

ANNUAL REVIEW 2021



Lisburn Enterprise Organisation Ltd.

Trustees

The Directors/Trustees of the charitable company who were in office during the year were:

Mr Andrew Robinson (Chairman)
Mr J Robert Catney (Company Secretary)
Mr Norman Elliott (Financial Director)
Mr Robert S Briggs
Mr Nicholas Fenton
Mr William Gardiner-Watson – resigned 11 May 2021
Mr Graham Green
Mr Desmond T Magill
Mr I Stanley S McBrien
Mrs Jean E McQuitty
Mr Chris Mitchell
Mr Brian Sofley – appointed 14 September 2021

2021 ANNUAL REVIEW

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 December 2021

The charitable company is managed by the Board which usually meets each month. The day to day management of the charitable company is carried out by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Trustees of the company are elected by the members of the charitable company. Trustees are recruited and appointed in accordance with the Articles of Association. Upon election each Trustee is given a copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the latest Annual Report. They are also introduced to the legal and operational aspects of the charity to ensure they have an understanding of the nature of charity trusteeship and the responsibilities and duties that go with this position.

Risk

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charitable company is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.



Lisburn Enterprise Organisation Ltd.



LEO Main Office Building

Chairman's Foreword

Welcome to the 2021 Annual Review of the activities of Lisburn Enterprise Organisation, presented on behalf of the LEO Board of Directors.

Although the challenges of COVID have remained, during the year Lisburn Enterprise Organisation has continued to support local businesses through the provision of advice, business support initiatives and workspace.

Provision of business support initiatives to aspiring and existing entrepreneurs has remained a key objective for the organisation. This year our Business Advisers have continued to deliver a range of business support initiatives such as Exploring Enterprise, Go For It, Co-Innovate and MY Adviser on a virtual basis.

LEO has continued to develop strong partnerships with other organisations throughout the year. Building such links has led to the delivery of capacity building mentoring to a range of community organisations.

The provision of workspace units and Grade A office facilities at favourable economic rates continues to underpin many of the charitable activities of LEO. By December 2021

occupancy levels at the site were 99% which, given the global pandemic, is a tremendous achievement.

The success, achievements and high performance of LEO is largely due to the dedication of our Chief Executive, Martina Crawford and her support staff. On behalf of the Board, I wish to record our thanks to them.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank our Board of Directors for their continued support. LEO's success is a result of their individual and collective contributions. This time is given on a voluntary basis and is very much appreciated.

As we learn to live with COVID and other challenges we are faced with, from rising energy costs in business to Brexit regulations, LEO will continue to invest in the future of the organisation, support businesses as we have always done so and fulfil our charitable objectives for Lisburn and the greater local area. Whatever challenges the year brings we will be ready and able to handle them.

Andrew Robinson
Chairman
10th May 2022

Objectives and Activities

LEO's main activities and beneficiaries are detailed in this report. All of our charitable activities focus on the promotion of urban and economic regeneration in the Greater Lisburn area and are intended to further our charitable purpose for the public benefit. Every activity is assessed in respect of its impact on beneficiaries and its contribution to charitable activities so that Trustees may determine the best allocation of resources. The objectives of the charity include the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture, support for business start-ups and mechanisms to encourage existing business development.

In the course of promoting an entrepreneurial culture and offering support services to new and existing businesses, the Charity makes a contribution to the following charitable purposes:

- a) The relief of poverty;
- b) The relief of unemployment, including assistance to the unemployed to find employment;
- c) The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience;
- d) The provision of financial assistance, technical assistance or business advice or consultancy in order to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people in cases of financial or other charitable need through help: (i) in setting up their own business, or (ii) to existing businesses; and
- e) The creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings and/or land for use on favourable terms.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission Guidance on public benefit in the Charities Act 2011.

The public benefit of our charitable purposes of advancing citizenship and community development through the promotion of urban regeneration in Lisburn are as follows:

- The relief of poverty through increased opportunities to learn, train and be successful in attaining paid employment locally;
- A reduction in unemployment because of enhanced opportunities to upskill, gain work experience and attain paid-for job positions;
- An increase in the number of indigenous businesses established;
- An increase in the survival rates of business start-ups as a result of the advice, training & mentoring received;
- An improvement in the skills and experience of the local resident population so that Lisburn becomes an attractive destination for businesses to locate, thus providing more opportunities for paid jobs, skills and experience;
- An enlargement of the local economy by providing support to businesses to become sustainable and prosper thus employing more people locally who's wages when spent locally, sustain many more businesses;
- The enhanced access to support structures making it easier for people to access advice, training & mentoring in entrepreneurship & business skills; and
- The advancement in awareness of enterprise as a viable career option.

These benefits are evidenced in a number of ways, both in the collection of primary data and the review of independently produced statistics.

Lisburn Enterprise Organisation was formally registered with the Charity Commission NI on 13 February 2015 having been confirmed by the Commission to exist for charitable purposes and the public benefit.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE

Enterprise Awareness

Promoting an enterprise culture and undertaking awareness raising activities to highlight the opportunity of self-employment and business start-up remains a key feature of the work at Lisburn Enterprise Organisation.

The latest Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2020) provides an insight into entrepreneurial activity at national and international levels. Historically Northern Ireland has lagged behind the rest of the UK in terms of enterprise start-up activity. The rate of total early-stage entrepreneurship activity (TEA) in Northern Ireland in 2020 was 5.4%, a slight decrease from 6.6% in 2019. The 2020 rate compares to a figure of 7.5% in the UK overall, 7.7% in England, 6.5% in Wales, and 7.3% in Scotland.

Throughout the year the team continued to provide guidance and support on a virtual basis to individuals considering self-employment. Business advisers also continued to engage virtually with other organisations such as the Jobs and Benefits office and Community organisations to promote the opportunities afforded by entrepreneurship. Other activities included the hosting of virtual business start-up clinics and participating in case studies and videos to highlight entrepreneurship as a career option.

During the year LEO worked with The Science Shop in Queen's University Belfast to sponsor a post graduate student undertaking research into entrepreneurship. Such research assists the organisation to develop the appropriate entrepreneurship support and enterprise awareness raising activities.



Team at LEO, David McKechnie and Natalie Mercer launching Business Clinic

BUSINESS START UP

Exploring Enterprise

The Exploring Enterprise Programme assists individuals in exploring the option of self-employment, education, training and employment. Bridging a gap in the provision of enterprise support, the programme helps those that are not yet ready to progress starting a business but wish to explore the option of self-employment. Other options are also considered such as returning to education or finding employment.

In addition to receiving training and mentoring by a dedicated Business Adviser, participants are equipped with the skills and confidence to start their own business

and the opportunity to attain an OCN qualification in Understanding Business Enterprise.

During the year 8 individuals participated on the programme. Delivery of workshops and one to one mentoring sessions continued virtually.

The initiative is delivered locally by LEO Business Advisers and is part-funded through the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-20, the Department of the Economy and Local Enterprise Agencies.

Go For It Start a Business Programme

The Go For It Programme provides the opportunity for aspiring entrepreneurs to avail of step-by-step business advice and tailored mentoring support to help get their business idea off the ground. Individuals can clarify their idea with an expert Business Adviser, set out strategic goals, create a comprehensive business plan and participate in business skills workshops.

The programme is delivered free of charge to participants throughout Northern Ireland by members of Enterprise



Amy McCoy, Core Veterinary Physiotherapy, Alderman Amanda Grehan, Chair of LCCC Development Committee and Senior Business Adviser, David McKechnie, Lisburn Enterprise Organisation



Dawn Lowe, Sweet and Lowe Cake Design Alderman Amanda Grehan, Chair of LCCC Development Committee and David McKechnie, Senior Business Adviser, Lisburn Enterprise Organisation

Northern Ireland and locally by Lisburn Enterprise Organisation in partnership with Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. Go for It is part-funded by Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the Investment for Growth & Jobs Northern Ireland (2014 – 2020) Programme.

Throughout the year LEO Business Advisers offered business advice to over 200 individuals exploring a business idea and worked with aspiring entrepreneurs to deliver mentoring and complete 125 business plans. Despite COVID, demand for the programme has remained high with increased numbers of entrepreneurs starting businesses during the year.

Amy McCoy launched her mobile business Core Veterinary Physiotherapy with support from her LEO Business Adviser who helped to turn her idea into a reality. Amy said, "The Go For It Programme has been really supportive and really helped me get my business off the ground. It was there to help me create a strong business plan and understand the competitive landscape and also guided me on how to market my prices."

Dawn Lowe of Sweet and Lowe Cake Design is another entrepreneur who has benefitted from the programme. Commenting on the support she received, Dawn said, "As I went through the Go For It programme David really built my confidence – I definitely wouldn't have been able to do it without him or the programme. He helped me put together a business plan, which was probably one of my favourite parts as you get to see your ideas come to life. It helped me gain a little more clarity over financial projections and the marketing side."

MY Adviser

During the year LEO continued to fund the MY Adviser initiative. Provided free of charge to start up entrepreneurs in the Lisburn area who are trading less than 18 months, the programme provides one to one mentoring support and MY Network catch up events. Such support has proved very beneficial in assisting aspiring entrepreneurs to make the transition from business plan to business launch.

Each start up business participating on the programme receives their own dedicated Business Adviser and will have access to one-to-one mentoring sessions for a 12-month period. MY Adviser focuses on the building of entrepreneurial skills and combines mentoring with monthly MY Network catch up networking events. These events provide the opportunity to network while learning about a particular business area.

This year 10 virtual MY Network events took place, focusing on topics such as Facebook, Google Adwords, Content strategy, HMRC compliance, Quickbooks, Instagram, SEO, Websites, Stress management and Effective networking.

By the end of December, 18 participants were enrolled on the programme and availing of tailored one to one business mentoring.

Since the programme's inception, a total of 56 individuals have availed of the support on offer including 5 entrepreneurs who have received support in the form of subsidised workspace.



MY Adviser participant Sean McGrath of the Veggie Barn with LEO Chief Executive, Martina Crawford

Support Network for Social Entrepreneurs (SuNSE)

The SuNSE initiative provided support to new and existing social enterprises in the LCCC area. Funded by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and the EU Interreg North West Europe, the programme was delivered by Development Trusts NI. LEO assisted in delivery of this programme in the Lisburn area through the provision of specific mentoring support and facilitating a social entrepreneurship workshop.



Support Network for Social Entrepreneurs workshop

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Co-Innovate

The Co-Innovate programme recognises that in an ever changing and increasingly competitive marketplace, innovation is vital for business growth and success. Focusing on cross border research and innovation, Co-Innovate is funded under the European INTERREG VA Programme and designed to support SMEs in Northern Ireland, Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.

The primary aim of the programme is to increase the number of businesses actively participating in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects and give SMEs and micro-businesses access to innovation capability development and help to implement enhanced Research and Innovation activity.

As innovation needs differ from business to business, Co-Innovate offers different levels of support tailored to each individual business. This support ranges from business health checks and innovation audits to expert mentoring and the opportunity to apply for funding for cross border collaborations with academia or business partners.

During the year DevineAir, Laser Prototypes Europe, Carolyn Adams Displays, DWS Controls, Bracken Interiors, Play Services Ireland and RC Joinery are just a few of the Lisburn businesses that have participated on the programme to assess the innovation readiness of their business.

Capacity Building Mentoring

Throughout the year capacity building mentoring was delivered to several community and voluntary sector organisations on behalf of the Community Foundation Northern Ireland. Mentoring focused on delivering specific support around market growth, strategic planning, funding proposals and raising finance.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Workspace

The aim of Lisburn Enterprise Organisation is to provide entrepreneurs with the best possible choice of flexible workspace to meet their business needs whether that is storage, industrial or high specification office accommodation.

At the centre we have 85,000 sq. ft of flexible workspace accommodation which comprises of 116 light industrial units and 37 high-tech offices.

To stimulate entrepreneurship, workspace is offered on favourable terms. These terms include a flexible licence agreement that can be terminated with a minimum of 30 days' notice, a single all-inclusive licence fee that includes site security, waste disposal and grounds maintenance and access to on-site administration and business support functions.

During the year occupancy figures throughout the site remained high with 99.4% occupancy recorded in December, bringing the total number of businesses trading from the site to 150 and providing employment for almost 550 people.

As part of LEO's commitment to the environment, the Organisation is pleased to report that waste reduction and recycling initiatives during the year contributed to 72 tonnes of waste being diverted from landfill.



New licensee Andy Curry, Fall Up NI with Martina Crawford, LEO

Virtual Office Facilities

By the end of the year 40 businesses were taking advantage of the virtual office facilities offered by LEO. These services allow the business owner to present a professional image whilst keeping overheads low. Businesses were offered a commercial mailing address and rather than incur the cost of a full-time receptionist, the LEO administrative team provided personalised call handling services to these clients.



Training Room



Board Room

Conference Facilities

This year demand for our meeting rooms and conference facilities continued to be impacted by COVID lockdowns and restrictions. A total of 52 separate small meetings were facilitated during the year. It is however hoped that we will get back to hosting more meetings for event organisers as we come out of the global pandemic.

Accessing Finance

LEO is an official and pro-active Delivery Partner of the Start Up Loans Company and the NI Small Business Loan Fund. During the year, these two loan funds committed £89,000 in loans to 4 Lisburn based businesses and entrepreneurs.

Co-operation & Partnership

A fundamental part of LEO's charitable activities is the significant contribution made by Trustees and staff to a range of other initiatives within the City of Lisburn and further afield.

The partnership with Fusion Theatre Company continued this year. Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions the group were still unable to organise theatre productions. However, the group are hopeful that they will get back to bringing performances to local audiences once again. Fusion provides an opportunity for youth aged 8-21 from all backgrounds to engage in the collective and inclusive production of high-quality musical theatre thus building personal and employability skills.

The Board of Directors welcomes the exceptional relationship that exists with our primary enterprise and economic development partners Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Enterprise Northern Ireland and Invest NI.

This year LEO promoted several growth programmes on behalf of the Council.

LEO remains an enthusiastic member of Enterprise Northern Ireland and is represented on the organisation's Board. LEO deliver many ENI initiatives to local entrepreneurs and participated at the ENI Enterprise Symposium to address the action necessary to support entrepreneurship and innovation in Northern Ireland.



Lisburn Chamber of Commerce Event attended by Lisburn Enterprise Organisation

As a member of Lisburn Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Directors were delighted to attend the Lisburn Chamber Dinner this year as part of the Chamber's 60th Anniversary celebrations.

LEO continues to work alongside the Bank of England, ensuring the experience of Lisburn businesses is represented in the economic and financial intelligence gathered by Bank of England Agents which in turn helps inform decisions made by the Monetary Policy Committee, the Financial Policy Committee and the Prudential Regulation Authority.



ENI Enterprise Symposium Event

Staff

The Board of Directors wishes to record its appreciation of the dedication during the year of Martina Crawford, Chief Executive and all the team. With many of our programmes continuing to be delivered on a virtual basis, the Board recognises the challenges that this has brought. Despite such challenges, demand for our programmes remained high and an occupancy level of 99.4% was reached.

The Charity is committed to developing and training its staff and Board, thus contributing to the provision of the highest quality service to its clients. Throughout the year training was provided in a range of areas including Money Laundering and Social media skills.

This year we welcomed David McKechnie as Senior Business Adviser to the team. We look forward to his contribution to the organisation.

During the year, the Organisation was reassessed to ensure that both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 standards were being maintained. A clean audit resulted and the organisation was awarded both accreditations.

Trustees and staff are also heavily involved with voluntary action in the local community, in prisons, local community groups and voluntary organisations. In 2021, these activities included staff and licensees raising over £937 for Macmillan Cancer.

The Trustees of the Charity give their time to support LEO voluntarily and are not in receipt of any payment from the Charity. During the year Brian Sofley, Managing Director of Assa Abloy was appointed to the Board. We take this opportunity to thank retiring Board Member Mr William Gardiner-Watson for his service and support during his term of office.



Fundraising for Macmillan Cancer Support

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2021

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £
Income from:		
Charitable activities	635,501	592,947
Investments	1,689	807
Total Income	637,190	593,754
Expenditure on:		
Charitable activities	501,509	512,324
Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds	135,681	81,430
Fund balances as at 1 January 2021	3,539,147	3,457,717
Fund balances as at 31 December 2021	3,674,828	3,539,147

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2021

	2021		2020	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets		3,073,001		3,205,947
Current assets				
Debtors	27,289		27,567	
Cash at bank and in hand	719,355		589,022	
	746,644		616,589	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(144,817)		(151,979)	
Net current assets		601,827		464,610
Total assets less current liabilities		3,674,828		3,670,557
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		-		(131,410)
Net assets		3,674,828		3,539,147
Income funds				
Unrestricted funds		3,674,828		3,539,147
		3,674,828		3,539,147



Lisburn Enterprise Organisation Ltd.

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