meet 4x per year with invitees from the management team and report into the Board.

Over the last year, the charity has made progress on a number of governance areas.

Continue working on clearly defined roles and accountabilities.

- All trustees have attended bespoke governance training session provided by a charity law specialist.
- All trustees except the Chair who provides oversight, are members of and/or Chair one or more sub-committees.

Increase the effectiveness of the risk register by including a 'traffic-light' system and undertaking regular reviews

- Charity reviews risks on quarterly basis within Finance and Risk Management Committee and reports on these at Board meetings.
- Charity uses traffic light system to monitor and report on risks.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Recruit at least one trustee with knowledge of mental health and/or the NHS and one with counselling experience

- Charity benefits from two qualified counsellor trustees and a trustee with many years health service experience.

Increase charity cohesion via the flow of knowledge from staff to trustees enabling trustees to gain an understanding of the work undertaken and the pressures on the staff ('coalface' understanding of work undertaken)

- Trustees continue to pursue opportunities to meet with both therapy and operational staff to learn more about the work being undertaken.
- A number of trustees have been involved in specific projects such as the development of the charity's theory of change model and volunteering to fundraise.

Over the next financial year, the Board will continue to focus on these governance areas.

Advisors

We are grateful to our Patron David Briggs who provides input and support on a regular basis. The CEO receives valuable support and advice from a CEO peer support group and the charity has benefitted from skills donors in a number of different areas facilitated by Cheshire Connect. Support and training has also been provided by Cheshire West Voluntary action for which the charity is very grateful.

Safeguarding

The charity has a Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed annually and updated whenever opportunities for improvements are identified. The policy requires that all the charity's personnel have valid DBS certificates and appropriate safeguarding training. The Clinical Lead, CEO and Chair of the Board all have level 3 safeguarding certificates.

Volunteers

Unlike many counselling charities, Platform for Life does not make extensive use of volunteer counsellors as a matter of policy. This is because the counselling is demanding and mostly requires experience and particular specialisms which are less common in the volunteer pool. The charity does offer a small number of carefully supervised placements for therapy students and has also benefitted from marketing, IT and leadership training related skills donor volunteers. It is anticipated that the new Family Support Worker role will help to open up additional volunteering opportunities within the charity.

Auditors

The Company is exempt from audit under the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011 (accounts and audit) order 2015 as the gross income is less than £1 million. Since our gross income for the year is between £25,000 and £1,000,000 we have engaged an independent examiner of "appropriate skill or ability" to verify our accounts.

The annual report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (Charities SORP) and the Companies Act 2006 as applicable for a small charitable company.

By order of the board



Mrs S Taylor

Chair/Director

Dated: 5 July 2023

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Platform for Life Limited (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements 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 the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable 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 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 financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements 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 financial statements 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 financial statements to be reached.

Champion Allwoods Limited

Susan Harris MA ACA
Champion Allwoods Limited
Refuge House
33-37 Watergate Row
Chester
CH1 2LE

Dated: 5 July 2023

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

		Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
	Notes						
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	265,890	18,000	283,890	137,606	51,200	188,806
Charitable activities	4	29,735	-	29,735	26,520	-	26,520
Investments	5	1,305	-	1,305	-	-	-
Total income		<u>296,930</u>	<u>18,000</u>	<u>314,930</u>	<u>164,126</u>	<u>51,200</u>	<u>215,326</u>
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	6	<u>295,233</u>	<u>21,454</u>	<u>316,687</u>	<u>180,404</u>	<u>65,947</u>	<u>246,351</u>
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/							
Net movement in funds		1,697	(3,454)	(1,757)	(16,278)	(14,747)	(31,025)
Fund balances at 1 April		<u>156,756</u>	<u>16,454</u>	<u>173,210</u>	<u>173,034</u>	<u>31,201</u>	<u>204,235</u>
Fund balances at 31 March		<u>158,453</u>	<u>13,000</u>	<u>171,453</u>	<u>156,756</u>	<u>16,454</u>	<u>173,210</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		-		191
Current assets					
Debtors	12	6,220		5,845	
Cash at bank and in hand		173,631		173,676	
		<u>179,851</u>		<u>179,521</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(8,398)</u>		<u>(6,502)</u>	
Net current assets			171,453		173,019
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>171,453</u>		<u>173,210</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	14		13,000		16,454
Unrestricted funds			158,453		156,756
			<u>171,453</u>		<u>173,210</u>

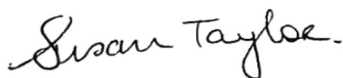
The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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.

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 Trustees on 5 July 2023



Mrs S Taylor
Chair/Director

Company Registration No. 10729008

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Platform for Life Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Unit 8 Parade Enterprise Centre, The Parade, Blacon, Chester, CH1 5HN.

1.1 Accounting convention

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

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

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

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

In accordance with accounting standards, the economic contribution of general volunteers is not included in the accounts.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is included on an accrual basis. Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of all its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support costs. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the accountants' fees and costs linked to strategic management of the charity.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Plant and equipment	20% straight line
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The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

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

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Financial instruments

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

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

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

Basic financial assets

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

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

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

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

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

Derecognition of financial liabilities

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

1.10 Employee benefits

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

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

1.11 Retirement benefits

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £	2022 £
Donations and gifts	28,042	-	28,042	8,381	-	8,381
Grants receivable	234,712	18,000	252,712	129,225	51,200	180,425
Fundraising	3,136	-	3,136	-	-	-
	<u>265,890</u>	<u>18,000</u>	<u>283,890</u>	<u>137,606</u>	<u>51,200</u>	<u>188,806</u>

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Counselling services	29,735	26,520

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Interest receivable	1,305	-

6 Charitable activities

	Counselling 2023 £	Counselling 2022 £
Staff costs	167,150	113,083
Other counselling costs	35,384	44,094
	202,534	157,177
Share of support costs (see note 7)	112,833	87,974
Share of governance costs (see note 7)	1,320	1,200
	316,687	246,351
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	295,233	180,404
Restricted funds	21,454	65,947
	316,687	246,351

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	Support costs	Governance costs	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	97,837	-	97,837	72,092	-	72,092
Depreciation	192	-	192	229	-	229
Admin	6,832	-	6,832	2,815	-	2,815
Other staff costs	1,977	-	1,977	5,979	-	5,979
Rent	3,708	-	3,708	3,161	-	3,161
Insurance	1,578	-	1,578	1,387	-	1,387
Telecommunications	637	-	637	2,237	-	2,237
Charges	72	-	72	74	-	74
Examination fees	-	1,320	1,320	-	1,200	1,200
	<u>112,833</u>	<u>1,320</u>	<u>114,153</u>	<u>87,974</u>	<u>1,200</u>	<u>89,174</u>
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	<u>112,833</u>	<u>1,320</u>	<u>114,153</u>	<u>87,974</u>	<u>1,200</u>	<u>89,174</u>

Governance costs includes payments to the accountants of £1,320 (2022- £1,200) for independent examination fees.

8 Trustees

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

9 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>
Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	244,678	170,720
Social security costs	16,270	10,847
Other pension costs	4,039	3,608
	<u>264,987</u>	<u>185,175</u>

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10 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.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2022	1,144
At 31 March 2023	1,144
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2022	953
Depreciation charged in the year	191
At 31 March 2023	1,144
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	-
At 31 March 2022	191

12 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	5,359	2,041
Prepayments and accrued income	861	3,804
	6,220	5,845

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	81	-
Accruals and deferred income	8,317	6,502
	8,398	6,502

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds			Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Westminster Foundation	-	-	-	-	5,500	-	5,500
CRH Charitable Trust - counselling delivery and staff costs in Lache and Blacon	9,408	-	(9,408)	-	-	-	-
Cheshire Community Foundation - 1000 Days Project	8,873	-	(8,873)	-	-	-	-
Cheshire Community Foundation - Cheshire Minds Matter	8,000	-	(8,000)	-	-	-	-
SJP Charitable Foundation - counselling delivery for school children at risk of exclusion	4,920	4,920	(6,970)	2,870	-	(2,870)	-
Cheshire Community Foundation - Improving Outcomes in Deprived Neighbourhoods	-	10,000	(2,500)	7,500	-	(7,500)	-
Sanctuary Housing - Lache counselling	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-	-	-
The Pixel Fund	-	7,300	(1,216)	6,084	-	(6,084)	-
DHSC Suicide Prevention Fund	-	26,480	(26,480)	-	-	-	-
Sanctuary Housing	-	-	-	-	2,500	(2,500)	-
Severn Trent	-	-	-	-	10,000	(2,500)	7,500
	<u>31,201</u>	<u>51,200</u>	<u>(65,947)</u>	<u>16,454</u>	<u>18,000</u>	<u>(21,454)</u>	<u>13,000</u>

PLATFORM FOR LIFE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	-	-	-	191	-	191
Current assets/(liabilities)	158,453	13,000	171,453	156,565	16,454	173,019
	<u>158,453</u>	<u>13,000</u>	<u>171,453</u>	<u>156,756</u>	<u>16,454</u>	<u>173,210</u>

16 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2022 - none).