

Lenadoon Community Forum Annual Report to AGM

1st November 2023

Present; Eamon Clarke (Mid-Lenadoon Residents). Michael Doherty (Lenadoon Cultural Group), Tim Smith (Lenadoon Festival Committee), Lorna Lundy (Lenadoon Women's Group) Frank Goodman, Gerry Caldwell, Joseph Jordan, (Black-Mountain Older Men's Group), Glen Phillips (Gaeil an Ghleanna), Deirdre Mc Kearney (Sarsfields GAC) Anto Fox, Neilly McDonnell. Melissa Meli (Carrigart Youth Group), Tommy O' Reilly (Belfast City Council) Brenda Richards, Jean McAnulty (Dep't for Communities). Cathy Megahey (St Oliver Plunkett Parish), Lisa Stitt (NIHE), Sean McKeown, (HML Mens Shed)

Apologies; Fionnuala Totten (Focus Group), Teresa Hyland Bernadene Donnelly, (Tuesday Club), Declan O'Reilly (Cairde Hillhead), Paul Niblock (Glen Parent and Youth Group), Seoirse Caldwell (Belfast City Council), Aidso Mulholland (Cairde Carrigart).

In-Attendance; Renee Crawford, Sharon McCullough, Paddy O'Donnell, Courtney McCloskey, Kate Scullion (Lenadoon Community Forum)

Tim welcomed everyone to the meeting and read out apologies from those people that were unable to attend. Tim offered the Forums condolences to the family and friends of Forum Member Groups who had passed away this last year. Tim informed everyone that three sets of the Annual Accounts were being passed around and that everyone should look over them and ask questions at the Treasurers Report.

Tim went through the minutes and matters from the previous year's AGM and then invited a proposer and a seconder for these.

These were proposed by Michael Doherty and seconded by Neilly McDonnell.

Tim then invited Sharon McCullough to present the report for the Lenadoon Community Education & Training Project

Lenadoon Community Education & Training Project Annual Report

Sharon presented the Annual Report for the LCF Education & Training Project

Following on from the very successful delivery of ICDL Level 1 & 2 and Computer and Online Basics, 29 of our students recently completed the Accredited Training. These courses were only made possible through funding from the Department for Communities and NIHE we are now pleased to

say that we have been successful in securing funding from the Belfast City Council, through the Capacity Grant.

COMPUTER & ONLINE BASICS FOR BEGINNERS (Just Completed) (10 Participants)

ICDL LEVEL 1 Commencing 10th November 2023

ICDL LEVEL 2 Ongoing (11 Participants)

We were also very fortunate to secure funding from Department for Communities for a brand-new state of the art IT Suite with 14 PCs. The new PCs are a very welcome addition for our beneficiaries. These new PC's have all the most up to date software and hardware to enhance our beneficiaries learning experience.

Our Audit with audit from the British Computer Society is due at end of November this year. This is an annual audit carried out by the BCS to ensure that our delivery of courses is up to the standard of the Awarding Bodies.

This locally based programme has been very successful in providing community education and training programmes, both in vocational and non-vocational. The results from our feedback questionnaires to students continue to demonstrate a need for a Training for Employment Programme within the area. All of our courses are geared towards employability.

Looking Forward:

The challenge for the Lenadoon Community Forum now is to ensure that we continue to access funding opportunities to keep this much needed Project alive. We are anticipating that the "Making Life Better in Lenadoon Survey is going to show the need for this invaluable Project. It is paramount that we continue to run Lenadoon Training for Employment Programme for the people of the Lenadoon Neighbourhood and surrounding areas.

The Priority for this Project is to source funding to sustain the Project. With the pandemic over there have been many job losses and people will be looking to upskill. The perfect opportunity to do this is in their own community with the support services of childcare, locality etc.

Lenadoon Community Counselling Annual Report

01 November 2023 (For the period April 2022 to end March 2023)

Kate Scullion presented the Counselling Services annual report .

OVERVIEW

It has been another very successful year for Lenadoon Community Counselling with many from the local area as well as others across West Belfast and beyond having benefitted from our professional counselling service. Clients were referred or self- referred to our service with a range of presenting issues including anxiety, depression, stress, suicide ideation, anger management, bereavement, abuse, addiction and personal/family relationships.

We have seen an increase in the complexities of the issues our client base present with as those who have been impacted by the conflict, the Covid pandemic and the ongoing financial crisis and lack of access to appropriate /relevant healthcare, become overwhelmed.

We are here to support those who are struggling with life, those who are in crisis, vulnerable, lacking hope and support, those who have mental health issues and those who have thoughts of suicide and consider this as the answer to their problems and difficulties. In the face of all of the adversities our community have faced in the past and also in relation to those they continue to face at present, Lenadoon Counselling aim to continue to offer a professional service free at the point of contact within the community.

PEOPLES PLAN

For the past few years, service users, counsellors, support workers and staff have been reporting a number of concerns about the additional needs and complexities of people within the community that create increasing hardships and obstacles to accessing and engaging in meaningful support. Things like lack of access to basic healthcare from G.Ps. Financial difficulties including benefit and debt concerns. Addiction and housing issues. People are struggling to meet daily costs of food and utility bills. Lenadoon Counselling Service as part of Lenadoon Community Forum have commenced an extensive consultation process within the local area which will culminate in a 5year Peoples Plan. The intention is to engage with around 1000 individuals and families to encourage them to have their say and offer the opportunity to feedback what they believe should be focused and prioritised in order to help improve the lives of those living and working within the area.

FUNDING

The counselling service have a number of ongoing contracts (listed below) that support our ability to deliver a consistent service in the local area and beyond. Both additional streams of the Henry Smith Foundation and C.F.N.I. have eased pressure on our ability to continue to meet the needs of our client base and also supported the services ability to create a new staffing structure within the organisation that has supported our own Finance and monitoring Officer. This post has been essential in creating and maintaining sound financial management of the various funding streams we now work alongside. However, it is important to emphasise moving forward that we are not immune to the financial crisis and have been impacted by rising costs and money saving efforts from funders. This year we faced a further reduction in our Talking Therapies contract resulting in approximately half of our original funding removed and as a result of the VSS restructuring as of March 2024 we will no longer be funded by them for our VSS support worker. There are ongoing efforts to try to access funding elsewhere so as we do not want to lose what has been evidenced to be a vital support that has been very well utilised within this community.

Our current funding streams include;

The Lottery Dormant Accounts Fund C.F.N.I. Mental health Fund, Henry Smith Foundation, Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Trust (BHSC), Victims and Survivors (V.S.S.)

Counselling services today face many challenges none greater than financial sustainability. Lenadoon Community Counselling has over the past year been primarily funded by the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) and Victims and Survivors Service (VSS). The PHA fund our main counselling contract for residents of West Belfast and BT17. It also funds the Weekend Crisis Intervention Service as well as the Self-Harm Intervention Programme (SHIP) which we deliver as part of consortium across Belfast. BHSCT are the funders for two Hub contracts (one delivered directly by Lenadoon and the other delivered as part of a consortium). VSS provides funding that is specifically to help and support those who been impacted by the Conflict/Troubles.

COUNSELLING SERVICE STAFF

Full-time Coordinator, Full time Finance and monitoring Officer, Full-time Clinical Lead Full-time Counsellor/Part-time Counsellors, 1 Health and Wellbeing VSS Caseworker, 2 Part-time Administrators, 9 Sessional Counsellors and Volunteer/2 Student Counsellors.

BACP ACCREDITATION

We have recently submitted our completed application to BACP for service accreditation. This is widely viewed as the professional Kite mark of high professional standards within the counselling and therapeutic world. The process itself has been very time consuming and laborious, however we are confident that our application will be successful.

COVID IMPACT

Covid created a huge challenge for the counselling service. We remained open throughout the pandemic and continued to support our clients via telephone sessions. This presented us with huge challenges at times as the pandemic impacted on both clients and counsellors and their families. The dedication and commitment of all of our staff and sessional counsellors should be recognised in our ability to achieve this.

As a result of the positive uptake and engagement we have continued to offer telephone sessions to clients who may benefit from this. We have recognised the difference it has made for people's ability to engage when accessibility issues of a wide and varied nature may prevent them attending f2f sessions.

We feel this approach has prepared us moving into the winter months to be able to manage the challenges any future Covid threats may present.

PARTNERHIP

We continue to engage with all of our community and statutory partners in highlighting the challenges faced in Mental Health and the community sector in meeting the needs of our community. Through CWA we are working on developing and pushing forward a new strategic plan to support and maintain a community response to the mental health needs of the people of West Belfast and beyond.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Funder	Counselling Sessions/Assessments
<p>Public Health Agency (PHA) Contracts</p> <p>These are rolling contracts each year, at some point in the future there will be tendering process for this funding.</p> <p>PHA SHIP (Self Harm Intervention Programme); partner in a Belfast wide consortium</p> <p>Weekend crisis intervention</p>	<p>3157 Counselling sessions delivered including assessments.</p> <p>848 individual sessions including assessments</p> <p>411 interventions</p>
<p>Belfast Health & Social Care Trust</p> <p>Main contract, rolling year on year (Legacy -Hub PC)</p> <p>Mental Health Hub (Community Wellbeing Alliance –CWA)</p>	<p>570 Counselling sessions delivered including 272 as part of Consortium (Community Wellbeing Alliance CWA)</p>
<p>VSS (Victims and Survivors Service)</p> <p>Year 3 of 3-year Contract</p> <p>VSS fund programme to help improve the Health and Wellbeing of those affected by the Conflict/Troubles.</p>	<p>1249 Counselling sessions delivered</p> <p>157 interventions were provided to 90 individuals through the Health and Wellbeing Programme.</p>

Total delivery April 2022-March 2023, 6664 individual counselling sessions, support sessions and interventions including assessments.

OTHER SERVICE PROVISION

- 2 ASIST programmes were delivered that benefitted up to 70 participants (PHA funded).
- Provision of Crisis Intervention Service 52 weekends throughout the year (4 hours Saturday/Sunday afternoons) for vulnerable clients and referrals for weekend support.
- We continue to provide counselling sessions in Outreach Centre at Daneo Service, (Crumlin Road)
- VSS Health and Wellbeing Caseworker started just before end of last financial year March 2018. All progressing well with **249** interventions to 90 individuals.

- Weekend Crisis Intervention Service available for 4hrs between 12pm and 4pm on every weekend of the year including holidays

Tim Smith thanked Kate for the efforts of all of the staff at L.C.C.S. Joe Jordan said that he would like to record the thanks of the Forum Member Groups for the work of Lenadoon Community Counselling Service.

Tim then invited Renee to give the Forums Staff Team Annual Report

Strategic Development Co-Ordinator's report for the year

November 2022 – November 2023

During the past year attendance by the Forums staff at meetings were carried out using a mixture of face to face, Zoom Teams or hybrid.

My colleagues Paddy and Sharon are to be commended for all the services and support they provided to Individuals, Groups and Organisations on behalf of the Forum over the past year.

Ongoing support was provided by the Forum to a number of Volunteers involved in many groups and projects throughout the area. These Volunteers give their time and commitment to help organise and manage various activities and events and they are to be acknowledged and thanked for all the work they carry out for others.

Housing Update

The Forum is represented on a number of housing bodies including the West Belfast and Shankill Area Housing Community Network,

Belfast Regional Housing Forum and

Central Housing Forum and a number of relevant Working Groups

These meetings are attended by a wide range of representatives from across many communities and thematic organisations

Over the past twelve months the Forum staff Team provided support to a number of Residents and Groups throughout the area in relation to proposed Planned Programmes of Improvement Works,

Individual Housing Repairs and

Individual Housing Cases.

Staff organised site visits were possible with Residents and Statutory providers and lobbied to help bring about resolutions to specific issues raised by Residents

Direct referrals were made to a number of Internal and External Support Services. These included referrals to amongst others

The Lenadoon Community Counselling Service,

NIHE Housing Solutions,

A Number of Housing Associations,

St Vincent de Pol,

Belfast City Council,

South West Food Bank,

Housing Environment and Community Safety Sub Group

The LHECS Sub Group bi-monthly meetings continued over the past year and have now reverted to face to face meetings. The Sub Group dealt with a number of issues of concern impacting on resident's lives and the areas in which they live. Actions were taken forward and progressed with a number of Statutory Organisations.

Building Successful Communities Forum

In essence the Building Successful Communities Forum initiative is finished there is currently an evaluation been carried out. Two of the 3 Working Groups established by the BSC Forum continue.

Corrib Flats the site has now been completely cleared, The Housing Executive Transferred the ownership of the land to Choice Housing Association who appointed a Contractor with work commencing on the New Build Development soon. When completed it will have 23 new homes for families and one bungalow for complex needs wheelchair user. someone has already been nominated for this property

Woodbourne Environmental Improvement Scheme

Lenadoon Community Forum has proactively worked in Partnership with local Residents, Traders and Elected Representatives since 1997 to get this Project done. I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the Late Maureen Scholly and the late Gerry Dunlop who were to the forefront of the campaign over the years to make this environmental scheme a reality

A substantial amount of progress has been made on the Woodbourne scheme since the last Forum AGM in 2022 The vesting of the small pieces of land has finally been completed and the ownership of the land has transferred to the Department for Communities. The Department allocated a budget for the Project. However, at our monthly working group meeting in September an issue relating to the timeframe of the expenditure in this financial year was raised. At our working group meeting last week it was confirmed the tendering and procurement will commence. Hopefully the Contractor will be appointed and work can begin next May/June 2024 if all goes well.

Lenadoon Community Forum's Community Magazine

In the last 12 months four editions of the Forums community magazine were collated and delivered in December, March June and September to every home in the greater neighbourhood. The magazine contained information in relation to services being provided in the area by local groups and organisations. Community Safety updates and contact details for additional support services that local people may require are included in the magazine.

Health Information Day

Lenadoon Community Forum with the help of a number of volunteers organised a very successful Community Health Information Morning in August as part of the Lenadoon Community Festival. It

was very well attended by both service providers Agencies and local people seeking information on Health Matters

Lenadoon Community Forum's SOS Page

The Forums SOS page continued to be updated with relevant information on sources of support and advice as well as local Government Initiatives, which can provide much needed support to the most vulnerable and isolated in our community.

Lenadoon Festival

Lenadoon Community Forum and a number of volunteers planned and delivered a three-day Community Festival in August, which catered for all sections of the community.

Half Moon Lake

The Forum continued to provide support to the Friends of the Half Moon Lake Group. The Forum Facilitated an AGM in May to encourage new people to become part of the committee overseeing the site

Stewartstown Road Regeneration Project

The three Directors nominated by Lenadoon Community Forum continued to participate in and represent the Lenadoon Community Forum on the board of the SRRP. The jointly joined shared space social economy project founded by Lenadoon Community Forum and Suffolk Community Forum.

Lenadoon Neighbourhood Partnership

The Forum continued to facilitate, represent, and provide secretariat and administrative support over the past year. Paddy is currently acting in the role of Chair of the partnership. The LNP are currently reviewing the membership and reviewing the Code of Practice and Guiding Principles

Lenadoon Community Forum staff have and will continue to be fully engaged and represent the Forum on many Local, Statutory, Community and Voluntary Organisations, Networks and Partnerships to ensure the views of the Forum are represented and Actions agreed are progressed in collaboration with others.

Lenadoon Peoples Plan

Tim asked Michael to introduce the proposed "Lenadoon Peoples Plan- How to make Life better in Lenadoon."

Michael said that at last years AGM the Forum announced that they had applied to Belfast City Council for funding to assist with consulting, developing and publishing a new five-year Development Plan for Lenadoon. It would involve extensive Community Consultations to ensure that everyone in the area got the chance to contribute. There had been a number of planning sessions and a questionnaire has been developed and this will form an important part of the process of gathering the opinions of the community. A QR code has been established and this will allow people to participate in the questionnaire online and this is due to be circulated widely. The Forum are planning to engage the community over as wide a spectrum as is possible and this had recently

started with the large number of people in attendance at the Halloween event in the Glen Complex. As well as door to door engagement people will get the opportunity to participate in the survey at the various Christmas events and others such as the annual community health information events.

The Forum is encouraging all the local Community groups in the area to promote the involvement of their users, members and families. The local primary schools will be asked to get involved. Lorraine Morrissey is facilitating the Initiative and a meeting has been organized for 11am on Tuesday November 14th in the Glen Complex and we would love all our member groups to send along a representative to give their views. We will update everyone over the coming months via the Community Magazine and other methods on upcoming consultation events and activities. Glen asked if local sports clubs could be sent the questionnaire's and it was agreed that this was a good idea.

Affiliated Community Forum Member Groups

Deirdre read out the list of Affiliated Forum Member groups for 2024

Glen Parent and Youth Group	Lenadoon Cultural Group
Lenadoon Community Festival	Lenadoon Women's Group
Black Mountain Older Men's Group	Gaeil an Ghleanna
Sarsfield's GAC	Carrigart Youth Community Group
Focus Club	Kids Together
Tuesday Club	Belfast City Council
St Oliver Plunkett Parish	Horn Drive Senior Citizens
Anti-Racism World Cup	Woodbourne Residents
Mid Lenadoon Residents	Cairde Loch Na Leathgheali
Cairde Carrigart Residents	Cairde Hillhead Residents
Suffolk Road Residents Network	GASNP

Treasurers Annual Report to L.C.F. A.G.M.

Michael presented the Treasurers report on behalf of Paul Niblock.

I hope you have all had an opportunity to read over the Forum's accounts for this past 12 months. Funding from P.H.A, V.S.S, BHSCT, Mental Health Fund, Henry Smith Foundation, City Council and a number of small grants, donations and fund-raising Initiatives enabled Lenadoon Community Counselling Service to operate effectively and deliver the Services outlined earlier by the Counselling Manager. Unfortunately, our funding from Belfast Trust under the Tender was reduced again and this was our last year of the Mental Health Funding so we will need to increase our fund-raising efforts to ensure we are able to deliver Counselling Sessions at their current level. The incoming year will be our last year of the Dormant Accounts and Henry Smith funding. Therefore, we face a huge shortfall over the next 18 months. A big thank you to Kate, Courtney, Michael, Paddy and Sharon for their efforts in securing this funding. The Forums Development Team are funded through the DFC Neighbourhood Renewal fund and this is due to end next March. We are optimistic that it will be extended for another year. However, that is due to be the last year of Neighbourhood Renewal and

this will create huge uncertainty for our staff and the support provided to Member Groups. We are grateful to Belfast City Council, N.I.H.E and SRRP for the funding which has enabled us to deliver a range of accredited I.T. Classes. Funding from the Council is also helping to offset costs towards the consultations and production of the Peoples Plan.

Michael thanked Sharon for her support throughout the year and to Richard McClay our auditor for his professional advice over the past 12 months.

A number of those present expressed their concerns about the financial uncertainty of the forum and its services in the long term with so much funding ending in March 2025.

The Audited Accounts;

The Accounts were proposed by Deirdre Mc Kearney and Seconded by Glen Philips; this was followed by a full show of hands by all present.

The Re-appointment of Company Auditor Richard McClay; Proposed by Michael Doherty and Seconded by Neilly Mc Donnell; this was followed by a full show of hands by all present.

Michael presented the Forums Adult Safeguarding Policy;

Adult Safeguarding Policy

- There had been no Adult Safeguarding concerns brought to the attention of LCF Staff/Committee.
- There had been no Adult Safeguarding Concerns referred to the Belfast Trust for action.
- Our Adult Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and updated.

Sharon McCullough is the Forum's Adult Safeguarding Champion and Renee Crawford is the Appointed Person in Sharon's absence.