pivotal

Annual Report & Financial Statements

2025
2026

Annual report and financial statements 2025-26

Contents

The Public Policy Forum N.I. Ltd
Company No. NI656627
N.I. Charity No. 108659

Registered Office
61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast,
BT15 2GB, Northern Ireland.

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Vision, mission, context and strategic priorities

Pivotal is an independent public policy think tank for Northern Ireland. Launched in September 2019, Pivotal aims to be a future-focused, ambitious and innovative voice, promoting the use of evidence and research in order to improve policy decisions in Northern Ireland. Pivotal is independent of government and has no political alignment.

Vision

Better policy making and improved economic and social outcomes in Northern Ireland.

Mission

Use research, evidence and engagement to inform and influence policy making in Northern Ireland.

Strategic priorities

1.
Inform, enhance and influence policy decision-making in Northern Ireland through promoting research and evidence of what works.

2.
Encourage and enable discussion about public policy issues, including involving more marginalised individuals and groups.

3.
Use our work to make convincing arguments for policy change.

4.
Create a reputation for being authoritative, influential, independent and relevant.

5.
Be a sustainable, effective and efficient organisation which is an excellent place to work and with whom others want to engage.

Strategic context

Northern Ireland faces many long-standing economic and social challenges, for example educational inequality, low productivity, ongoing tensions between communities, poor health and social care provision, persistent poverty, and crumbling wastewater infrastructure. In the past, the political system here has tended not to be focussed on finding effective solutions for these longer term problems. Decisions are often made for political reasons rather than being based on research or evidence. Tough but necessary decisions are frequently avoided, because of the political difficulties involved.

Pivotal wants to help improve policy making by promoting evidence-based solutions to Northern Ireland's policy problems. As part of increasing the use of evidence in policy making, Pivotal seeks to involve more people in talking about the public policy issues that matter to them. We aim to enable more people to give their views on issues and influence policy decisions, particularly young people and others who might not have had a voice in the past. Our research involves engaging with a wide range of people including users of public services, researchers, public service providers, politicians, policy makers and members of the general public. In the past year we have also begun a more active engagement with a younger cohort through a new Policy Leadership Development Programme which has provided a weekly programme to inform and inspire people aged 18-25 about policy issues and influence.

The social and economic challenges facing Northern Ireland are severe: by far the longest health waiting lists in the UK; low average skill levels; inequality in educational outcomes; low productivity and innovation; persistent poverty and deprivation; divisions between communities; and a lack of focus on climate change. There is an urgent need for improved policy decision-making in all of these areas.

Policy context in 2025-26

In March 2025, the Executive published its final Programme for Government (PfG), confirming the nine priorities which reflect some of Northern Ireland's biggest policy challenges: the economy, childcare, health waiting times, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Special Educational Needs (SEN), housing, Lough Neagh and the environment, safer communities, and public service transformation. While publication of the PfG was welcome, Pivotal raised concerns about the lack of measurable targets and specific details on many of these issues.

There has been some progress against these priorities since the Executive's return two years ago: some of the longest health waiting lists are being tackled, parents received support for childcare costs, and the VAWG Strategic Framework received a lot of publicity and support. The first round of transformation funding was allocated, investing in primary care, SEN, speeding up justice and more. However, on many other issues, progress has been lacking. The Executive is unlikely to meet its housing targets, productivity remains low, economic inactivity is high, and despite progress on the longest waits, hospital waiting lists continue to grow.

Action on some longer-term issues also remains insufficient. There is no agreed plan to tackle poverty, after campaigners strongly opposed the proposed strategy, there is no shared way forward to tackle our ageing wastewater infrastructure, which is stalling or blocking developments across Northern Ireland, and key infrastructure projects such as the A5 and Casement Park remain unbuilt. The Executive still has not published its Investment Strategy, four years after the draft emerged in January 2022.

Last year saw some progress on stabilising the public finances, through the Budget Sustainability Plan and Interim Fiscal Framework, which added a needs-based element to the Barnett Formula. These reforms, along with the certainty of a multi-year settlement from the Treasury, should have paved the way for Northern Ireland's first multi-year budget in a decade, allowing ministers to plan, invest and transform. However, the Finance Minister's proposed draft multi-year budget was rejected by his Executive colleagues and now, in the early months of the new financial year, a budget is yet to emerge. Ministers are now faced with uncertainty about their funding allocation, weak budgetary management, and an inability to plan. All the while, public services continue to deteriorate, making it even harder for transformation to be undertaken.

The Executive claims that a budget cannot be agreed until more money is provided from the UK Government, but many questions can be asked of ministers about financial decisions they are making themselves. The Fiscal Council made clear that savings could be made through tough choices about the size of the public sector, pay parity and local revenue raising, which could go some way to stabilising the public finances here. Public services, as currently configured, are not affordable. The Executive should take the difficult decisions needed to reduce overspends, invest in public services, and put the public finances on a more stable footing.

With an Assembly Election in May 2027, Ministers and MLAs need to focus on policy challenges rather than solely the election, so citizens can see a meaningful difference in our public services and public finances before they cast their vote. The process of transformation must be a whole-of-government mission, rather than a project confined to a single pot of money. A relentless drive to improve outcomes is needed from the Executive. Looking to additional funding from Westminster is unlikely to yield much given the fiscal constraints that the UK Government faces.

Charitable purpose

Pivotal's organisational purposes as set out in our objects in the Company's Memorandum of Association are:

To advance citizenship by encouraging and equipping the public on a non-partisan basis to engage in the process of public policy-making, and by promoting the inclusion of sections of the community who are under-represented in public policy debate.

To advance the education of the public by providing opportunities to learn about the processes and effects of public policy-making; and by undertaking, publishing and disseminating independent research on the potential implications and benefits of varied social and economic policy options.

How our activities deliver public benefit

The Trustees pay due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. The Trustees are confident that Pivotal's vision, mission and strategic objectives are in accordance with the regulations on public benefit.

The Trustees believe that our purpose satisfies both elements of the public benefit requirement. The direct benefits which flow from this purpose include:

- **More people, and particularly those from disengaged sections of the community, will become actively engaged as citizens in the public policy-making process and in shaping the policies that directly and indirectly affect them.**
- **Elected representatives and public officials will be better informed and equipped to devise public policy.**
- **More people will understand how public policy is made and how it affects their lives, and public policy debate and implementation are informed by both expert evidence and public views.**

These benefits will be evidenced through the collation of statistical information around participation in events and projects organised by the charity, and the range and numbers of sectors engaging. We will also provide qualitative information in the form of case studies and feedback from participants, politicians and policy-makers. We will assess the extent to which public policy-making reflects the outputs from the charity's work.

The purposes of our charity will not lead to any harm.

The charity's beneficiaries are the general public. The only private benefit that may arise would be to Trustees and staff who undertake skills training in good governance, finance, IT, event management, etc in order to enhance the charity's ability to deliver its services, but which may also be transferable to other settings. These skills are incidental and necessary to ensure the described benefit is provided to its public beneficiaries, the general public.

Governance and staff

Board

David Gavaghan (Chair)
Advisor, consultant, and director

Barry Byrne
Chief Executive Officer of Mount Charles; joined December 2025

Sarah Creighton
Housing Advisor and lawyer

Judith Gillespie
Former Deputy Chief Constable, PSNI

Jarlath Kearney
Strategy Advisor and media contributor; resigned June 2025

Seamus McAleavey
Retired Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action

Andrew McCormick
Retired Northern Ireland Civil Service Permanent Secretary

Sinéad McSweeney
Former Global Head of Public Policy, Twitter; resigned June 2025

Rosalind Skillen
Climate activist and columnist; resigned March 2026

Alan Whysall
Honorary Senior Research Associate, University College London

Staff

Ann Watt
Ann was appointed as Pivotal's Director in September 2019. Ann is a former senior civil servant, with 15 years' experience working in London in HM Treasury, Home Office and Cabinet Office. From 2014, Ann was the Head of the Electoral Commission in Northern Ireland for five years. Ann is now well-established, trusted and valued across policy debate in providing a clear, authoritative and independent voice.

Dr James Greer
James joined Pivotal in February 2023 as Senior Researcher. James is an experienced academic and researcher. He has researched, taught and published widely on issues regarding politics and society in Northern Ireland, devolution and public policy across the UK, and the political history of Ireland. James has led many of our research projects, including commissioned work for other organisations, as well as our regular Pivotal Platform series.

Tom Burns
Tom joined Pivotal in September 2024 as a Researcher. Tom is a Law with Politics graduate, with a Master's in Global Security and Borders from Queen's University Belfast. His focus has been on the politics and policies of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK. Tom has led the development of our Policy Leadership Development Programme, as well as several research projects about the operation of the NI Assembly and Executive.

Pivotal also uses research associates, research assistants, interns and placement students to work on particular projects. Each year we host two QUB undergraduate interns for a 12 week placement.

Our values

In all our work we adhere to the following values:

Independent and objective

- **We act only in the public interest**
- **We will not be associated with a single individual, organisation, political party, or ideology**
- **We will remain free to think radically and objectively, promoting policies based on evidence, not opinion**

Inclusive and accessible

- **We will make all our work accessible to the public**
- **We will seek to engage and involve the widest spectrum of people in our work**
- **We will provide a platform for new voices, particularly from those parts of the community under-represented in public debate**

Authoritative, effective and influential

- **Our research, analysis and advice will be accurate, credible and authoritative**
- **We will have the expertise to communicate and influence in order to make an impact**

Open and transparent

- **We will be transparent about how we are funded, who we are working with and what we are doing**

Chair’s report for 2025-26

Pivotal has had a strong year building upon the valuable contribution it makes as an independent voice on public policy in Northern Ireland, further establishing itself as a leading contributor to policy debate and discussion. We produce relevant and timely research reports, and provide valuable independent analysis and commentary.

Pivotal is today recognised as an important and trusted voice on current issues, with much greater opportunity to contribute to discussions and decision-making since the Assembly and Executive returned in February 2024.

Main outputs during 2025-26

1. Research Report on policy delivery in Northern Ireland

2. Two Tracker Reports reviewing the actions of the Executive and making recommendations for change

3. Briefing Report on the challenges and opportunities of a multi-year budget

4. Evidence to a number of Committees and consultation responses

5. Comment and analysis day-to-day on government and policy issues, appearing frequently on local media and providing regular comment on X, LinkedIn and Bluesky.

Tracker reports

During 2025-26, Pivotal published two tracker reports, looking at the actions of the Executive departments, progress against PfG priorities, analysis of the key issues and recommendations for the future.

18 months of the Northern Ireland Executive: a review (September 25)

Two years of the restored Northern Ireland Executive (January 26)

Research reports

We published one major research report this year, based on interviews with 30 leaders from the Civil Service, politics, business, the voluntary sector and beyond.

Policy delivery in Northern Ireland (June 25)

Briefing reports

We published a briefing report which provided background and analysis of Northern Ireland's public finances.

Northern Ireland's multi-year budget: challenges and opportunities (December 25)

Evidence and consultations

We have provided submissions of evidence to Committees and consultations:

Written evidence to the Department of Infrastructure's Developer Contributions for wastewater infrastructure consultation

Written and oral evidence to the Assembly and Executive Review Committee's consultation on reform of the Assembly and Executive

Oral evidence to the Finance Committee about the Northern Ireland Fiscal Council Bill

Oral and written evidence to the Finance Committee on the multi-year budget

Response to Department of Finance consultation on draft multi-year budget

Commissioned work

We completed commissioned work on behalf of the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) on the role of the community and voluntary sector in tackling Economic Inactivity (November 2025). We supported Carnegie UK's roundtable discussion in Belfast about deliberative democracy.

Pivotal Platform

Each week, Pivotal Platform allows us to engage with people and sectors across Northern Irish society, sharing their experiences and challenges, with a solution-oriented focus about how government can work better. Pivotal Platform offers an insightful contribution to greater evidence-based policy discussion. We are grateful to all those who have written articles.

We have published 34 Pivotal Platform articles in 2025-26, totalling 83 articles since its launch, on a range of topics including: economic inactivity, housing, supporting carers, AI, Violence Against Women and Girls, apprenticeships, clean energy, GP funding, integrated education, health transformation, infrastructure investment, active travel and many more.

Policy Leadership Development Programme

In September 2025, we launched our new Policy Leadership Development Programme (PLDP), bringing together young people aged 18-25 with an interest in public policy and a desire to contribute to making Northern Ireland better.

Since its launch, we have run two cohorts, reaching a total of 47 young people from across Northern Ireland, with strong representation of women, ethnic and religious minorities, and the “traditional communities”. We have had participants from Further and Higher Education institutions and different employment backgrounds including teaching, the civil service, public affairs, environmental preservation, law, economics, community engagement and many more. We are pleased to have had participants from all 11 council districts in Northern Ireland, as well as students from GB and US who are studying here.

Over an eight-week course, participants engage in policy skills workshops delivered by the Pivotal team, learn about important policy debates and government functions, and hear from current policy leaders about their careers and how they shape policy. Guest speakers have included Jonny Currie and Celine McStravick (NICVA), Suzanne Wylie (NI Chamber), Jayne Brady (Head of the NI Civil Service), Máirtín MacGabhann (Donate4Dáithí) and Stephen Farry (Ulster University).

In working groups of 2-4 people, participants researched and wrote a future-focused, solution-oriented briefing paper on an issue that mattered to them. Topics included: youth mental health, housing, political education, Violence Against Women and Girls, green skills and the Just Transition, AI in education and many more. One report was cited in a community regeneration project, and another has formed the basis of a mental health campaign in the participants' university, showing the value of the work they have done.

We also launched the PLDP Alumni network, allowing participants to join and deepen their connections and learn more about policy in Northern Ireland. We have organised a number of events for the alumni, including a visit to the US Consulate and Q&A with the Consul General, attending the Belfast Summit and Leadership and Governance Conference. Upcoming events in Spring/Summer 2026 include a meeting with the Finance Minister, a visit to the NI Assembly, and a Q&A with NICS Permanent Secretaries.

Events

We were pleased to contribute to events hosted by other organisations throughout the year, including:

- **British Irish Association conference in Oxford**
- **NI Fiscal Council report launches and discussions**
- **NI Economic Conference (AgendaNI)**
- **NICVA events including a visit to Cardiff as part of the Civic Threads project**
- **Presentations on the multi-year budget at NICVA and CO3 webinars**
- **NICON's Leadership and Governance Conference**
- **Public Sector Chairs' Forum on policy delivery in Northern Ireland**
- **Funders' Forum NI event for visiting GB funders**
- **FDA conference on the NICS and delivery**

We hosted a webinar with Dr Michelle Clement, author of 'The Art of Delivery'.

Media and social media

We have contributed frequently to local radio and TV, including BBC Sunday Politics, BBC Radio Ulster, UTV News, UTV View from Stormont, U105, Q Radio and Cool FM. We have also had significant coverage of reports and other outputs in print media in Northern Ireland and beyond, including the Belfast Telegraph (where we have also had a number of opinion pieces published), the Irish News and the Irish Times. We continue to use X, LinkedIn and Bluesky for day-to-day comment and analysis. Since early 2026, we have made greater use of LinkedIn articles, which allow for quick and insightful analysis which is longer-form and detailed. So far, we have published nine articles, with plans for more in future.

Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University

We are grateful to Queen's University Belfast (QUB) for providing Pivotal with an office and IT support from October 2023. Having our own office space has been very beneficial to the team.

In the spring term we hosted two QUB politics undergraduates for 12-week placements as part of their degrees.

We contributed again this year to the Ulster University (UU) public policy challenge for economics undergraduates.

Staff team

Pivotal currently has a staff team of three – Ann Watt (Director), Dr James Greer (Senior Researcher) and Tom Burns (Researcher).

Our aim is to grow the team , but this depends on raising additional income. There is a renewed emphasis across Pivotal to do this.

Income generation

We are very grateful to our donors who between them cover most of Pivotal's core costs.

We remain committed to growing our base of supporters from different sources, including individual donors, grant-making organisations and commissioned projects.

Future plans

The Pivotal team has just completed a new research report (published June 2026) looking at suggestions for reforming the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement institutions, short of what has become known as the 'single-party veto'. An in-depth research project on disengagement from education is well underway. Another tracker report will be published in September 2026. We also have a number of commissioned projects, including for NICVA and IntrinsicAI. Other future projects will be subject to securing necessary funding. The team, along with Board members, are planning ahead of the upcoming Assembly Election in 2027. We hope to start the third PLDP cohort in September 2026, and Alumni events will continue.

We will continue to respond to consultations and inquiries as appropriate, and engage with issues day-to-day on social media and on TV, radio and print media.

Thanks

Our sincere thanks to those who have funded Pivotal throughout this year, particularly our main donors.

We are also grateful for all those individuals and organisations with whom we have worked in partnership and who have supported Pivotal in other ways including:

- **QUB for generous provision of office space and IT support**
- **Thought Collective, particularly for their work on the website and the design of our reports**
- **Ryan Miller for his support for our comms and media work**

I am grateful to my fellow Trustees for giving their time and expertise to Pivotal. A particular note of thanks to Jarlath Kearney, Sinéad McSweeney and Rosalind Skillen, who stepped down from the Board during the year, for all their contributions – each of them have played an important part in helping Pivotal in its journey since its establishment in 2019. We recognise that in each case the individuals have weighed up their need to also cope with other responsibilities and fully understand that after a number of years of contributing to Pivotal they have decided to move on. I am delighted that Barry Byrne joined as a Trustee this year, and for the energy he has brought to the role work so far. We will be looking to add more new Trustees in the coming year.

Finally on behalf of my fellow Trustees, I would like to record our sincere thanks to the staff team for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Pivotal's reputation and impact grows each year, and this is due to the team's energy, talent and commitment. We recognise that each of the team have played a critical part in Pivotal's outputs against a very challenging backdrop, and the Trustees cannot thank them enough for the passion and perspicacity that each of them brings to the organisation's vision and mission.

D N Gavaghan

David Gavaghan
23 June 2026

Public Policy Forum NI Limited (Pivotal)

Financial Statements

for The Period Ended 31 March 2026

Registered Charity No: NIC108659

KAREN DRENNAN
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Independent examiner's report

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Respective responsibilities of charity Trustees and examiner

As the charity Trustees (and the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law as the charity is a small company charity, it is exempt from audit in accordance with section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- **examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act**
- **follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act**
- **state whether matters have come to my attention.**

Basis of independent examiner's report

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act. The examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as charity Trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. **That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006**
2. **That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records provided**
3. **That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the 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**
4. **That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.**

Independent examiner's statement
I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.
The accounts have been prepared using the accrual method.
This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, and work has been undertaken to that I might state to the charitable company's members those matters which are required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company's members and the charitable company's members as a body, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

K. Drennan

Karen Drennan, Karen Drennan Business Management Services
Chartered Accountant, 101 Killinchy Road, Comber BT23 5NE
18 June 2026

1: Accounting policies

General Information and basis of preparation

The Public Policy Forum NI Ltd is a charitable company not having share capital and is registered in Northern Ireland.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Statement of Compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with the 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2013, Charities (Accounts and reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charitable company and rounded to the nearest £1.

Fund accounting – unrestricted funds

The charitable company's unrestricted funds consist of a general fund which is expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the charitable objects of the organisation. The Trustees may at their discretion designate funds for specific purposes but the designations do not legally restrict the Trustees' discretion to apply the funds.

Fund accounting – restricted funds

The charitable company's restricted funds consist of funds where the donor has imposed restrictions on the use of the funds.

Income recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charitable company is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received. For donations to be recognised the charitable company will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charitable company and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Voluntary income received by way of donations and gifts is credited to revenue on a receivable basis.

For legacies, entitlement is the earlier of the charity being notified of an impending distribution or the legacy being received. At this point income is recognised. On occasion legacies will be notified to the charitable company however it is not possible to measure the amount expected to be distributed. On these occasions, the legacy is treated as contingent asset and disclosed.

Income from grants are recognised at fair value when the charitable company has entitlement after any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.
If entitlement is not met, then these amounts are deferred. Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are

receivable, unless they relate to a specified future period. Grants which contribute towards specific expenditure on fixed assets are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in full upon receipt.

Accrued Income

Income from certain events has been accrued as the concerned event occurred before the year end.

Value Added Tax

The charitable company is not registered for VAT purposes; therefore, expenditure is shown gross of VAT.

Expenditure Recognition

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.
It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprises of direct costs; and
- Expenditure on charitable activities comprises those costs incurred by the charitable company in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries and includes direct costs for example, salary costs, consultancy costs, travel and subsistence and an apportionment of support costs

Support costs allocation

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charitable company but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs and administrative payroll costs.

They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objectives of the charitable company. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed to headings, they have been allocated to cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources.

The analysis of these costs is included in note 7.

Taxation

As a charitable company, the company benefits from various exemptions afforded by tax legislation. It is therefore not liable to corporation tax on income or gains falling due within those exemptions. Recovery is made of tax deducted from receipts under gift aid.

Going Concern

The financial statement has been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The Trustees have considered the level of funds held and expected level of income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charitable company to be able to continue as a going concern.

2: Status

The company is a company limited by guarantee (NI656627).

The company is accepted as a charity by H M Revenue & Customs within the definition of Section 506(1) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1998. The company has been registered by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland since March 2022 (charity number NIC108659).

Statement of financial activities

	NOTE	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL FUNDS '26	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL FUNDS '25
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	**134,750**	-	**134,750**	105,000	-	**105,000**
Other trading activities	4	**58,749**	-	**58,749**	8,809	-	**8,809**
Investments	5	**-**	-	**-**	-	-	-
Total income		**193,499**	-	**193,499**	113,809	-	113,809
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		**-**	-	**-**	-	-	-
Other trading activities	6	**174,791**	-	**174,791**	140,494	-	**140,494**
Total expenditure		**174,791**	-	**174,791**	140,494	-	140,494
Net (expenditure)/income		**18,708**	-	**18,708**	(26,685)	-	(26,685)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		**24,881**	-	**24,881**	51,566	-	51,566
Total funds carried forward		**43,589**	-	**43,589**	24,881	-	24,881

Income and Expenditure Account

	TOTAL 2026	TOTAL 2025
	£	£
Income	**193,499**	113,809
Interest and investment income	**-**	-
Gross income	**193,499**	113,809
Expenditure	**174,791**	140,494
Total expenditure	**174,791**	140,494
Net income	**18,708**	(26,685)

Balance Sheet

	NOTE	2026		2025	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Other debtors	15	**41,033**		20,053	
Cash at bank and in hand		**7,767**		11,802	
		48,800		31,855	
Creditors:					
Amounts falling due within one year	16	**(5,211)**		(6,974)	
Net current assets			**43,589**		24,881
Creditors					
Amounts falling due after More than one year	17	-			-
Net assets			**43,589**		24,881
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	19		**43,589**		24,881
Unrestricted funds	19		-		-
			43,589		24,881

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

These financial statements and the following pages were approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 23 June 2026.

David Gavaghan, Chair

Seamus McAleavey, Treasurer

Statement of Cash Flows

	NOTE	TOTAL 2026	TOTAL 2025
		£	£
Cash flow from operating activities	21	**18,708**	**(26,685)**
Net cash flow from operating activities		**18,708**	**(26,685)**
Changes in:			
Trade and other debtors		**(28,033)**	**(13,000)**
Trade and other creditors		**388**	**4,823**
Net cash flow from operating activities		**(27,645)**	**(8,177)**
Cash flow from financing activities			
Proceeds from bank loan		-	-
Repayment of bank loan		-	-
Net cash flow from financing activities		-	-
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents		**(8,937)**	**(34,862)**
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		**11,802**	**46,664**
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year		**2,865**	**11,802**

Notes to the Financial Statements

3. Income from donations and legacies

	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS 2026	TOTAL FUNDS 2025
	£	£	£	£
Programme sponsorship	**46,261**	-	**46,261**	-
Fundraising & donations	**134,750**	-	**134,750**	100,000
Other income	**2,988**	-	**2,988**	5,000
	183,999	-	**183,999**	105,000

4. Income from other trading activities

	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS 2026	TOTAL FUNDS 2025
	£	£	£	£
Commissioned research & other income. (Detailed as training in previous years)	**9,500**	-	**9,500**	8,809
	9,500	-	**9,500**	8,809

5. Income from investments

	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS 2026	TOTAL FUNDS 2025
	£	£	£	£
Interest	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-

Notes to the Financial Statements

6. Analysis of expenditure '26	ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DIRECTLY	GRANT FUNDING OF ACTIVITIES	SUPPORT COSTS	TOTAL 2026
	£	£	£	£
Research & publications	97,490	-	1,823	**99,313**
Communication & engagement	45,574	-	1,823	**47,397**
Governance & administration	12,825	-	2,126	**14,951**
Fundraising	12,825	-	305	**13,130**
	168,714	-	6,077	**174,791**

Analysis of expenditure '25	ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DIRECTLY	GRANT FUNDING OF ACTIVITIES	SUPPORT COSTS	TOTAL 2025
	£	£	£	£
Research & publications	70,013	-	3,360	**73,373**
Communication & engagement	41,776	-	1,120	**42,896**
Governance & administration	11,807	-	305	**12,112**
Fundraising	11,807	-	305	**12,112**
	135,403	-	5,091	**140,494**

7. Allocation of support costs '26	RAISING FUNDS	CHARITABLE ACTIVITY	TOTAL 2026
	£	£	£
Governance & administration	-	600	**600**
Finance	-	99	**99**
Depreciation	-	-	-
	-	699	**699**

Allocation of support costs '25	RAISING FUNDS	CHARITABLE ACTIVITY	TOTAL 2025
	£	£	£
Governance & administration	-	600	**600**
Finance	-	108	**108**
Depreciation	-	-	-
	-	708	**708**

8. Governance costs

	2026	2025
	£	£
Independent examiners costs	**600**	600
Trustees remuneration	-	-
Trustee expenses	-	-
Legal and professional fees	**411**	542
Other	**-**	-
	1,011	1,142

Notes to the Financial Statements

9. Analysis of expenditure

	RAISING FUNDS	OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES	OTHER	TOTAL 2026	TOTAL 2026. ANALYSED AS UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL 2026. ANALYSED AS RESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL 2026	TOTAL 2025. ANALYSED AS UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	TOTAL 2025. ANALYSED AS RESTRICTED FUNDS
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£		£
Direct costs									
Research & publications	-	5,200	-	5,200	5,200	-	5,200	6,720	-
Communications & engagement	-	8,140	-	8,140	8,140	-	8,140	3,405	-
Design & print	-	17,502	-	17,502	17,502	-	17,502	5,520	-
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Salaries and NICs	-	125,823	-	125,823	125,823	-	125,823	109,419	-
Pension contributions	-	12,050	-	12,050	12,050	-	12,050	10,339	-
Selection and recruitment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travelling and subsistence	-	632	-	632	632	-	632	1,495	-
Membership & subscriptions	-	715	-	715	715	-	715	319	-
Bank charges and interest	-	108	-	108	108	-	108	108	-
General expenses	-	2,654	-	2,654	2,654	-	2,654	1,347	-
Insurance	-	956	-	956	956	-	956	922	-
Support costs									
Governance:									
Independent examiner's report	-	600	-	600	600	-	600	600	-
Trustees remuneration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trustees expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Legal and professional fees	-	411	-	411	411	-	411	300	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	174,791	-	174,791	174,791	-	174,791	140,494	-

10. Net income for the year

	2026	2025
This is stated after charging:	£	£
Independent examiners fee	600	600
Depreciation of fixed assets	-	-
Operating lease payments	-	-

11. Independent Examiner's remuneration

The independent examiner's remuneration amounts to £600 and other services of £325 for payroll provision.

12. Trustees and key management personnel remuneration and expenses

The Trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year. The total amount of employee benefits received by key management personnel is £51,750.

13. Staff costs and employee benefits

The average number of employees employed by the company during the period April 2025 - March 2026 is 3.

	2026	2025
	£	£
Raising funds	-	-
Charitable activities	3.0	2.5
Governance	-	-
	3.0	2.5

The total staff costs and employee benefits incurred during the year was as follows:

	2026	2025
	£	£
Wages and salaries	120,500	103,395
Social security costs	5,323	6,025
Defined contribution pension costs	12,050	10,338
	137,873	119,758

No employee received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000 during the period April 2025 - March 2026.

	2026	2025
	£	£
Allocated to:		
Raising funds	-	-
Charitable activity	137,873	119,758
	137,873	119,758

Notes to the Financial Statements

14. Taxation

The charitable company is a registered charity and as such, is entitled to certain tax exemptions on income and profits from investments and surpluses on any trading activities carried out in the furtherance of the charitable company's primary objectives, if these profits and surpluses are applied solely for charitable purposes. The charity is not registered for VAT and accordingly, all their expenditure is inclusive of VAT incurred.

15. Debtors	2026	2025
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	41,093	20,053
Amounts owed by related party	-	-
	41,093	20,053

16. Creditors: -amounts falling due within one year	2026	2025
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts	-	-
Other tax and social security	1,270	2,860
Other creditors	3,941	4,114
Amounts owed to related party	-	-
Accruals	-	-
Deferred income	-	-
	5,211	6,974

17. Creditors: -amounts falling due after more than one year	2026	2025
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts	-	-
	-	-

18. Pensions

The company operates a money purchase pension scheme for its employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund. The pension costs charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to £11,607 (2024-2025 £10,339) The amount of pension costs accrued at the year end amounted to £2,812.00 (2024-2025 - £3,941.00).

19. Analysis of net assets between funds

	TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	NET CURRENT ASSETS	LONG TERM LIABILITIES	2026
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted	-	43,589	-	43,589
Restricted	-	-	-	-
	-	43,589	-	43,589

Notes to the Financial Statements

20. Fund reconciliations: Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted funds consist of funds which are expendable at the discretion of the Charity in furtherance of its objectives. In addition to expenditure on activities such funds may be held in order to finance capital investment and working capital.

	BALANCE AT 31/03/25	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	TRANSFERS	BALANCE AT 31/03/26
	£	£	£	£	£
General	24,881	193,499	(174,791)	-	**43,589**
Designated	-	-	-	-	-
	24,881	193,499	(174,791)	-	**43,589**

21. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2026	2025
	£	£
Net income for the year	18,708	26,685
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	-	-
Interest from investments	-	-
Increase in debtors	5,217	(13,000)
Increase in creditors	388	4,823
Net cash flow from operating activities	13,879	(34,862)

22. Financial commitments

No contracts had been placed for future capital expenditure at the balance sheet date.

23. Contingent liabilities

The company has a contingent liability to repay grants received if the company fails to comply with certain conditions stipulated in the letters of offer under which the grants were paid. The directors do not expect any claims to be made in this respect.

24. Company limited by guarantee

The Public Policy Forum NI Ltd is a company limited by guarantee having no share capital. It is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association and the liability of the members is limited to an amount not exceeding £1.

25. Ethical standards

In common with many other organisations of our size and nature, we use our independent examiner to prepare and assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account

	2026		2025	
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Grants				
Department of Foreign Affairs	46,261		-	
		46,261		-
Other income				
Research income	9,500		7,250	
Other income	2,988		1,559	
Donations	120,000		100,000	
Gift aid	14,750		5,000	
		147,238		113,809
Total income		193,499		113,809
Expenditure				
Central costs:				
Salaries and NICs	125,823		109,419	
Pension contributions	12,050		10,339	
Staff travel and subsistence	632		1,495	
Staff training and conferences	1,153		557	
Administration and office costs (Note 1)	4,291		3,039	
Selection and recruitment costs	-		-	
		143,949		124,849
Communication & engagement:				
Research & publications	5,200		6,720	
Communications & engagement	8,140		3,405	
Design & print	17,502		5,520	
		30,842		15,645
Total expenditure		174,791		140,494
Total income		193,499		113,809
Surplus for the year		18,708		(26,685)

Note 1: Administration and Office Costs

	2026	2025
	£	£
Insurance	956	922
Payroll fees	325	300
Independent examiners fee	600	600
Professional & legal fees	86	-
Memberships and subscriptions	715	319
Bank charges	108	108
General expenses	1,501	790
Total Administration and Office Costs	**4,291**	**3,039**

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Annual report and financial statements
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