

Trustees' report 04/05

Lunch on the Run was incorporated as an independent company and charity in the Spring of 2000. It was important for us to show that a social business could operate commercially and still hold true, the values that established Lunch on the Run.

We provide training and work experience for 30 co-workers. In addition to this, we receive extra referrals from Social Services and local schools. Co-workers are involved in all aspects of running what is now a viable and thriving catering business.

We feel that this is testament to the fact that people with a learning disability can play an active and important part in the work place.

The charity pays a commercial rate for the use of the kitchen and Coffee Shop on the Pensnett Estate

The charity is organised so that its Management Committee of Directors/Trustees meet regularly to manage its affairs and formulate policy. The Chief Executive is responsible for the day-to-day running of the charity and reports to the committee monthly.

The organisation was reassessed in March 2005 for the successful maintenance of the Investor in People Award. This is testament to the commitment of staff and management to developing their skills and knowledge in offering a high quality service to co-workers and customers.

Staff continue to achieve formal qualifications through NVQ accreditation.

Lunch on the Run continues to be represented on the Board of Dudley Social Business Partnership. In this way the company can contribute to and learn from the development of other social businesses for disadvantaged groups. Staff continue to build links with local schools and colleges.

The project continues to be well respected; for its support and training for people with a learning disability as well as for providing good quality food at reasonable prices. In particular the sandwich runs have continued to grow. This has been a deliberate strategy, as the Sandwich Run enables co-workers to have face-to-face contact with customers. Co-workers themselves have said how this is the most enjoyable part of their LOTR experience.

Future developments

We look forward to the continued support of Langstone Society, a related charity. Together a strategic plan for the company has been developed. The latest strategy concentrates more on offering training and work experience opportunities rather than simply seeking to maximise sales. However trustees recognise that the organisation operates in a competitive environment. We

will continue to ensure that our range of products represents good value for money and generates appropriate levels of income.

We will continue to ensure that work at Lunch on the Run continues to be a worthwhile experience for co-workers, introducing them to the rights, responsibilities and rewards of a working life.

Financial position

Joint funding from Dudley Health and Dudley Social Services Department is essential in order for us to provide training for co-workers. This funding also acknowledges that our work is very 'labour intensive' and co-workers often need one to one support to enable them to take a full part in work activities.

We are also reliant on grants from various other charities and organisations for the replacement of capital equipment.

We are grateful for the practical help and support given to us by Stourbridge College.

Risk assessment

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational issues which the company faces. They confirm that systems are in place to enable regular reports to be produced so that necessary steps can be taken to reduce risks.

Lunch on the Run continues (as any other trading company) to be sensitive to fluctuations in the environment in which it operates. The demise of some local businesses has resulted in a loss of 'passing trade'.

Trustees continue to closely monitor, income and expenditure.

A realistic budget has been set for 2005/2006 with the target of maintaining the financial viability of the company. Management are positively seeking new business and controlling costs.

The Joint Finance Grant continues to be an essential element of our funding stream. We will endeavour - (by fulfilling our obligations under our service level agreement with Dudley MBC) - to secure this funding in future years.

John Harris, Chair

November 2005