



# Directors' Report

As presented to the members in the complete audited accounts for 2013

<b>Directors</b>	Mary Cunningham Carol Conway Sean Coughlan Etain Doyle Catherine Hickey Sharon Kennedy Joyce Loughnan Austin O'Sullivan Paul O'Sullivan Sheena Horgan (Appointed 1 May 2013) Dermot Mc (Appointed 1 May 2013)
<b>Secretary</b>	Deirdre Garvey
<b>Company number</b>	302282
<b>Registered office</b>	The Wheel 48 Fleet Street Dublin 2
<b>Auditors</b>	Byrne Curtin Kelly Verschoyle House 28-30 Lower Mount Street Dublin 2
<b>Charity Number</b>	13288

## **Introduction**

This report provides a summary of The Wheel's structure, governance and activities for the year ended 31 December 2013.

### **Principal activities and review of the business:**

The principal activity of the company is to act as a support and representative body connecting community, voluntary and charitable organisations across Ireland. The organisation provides information, training, advice and other supports to members and others across the whole community, voluntary and charity sector and also represents them on cross cutting sector-development issues to Government and other key decision-makers.

### **Results:**

In 2013, The Wheel had an income of €1,110,720 and spent €1,134,310 on services for its members and supporting their needs and those of the sector. Of the total raised, €542,676 was from statutory sources, €138,327 from donations and gift and €351,838 from income generated by membership and the sector. Statutory support from the core funding schemes from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government reduced by 6% in 2013. Non statutory income grew by 18% in 2013.

The major elements of expenditure in 2013 were on advocacy, training, research and member-related staffing costs and secondly, the implementation of the National Training Fund Sector Skill programme of training and supports.

The full results for the year are set out in the Audited Accounts for 2013.

### **Directors:**

Page 2 lists all Directors of The Wheel from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2013. Their record of attendance at board meetings and board subgroup meetings is found in APPENDIX A.

### **Books of account:**

The company's directors are aware of their responsibilities, under section 202 of the Companies Act 1990 to maintain proper books of account.

The books of account are held at the company's registered office, 48 Fleet Street, Dublin 2.

### **Auditors:**

In accordance with the companies Act 1963, section 160(2), Byrne Curtin Kelly continue in office as auditors of the company.

### **Structure, Governance and Management of The Wheel:**

The Wheel is constituted as a company limited by guarantee without a share capital. Its purpose and objects are set out in its Memorandum of Association and how it conducts its business is set out in its Articles of Association. Both of these documents are posted on The Wheel's website and are publicly available from the Companies Registration Office website [www.cro.ie](http://www.cro.ie)

During 2013 an EGM in March made changes to the size and composition of the board of directors, primarily in relation to reducing it from a board of up to 20 people down to a board of up to 12 people.

Of these twelve people, a maximum of eight of them are elected from amongst the company's membership and a further four are appointed by the board members. Every board member's terms of office is three years.

Every year at the AGM (usually in May) approximately one third of the board members which are elected from the membership rotate off and are replaced by new Directors, nominated and elected from the company's membership. The process for nominations and voting is laid out in the 'Election Rules' document which is posted on The Wheel's website and made available to all members and a summary is provided in APPENDIX B. People may put themselves forward for nomination and election after their term of office is up. There was no nomination or election process conducted in 2013, due to the fact that the board was transitioning from a position of having 15 board members elected from amongst its membership down to eight. Now that the transition has been completed, the normal process of filling one-third of the board places will continue in 2014.

Four of the places on the board are appointed by decision of the board. During 2013 criteria were developed and openly advertised to fill three such vacancies on the board of directors. Similarly to the principles of the process outlined above, the vacancies and criteria were openly advertised and nominations were invited. These were reviewed by the Governance subgroup of the board and subsequently by the board of directors. Over 2013 three invitations were extended to three newly co-opted board members in this fashion. Two joined the board in 2013 and the final one will join in January 2014. All co-opted places on the board come with a term of office of three years – which may be renewed by decision of the board. All co-opted board members must also become members of the company before they take up their board position.

#### *Policies and procedures for the induction and training of board members*

All new Board members receive a 'Board Induction Folder' when they become a board member. This contains all the information and documentation that a board member requires including: a Board Handbook, the governing documents for The Wheel, the strategic plan, board minutes from the previous 12 months, CEO reports from previous 12 months, organisational budget and other relevant documentation.

The CEO schedules a 2-hour Induction Meeting with each new board member in their first month to six weeks on the board, at which a sub-set of information customised for each new member is reviewed – all of which is based on the Induction Folder which they will be expected to have read in advance. In 2013 this process was followed for all new board members.

### Organisational structure and how decisions are made:

The Wheel has a staff team based in an office in Dublin, and headed by a Chief Executive Officer who reports directly to the board through the Chairperson. A management team of three reports to the Chief Executive, and all other staff report to members of the management team.

Decisions reserved for the board to make include:

- The Company's strategic plans and annual operating budgets;
- Projects outside the scope of the strategic plan;
- Business acquisitions and disposals;
- Litigation;
- Appointment/Removal of Subgroup Chairs and Members;
- Appointment/Removal of Chief Executive Officer;
- Appointment/ Removal of Auditors;
- Approval of Borrowing/Finance Facilities;
- Approval of Contracts with term exceeding one year or financial liability on The Wheel exceeding €60k;
- Annual Review of Risk and Internal Control; and
- Approval of new staff positions.

Although the board of directors is ultimately responsible for The Wheel and for the above list, certain duties and responsibilities are delegated from the Board of Directors to the Chief Executive Officer and through her to the staff team. This includes implementation of the strategic plan; leading and managing The Wheel's staff members, programmes, projects, finances, pricing and all other administrative aspects so that The Wheel's ongoing mission, vision, and strategies are fulfilled within the context of The Wheel's values as approved by the Board of Directors and membership. The CEO is also responsible for preparing materials for Board consideration and for preparing materials for any future strategic planning process.

From time to time, The Wheel agrees to cooperate formally with other organisations on specific projects or in specific work areas. These agreements are determined by a 'Memorandum of Understanding' which is usually approved by the board of directors. Just before the end of 2013 the decision was made to track all formal as well as informal collaborations and partnerships engaged in by The Wheel in a new 'collaboration matrix'. This will be published on the website in 2014.

A 'Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Loyalty' policy is in place and observed by the board and is used at every board meeting as a matter of course.

### Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations

The Wheel has fulfilled the recommended guideline actions for compliance for a Type C organisation as defined by the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations ([www.governancecode.ie](http://www.governancecode.ie)). It will confirm its compliance after the adoption of an updated Articles of Association to be voted on by the membership at the AGM in May 2014.

### Risk Review:

The Wheel conducts an annual Risk Review process that is assessed in detail by the 'Finance and Audit subgroup' with senior management and ultimately reviewed and signed off by the board of

directors. This process involves identification of the major risks that The Wheel is exposed to, an assessment of their impact and likelihood of happening and a risk mitigation action(s) for each. A full Risk Review was conducted in preparation for the Finance and Audit subgroup in October 2013 and it is due to be approved by the full board in 2014.

### Objectives and Activities

The Wheel's governing documents set out that its overall aim is to support and assist the needs of groups which work for the disadvantaged and/or vulnerable in Ireland.

The Wheel's members adopted a strategy called 'Being the Change' in July 2012 which defines the organisation's vision and mission as follows:

Our vision is of an Ireland where there is a shared idea of, and commitment to realising, a fair and just society; and where the role and contribution of the community and voluntary sector in achieving this is valued and understood.

Our mission is to increase the community and voluntary sector's capacity and capability to play its part in achieving a fair and just society in Ireland. We do this by:

- Representing the shared interests of community and voluntary organisations
- Supporting these organisations to do their work
- Promoting the importance of active citizenship as vital in making Ireland a better place to live.

In the plan, eight strategic objectives are highlighted across four thematic areas and we achieve these objectives through the following core programme areas:

- **Advocacy Programme:** we advocate on cross-sector issues, enabling the diverse interests in the sector to negotiate with key stakeholders on issues of common interest.
- **Networking Programme:** we facilitate the building of networks of people with common interests, and create opportunities for networking across traditional boundaries. We also maintain an up-to-date directory of organisations within the sector.
- **Training and Development Programme:** we make training available to organisations and individuals in the sector and promote the highest standards of operational excellence.
- **Information Services Programme:** we provide information tailored to needs of people working in community, voluntary and charitable organisations.

We also implement the 'Sector Skills' programme, co-funded by the National Training Fund under the Department of Education and Skills. This includes a grant-making programme, every three years, called the 'Training Links' grant programme which is used by the successful networks of 10 or more non-profit organisations to fund training programmes in their specific areas of work.

### Transparency and public accountability

The Board believes that The Wheel, and all charities should be fully accountable to the general public, providing detailed information on where its funds come from and what they are spent on. We have provided substantial information in the Directors' report for many years and since 2012 report our accounts in accordance with SORP, the international Statement of Recommended Practice for charities. We also publish our accounts on our website [www.wheel.ie](http://www.wheel.ie), under the

About Us section. We would welcome any suggestions on improving the user-friendliness and public access to information.

### **Achievements and Performance in 2013:**

The year 2013 represented the first full year of the implementation of The Wheel's strategic plan, 'Being the Change'. The achievements and performance against each of the eight strategic objectives is provided in APPENDIX C.

### **Financial Performance Against Targets:**

The core income from all sources into The Wheel's income and Expenditure account over 2013 was €1,110,720 against expenditure of €1,134,310 over the same period, thus leading to an operational deficit of €23,590 in 2013 as compared with an operational deficit of €25,875 for 2012. (See note 20 for an explanation of other income received that was not taken into the income/expenditure account.)

In relation to financial performance against budget and targets, the following should be noted:

- The original business target was for a balanced budget for 2013 and this was achieved at the level of operational budget management. The deficit arises due to adjustments being allowed for in the audit process.
- Over 2013 we grew our non-statutory income by 18% in 2013 over what was achieved in 2012. This compares with a growth of 23.5% in 2012 (over 2011 figures) and 40% in 2011 (over 2010 figures).
- In relation to statutory income, the core statutory grants from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government were reduced by 6% in comparison with 2012.

### **Income Diversification**

2013 marked the end of the three-year Income Diversification Strategy (IDS) which had been developed and invested in by the board to grow non-statutory income.

In reviewing the Income Diversification Strategy in November 2013, The board concluded that it had been successful at orienting the organization towards securing non-statutory income. It noted that securing income the way The Wheel does it, i.e. through large volumes of 'small ticket items', is an expensive way to secure funds, although ultimately more reliable than over-dependence on statutory funding or large grants because it tends to be repeatable income.

In the implementation of the Income Diversification Strategy we have also actually grown the cost base of The Wheel (in terms of salaries) in order to build capacity in this area, but it is clear that there is no 'holy grail' and that yet more capacity (and more costs) may well be needed if income targets are to continue to grow.

### **Deal Effect**

The board of directors oversaw the establishment of a new social enterprise called Deal Effect over 2013. This had been in the planning since 2012 and was discussed at almost all board meetings in 2013 (as well as in 2012). The purpose of the new social enterprise, Deal Effect, is to generate funds for The Wheel and for associated partner charities through the running of an online daily deal website.

Having passed through the feasibility stages and pre-funding rounds in 2012, the oversight work of The Wheel's board in 2013 was one of ensuring the new organization had met its funding target before authorising its set-up – all of which happened by July 2013. The Vice Chair of The Wheel's board of directors and the CEO of The Wheel took up places on Deal Effect's board of directors which was set up as an independent company with no charitable status.

Due to delays in the launch date and in committed funding being drawn down, The Wheel's board was asked to consider the extension of a line of credit to fund Deal Effect's working capital prior to launch.

This loan was approved by the Board in September 2013 and funded from The Wheel's reserves.



### Principal Funding Sources:

In 2013, the principle funding sources for The Wheel's core operations were as described below. Note that a detailed breakdown of major funding lines is provided in the supplementary information supplied at the end of this document, broken down as per SORP headlines. The table here is a narrative description and explanation as to the primary / large amounts/sources:

#### Statutory Income:

Source	Amount	Remarks
Department of Environment, Community and Local Government	€94,200	This was from the 'National Organisations Grant Scheme', a stream of funding which has suffered a cumulative 33% cut over the last 6 years, and a 6% cut in 2013. It funds 70% of the salary and associated costs of the CEO and the Membership Officer.
	€73,476	This was from the 'Social Partnership' grant scheme, a stream of funding which has suffered a 33% cut over the last 6 years, and a 6% cut in 2013. It part-funds the salary and associated costs, plus direct member-engagement costs associated with the role and work of the Director of Advocacy.
Department of Education and Skills / National Training Fund	€375,000	This funding represents 80% of the total costs of the 'Sector Skills' programme of training and supports for people working in community and voluntary organisations. The 'Sector Skills' programme has three dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Training Links network grant programme which primarily part-funded training in 23 networks of 10 or more organisations in 2013</li><li>• The Leadership Programme which primarily was delivered through the Investment in Excellence programme as well as the two new accredited leadership programmes in 2013.</li><li>• The Learningpoint web-based information services about training in the voluntary sector and which is located at <a href="http://www.wheel/training">www.wheel/training</a></li></ul>

Non Statutory Income:

Membership Fees	€146,107	Income from membership fees membership fees which contribute to the costs of supports for members and the sector.
Income from charitable activities	€205,731	Income from a range of charitable activities: training courses; customised training; information and advice publications; Fundingpoint subscriptions; and member affinity programmes.
Donations, sponsorships and grant fundraising	€138,327	Deferred donations from 2012 (i.e. received in 2012, but allocated for 2013 work), plus various donations / sponsorships for programmes and events, including the Better Together campaign, annual conference sponsorship and specific training / support events. The significant sums are listed individually in the supplementary pages at the end of this document.

**Funds held on behalf of other initiatives or organisations:**

The income shown in the table below was received in 2013 for programmes of work that were specific to 2013 and which were fully funded from the respective sources named. This income and associated expenditure is included in the audited accounts income and expenditure of The Wheel.

Source of funds	Amount	Details
Four members of the 'Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Taskforce'	€10,000	3x payments of €2,500 (to which The Wheel added a further €2,500) to fund the work of the Taskforce. The funds were spent in 2013 by The Wheel, on behalf of the Taskforce, to pay certain contractors for work delivered to the Taskforce.

In addition, The Wheel holds funds on behalf of Vodafone Ireland to enable the Like Charity mobile-text-donations service to provide a 100% donation function to charities. The Wheel performs this service in order to facilitate our members receiving the maximum possible donations from members of the public who donate via their mobile phones using the Like Charity service. Every payment made to Like Charity from the funds held by The Wheel for this service is pre-approved by Vodafone prior to entering into our expenditure approval process in The Wheel. These transactions are not covered in the income and expenditure account for The Wheel.

**Reserves Policy and Level:**

The Wheel's Reserves Policy is that:

- Reserves be maintained at a level which ensures that The Wheel's organisational core activity could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty (estimated to be 4-6 months for the purposes of the calculation of the reserves level.)
- That reserves levels should allow the company to meet its obligation as an employer in terms of redundancy or other liabilities, e.g. lease
- That a proportion of reserves be maintained in a readily realisable form.

The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecast cycle and takes into account:

- Risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure being different from that budgeted
- Planned activity level
- The organisation's commitments.

Over several years, the reserves were kept at a level of ca €350,000 as a result of the application of the Reserves Policy as described above.

However, in the light of the difficulties of more recent years, the Board adopted the Income Diversification Strategy referred to above, and agreed to use resources from the reserves to help fund this, with the result that reserves reduced from ca €350,000 to €277,000 at the start of 2013. A balanced budget was achieved in 2013 and thus, including the extension of the line of credit of €70,000 to Deal Effect, the Uncommitted Reserves level at the end of 2013 is €210,814. The board will review the reserves level in 2014 and the policies underlying it to determine the appropriate strategy for the future.

**Investments:**

Part of the reserves is lodged with a Depositline Account with ICS, which is part of the Bank of Ireland Group. The balance at end of 2013 was €153,636.

In May 2013 a donation was received in the guise of an investment in KBI Venture Capital Fund. This was treated as an in kind income and the value at transfer of ownership amounted to €€59,129. As at 31st December 2013 the valuation of same amounted to €54,962. This has been recognised as an asset on our balance sheet.

**Pension:**

The Company has a contributory pension scheme to which all employees are entitled to be members. It is with New Ireland and is a defined contribution plan. The Directors are satisfied that the trusteeship arrangements for the scheme meet all legal requirements and recommendations and have engaged 'General Investment Trust Ltd' to act as Trustees for the pension scheme.

**Principal Risks and Uncertainties:**

In common with all organisations set up on a non-profit / charitable basis, the company has uncertain income streams coupled with the increasing wage/materials costs that face all

companies in Ireland. The directors are satisfied that the risks facing the organisation have been identified and managed through the annual 'Risk Assessment Review' described in more detail earlier in this report.

**Health and Safety:**

The directors are satisfied that the Health and Safety statement was reviewed during 2013 and that all staff members are aware and understand it and are provided with appropriate training.

**Plans for Future Periods:**

The 'Being The Change' strategy document will shape the plans and direction for The Wheel until 2016 against our eight strategic objectives. A high level summary of the objectives for 2014 can be read in the APPENDIX D. All members of staff have goals which are aligned with these top level goals for the organisation.

**Statement of directors' responsibilities:**

The directors are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland including the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Acts 1963 to 2012. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## APPENDIX A

### Attendance Record of Board Members

The following directors have held office since 1 January 2013 and this table records their attendance at board meetings over 2013:

*Grey cells indicate a 'not applicable' status, either because the person was not on the board at the time, or else they were not a member of that particular subgroup.*

Board Member Name	Date of Board Meeting					Sub Group Meetings			
	Feb 14 <sup>th</sup>	Apr 17 <sup>th</sup>	Jun 26 <sup>th</sup>	Sep 25 <sup>th</sup>	Nov 21/22 'away day'	Finance & Audit	Policy	Staff & Employment	Governance
Carol Conway	Y	Y	Y	N	Y			1 of 1	4 of 4
Sean Coughlan (Chair)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		2 of 3		3 of 4
Mary Cunningham	N	Y	Y	Y	Y		3 of 3	1 of 1	4 of 4
John Dolan <i>(Retired in May)</i>	N	Y						0 of 0	
Etain Doyle (Vice Chair)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	3 of 3	2 of 3		3 of 4
David Fitzgibbon <i>(Retired in May)</i>	N	N							

Sinead Grennan <i>(Retired from board in May, but remained on as member of subgroup)</i>	Y	N					3 of 3			
Catherine Hickey	Y	Y	Y	N	Y					3 of 4
Sheena Horgan <i>(Appointed in July)</i>				Y	Y <i>(missed the last session)</i>					
Joe Houghton <i>(Retired in May)</i>	N									0 of 2
Sharon Kennedy	N	Y	Y	Y	Y			1 of 2		
Joyce Loughnan <i>(On extended sick leave from Feb to Nov)</i>	N				Y			1 of 1		
Dermot McCarthy <i>(Appointed in October)</i>					Y					
Barbara O'Connell <i>(Retired in May)</i>	N	N					0 of 1			

Austin O'Sullivan	Y	Y	N	N	Y		3 of 3			
Paul O'Sullivan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y <i>(missed day one)</i>			2 of 3		

## APPENDIX B

### Election Process for new board members

Every year at the AGM (usually in May) approximately one third of the board members which are elected from the membership rotate off and are replaced by new Directors, nominated and elected from the company's membership.

The process for nominations and voting is laid out in the 'Election Rules' document which is posted on The Wheel's website and made available to all members and a summary is provided in the Supplementary Report.

In summary, the process involves all of the company's membership being eligible to nominate onto or be proposed for the Board of Directors and notices to this effect are sent out two months before the AGM. The Governance Subgroup of the board performs the role of a Nominations Committee and assesses all the nominations received by the closing date against the published eligibility criteria. If there are more eligible nominations than places available on the board that need filling that year, then there will be an election by postal ballot to choose the winners and these people will be appointed officially at the AGM. If the number of eligible nominations is the same or fewer than the number of places available on the board to be filled, then all of the eligible nominees will be deemed elected at the AGM. The term of office for Directors is three years and people may put themselves forward for nomination and election after their term is up. There was no nominations or election process conducted in 2013, due to the fact that the board was moving from a position of having 15 board members elected from amongst its membership down to eight. Now that the transition has been completed, the normal process of filling one-third of the board places will continue in 2014.



## APPENDIX C

### Achievements and Performance in 2013

The year 2013 represented the first full year of the implementation of The Wheel's strategic plan, 'Being the Change'. The achievements and performance against each of the eight strategic objectives is provided in the Supplementary Report in this document.

#### **1. Build an understanding of the importance of participating in community life and in public decision-making.**

- We commenced a two-year partnership with the Carnegie Trust UK to develop a **New Vision for Citizenship** in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century project. This will ultimately result in a programme of work run over two years which will feed into the policy manifestos of the political parties in 2016. The initial project scoping, feasibility and agreement of the two-year partnership were completed in 2013.
- We secured funding from the EU Parliament to run an innovative programme promoting **EU citizenship** and the role of the EU parliament and providing many opportunities at regional level for members of The Wheel and citizens to participate in The Wheel's work linking citizens to policymakers. A total of four events and conferences were run as part of this programme in 2013.
- We participated in a special-project team of the *Institute of International and European Affairs* (IIEA) looking at the **values (civic, social, economic and political etc)** that underpin and/or should underpin Ireland's participation in the European Union. In 2013, this involved writing a number of papers and preparin for/participating in four consultation events.

#### **2. Maximise public participation in the development of shared ideas of what a fair and just society is in Ireland.**

- We implemented the **Better Together** campaign 2013 involving 137 entries into the video competition. Successfully rolled-out two new Award categories (Young Filmmaker Award & Business Award). Worked with RTE to develop special episode of Nationwide that was filmed at the Awards night on Dec 12<sup>th</sup> attended by over 300 people and which will broadcast in 2014. Over the course of the campiagn we welcomed over 300,000 people to the [bettertogether.ie](http://bettertogether.ie) website – higher than any previous year.
- We **supported the work** of the following initiatives through participating actively in a leadership way in the core groups of:
  - a. The Advocacy Initiative
  - b. Claiming our Future
  - c. People Talk (formerly Dialogue on Democracy)
  - d. The Open Government Programme

This meant preparation for, and attending the leadership group meetings for all of the above at ca five each per year. Each initiative was progressed significantly over 2013.

- We worked in an **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** grouping with Amnesty, Irish Council for Civil Liberties, the National Womens Council of Ireland, TASC and Impact trade union to put

the issues of such rights on the agenda of the constitutional Convention. The successful outcome is that the Constitutional Convention will devote a weekend to consideration of this topic under its 'any other business' remit in early 2014.

- We collaborated with Dochas and Claiming our Future in **The World We Want** initiative to in bringing people together at a major event in the RDS to identify Irish Civil Society's priorities for the post 2015 development agenda: Equality; Responsive, Inclusive and accountable governance; environmental and social sustainability; Rights; Non-exploitative economy.
- We addressed **The MacGill Summer School** on the theme Protecting our Weakest and most vulnerable citizens
- Worked with Carnegie UK Trust and convene a group in January to explore the idea of the **Enabling State** and its relevance to new relationships between citizens, communities and the state. This was continued at year's end in the design and agreement for a further two-year work programme to explore this further.

### **3. Maximise the effectiveness of the community and voluntary sector's voice so that the sector's importance is recognised by the state, the political system and other sectors.**

- The year 2013 saw The Wheel's **advocacy work** focus on active engagement and representation on key committees and groups working to influence policy relating to the Community and Voluntary Sector in key areas as follows:
  - Department of Justice: Charity Regulation Section
  - Department of Environment: Community Division, including a Ministerial appointment to the Working Group on Citizen Engagement to advise the Minister on how citizens will engage with local government as part of the local government reform programme.
  - Department of Social Protection: Employment Services Advisory Group.
  - Department of Enterprise: via our work in the the Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Task Force (SEETF)
  - Departments of Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform: via our work in 'CV Pillar' bilateral meetings.
- In the final month of 2013, we played a strong **leadership role** in the media, and with members, with respect to the sudden and massive negative publicity around charities. We engaged both reactively and also proactively with national and local media and successfully positioned The Wheel as a credible and authoritative representative voice for the sector as the scandal unfolded.
- Pre budget briefings and submissions were prepared for **Budget 2014** and meetings were held with Ministers (Burton, Howlin & Noonan) and media respectively. We organised our second joint pre-budget press conference with other umbrella groups and continued with our post-budget analysis briefing event after the fact. We prepared and published a paper outlining the impact of the budget on the community and voluntary sector. This work will continue annually.
- In relation to **funding for the sector** and its work, we prepared a submission on the proposed new 'National Organisations Grant Scheme' and held meetings on that basis with officials, including the Secretary General, in the Dept Environment as well as in Pobal. We also facilitated a joint submission, on the basis of our own policy paper, with the Disability Federation of Ireland and the Carmichael Centre in this regard. The outcome is that the scheme will continue.

- Our **annual conference** was successful on a number of fronts: it met its income target in sponsorship; it engaged with a wide range of speakers both nationally and internationally that both provided stimulating cause for debate, and also built bridges into those parts of the sector that we have sought to build bridges with.
- We successfully coordinated and implemented The Wheel's national consultation on the **Charities Act 2009 consultation**, making a submission based on member input which was gathered from four consultations (Dublin and regionally) and one webinar. We were instrumental in the setting up of a collaborative grouping of 10 'infrastructure organisations' which held a joint consultation event in March which was a significant sector-wide event. The outcome is that the commencement of the Charities Act is back on the cards for 2014.
- We worked with the National Youth Council of Ireland to develop and implement a project to identify the appropriate indicators which might be used to for a **"health-check" for citizen participation in Ireland** and associated policy recommendations. Phase 1 of the project was brought to a close in Q4 of 2013.
- We successfully positioned the rebranded **Be The Change** magazine as the quarterly magazine for the sector in Ireland, working with a prestigious Editorial Board to develop its content and messaging.
- We played a central role in facilitating civil society to come together and input into the preparation of the **Ireland's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan**.
- The Wheel's CEO was a member of the **Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government** that worked throughout Autumn/Winter 2013 to produce a report proposing a new mechanism to maximise engagement between community and voluntary organisations and local government. (Report ultimately published in March 2014).
- Facilitated the **Community and Voluntary Forums** to meet together in the context of Putting People First, the Government's vision for reformed local government

#### **4. Foster excellent leadership within the sector.**

- We developed and rolled out a programme of work that focused on developing leadership in the three 'tiers' identified in our strategy:
  - 1) voluntary board leadership;
    - We provide 5 training and 7 consultation events to encourage and help groups to reach the standards embodied in the **Governance Code**.
    - We maintain active engagement on the **Governance Code Working Group**, participating in four meetings and project managing / serving the website functionality.
  - 2) senior management levels;
    - We specified a new **accredited leadership course** for the sector and ran an open tender process to secure a partner to deliver it. The outcome was two distinct but aligned accredited programmes in the sector – the first such courses ever produced in Ireland. We rolled them out in the last half of the year with both commencing, fully booked, in December.
    - We ran **CEO Roundtables** (4 in Dublin, 4 in Galway, 4 in Cork and 1 in Limerick).

- We introduced a new offering (a '**leadership network**') for leaders at senior management level in organisations which engaged 158 people over 4 events. We ran four quarterly breakfasts involving 215 people from 175 organisations and we ran 2 programmes of the 'Investment in Excellence' leadership programme in partnership with the Pacific Institute.

### 3) community activist leadership.

- We provided a wide range of 'business and technical' **supports and training** to enhance the natural ability of people to provide leadership in their communities and community groups by running organisations and groups effectively. (see 'objective 5' for statistics and numbers).
- We completed the three year cycle of the '**Training Links**' network-led training programme, ensuring that all outcomes were captured in an evaluation report of the entire programme in Q4 2013.

## ***5. Promote quality and excellence in the community and voluntary sector to deliver better outcomes for people.***

- Overall and including all the training and information sessions in 2013, we supported **3612 people from 2784 organisations** face-to-face to run their organisations better in 2013.
  - Topics addressed over 2013 were: governance and the Governance Code; fundraising; strategic planning: 'theory of change'; communications and marketing; engaging with the media; employment law & HR; risk management; and data protection
  - A total of 20% of the training events were outside Dublin, primarily in Cork, Galway and Limerick
  - Webinars were introduced in 2013 to address both cost and access concerns and a total of 2 were run in 2013, with 111 attendees. The outcome was that there is a demand for webinars for the delivery of certain types of information events; it ensures that The Wheel provides training supports for all of its members regardless of location. Further webinars are planned for 2014 on other topics
- A dedicated training and support offering on '**outcomes measurement**' for nonprofit organisations was continued in 2013 with 4 events being delivered and 187 good practice guides on the subject - 'Knowing and Showing Your Impact' distributed.
- Over 2013 a total of 447 **good practice guides** on running nonprofit organisations (the 'Solid Foundations' series, of which there are six guides) were sold and a further 1,148 distributed free to members.

## ***6. Maximise collaborative working in the sector.***

- We demonstrate collaboration through **actively seeking partnerships** with relevant charities, agencies and companies in 2013 as we bedded down our new strategy's implementation plans. By the end of 2013, we were participating in 10 separate collaborations and coalitions (involving over 100 organisations) with varying levels formality. The purpose of each varies, but

all such activity was done to enhance the chances of success for each initiative, and thus The Wheel's impact as a co-creator of that outcome.

The newest good practice Solid Foundation guide, '**Collaborate to Innovate**' guide, was published and launched at an event in June. It sets out the case studies and learnings from over 36 organisations who were helped by The Wheel to run collaborative working programmes. Since then, a total of 1,085 guides have been distributed in total over the rest of 2013.

***7. Ensure that The Wheel has the systems, structures, processes, procedures and resources to deliver on our strategic objectives.***

• **Business Development**

- A total of €535,921 was raised in **non-statutory funds** in 2013. This meant that over the course of the 3-year Income Diversification Strategy which ended on Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2013, a total of €570,000 in new cash was raised over three years against a target of €700,000. As the initial earning level in 2010 was €248,000 per annum, it means we cumulative grew our non statutory income by 116% over those three years. This was deemed to be a significant success by the board, especially in light of the external environment and pressure on funds in all sectors.
- **ResourcePoint** was developed as a cost-savings group purchasing framework for our members through affinity partnerships. Launched in September 2013, it gained momentum over the 3 months to the end of the year and commenced delivering its objective of providing savings to our members.
- We secured funding for and set up the new social enterprise '**Deal Effect**' as its own independent entity which launched in November 2013.

• **Finance & Administration**

- In April The Wheel's audited accounts for 2012 were completed for the first time in full compliance with SORP.
- The finances were managed very tightly with a balanced budget being achieved for the first time in four years.
- The board approved updated finance and admin procedures through approval of a new 'Finance Management Policy' document.

• **Information Systems**

- A new promotions and email system for planning and executing the large amount of emails was developed and put into place.
- A new ICT support partner to maintain The Wheel's systems was identified and a contract was signed.
- Risk factors associated with our usage of outdated technology for our CRM system and the backend of our website were identified.

• **Governance**

- New Articles of Association were developed and approved by members at an EGM in March which reduced the size of the board of directors and amended its composition. Subsequent work through to the end of the year ensured that the decisions made about the organisations governance at the EGM were implemented.
- Substantial work was done to complete compliance with the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charity Organisations. By year's end it was complete in all respects other than a further update of the Articles of Association, which requires a delay until the AGM in 2014 to come into effect.
- **Staff**
  - The roles of Business Development Executive and Business Services Manager were made permanent during the year. Performance appraisals and goal setting were completed for the CEO (by the board) and for the management team (by the CEO).
  - The first staff satisfaction survey was completed with an average total satisfaction rating of 87.2%%.
  - We engaged significantly with interns in 2013, working with two people in particular as necessary support resources for the Better Together and ResourcePoint programmes respectively.
- **'corporate communications'**
  - A detailed Strategic Communications plan was developed and approved.
  - The communications and advocacy work of The Wheel were aligned through a line management responsibility change, embedding communications as part of the advocacy business unit.

#### ***8. Ensure The Wheel involves, adds value, and is responsive to our members.***

- We developed a new **board ↔ member accountability policy** to outline the relationship between members, and the board with respect to implementation of the strategic plan.
- We developed a comprehensive **added-value programme for members** which was implemented in 2013. This involved a range of supports exclusively for members which were topical, relevant and hugely appreciated, offering members opportunities to work together, access to the most up-to-date information, dedicated support services, unrivalled networking opportunities and the ability to influence policy-makers. A total of 30 events and 1 webinar were held exclusively for members.
- We redesigned **FocalPoint**, The Wheel's ezine for members, to include regular features on all the significant sector development initiatives The Wheel is working on.
- A total of 136 new members joined The Wheel in 2013. A total of 105 did not renew their membership. We ended the year with **934 members** which represents a 3.4% growth in member numbers over the year in total (We started the year with 903 members.)

## APPENDIX D

### Plans for Future Periods:

The table below reflects a high-lighted summary of the top level priorities of The Wheel in 2014 against each of our eight strategic objectives. All members of staff have goals which are aligned with these top level goals.

<b>1. Build an understanding of the importance of participating in community life and in public decision-making.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete planning for, and implement year one of the two-year ‘Citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’ project</li><li>• Advocate for the rollout of the consultative methods named in ‘Putting people First’, the local government reform policy paper and for appropriate engagement of citizens in those structures and processes.</li><li>• Publish and launch, and produce plan to track the indicators contained in the “Health of Active Citizenship Index”, developed in collaboration with the National Youth Council of Ireland.</li><li>• Support cross-societal initiatives which further the ‘active citizenship’ agenda’.</li></ul>
<b>2. Maximise public participation in the development of shared ideas of what a fair and just society is in Ireland.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete the “Shaping Europe’s Future” project, producing the analysis and report, ensuring widespread engagement prior to European Elections.</li><li>• Support public engagement initiatives that make progress towards a fair and just society, maintaining involvement in: Claiming our Future, Advocacy Initiative, EESC Rights campaign, Open Government Programme, Code for Ireland, Shared Social Responsibility etc. Prioritise those which have closest ‘fit’ with current priorities.</li><li>• Develop the ‘Better Together’ campaign into an integrated public facing work programme to engage people in the concepts of getting involved in creating a better Ireland, specifically:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Introduce a new ‘national motto’ competition around engaging people in talking about what kind of Ireland they want to see.</li><li>○ Run once again, and further enhance and develop the Better Together video competition and awards.</li><li>○ Ensure integration with other communications and policy work we are producing in 2014.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>3. Maximise the effectiveness of the community and voluntary sector’s voice so that the sector’s importance is recognised by the state, the political system and other sectors.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Produce and implement an advocacy campaign for each of the three policy priority areas for The Wheel in 2014:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Increasing the credibility of CV Sector in the context of the current crisis of trust in charities.</li><li>2. Progressing the active citizenship agenda, including a focus on inclusive local government / local development reform and alignment.</li><li>3. Ensuring the community and voluntary sector’s role in delivering public services is</li></ol></li></ul>



valued and adequately funded.

- Develop and roll out an engagement strategy with media in relation to the public image of charities and how they are portrayed in the media.
- Build coalition of infrastructure groups to coordinate the leadership needed for the sector to strengthen its voice.
- Engage proactively with Charities Regulator, ensuring maximum possible support for members during this transition phase.
- Provide practical supports to collaborative 'voice' networks and coalitions (eg Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Task Force)
- Publish the sector magazine, *Be The Change*, in conjunction with partners IFP and also the Editorial Board.

#### **4. Foster excellent leadership within the sector.**

- Develop and roll out a programme of work that will focus on developing leadership in the three 'tiers': 1) voluntary board leadership; 2) senior management levels; 3) community activist leadership.
  - 1) voluntary board leadership;
    - Provide supports (training, information, guides) to encourage and help groups to reach the standards embodied in the Governance Code.
    - Maintain active engagement on Governance Code Working Group
  - 2) senior management levels;
    - Roll out and monitor the new accredited leadership development programmes.
    - Further enhance and develop the CEO Roundtables' and 'Leadership Networks' to enhance leadership in the sector
  - 3) community activist leadership.
    - Provide information, supports and training to enhance the natural ability of people providing leadership in their communities, through 'business and technical' supports around running organisations and groups effectively, and principles of participation.
    - Roll out another cycle of the 'Training Links' network-led training programme.
- Support initiatives where good leadership is celebrated and recognised.

#### **5. Promote quality and excellence in the community and voluntary sector to deliver better outcomes for people.**

- Develop calendar of training, supports and information to encourage organisations to adopt outcomes-focused planning and measurement in their work (and seek feedback from their service users, with regard to quality and relevance of those services).
- Develop information services to reflect this strategic objective and provide a new 'home' for it on wheel.ie
- Track and promote adoption of quality standards across the sector.
- Promote adoption of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for financial account reporting; the Governance Code, the Principles of Good Practice in Fundraising and other quality assurance standards across the sector.
- Develop and publish a seventh 'Solid Foundations good practice guide' on the topic of



funding for non-profit organisations.

#### **6. Maximise collaborative working in the sector.**

- Review and keep 'live' the collaborative-working space on wheel.ie in order to be a home for the information and signposting work in this area.
- Run training and support programmes for members in how to improve their collaborative working practice; developing as a result, a network of collaborative working practitioners to use for peer learning programmes.
- Demonstrate The Wheel's own commitment to collaborative working through publishing and updating our 'collaboration index'
- Maintain and grow the procurement project, ResourcePoint to show that working collaboratively with organisations can secure savings on expenditure.

#### **7. Ensure that The Wheel has the systems, structures, processes, procedures and resources to deliver on our strategic objectives.**

##### People

- Ensure the team has the capabilities and skills to deliver on the strategic objectives.

##### Processes and Systems

- Examine the information systems, processes and tools in place in the office currently and: (1) identify improvements and efficiencies needed to achieve organisational goals; and (2) make the necessary changes.
- Review the current 'Customer Relationship Management' system and come to a conclusion about which solution is most appropriate.

##### Governance

- Complete the review of governing documents and seek adoption of them at the AGM.
- Adopt the Governance Code and the Good Practice Principles in Fundraising, putting all relevant documents on our website.

##### Communications

- Implement the Strategic Communications Plan, building the public face of The Wheel; and maximising engagement with members.
- Update weekly the media-section of wheel.ie ensuring all activity that is media-related finds a home online.

##### Business Development / Sales

- Implement structures and processes to review, monitor, manage and drive all Sales Activity within The Wheel so as to meet targets.
- Income Diversification: develop new 3-year targets across all income lines and create implementation plan for each.
- Ensure ResourcePoint is successful at reducing costs for members and raising income for The Wheel.

##### Finances and Funding:

- Complete 2013 audit, implementing full SORP for second year.
- Manage 2014 budgets tightly.

- Focus on cost cutting for the organisation.

Administration:

- Conduct facilities management with proactive early-addressing issues with landlord.
- Address shortage of office space and negotiate and renewal of lease in current offices.

Information Technology:

- Work with new IT provider to produce report on shortcomings of/potential risks with our current system. Devise/cost a plan to enhance efficiencies.
- Ensure proactive management of IT network and tools.

**8. Ensure The Wheel involves, adds value, and is responsive to our members.**

- Provide members with a range of services compliant with, and based on, the strategy and which are informed by periodic and annual feedback via a number of different mediums e.g. face to face, email, online groups, surveys etc.
- Roll out the implementation of the 'member engagement and accountability policy' and the 'policy development framework' to achieve: (1) better informed members (2) greater involvement from, and deeper engagement with, members (3) better founded policy/advocacy positions and plans and (4) stronger governance
- Ensure query-response service to members is adequate to what is needed, and that it is being tracked and built upon.