



Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027

Presented to Annual General Meeting 6 December 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Fermanagh Enterprise Limited was set up in 1985 as one of the first Local Enterprise Agencies in Northern Ireland. The Organisation represents the vision of a dedicated group of local professional and business people who sought realistic solutions to the problems of unemployment, through promoting the establishment and development of small businesses.

The Organisation is based in the Enniskillen Business Centre, 21 Lackaghboy Road, Enniskillen and also works in close co-operation with a network of other Enterprise Centres and a range of Partnership Bodies at a Local, Regional and Cross Border level. The Agency is a member of Enterprise Northern Ireland, an association of Enterprise Agencies which exists to make Northern Ireland more enterprising and innovative.

Fermanagh Enterprise Limited is a Company registered in Northern Ireland with Company Number NI 18464 and is registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland Number NIC101571.

1.2 Mission Statement

To strengthen the economy of Fermanagh through encouraging, assisting and advising individuals wishing to move to self-employment and set up and grow their own business.

1.3 Values

- Quality, Excellence and Professionalism
- Respectfulness, Responsiveness
- Encourage collaboration
- Transparency and accountability
- Good governance
- People First - Customers, Staff and local community.

1.4 Aims

- To relieve poverty through stimulating economic prosperity
- To relieve unemployment through the promotion of enterprise and micro business start-up, growth and development.

1.5 Objectives

- To provide flexible industrial and office workspace suited to start-up and growing small businesses
- To provide free business advice, mentoring and support to members of the public in Fermanagh wishing to explore self-employment and/or set up a small business
- To maintain a public profile to ensure potential clients are aware of our services
- To deliver programmes of Support to the target market in Fermanagh
- To develop links and working relationships with other stakeholders at a local, regional and wider level
- To operate Fermanagh Enterprise Limited to the highest level of Governance, Integrity and Accountability
- To operate a well-run, sustainable Organisation which generates sufficient profits to fund other objectives.

1.6 Charities Commission Statement

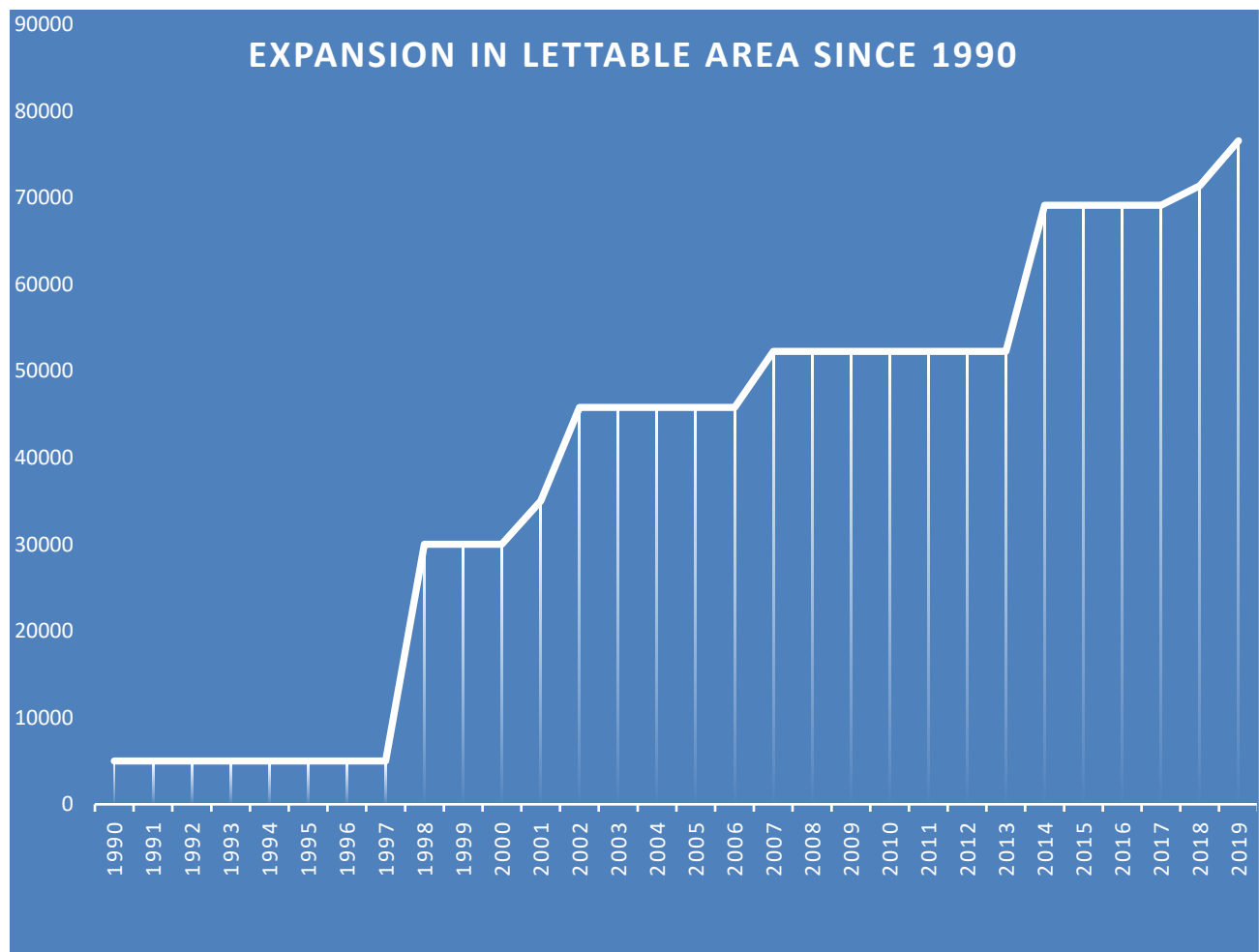
The objects of the Company shall be the promotion for the public benefit of urban and rural regeneration in County Fermanagh and the surrounding areas (the "area of benefit"), being an area of social and economic deprivation, by all or any of the following means: (i) the relief of poverty in such ways as may be thought fit; (ii) the relief of unemployment in such ways as may be thought fit, including assistance to find employment; (iii) the advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly among unemployed people and providing unemployed people with work experience; (iv) the provision of financial assistance, technical assistance or business advice or consultancy in order to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people in cases of financial or other charitable need through help: (i) in setting up their own business, or (ii) to existing businesses; (iii) the creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings and/or land for use on favourable terms.

1.7 Some Key Performance Indicators to Date

1.7.1 Workspace Development

<i>Year</i>	<i>Lettable space sq ft</i>	<i>Number of units</i>
1998 Lackaghboy	31,117	46
1998 Buttermarket	10,802	23
2001 Lackaghboy	5,000	1
2008 Lackaghboy	6,485	16
2013 Killyhevlin	16,836	33
2018 Killyhevlin	2,250	1
2019 Abbey House	5,203	29
TOTALS	77,693	149

1.7.1.1 Expansion in Lettable Area Since 1990



1.7.2 Recent occupancy figures (from Annual Reports Year End March 2019, March 2020 and March 2021)

	<i>Number of units</i>	Occupancy %			<i>Number of businesses</i>	<i>Employment</i>
		2019	2020	2021 (COVID-19)		
Lackaghboy	63	98	97	91	42	123
Buttermarket	23	97	99	78	22	33
Killyhevin	34	99	96	86	30	57
Abbey House	29	N/A	69	85	27	36
TOTALS	149				121	249

1.7.3 Business Start-up Support

Fermanagh Enterprise Limited has delivered support to micro business start-up via the current Regional Start Programme and its precursors continuously since 1989.

Some statistics going back to 2001 indicate the relative importance of this type of support in Fermanagh.

Year	Businesses	Jobs Created
01-02	52	146
02-03	91	255
03-04	145	406
04-05	227	636
05-06	209	585
06-07	220	616
07-08	247	692
08-09	158	442
09-10	131	367
10-11	134	375
11-12	129	361
12-13	75	210
13-14	178	499
14-15	198	555
15-16	177	496
16-17	148	414
17-18	142	398
18-19	128	358
19-20	138	386
20-21	55	154
Totals	2,982	8,351

1.7.4 Business Development Support

Fermanagh Enterprise Limited has extensive experience in bringing Business development type support to existing businesses who wish to expand and grow.

Recent examples are:

- EEP - a Programme for individuals wishing to explore self-employment. Involves putting together a Portfolio for a Qualification in CCEA Accredited Training for a Level 2 in Understanding Business Enterprise
- Kick Start - a Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Programme designed to provide Support and Mentoring to existing businesses
- Co-Innovate - an initiative funded under the European INTERREG VA Programme. The Co-Innovate Programme is a Cross Border Research and Innovation (R&I) aiming to increase the proportion of SME's engaged in cross-border research and innovation.

2.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Financial Sustainability

2.2 Property Management and Development

2.3 Programme Delivery and Enterprise Development

2.4 People and Skills

2.5 Public Profile and Representation

2.1 Priority 1 – Financial Sustainability

The Organisation will be operated and managed on a commercial basis and maintain its ethos of being ‘profit making but not profit taking’. This approach will safeguard the long-term viability and sustainability of the Company and ensure that we are a resilient and robust Organisation equipped to respond to the challenge of change. Financial sustainability will help maintain our on-going ability to contribute to the relief of poverty through the promotion of enterprise and micro business start-up, growth and development.

Thus, a key strategic aim is to ensure that in 2027, the Organisation is solidly positioned as a financially secure Company making a vital contribution to social and economic development in Fermanagh.

The Organisation will be managed in an efficient and effective way and the necessary systems and processes in place to ensure value for money and transparency in all areas of activity. We will manage our finances, property, programmes, people and partnerships in a responsible and professional way to meet the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

In the past, the Company had a significant role in the local delivery of a range of programmes of support for business start-up and development. We are aware that the changing external environment including Brexit and the role of Invest NI, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and other support Organisations will mean changes in funding and potentially fewer opportunities to tender for similar programmes in the future. This will be an area of uncertainty in the time frame of this Strategic Plan.

In order to mitigate against the unpredictability and lack of control of revenue streams from Programme delivery, there will be a continued focus on property income with an estimated split of overall revenues of 85% property and 15% programme delivery.

In summary, a key financial focus of the Company during the period of the plan is the development of long-term sustainable income from property and services management as well as delivering support programmes to assist individuals start in Business and to help small businesses develop and grow.

2.1.1 Financial Sustainability - Actions

- Maintain Annual Profitability
- Agree each year, for the duration of the Plan, detailed costed Operational Plans
- Monitor and challenge delivery of Operational Plans to include detailed annual variance analysis
- Monitor Income on a monthly basis and increase where possible
- Monitor Overheads and reduce where possible
- Implement and maintain effective Credit Control measures
- Maintain adequate Cash Reserves and a Reserves Policy
- Maximise Investment returns on Cash Deposits
- Ensure effective Risk management including risk assessment at least twice per year.

2.2 Priority 2 – Property Management and Development

We will continue to develop and maintain the property assets of the Company. This will involve the maximisation of income from existing property and facility assets. As the property base ages, there will be a focus on maintenance and upkeep to ensure the highest level of buildings quality and prevent unnecessary degradation. This will guard against any large capital or repair burdens in the future.

It is acknowledged that, for some business sectors, Geographic disadvantages can be mitigated in some way if businesses have access to excellent internet connectivity. An increasing trend to online trading, accelerated by the recent pandemic experiences, will create some potential for economic activity which is less location dependent. To ensure maximum support for such business trends and encourage further use of technology and innovation in both new and existing businesses, the Organisation will provide dedicated leased lines to all sites and ensure high speed fibre connection in all workspace units.

The recent acquisition and development of Abbey House Business Centre has highlighted the demand for small offices to facilitate a growing trend for remote working as ‘returners’ seek to relocate to Fermanagh and continue to work for employers abroad or indeed set up businesses where location is not a restricting factor. These individuals and businesses tend to be higher earners and generate revenue from outside the local economy making a valuable contribution to increased wealth creation locally. This ‘new’ sector is not location dependent but does need and demand excellent internet connectivity and a quality office environment. To promote this sector, the Organisation will seek to expand its provision of small offices over the five-year period through further acquisition and development.

The Buttermarket 21-year Lease with the Council has ended and the Company has responded to the public tendering invitation by submitting a proposal for a five-year Management Plan. It is proposed to continue with the provision of the Buttermarket workspace as a Centre with a focus supporting the arts and craft sector as well as a valuable visitor experience in Enniskillen. This is subject to decisions by the Council.

In an effort to continue to support the Craft sector in the Buttermarket, a new website will be developed and managed to include promotional video footage of tenant businesses.

2.2.1 Property Management and Development - Actions

- Maintain over 42,000 sq ft of lettable space in Enniskillen Business Centre
- Maintain over 10,000 sq ft of lettable space in The Buttermarket (assuming a successful tender)
- Maintain over 19,000 sq ft of lettable space in Killyhevlin Business Centre
- Maintain over 5,000 sq ft of lettable space in Abbey House
- Maintain a co-working facility at Abbey House
- Ensure units are accessible by offering easy term licence agreements
- Ensure units are affordable by comparison with market rates
- Recognise incubation role - Measure tenant turnover
- Maintain workspace occupancy levels at or above 80% during the period of the plan
- Seek to acquire and develop further small offices in a quality environment with excellent connectivity
- Adopt Energy Efficiencies/Environmental Awareness in Property Management - replace existing light fittings at the end of life with low energy lighting and maintain PV installation
- Ensure adequate Buildings Maintenance
- Provide excellent internet connectivity to all units
- Ensure effective Risk management including risk assessment at least twice per year.

2.3 Priority 3 – Programme Delivery and Enterprise Development

2.3.1 Programme Delivery and Enterprise Development

Under Programme Delivery and Development, we will continue to focus on promoting enterprise and supporting individuals who wish to pursue self-employment opportunities. We will continue to provide support for micro business start-up as well as businesses with potential to develop and grow.

We will deliver support to start-up businesses under the Go for It Programme for the remainder of the existing contract and aim to tender for any successor of this Programme released by the Council.

We will act as the local delivery point for the Enterprise Northern Ireland Small Business Loan and mentor successful clients.

Free advice and guidance to the general public

The Organisation has gained Charitable Status with the Charities Commission for its work in promotion for the public benefit of urban and rural regeneration in County Fermanagh and the surrounding area in order to relieve poverty and unemployment.

The Organisation will continue an 'open door' policy where small businesses and members of the general public are welcome to call in for advice and guidance with issues associated with exploring the self-employment option or starting or growing a business. Such assistance, subject to personnel resources will be available free of charge to the recipients.

Actions

- Deliver Go for It Programme for the duration of the existing contract and tender for any replacement from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
- Tender for any Business Growth Programme which succeeds Kick Start
- Achieve output targets as detailed in Letters of Offer in Delivery of Support Programmes
- Work to identify new Programmes and Initiatives
- Work with Omagh Enterprise Company to deliver Initiatives over the Fermanagh and Omagh Council area
- Work with Enterprise Northern Ireland to deliver Loan Fund support and any other suitable Programmes
- Provide, within resources, free advice to the public on Business Start-up and Self Employment.

2.4 Priority 4 – People and Skills

Under People, we will continue to value the individual contribution of each Board and staff member and provide leadership in a challenging and rewarding working environment that realises the potential of each person. We will work as a motivated team showing mutual respect and trust in each other. We will communicate positively and effectively while challenging ourselves and delivering services to clients in a professional manner.

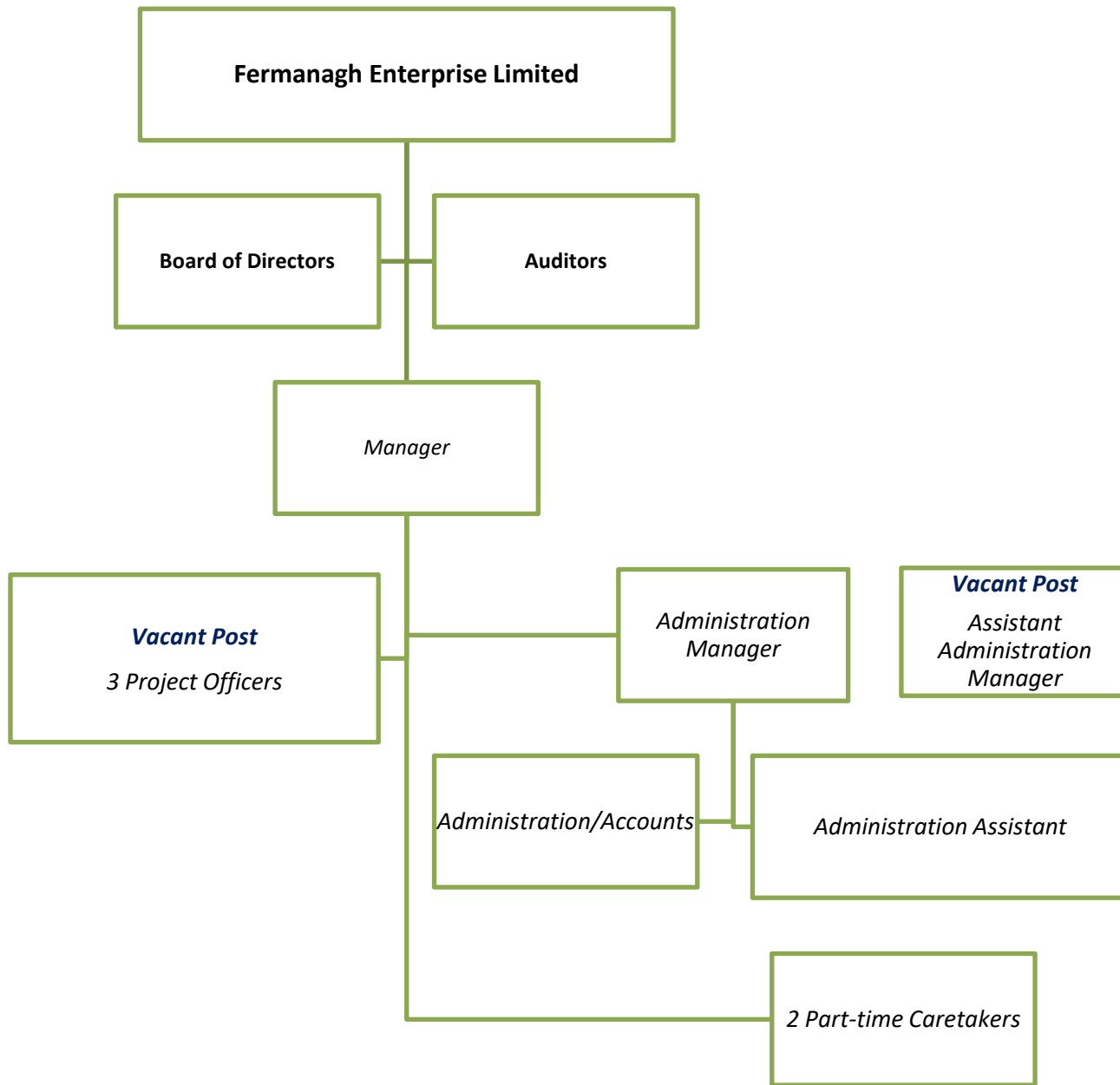
The Corporate Strategic Plan will ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the Company's mission, vision and values and their individual role within the Organisation. It will ensure that each person has the understanding and skills needed for their job and a sound knowledge of the Company's strategic priorities and objectives.

The Company is committed to the ongoing development of its Board and staff. Staff performance appraisals will be carried out with each individual in April and October each year. The process will ensure the retention of a flexible and highly skilled team and will identify areas for additional training and professional development. It will also ensure that all staff members have the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of clients.

We will continue to monitor the staffing levels required to deliver services in an effective and efficient manner while ensuring a quality service to customers. We will, at all times, ensure an appropriate level of staff. We will also utilise the services of external contractors where special skills and expertise is needed for support delivery.

Succession planning is a business process designed to manage risk associated with the departure of Key Staff and is an important part of effective Governance. It provides comfort for the Board and staff and ensures the smoothest possible transition when changes in leadership occurs, allowing the Staff and Board to move forward in a seamless and productive manner. We will undertake succession planning at least annually.

The Organisational Chart provides an illustration of the staffing and management profile of the Company.



2.4.1 Staff

Actions

- Fill vacant positions through a public recruitment process
- Ensure appropriate mix of skills capability and capacity on Staff Team
- Bi-Annual Staff Performance Appraisal
- Monitor Staff Training and Development needs
- Encourage Staff CPD where necessary
- Include succession planning as an integral aspect of Risk Assessment
- A succession plan will be updated annually by the Board.

2.4.2 Board/Governance

The Company has a Board membership process in place to facilitate the recruitment and appointment of new Board members and ensure the correct mix of skills and experience amongst Board members. The Board will operate to the highest standards in Board Governance and will keep up to date through Board training. The Board have in place Policies and Procedures to meet all its legal and regulatory obligations and these Policies will be reviewed regularly.

To meet best practice in Board operation, we will utilise, as necessary, a number of Sub-Committees during the period of the Strategic Plan. This will include but is not limited to, an Internal Audit and Risk Management Committee, Property Committee, Covid-19 Committee and Human Resource Committee. These Committees will bring recommendations to the full Board which will then take informed decisions.

The Company has held the ISO 9001:2008 quality mark for the past 15 years and is subject to an independent annual audit of its systems and processes. During this time, we have received unqualified 'clean sheet' audit outcomes. This standard has now been updated to the ISO 9001:2015.

We will continue to maintain quality control systems and procedures within the ISO framework. In addition, as a member of Enterprise Northern Ireland, quality is monitored in relation to individual programme delivery and progress against targets. This attention to quality is captured through the Membership Agreement held between the Company and Enterprise Northern Ireland. The quality of services provided by the Company is further measured by the ability to meet outputs and targets detailed in individual Letters of Offer and Service Level Agreements with relevant funders.

Actions

- Maintain a representative Board with appropriate expertise and experience
- Management Accounts monthly to Board
- Directors Appraise Board Operations
- All Board papers including Agenda, Minutes of Previous Meeting, Management Report and any other papers to be circulated to Directors at least 4 days before a meeting
- Draft Minutes to be circulated to Directors within 7 working days of a Meeting to enable Members to review
- Annual Operating Plan and Budget to be agreed by Board at the beginning of each financial year
- Annual Report including variance analysis to be presented to the Board at year end
- Operate all Systems and procedures to the ISO 9001:2015 Standard
- All programme delivery to meet quality and performance as governed by individual Service Level Agreements
- Full Audited Annual Accounts to be presented to Board at AGM in October/November
- Transparency
 - Strategy publicly available on website
 - Annual Report and Operational Plan available publicly on website
- Ensure Organisation meets Public Benefit requirement of Charities Commission
- Ensure that all Policies and Procedures are reviewed regularly by the Board
- Integrate Risk management into the Company's decision-making processes, allocating accountability and reporting protocols.

2.5 Priority 5 – Public Profile and Representation

Under Representation and Promotion, we will work in partnership with all key stakeholders and contribute to consultations and policy issues, particularly in relation to enterprise and economic development. We will focus our efforts where they are most effective and be actively involved in the development and implementation of small business strategies and programmes.

We will develop strong links and where appropriate working relationships with a range of key stakeholders and staff will give their time to sit on committees and attend meetings and events run by stakeholders.

Examples of these stakeholders are Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Southwest College, Enterprising West, Invest Northern Ireland, Enterprise Northern Ireland, Enniskillen Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership, Young Enterprise, Princes Trust, Business in the Community, Enniskillen Business Partnership, Fermanagh Rural Community Initiative, Fermanagh Rural Community Network, Enniskillen BID, Digital Enniskillen, etc.

We will continue to develop our web presence and digital and social media strategy to promote the Company and raise awareness of the services on offer. To promote transparency, a range of corporate material will be available on the Company website such as Corporate Strategy, Operational Plans and Annual Reports.

Actions

- Maintain Website and Social Networking presence
- Maintain database of clients
- Regular emails to client base
- Local newspaper presence to include press releases and photos
- Maintain links and working relationships with other stakeholders at a local, regional and wider level.