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**Merseyside Society for Deaf People**

**Business and Strategy Plan, 2024 – 2027**

**Version 4: 3 May 2024**

**Merseyside Society for Deaf People**

**396 Queen’s Drive, Liverpool, L13 0DJ**

**Registered Charity No. 1065021**

**A group of people posing for a photo

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**Executive Summary**

Merseyside Society for Deaf People (MSDP) is an established charity advancing equality for all d/Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing individuals. MSDP’s mission is to work in partnership with Deaf communities and establish inclusive resources. Our focus is to increase awareness of the barriers individuals with sensory loss experience and promote a person-centred approach to client independence. We are proud to be inclusive and celebrate differences whilst remaining Deaf first. There is recognition at a national level that people with hearing loss experience significant inequalities and poorer health outcomes. NHS England’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Guidance (2019) states that deaf people “find it difficult to communicate and are at greater risk of unemployment, social isolation, depression and other mental health issues”.

In recent years, the relevance and resilience of MSDP are reflected in the stability of the organisation. The three-year strategic and business plan is driven by the needs of employees and services users, whose voice is prominent throughout the planning process. Going forward, we are raising the voice of the service user in the development and delivery of services; investing in the professional and personal development of employees; and enhancing our position in the community to ensure clients’ needs are reflected in local and national policies. MSDP are cognisant of the impact of changes to small charities in a changing political and financial landscape. Our key goal during this period is to enhance our strengths and develop opportunities with a steady hand to benefit the people who access our services. Within the first twelve months to eighteen months, we aim to support organisational changes through consolidation; enhance governance structures; and ensure financial viability to support plans for growth and development in an unstable market. From eighteen to twenty-four months, we aim to augment our financial dependence on Local Authority contracts with the provision of services to meet growing demand. From twenty-four to thirty-six months, we aim to capitalise on the recognition of the needs of the ageing population of our service users and plan care and support packages for clients with complex co-morbidities. Additionally, we aim to develop extended services to meet the gaps in service provision for children and young adults with sensory loss. A key initiative is the provision of support and BSL training for parents with Deaf infants and children and marketing our newly developed Deaf Awareness training to reach a wider audience.

The operation of MSDP as a service provider is to protect and enhance the life experiences of service users, who require the quality of what we deliver to be ethically, legally, and morally compliant. We are committed to investing in technologies to support the initiatives identified in the strategic and business plan. All objectives are outcomes-focused, and progression and achievement will be measured within the three-year period.

**Summary of Strategic and Business Plan 2023-2026.**

The focus of advancing equality for all d/Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing individuals remain, with emphasis on person centred support to promote independence and inclusivity. Through the accessibility of services, MSDP will expand our customer base with a focus on investing in people and technology to enhance the quality and safety of service provision. The development of our position in the local community will enable MSDP to become more proactive in influencing policies and practices affecting the Deaf community.

**Aim**

MSDP’s aim is to invest in people, processes, and technology to drive forward the action required for organisational transformation and growth.

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# 1 Strategic Objectives 2024-2027:

A group of people on a path

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1. To develop MSDPs position in the local community.
2. To increase revenue and develop the organisation.
3. To extend the customer base and increase participation in the wider community.
4. To enhance technology to improve service delivery.
5. To undertake a person-centred approach to all service provision.

#### **Achievements and Impact following the 2020-2023 Business Plan.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Area | 2020-2023 Business Plan objective | Achievements |
| Technology | Build App, website, and studio | Regular updates of the website have been completed with a view to a fuller overhaul of MSDP’s online presence and brand. |
| Promotion of training services | Explore ways to increase numbers of courses and students | Trustees reduced departmental costs and invested in the development of e-learning content and a new BSL Level 4 course which will be launched in 2024. Summer 2023 the charity recruited a Trainee Tutor to join the service. |
| Financial information | Provision of annual budgets for managers and monthly budgets for Trustees | Full review of financial management completed including move to Xero management platform. Annual forecast budgets prepared and signed off by Trustees annually. Monthly reports provided on performance against budgets including profit and loss, balance sheet data, creditors, and debtors. Improved management of debtors control account to maximise income |
| Increase customer feedabck | Create ways to actively engage/involve the Deaf community with service planning and improvement | Creation of a designated Deaf Community Lead on the Board of Trustees.  Deaf Community representatives given opportunities to observe Board meetings.  Consultation completed with beneficiaries annually through focus groups, feedback forms and surveys.  Plans to establish a customer steering group which will meet quarterly and feed in comments to the Board and for commissioner reports. |
| Raise the profile of MSDP across the Merseyside Region | MSDP needs to communicate, advertise, and promote services. | Investment made in external marketing support to improve website and social media communications. BSL video content is very strong with good engagement with Deaf people through Facebook. Communications Plan in development for 2024 which will include marketing for the launch of MSDP’s e-learning packages. |
| Funding and partnership work | MSDP to apply for funding, forge new partnerships. | MSDP successfully applied for partnership funding to deliver; diabetes awareness with Liverpool CCG, 12 months of health and fitness in partnership with Deaf Active, Covid Community Champion scheme with Liverpool City Council.  Additionally, MSDP became Executive Directors of Wiral Health and Wellbeing CIC to successfully bid for a Service Level Agreement with Wirral Borough Council. |
| Review of staff structure and pay | Ensure staff skills and experience are utilised, review roles and responsibilities. | The charity has taken advantage of apprenticeship levy transfer through Liverpool City Region to invest in staff training across the organisation.  A full review of staff roles and pay was completed in 2022. In 2023 the charity restructured services resulting in two staff choosing redundancy and a refined structure fit for meeting Local Authority contract requirements. |
| Events and activities | Additional events to be provided in partnership to raise profile of MSDP and services | MSDP has continued to provide a schedule of activities and events which was further expanded following the creation of a Community Development Officer post in July 2022. |
| Children’s Services | MSDP to plan how we can deliver effective services to deaf children and young people.  Work in partnership with local, regional, and national organisations to support CYP | As a significant part of the 2020-2023 was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic there has been little in the way of developing new services for children. However, the centre has continued to provide activities for families and has supported local partners such as Deaf Active and Deafness Resource Centre who do provide services under grant funding to families. |
| Develop future care and support provisions | New care home and creche facilities for Deaf, hard of hearing or Deaf-blind people | Liverpool City Council’s Market Position Statement acknowledges the continued trend in reduction of care home places and a focus on community-based care and engagement with the voluntary sector.  A full review of the charity’s support services has been completed and significant improvements have been made to ensure the service is safe, person centred and has capacity for growth. |
| Develop in partnership facilities. | To look at ways to share resources and costs. | In March 2021 MSDP moved into Wirral Society of the Blind and Partially Sighted People to provide co-located services under Wirral Council’s Service Level Agreement. |

# 2 Vision, Mission Statement and Values

**Vision Statement**

To advance equality for all Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing individuals by increasing awareness of the barriers individuals with sensory loss experience and promoting independence through accessibility of services and better opportunities to contribute a full, active, and influencing role in mainstream society.

**Mission Statement**

Working in partnerships, bringing together Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hard of Hearing communities to create more accessible and high-quality services to safeguard and enhance the lives of service users and promote independence and inclusivity.

**Values**

MSDP are PROUD to be inclusive. We honour our principles of **P**rofessionalism, **R**espect, **O**pen communication, **U**nique - celebrating difference, and **D**eaf first.

### **History Overview**

**A close-up of a person

Description automatically generated**Merseyside Society for Deaf People (MSDP) was established in 1864 to address the many barriers and inequalities experienced by Deaf people. Founded by George Healey, a Deaf man, the Benevolent Society began in one-room to provide equal access to the Scriptures for Deaf adults in Liverpool. Through a series of funding opportunities and expansion, MSDP secured its own premises, providing an employment bureau, interpreters for all occasions, social gatherings for the Deaf Blind and financial help for the poor. MSDP relocated premises across Liverpool on several occasions. In 2016, following a period of financial uncertainty, MSDP moved to the current smaller, purpose-built building at Queen’s Drive retail park in West Derby. The new build retained the same ease of access in central Liverpool and remains an established community hub for all clients with sensory loss.

In recent years, the geographical provision has extended across Merseyside, with the addition of offices in Sefton and Wirral. As the charity's objectives widen, and our customer base extends, our guiding principles remain; to be a welcoming and accessible community for all individuals with sensory loss.

### 

### **Legal Status**

Merseyside Society for Deaf People is a Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. The charity was established in 1864 and became a Company Limited by Guarantee in 1997.

# 3 Resources

The Deaf centre is used as a safe space where communication needs are met, barriers reduced, and Deaf visibility increased. Resources for community-based activities include the promotion of community events and social activities; development of peer-led support groups; supporting hearing loss committees to be sustainable and well-organised; facilitating guest lectures on a range of topics to reduce social, financial, and digital isolation; encouraging people from diverse groups to come together through social activities to celebrate all cultures and create a sense of unity in the wider community (for example, Black Deaf UK, Deaf Rainbow UK, Jewish Deaf Association).

As a small charity, priorities are met based on demand and capacity. MSDP has widened access to services through extending geographical support and offices across the region, including Liverpool, Sefton, and Wirral. Although the ‘hub’ at Queen’s Drive, Liverpool attracts most customers (56%), the availability of services has demonstrated the need for provision across the region, with 9% accessing services in Sefton, and 35% in Wirral.

## **Services**

The community hub is essential as a safe place for clients to receive information and support, including duty sessions, social support for daily living activities, informative lectures from specialist guests (for example, awareness of fraud, loan sharks and the energy crisis), environment aid assessment, access to interpreters, and social activities. The charity also provides specialist training in Deaf awareness and British Sign Language.

During the cost-of-living crisis and surging energy costs, the hub was established as a warm bank for anyone in the community to access for free. Additional plans to access a food bank and develop a sustainable food centre are currently being explored. MSDP also intend to establish a recognition for BSL Friendly Services in Liverpool that demonstrates Deaf Awareness and accessibility for Deaf people.

**Services provided:**

1. Advice and Support:Provide drop-in surgeries and short term one to one case work across a broad range of issues in Wirral, Liverpool, and Sefton. The services are open to all people with a hearing loss but used predominately by Deaf and Deaf-Blind people who require BSL, International Sign Language or Deaf-Blind tactile communication methods.
2. Support Work: Community outreach workers enable vulnerable Deaf and Deaf-blind adults to remain independent in their own homes and connected to their communities and interests.
3. Aids and Adaptations Service: Rehabilitation officers undertake assessment of needs, provide equipment and repairs of environmental aids to enable individuals with a hearing loss to live independently in their own homes.
4. British Sign Language Interpreter Service: Works with freelance NRCPD Registered BSL Interpreters to fulfil booking requests for face-to-face and online Video Remote BSL and Deaf-Blind Interpreter services.
5. Specialist TrainingDeaf tutors: Deliver Deaf Awareness and Signature accredited BSL training to corporate and individual clients.
6. Community Development:Facilitate capacity building local hearing loss support groups and Deaf social clubs, including user-led community activities designed to reduce social isolation, tackle financial and digital exclusion, improve health and wellbeing, increase knowledge, enhance confidence, and promote independence.

# 4 External Factors and Considerations

External factors include the recent challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and national lockdown, which had a significant impact on MSDP’s vulnerable clients, the majority of whom are Deaf and identify BSL as the first language. Client’s inability to access support services and assistance with daily living activities (e.g., communication support, shopping, banking), impacted on both short and long-term health and wellbeing. Many clients are elderly with no access to the internet or personal computers, and therefore were unable to do online banking or shopping. The inability to socialise and communicate with peers exacerbated social isolation in the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf Blind communities, with a resulting impact on mental health.

MSDP provide services across Liverpool City region (LCR) (Local Authorities include Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, and Wirral). LCR has sixteen areas in the most deprived across England. Social demographics identify 22% of children living in poverty, and 21% of over 60’s income deprived.

The Indices of Deprivation 2019, analysed the levels of deprivation for LCR, using average scores based on income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing, and living environment; the results identified Liverpool as the third most deprived of 317 local authority areas, and the fourth most deprived local authority in England. The Public Health Institute (2021) identified health outcomes in the LCR were among the poorest in England, with long-term health conditions and mental health issues expected to be exacerbated by Covid-19.

Vulnerable groups with sensory loss in Liverpool City Region include:

* An estimated 115,754 people with sensory impairment.
* 94,612 have deafness or hearing loss.
* 21,140 are blind or partially sighted.
* 665 people identified BSL as their first language.

Vulnerable populations are more likely to experience health inequalities and the least likely to mitigate against austerity. Clients with sensory loss have increased health inequalities due to the many barriers accessing health and social services. In 2020, reporting of deafness or hearing loss to GPs in LCR was 7.4%, which is higher than the national average 6.2%.

MSDP are cognisant of the changing needs of LCR and the Deaf community. In the 2021 Census, more than 231,000 people were predicted to have some hearing loss and 24,738 predicted to have severe hearing loss by 2025. An ageing Deaf BSL population will increase the number of Deaf-Blind tactile BSL signers. Signposting support for the younger population will require a different way of working as 1,211 permanently deaf children and younger d/Deaf populations resident across the LCR socialise outside of the traditional Deaf networks.

Investment is needed in developing workforce, staff and BSL Interpreters able to communicate with Deaf-blind people. The NRCPD (National Registers of Communication Professionals Working with Deaf and Deaf-blind People) shows that there are no qualified Deaf-Blind Interpreters registered in the North West of England. MSDP have staff able to communicate with and support Deaf-blind people, but this provision needs to be expanded if the charity is to meet the needs of an ageing culturally Deaf population.

Figure 1: Statistics of hearing loss in LCR.



The continuing pressures of the rising cost of living on low-income families is further exacerbated by the Government’s recent autumn statement (2023), which outlined planned reform to require people with disabilities and chronic health conditions to look for work. Disability charities estimate this will impact 370,000 people who will be ineligible for incapacity benefits. The Institute for Fiscal Studies identify only 2.7% are expected to move into work, with the majority remaining on benefits but with a lower level of income.

Digital isolation for individuals with hearing loss is acute and life-long due to the lack of access to information. Communication with Deaf clients often relies on video calls and simple Deaf friendly text messaging. Digital forms of communication are more prevalent than ever in society. Individuals without the skills, means, or ability to use or access digital technology are disadvantaged. A range of factors, including age, level of ability, levels of deprivation, housing, receipt of benefits and unemployment can influence digital exclusion. Within LCR, almost all premises have the capacity to access superfast broadband, however, only 52% have taken this up. Additionally, the Government reports an estimated 1:4 do not have the five Basic Digital Skills listed in GO ON UKs Basic Digital Skills Framework, which includes managing information, communicating, transacting, problem-solving and creating.

In response to client digital isolation, MSDP successfully applied for grant funding in 2023 to create a community IT suite in the Wirral and Liverpool, which is fully accessible to Deaf-Blind people to receive basic IT training and help using phone technology/computers.

In 2024, the purchase of eight computers were set up as a designated IT hub at the Liverpool centre. The IT hub is designed to be accessed by community members to support IT literacy and development of CVs, job application and interview skills to support application of jobs, work experience or volunteering opportunities. Volunteers and staff will be trained to help Deaf people to use and understand mobile phone and video call technology. The team will also work with partners to develop a job club for people with hearing loss seeking employment.

### **Alignment with local and national policy**

A group of people standing in front of a firetruck

Description automatically generatedThe 28 April 2022 saw the implementation of The BSL Act 2022 after the BSL Bill received royal assent. This historical moment for the British Deaf Community brought recognition to their language after decades of campaigning. As a member of the British Deaf Association and the BSL Alliance the charity is connected at a national level and is aware of policy drivers linked to deafness. The key influence structure incorporates:

* The BSL Advisory Board: Set up to advise central government on the implementation of the Act. With an initial focus on the development of BSL GCSE scheduled for introduction in September 2025, and advising government departments on development of guidelines linked to the BSL Act 2022.
* The BSL Alliance: Run by the British Deaf Association. MSDP has a representative sitting on this Alliance whose role is to feed in the views of local Deaf people to ensure the Act evolves to improve equality of access for BSL users.
* The All-Parliamentary Party Group on Deafness: Championing funding for Deaf sports as well as funding for BSL courses for parents and families of deaf children.

Locally, MSDP is a member of the Strategic Health and Wellbeing Board, a collective of VCSE organisations in Merseyside feeding into One Liverpool Partnership Board and the Merseyside Sensory Network.

MSDP’s current and proposed services aim to support objectives within the local polices and plans including:

* NHS England’s Action Plan on Hearing Loss (2019):
* 3. To have services which are integrated, work collaboratively, and focus upon the
* individual needs of the person with hearing loss,
* 4. Ensuring that people with hearing loss, in all communities, are supported to stay as well as possible, to reduce the need for unscheduled healthcare and mitigate the risk of isolation.
* 5. Ensuring that people of all ages with hearing loss of all severities are actively

supported to participate fully in society, and are not limited in their potential to

succeed in education, employment, family and community life, all facets of individual

living, and in the pursuit of sport, leisure, and other activities.

* NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Joint Forward Plan 2023-2028
* Liverpool City Council’s Plan 2023-2027
* Merseyside Market Position Statement <https://www.merseysidemarketpositionstatement.co.uk/#panel-liverpool>
* Sefton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025
  + Older people will stay active, connected, and involved
  + … a strong role in prevention and early intervention
  + … opportunities for better health and wellbeing on our doorstep
* Wirral Working Together A Council Plan for 2023-2027
  + Promoting independence and healthier lives
  + Safe, resilient, and engaged communities

# 5 Strategy and Business Plan 2024-2027

The three-year strategic and business plan is aligned to MSDP’s mission, vision, and values. Consultation with employees and service users was conducted as part of the planning and development of the strategy and business plan.



### **Focus Groups Informing Strategic Direction**

Analysis of a focus group attended by 14 MSDP employees in September 2023 identified staff perception of MSDP’s strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths include MSDP as an inclusive environment to work in, with recognition of volunteers who were able to sign using BSL. The focus group identified frontline client support was of a high standard and facilitated by caring and passionate staff who were always willing to go the extra mile. The facilitation of social activities for clients helped prevent social isolation and were advertised effectively on social media.

Staff requested enhanced communication, including regular team meetings and team building events and increased resources in formats accessible to Deaf staff, including videos, easily understood flow charts, video to English email, and improved technology. Additionally, staff identified opportunities for expansion, including supported living and residential care homes, services for mental health, youth services, d/Deaf immigrant and asylum seekers and support for children of Deaf adults, and partnership and accreditation with the Citizen’s Advice Bureau.

Following staff consultation, the following were incorporated in the strategic goals:

* Enhanced communication
* Investment in technology
* Widening participation to diversify business.

Consultation with community groups and service users was undertaken in August 2023. Analysis of feedback identified MSDP as a welcoming, friendly, and helpful organisation, which reduces isolation.

Feedback identified a variety of activities and the relevance of social events, peer interaction and reducing loneliness, including the recognition that signing was enhanced following interaction with peers.

Service users requested greater flexibility of services, including duty services and interpreters, and varied methods of advertising in addition to social media. Additional comments included support with using computers and mobile phones, CV writing and advice on how to attend interviews, and transportation to scheduled events.

Feedback on opportunities for new services included provision for children and young adults, such as youth clubs, photography sessions, family events in the summer holidays, and BSL information and support in mainstream schools.

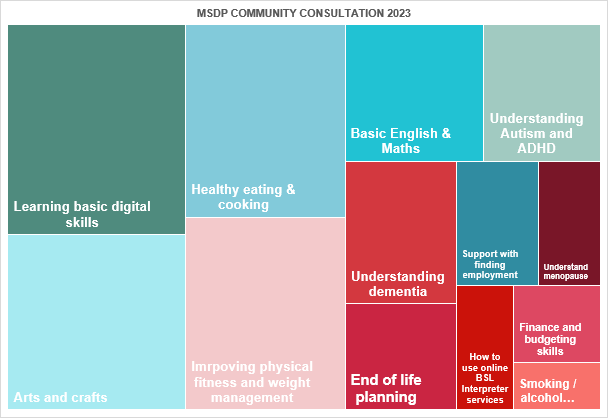
Media personality and actor Rose Ayling-Ellis visits MSDP A group of women standing together

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A survey was also conducted with community groups to ascertain the areas of need or interest.

Following service user consultation, the following were incorporated in the strategic goals:

* Peripatetic service delivery to increase flexibility and extend continuity
* Enhanced marketing and advertising of services and social events
* Develop services to include families, children and young people
* Develop drop-in services for help with computers, phones and support with CV writing and job applications



### **SMART Strategic Objectives**

The strategic and business goals for 2024 to 2027 are in response to the identified needs and preferences of employees and service users. Monitoring, progression, and achievement of the objectives are outcome focused and will be measured in the three-year timescale. The summary of objectives is identified in the table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of SMART strategic objectives (2024-2027)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Specific** | **Measurable** | **Achievable** | **Relevant** | **Time-bound** |
| **To develop MSDP position in the local community.** | Identify and develop partnership and collaborative working by identifying Identify 10 new contacts at local and national forums, committees, and boards per year.  Widen service provision and increase the numbers of referrals p.a.:  Advice & Support No. families by 20 No. surgeries by 6    No. of Support Services Care Act assessments by 5    Equipment referrals increased by 10% | MSDP to be proactive in local and national networking forums.  Develop a stakeholder strategy to enhance partnership working.  Liaise with commissioners to identify key strategic meetings and  invitation to join.  Invest in service users representatives to scope the growth and development of the charity, including co-production of the design, delivery, and evaluation of services. | MSDP to have key advisory roles on policies impacting on Deaf clients. | *tbc* |
| **To increase revenue and develop the organisation.** | Target marketing of e-Learning ‘Deaf Awareness’ Sell the e-Learning ‘Deaf Awareness’  1. No. of licences 50  2. No. of users 2000  Delivery of BSL training  Level 1: 2 courses per years  Level 2: 1 course per year  Level 3 or level 4: 3 courses per year | Develop a financial strategy to maximise efficiencies, secure funding, increase revenue to develop business.  Enhance fundraising goals to maximise all funding opportunities.  Identify gaps in market that attracts funding opportunities following the BSL Act.  Access funding to develop a training and awareness (e.g. following BSL Act/access to learning/Deaf-Blind tactile training) | Ensure long-term financial viability and growth of the charity. |  |
| **To extend customer base and increase participation in the wider community.** | Increase number of social activities by 10% per year  Increase SU attendance by 10% per year  Increase participation of onset Hearing Loss by 10%  Identify 40 local businesses who willing to be ‘sensory loss’ friendly  Increase the number of Deaf people engaged with physical or mental wellbeing events: 50 per year  Target engagement in social media by X% to recruit new client base  Seek grant funding to provide free training programme that is affordable to support parents of Deaf children. | Develop peripatetic services within LCR  *(i.e. libraries, one stop shops community hubs).*  Benchmark against similar organisations to inform ‘gaps’ in the market.  Identify and develop care and support packages for Deaf clients with complex co-morbidities.  Target engagement with CYP and their families.  Provide equipment at cost to service users and the Deaf community  Arrange and participate in work-based fairs.  Extend the number of volunteers and their contribution to the organisation.  Develop directory of local businesses signed up to the accreditation. | Provide a community hub to include social activities, cultural events, community fairs, to reduce social isolation.  Reduce inequalities to health and wellbeing by removing barriers and promoting equal access for all clients. |  |
| **To enhance technology to improve service delivery.** | Enhance usage of technologies:   * Care Planner X% * Charity Log X% * Increase staff/volunteer compliance of training using Charity Learning Consortium to 95% * 10 Deaf people using the IT hub per year | Generate data analytic reports and audits.  Use technology to  streamline privacy and security across the organisation.  Complete Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT)  Support service users to develop understanding and use of technology via IT hubs.  Supporting Deaf people into employment via IT hubs. | Streamline customer interactions and enable technology to deliver well designed services that deliver efficient and cost-effective services. |  |
| **To undertake a person-centred approach to all service provision.** | Invest in employee and volunteer training by X% to ensure professional conduct is understood and adhered to.  Develop strong service user participation and leadership within the organisation.  Increase capacity of SU groups across the Charity to represent the needs of all services by X%  Increase number and frequency of SU evaluation surveys X% | Develop and implement a communication strategy to promote vision and values and align to strategic direction.  Co-production of all support packages with service users to promote independence and empowerment.  Access funding to develop support in the community services following LCC new model.  Access funding to develop a transport service utilising local community transport and volunteer drivers to transport service user and carers to community hub events.  Develop a befriending/mentoring system which is service user-led to provide support and reduce isolation.  Provide training for peer supporters.  Join a local and national ‘peer2peer’ network. | Value individuals’ unique differences, abilities, needs and preferences. |  |

# 6 Approaches to Engagement

**Objective 1:** To develop MSDP’s position in the local community.

**Key tasks:**

* MSDP to be trusted as responsive and reliable by the community, employees, Trustees, and funders.
* MSDP to thrive and make a real difference to the Deaf community.
* Have a key advisory role within the Liverpool City region.
* Be proactive in influencing policies impacting on our community.
* Develop ‘Supporting Deaf people into employment’ hubs.
* Enhance MSDP as a professional organisation aligned closely with our vison, charitable purpose, and strategy.

**Objective 2:** To increase revenue and develop the organisation.

**Key tasks:**

* Develop a financial strategy to maximise efficiencies and secure funding to grow business.
* Benchmark spans and layers against similar organisations to inform business development and growth.
* Develop a stakeholder strategy to achieve purposeful, consistent, and positive engagements.
* Liaise with commissioners to actively seek new opportunities for business growth that attracts funding.
* To be proactive in seeking out funding opportunities.
* Scope for partnership working.
* Enhance partnership working and collaboration to improve referrals and signposting services.
* Be proactive in local and national networking forums.

**Objective 3:** To extend the customer base and increase participation in the wider community.

**Key tasks:**

* Develop outward-looking perspective and welcome the wider community, including Deaf-blind, life-long deafness/hearing loss, and onset deafness/hearing loss.
* Engage with young people and their families, including parents and families of Deaf children.
* Be proactive in arranging and participating in cultural events, community fairs and social activities.
* Enhance engagement in social media.
* Access funding to develop a transport service utilising local community transport and volunteer drivers to transport service user and carers to community hub events.
* Extend the number of volunteers and their contribution to the organisation.
* Provide equipment at cost to service users and the Deaf community.
* Arrange work experience for volunteers, provide work-based placements for health and social care students in further and higher education, arrange and participate in work-based fairs.
* Provide a community hub to support the community during cost-of-living crisis.

**Objective 4:** To enhance technology to improve service delivery.

**Key tasks:**

* Enhance transparency and be data driven to make faster and more accurate decision making.
* Streamline customer interactions and generate data analytic reports and audits.
* Invest and develop in Client Record Management System to manage relationships with service users and help the organisation develop business and grow.
* Enable technology to enable well designed services to deliver further efficiency and cost effectiveness.
* Use technology to streamline privacy and security across the organisation.

**Objective 5:** To undertake a person-centred approach to all service provision.

**Key tasks:**

* Develop a communication strategy and ensure all employees and volunteers and service user understand MSDP vision and values.
* All employees, volunteers, and Trustees to conduct themselves with professionalism.
* To undertake a person-centred approach to all service provision, and value individuals’ unique differences, abilities, needs and preferences.
* Enhance communication between employees, service users and external organisations.
* Reconfigure the organisational structure to best deliver the services.
* Invest in employee (and volunteer) training and development to maximise value, upskill staff and enhance the quality and safety of service provision.
* Establish a training programme to support the Deaf community that is affordable and meets the needs of our customer base. Giving equality of access for all.
* Enhance service provision to meet the standards outlined in Care Act and the Charity Commission.

# 7 Governance

Effective governance is necessary to ensure accountability for strategic planning and monitoring of performance to meet charitable objectives. Therefore, we are enhancing governance structures to ensure robust risk management processes better support decision-making and accountability. MSDP strives to continuously improve the quality of services provided and promote a culture of excellence. The following four pillars demonstrate a commitment to governance and safeguarding high standards for all stakeholders and employees.

### **Four Pillars of Governance**

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The four pillars of governance are broad terms that cover the strategic activities of MSDP to support and advance continuous improvement. The following horizontal ‘umbrella’ functions are essential in ensuring services are high quality, safe, effective, and efficient.

**Umbrella Functions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1**  **Governance and Risk** | * Vision, analysis, target, and plan * Risk management * Medium term plan (MTP): Annual monitoring of MTP and assess progression/challenges * Driving strategic planning * Infrastructure planning * Stakeholders and partnership working * Safeguarding * Complaints management linked to quality initiatives * Data and information risk assurance * Communication strategy aligned to organisation brand/values * Audits and quality improvement |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2**  **Finance** | * Operational finance management and reporting * Tracking fiscal position and contingency plans to meet operational needs (medium term planning) * Budgets * Investments and outcomes * Forecasts for sufficient reserves and contingency planning * Financial planning for organisational growth * Strategic funding management, monitoring, and outcomes/impact reporting |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **3**  **Operational** | * Staffing and staff management: People, vacancies, and outsourced contractors and consultants * Operational structure and performance * Contract compliance, monitoring, and renewal * HR including; people, policies, and reward * Education, training, and development * Risk management and safety: Legal, statutory, and regulatory compliance * Engaging stakeholders and partnership working * Technology investments and monitoring outcomes and improvements * Risk assessment * Auditing and benchmarking the quality of services provided * Evidence based/aligning national policies and guidance to services |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **4**  **Service User Experience** | * Service user partnership working * Co-production -Informing business and growth * Service user shaping, delivering, and evaluating their support and future direction of services. * Service user forums * SU attendance at Board meetings * Quality improvement –acting on SU evaluation and feedback * Complaints, comments, and compliments management for service improvement. * Efficient utilisation of volunteers and peer supporters with impact reporting * Train the trainer – peer support |

### **Risk Management**

Risk management informs strategic and business planning. Effective governance measures are critical to monitor the progression and achievement of agreed organisational objectives, and reassurance is provided to regulators, stakeholders, and partners through open and transparent accountability of all leadership and decision making.

### **Risk Register**

The risk management register provides a dynamic approach to the identification, assessment, control, and mitigation of risks that may prevent MSDP from achieving its strategic objectives. The risk register is reviewed monthly by the Board of Trustees and quarterly at the Safeguarding and Risk Committee Subgroup. Following Board ratification, the implementation of risk management is disseminated across the organisation to ensure operational risks are being managed.

### **Business Continuity Plan**

The business continuity plan (BCP) identifies the activities to be undertaken if a major issue arises resulting in disruption to business delivery. BCP recovery strategies and management of actions are focused on maintaining critical business function, which are regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees. The BCP identifies leads responsible for executing set actions to remediate events and situations that may prevent the execution of service delivery.

### **Comments, Compliments, and Complaints**

The comments, compliments, and complaints (CCC) policy demonstrate MSDP's commitment to quality standards. MSDP welcomes all comments and complaints as a clear statement of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of services provided. All CCC are identified, prioritised, and managed to lessen impact on service provision. Good practice and lessons learned are disseminated throughout the organisation to ensure quality improvements are maintained.

Two men holding hands

Description automatically generated

# 8 Investing in Employees

A person wearing a white shirt with red text on it

Description automatically generated MSDP are proactive in the recruitment, retention, and career development of Deaf employees. Currently, 60% of employees are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and identify British Sign Language as their first language. The lived experience of Deaf employees constructs an authentic understanding of the challenges and barriers service users face in society that is hard to replicate if all employees were hearing. Deaf employees and service users provide unique insights into sensory loss services and their essential participation and leadership within MSDP helps shape the future direction of the organisation to provide sensory loss holistic services.

All employees are supported to reach their potential, which includes reflection and identification of good practice during bimonthly supervision and annual appraisals. Self-identification of opportunities for professional development to support better outcomes is supported through allocated resources to support professional development. Employees are recognised and rewarded for sharing innovations and good practice and representation at all levels within the organisation is used to capture experiential learning and enthusiasm for enhanced impact on service provision.

A person clapping his hands

Description automatically generatedInvestment in staff training includes the purchase and development of the Learning Management System (LMS) to meet statutory and mandatory training based on legislation and organisational need. The blended approach to learning includes e-learning, face-to-face and BSL interpreted delivery to ensure training is accessible to all employees and meets statutory, mandatory and health and social care requirements. Clear identification of the frequency of training complies with legislation and competency. Training was designed for the non-regulated support workers based on the Care Quality Commissioner (CQC) ‘Essential Standards of Quality,’ and Skills for Care ‘Care Certificate Standards,’ to provide confidence of skills, knowledge, and behaviour and ability to provide compassionate, safe, and high-quality support. All new employees are assessed during the probation period using the competency assessed induction book. Continued assessment of employees’ progression and development is monitored through staff appraisals and bi-monthly supervision.

MSDP are committed to quality improvement and have adopted evidence-based principles to enhance organisation-wide improvement and high-quality, person-centred support services. MSDP’s commitment to safeguard vulnerable adults, young people and children is identified in the Safer Recruitment policy and guidance. All employees must evidence requisite qualifications and employees and volunteers provide evidence of an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and two references to ascertain suitability for the post.

The charity has worked with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to access funding for apprenticeships to develop our staff team. The levy, which covers up to 95% of training costs has enabled the charity to upskill new and existing staff through apprenticeship pathways in administration, finance, social care, and senior leadership.

With a number of key staff reaching retirement age in the next 3 to 5 years, succession planning, and development of future Deaf leaders is a priority. The charity will be investing in the development of Deaf staff through mainstream apprenticeship routes and fully accessible ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) courses delivered by the Royal Association of Deaf People (RAD).

# 9 Investing in Service Users

MSDP are committed to developing strong service user participation and leadership within the organisation. Our vision as a service provider for Deaf people is to move from service users as representatives only to leaders in the design, commissioning, delivery, and evaluation of services. The value of service users' leadership lies in drawing on the wealth of experience of their community in meeting the needs of the groups they work with, which can help shape the scope of MSDP. The strategic commitment to co-production of services includes Deaf and Hard of Hearing members on the Board of Trustees, regular client feedback, community representatives invited to Board of Trustees meetings, customer focus groups, and capacity building of hearing loss voluntary groups.

Additionally, MSDP plan to develop user-led peer support. This includes providing support to individuals who experience barriers to accessing services, thereby reducing the potential for isolation. This will necessitate practical training for peer supporters and developing a befriending/mentoring system. The opportunity to join local and national ‘peer2peer’ networks will also be explored.

Improving service user experience by tracking satisfaction about the services provided is key. A comments, compliments and complaints policy are already embedded. However, as MSDP transition to digitised services, an online form is planned for service users to feedback about the services provided, which can be submitted anonymously if preferred. For ongoing support services, a satisfaction questionnaire will be sent, either when a client enters or leaves the service. Service user feedback is essential to understand the expectations of service users and the impact of services provided.

Appropriate means of eliciting user satisfaction will include self-completed questionnaires, telephone interviews, face-to-face or focus groups undertaken by an independent person rather than principal support worker to remove bias potential. Resulting information will be analysed quantitatively to identify statistically significant pattens, and qualitatively to gather data about users’ attitudes, experiences, or opinions. The focus will be outcomes based and include target improvements to ensure services are provided in a reliable, consistent, and dependable manner. Data will inform which parts of the service may require improvement. Subsequent satisfaction surveys will be used to monitor and track the effectiveness of changes made. Feedback will be via service user representative groups within MSDP.

# 10 Investing in Technology

Following recommendations of good practice for providers of adult social care by the Department of Health, NHS England, and Care Quality Commission, MSDP have recently invested in digital technology. The goal is to make health care support more accessible and effective through the collection, analysis, storage, retrieval and sharing of data. The generation of data-driven audits and reports enhances transparency and supports improvement of the quality, efficiency, and safety of services.

In 2023, MSDP started the transition from paper based to digital technology with the investment of four digital platforms including Care Planner, Charity Log, and the Charity Learning Consortium learning management system.

* Care Planner: a secure, cloud-based software system with a digital client record management system for the charity’s support clients and full rota management system which has streamlined staff resources and enhanced customer experience
* Charity Log: a customer relationship management digital system, which provides a central location to store, track, retrieve, and share information. Charity log is data driven, with enhanced transparency to streamline client interactions across all frontline services except support services – which sits within Care Planner. The platform acts as a gateway for assessment of clients accessing services and for capturing data on signposting to other organisations. It supports faster and more accurate decision-making. Additionally, Charity Log will enable MSDP to spend less time on administrative tasks and more time on delivering personalised services and managing relationships with people. This will enable a smarter way of working and managing teams, allowing for growth in the organisation
* Charity Learning Consortium e-learning learning management system: Flexible e-learning system with built in mandatory training modules to support staff and volunteers from induction to annual refresher training.

In addition, MSDP are currently working towards the Data Security Protection Toolkit (DSPT), a national programme funded by NHSX for adult social care providers. Registration and completion of the online self-assessment toolkit demonstrates MSDP are following good practice in data protection and cyber security.

# 11 Finance

MSDP’s income is predominantly from Local Authorities in Merseyside, with additional income generated through sales of courses, rental of space, provision of freelance BSL Interpreters and from funds raised through grants and donations.

In 2023, income generated from sales and contracts was £756k which included:

* Service level agreements with three Local Authorities, which formed 57% of annual sales. MSDP were successfully in the bid for the renewed Liverpool City Council contract and secured £309k per year for 3 years
* Social care services generated 30%,
* The provision of interpreter services and training courses generated 13%.

In addition the charity raised an additional

* £209k in grants, donations, room hire and other income.

## Financial Forecast 2024 to 2027

In the current environment, competition for grant funding is increasingly challenging, necessitating a forward-thinking approach to diversity business, increase revenue and ensure services are efficient.

In addition the recent increases in National Minimum Wage and the charity’s commitment to pay the Real Living Wage, alongside cost of living increases on overheads will have an impact on annual expenditure.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **P&L £** | **2026** | **2025** | **2024** | **2023** |
| **Turnover** | 774,403 | 762,742 | 751,421 | 762,174 |
| **Total Cost of Sales** | 89,720 | 89,720 | 96,707 | 127,102 |
| **Gross Profit** | 684,683 | 673,022 | 654,714 | 635,072 |
| **Total Administrative Costs** | 932,694 | 946,996 | 936,263 | 914,181 |
| **Operating Profit** | (248,011) | (273,974 | 281,549 | 279,109 |
| **Surplus** | 107,527 | 130,490 | 131,300 | 77,192 |
| **Depreciation** | 27000 | 41902 | 41902 | 41902 |
| **EBITDA** | 80,527 | 88,588 | 89,398 | 35,290 |

Table identifying financial forecast 2023-2026

## Analysis

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic impacting on training and spot purchase services, income levels from community outreach support packages and service level agreements have remained static over the 2020-2023 financial years, income increased in 2022 and 2023 thanks to successful grant applications and government support through schemes such as furlough. Expenditure increases included salaries as well as investment in short to mid-term external consultancy for expert, professional support across HR, finance and quality assurance funded under the Charities Aid Foundation Resilience Fund and from allocated financial reserves.

As the charity had accumulated a strong cash reserve, short term the Board have signed off a deficit budget to enable investment in technologies such as a new CRM, investment in new staff roles and staff training, as well as the development of a Deaf Awareness e-learning package. It is anticipated that these investments will yield long-term benefits such as operational efficiencies and improved governance.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2023** | **2022** | **2021** |
| **Total turnover** | £ 756,059.40 | £ 776,621.17 | £ 763,733.57 |
| Total Cost of Sales | £ 117,894.78 | £112,884.61 | £ 76,417.65 |
| Gross Profit | £ 638,164.62 | £ 663,736.56 | £ 687,315.92 |
| Total Administrative Costs | £ 905,329.28 | £ 855,826.40 | £ 746,218.61 |
| Operating Profit | -£ 267,164.66 | -£ 192,089.84 | -£ 58,902.69 |
| Total Other Income | £ 209,211.28 | £ 298,682.84 | £ 174,028.75 |
| Operational surplus | -£ 57,953.38 | £ 106,593.00 | £ 115,126.06 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **2023** | **2022** | **2021** |
| Total income | £ 965,270.68 | £1,075,304.01 | £ 937,762.32 |
| Total expenditure | £ 1,023,224.06 | £ 968,711.01 | £ 822,636.26 |
| Balance | -£ 57,953.38 | £ 106,593.00 | £ 115,126.06 |

# 12 Market analysis

MSDP is the primary provider of services to people with hearing loss in Liverpool, Wirral, and Sefton. There are smaller charities and social enterprises also delivering services to people with hearing loss in the area, with services in competition or outside of MSDP services. MSDP seeks to work in partnership with these providers to ensure d/Deaf communities can access a range of services to meet their needs and to access joint funding for project-based work. For further information on peer/competitor organisations see Appendix A.

The unique selling point of MSDP is the majority Deaf staff team and the offer of frontline services in a range of communication modes including BSL, Deaf-Blind Tactile Signing and International Sign Language.

# 13 Operational Plan: Organisation restructure

In 2023, structural changes to the organisation were proposed in response to service user consultation and to drive forward business development. The need for services to be more flexible was identified and workforce planning recognised the need for collaborative structures to meet client demand and support employee professional development.

As a result, a team of multi-disciplined employees would provide services to meet client demand. Operation of delivery would continue 365 days a year, with core services delivered Monday to Thursday 9am – 5pm and Friday 9am – 4pm. However, from January 2024, extended services would be trialled to include monthly evening and weekend surgeries to be more flexible and client friendly. Any extended hours provision would be monitored to identify usage and evaluated to determine need. Where there is demonstrable demand, evening and weekend flexible services will be provided permanently.

The use of the newly developed client record management system (Charity Log) will allow management oversight along with autonomy of employees to manage workloads and deliver longer appointments and floating support cases, where relevant. Frontline staff will be trained to complete a baseline assessment, to identify customer needs and process initial enquiries and assessments into the charity’s CRM system for tracked allocation and response. Advice and short term (floating) support services will function as combined roles providing greater flexibility for service coverage and a structured timetable of clear service times and availability. Workforce continuity will ensure capacity to cover absences in the equipment or community support teams. Additionally, zero hours bank staff have the opportunity to shadow and train for other services where necessary.

The graph below identifies the new structure of MSDP.

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated

Graph 1: New Organisational structure MSDP

The new roles and responsibilities of Advice and Support and Officers will ensure individual staff taking the lead on specific themes to promote wider engagement, including financial and digital inclusion, ethnic minority groups, children and families, older people, veterans, dual sensory loss. Promotion of services will be through local Deaf clubs and social media to target a wider age range of d/Deaf & Deaf-blind people.

Rehabilitation officers will continue to supply, install, and demonstrate equipment and new technology. In addition, the rehabilitation officers will target statutory and voluntary organisations to generate referrals, for example, Age Concern, housing associations, community health teams, and audiology.

Support workers will engage with adult social care, community health & voluntary sector teams to promote short- and long-term support services and community activities. Deaf Active leads on a young person’s employability scheme will provide a natural pathway for transition services.

Proposal to ensure smooth implementation include:

* A steering group of services users, with Board representation ensuring co-production of services.
* Updating MSDP website and social media clearly outlining services and times of operation, including in BSL.
* Developing an internal and external communications plan on available services, with targeted promotion to staff and communities.
* Expanding partnership working and networks within local authorities, ICB and audiology departments to identify new referral pathways.
* Developing an operational group of staff and managers from Hearing and Vision Loss services to forge strong referral pathways and joint working and training.
* Joined up staff and volunteer training programmes with the Vision Loss provider.
* Referral and training from our partner SignHealth into Deaf IDVA Domestic Abuse Services and NHS Deaf IAPT therapy services
* Deaf Awareness training for frontline staff including issuing licences for our first e-learning Deaf Awareness package.
* Ongoing volunteer recruitment will target current and alumni BSL students to support community activities.
* MSDP will train employees and volunteers in Deaf-Blind communication.
* Raising Deaf Awareness within strategic forums in a bid to positively influence policy and practice.

# 14 People and Management

A group of people standing in front of a table

Description automatically generated

MSDP currently employ 20 staff. There are sixteen full-time staff and four part-time staff .

In addition, there are seven bank staff on zero-hour contracts. The zero hour contracted staff are experienced and provide frontline support to meet business needs when resources are low, such as peak holiday time.

MSDP also commissions external consultants on a freelance basis to provide expertise in IT, finance, quality assurance and human resources.

**Volunteers**

MSDP actively recruit volunteers to support the charity. There are currently seven volunteers contributing their time, skills, and value to the charity

**Structure, Roles, and Responsibilities**

1. Chief Executive Officer:In 2021, MSDP welcomed the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer with executive management responsibilities, including Charity Commissioners regulations, finance, marketing, promotion, and business development.
2. Head of Services:In July 2023, MSDP successfully recruited to a newly developed post with responsibilities for contract management, reporting, management of KPIs and line management of operational managers.
3. Support Service Manager:In October 2023, a new Support Services Manager was recruited with responsibilities including overseeing person-centred assessments, review, and case supervision of short-term support clients, and referrals for Care Act Assessments. The Support Services Manager is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
4. Senior Advice and Support Manager and Officer posts:In December 2023, MSDP successfully recruited to a newly developed post with responsibilities including managing duty service schedules, allocation, and review of short-term floating support cases, building networks with frontline statutory and voluntary sector partners to generate new referrals and access staff training.
5. Advice and Support Officers: A newly developed role, which enhances the current duty officer role. Recruitment for two positions is ongoing. Responsibilities include duty surgery sessions, including evening and weekend surgeries. The post holders will manage floating support case work, recording assessments, outcomes, and satisfaction survey feedback.
6. Rehabilitation Officers:The rehabilitation officer is experienced, with responsibilities to provide assessment, installation, and repair of environmental aids in clients’ homes. Assessment pathways includes referrals to other areas of MSDP or external services to meet the needs of clients and their families.
7. Community Engagement Manager: Leads on raising awareness and advocating the needs of people with hearing loss and those who use BSL as their first language. Responsibilities include facilitating community feedback, engaging with statutory user forums, managing volunteers, and setting up of training such as IT skills and employability. The role includes representing MSDP on British Deaf Associations national BSL Alliance.
8. Community Development Officer: Leads on centre and community-based activities, bringing Deaf and hard of hearing people and wider networks together; facilitates external presentations on contemporary key issues to support clients; creates and publishes BSL social media content.
9. Administrators: Provides administration support to contract staff to co-ordinate service appointments, respond to frontline enquiries, captures and reports data on contract KPIs.

# 15 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees are accountable for the strategic governance of MSDP, ensuring the charity advances its purpose and provides a public benefit. All trustees have individual and joint responsibility to ensure the charity is managed in an effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent way. All trustees adhere to the Charity Commission governance code to ensure best practice. MSDP actively recruit trustees to ensure a diverse range of experience to enhance the knowledge, qualities, and skills required to govern the charity. Application to join the Board of Trustees is through robust application, including interview, disclosure and barring checks, and references. Ongoing training and support are provided to develop the potential of trustees and engage them in a meaningful way which best makes use of their skills and experience. The trustee term of office is held for four years, with statutory attendance required at Board for three consecutive meetings within a period of six months each year. Inclusiveness at MSDP Board is demonstrated through the active recruitment of Deaf and Hard of Hearing trustees. Currently, 60% of our trustees identify Deaf or Hard of Hearing**.**

The Board of Trustees quorum is composed of four members; currently the Board has five members. The Chair of the Board has been in position since May 2022 and has more than 20 years senior leadership experience in the NHS in operational and regulatory roles at the hospital and regional level. The Treasurer is a qualified finance and pensions’ advisor with more than 30 years of experience in corporate and personal financial services and is also the safeguarding lead for the Board. The three remaining Board members possess extensive knowledge and skills, including leadership experience in senior management, strategic human resources, and volunteering in Deaf communities nationwide to support social inclusion. Additionally, each provides a unique perspective on sensory loss to the Board; one member identifies as Deaf, one member identifies as Hard of Hearing, and one member is a child of a Deaf adult (CODA).

# 16 Risks and Mitigation

The following risks have been identified in the implementation of the strategy and business plan 2024-2027. The following tables identifies the key risks and strategies to mitigate.

Table 4: Identification of risks and mitigation strategies

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk** | **RAG** | **Mitigation strategies** |
| Reliance on Local Authority contracts for income |  | Diversification of income generation such as; increased sales of training products, increased grant applications, investment in marketing and communication to promote fundraising/donations, growth of support packages. |
| Current financial and political impact for commissioned services |  | Diversification of business to align with changing policies and wider user engagement. |
| Investment needed for staff training |  | Approach Local Authorities to support with staff training costs and access apprenticeship levies. |
| Small number of clients in support services |  | Develop health and social support services for clients with complex health needs.  Diversify services to incorporate clients with any level of hearing loss. |
| Ageing population of clients |  | * Develop service for children and young adults * Develop service and training for parents of children and young adults * Develop health and social care support services to support client with complex health care needs. |
| Reliance on local community-based clients, poorly advertised and reduced opportunities to attract new clients, new employees, and wider networking opportunities. |  | Proactive and targeted marketing through communications and enhanced, strategic partnership working. Investment in professional marketing using multi-media channels. |
| Lack of internal quality assurance frameworks |  | Enhanced governance throughout the organisation using the four pillars of governance. Increased monitoring and reporting through data driven and outcome focused measures. |
| Staff coming up for retirement – succession planning |  | Develop leadership pipeline through internal promotion, job shadowing and training. |
| Failure to generate sufficient grant or fundraised income |  | Newly developed targets for external fundraising including diversification of funding streams. |
| Strengthening of partnership working |  | Targeted approach to ensuring staff and community representation at strategic forums. |
| Diversification of business to meet the needs of changing population with increased needs. |  | Investment in development of Deaf-Blind and Health and Social Care services. |
| Increased cost of living impacting on competitive recruitment and staff retention. |  | Emphasis on Real Living Wage and employee benefits as well as working with funders to raise salaries closer to Local Authority rates.  Recognition that although roles are specialists, the current delivery operates within low-risk client groups |

**Appendices**

# Appendix 1: Stakeholders, Partners, and Key Relationships

**Stakeholders**

Local Authorities:

Liverpool City Council

Sefton Council

Wirral Council

**Partners**

Bradbury Fields

Deaf Active

Deafness Resource Centre

Wirral Society for the Blind and Partially Sighted

Wirral Health and Wellbeing CIC

**Key Relationships**

NHS Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group

800 Group

The Deaf Charity SignHealth

The Health and Wellbeing Strategic Leads Forum.  
Merseyside Sensory Network  
Merseycare  
Liverpool CHISWG (Children Hearing Impaired Services Working Group).

Dual Sensory Loss City Region Alliance between MSDP, Deaf Active, Deafness Resource Centre, Bradbury Fields, and Wirral Society of the Blind.

The British Deaf Association’s BSL Alliance (which feeds into the BSL Advisory Board and advised the Government on the BSL Act 2022)  
Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Network  
Healthwatch Liverpool,   
Liverpool Women’s Hospital  
Arrowe Park Hospital

# Appendix 2: SWOT analysis of peers and competitors.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Who** | **What** | **Target market** | **Strengths** | **Observations** |
| SEA Recruitment | Social Care Services in the community.  Residential Care provision | Deaf individuals, Local Authorities | CQC – Outstanding  Large workforce  Social Enterprise | Rapid expansion on a regional and national level.  Local Authorities are keen to move away from residential care models. |
| Deaf Active | Youth services and BSL training | Deaf children, Families, individuals seeking BSL training.  Deaf fitness | Predominately young, Deaf workforce.  Great community facilities  Key MSDP partner.  Strong fitness offer  Activities for Deaf children and families. | Set up as a charity with a CIC arm. |
| SignHealth | Deaf Mental Health | Deaf people needing mental health support or domestic abuse support. Care services on outreach and residential care | CQC registered care services.  Large organisation.  Strong MSDP partner | Little presence in Merseyside. Nearest outreach services are currently in Greater Manchester. |
| Deafness Resource Centre | Community and centre-based services for Deaf and hard of hearing people. Aids and Equipment services.  Families and CYP project.  Interpreting services.  BSL training | Deaf and hard of hearing people | Key partner  Based in St Helens and run services in Halton and Knowsley under Local Authority contract.  Strong on grant funded programmes for social benefit. Currently running Merseyside wide children and families’ programme. | Does not work in social care services.  Holds some Interpreting contracts for hospitals. |
| Signalise Co-operative | BSL interpreter services | Local Authority contracts, NHS Trust contracts and Deaf individuals | Set up by Liverpool BSL Interpreters as a Community Co-operative with memberships.  Strong market research and presence.  Successfully won several local tenders.  Strong quality assurance. | Run by Deaf people and BSL Interpreters. |