

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Structure

Trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Reference and Administrative Information

The name of the charity's trustees at the date this report was approved are listed on page 1, together with the address of the principal office of the charity and the charity's registration numbers.

Fóram na nÓg is the lead representative organisation for the youth sector through the medium of Irish. The organisation aims to develop the sector with the co-operation of youth workers and volunteers, youth club committees, Irish language organisations and statutory agencies and, most importantly, young people themselves.

Fóram na nÓg comprises membership from a wide range of groups and any youth club or community group working with young people in Northern Ireland through the medium of Irish can affiliate. We work in partnership with relevant statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations to promote the needs of youth services through the medium of Irish. Our mission is to ensure that community based youth provision through the medium of Irish is safe, fun, educational, interesting and inclusive.

Fóram na nÓg offers support, guidance and advice to the committees of Irish-medium youth clubs across the north to help them to provide high quality non-formal educational and social experiences to young people. The organisation offers training to youth workers and volunteers on youth work programmes and also offers training, support and guidance to other youth organisations who have a role in the provision of youth services to increase the understanding of Irish-medium youth work e.g. through sitting on regional and local youth planning committees. Through developing a theory of change for the organisation and for the sector over the next number of years and through working with partners in local authorities, the education authority and with other regional youth organisations, Fóram na nÓg will lead the development of a strategic, long-term plan for the Irish-medium youth sector. Fóram na nÓg recruits members for Coiste na nGael Óg, trains these members and facilitates the meetings and activities of this group to enable them to participate fully in the planning and work of Fóram na nÓg and therefore the development of the Irish-medium youth sector. Fóram na nÓg sits on advisory committees to represent the interests of the Irish-medium youth sector, works to raise awareness of Irish-medium youth work and seeks out new opportunities to work with other partners in a way that will benefit the Irish-medium youth sector.

Fóram na nÓg underwent numerous changes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic that has informed the ways in which the organisation's work is carried out to ensure maximum effectiveness. The pandemic allowed Fóram na nÓg to strengthen its digital approach to supporting member groups situated farther away from the Greater Belfast area where the main office is based. The use of new apps designed to aid remote work during the pandemic has allowed Fóram na nÓg to carry out effective and efficient work at a faster rate.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)

Fóram na nÓg was also relaunched in 2021 into a new funding scheme, which has employed five members of full-time staff since then. Research, Development, Training, and Support Officers and a Director were employed to assist youth clubs delivering services through Irish. These posts were foundational to the work needed to support the organisation's member groups as they were also to enter a new Priorities For Youth funding scheme in April 2022. In September 2022 Fóram na nÓg Regional Development Scheme and Regional Project Scheme came to an end with the loss of a full-time youth development officer and a part time training officer. In November 2022 Fóram na nÓg have re applied to the Education Authority for the continuation of the Regional Strategic Funding, in addition to this Fóram na nÓg have applied for Regional Project funding to build and develop the volunteer workforce across the Sector. Additional Funding has also been awarded from the Dormant Account Fund to employ a part time staff member to work on building the sustainability of the project from 2022-2025. There have also been numerous small grants for programme and facilitation costs from Halifax Foundation, Irish Youth Foundation, Belfast City Council and Foras na Gaeilge. New board members were also recruited to bring in a swath of new ideas to plan for the future of Fóram na nÓg strategically. Member groups have been consistently supported in their efforts to enter the new funding scheme. This has developed their capacity for delivering youth work and in turn, provided opportunities for young people and their communities as a whole.

Public Benefits

Irish-medium youth work provides important non-formal educational opportunities for young people through the medium of Irish. This is beneficial as it has been long established that youth work contributes to young people's personal development and social skills. The Irish-medium youth sector provides the same benefits and opportunities and also brings with it the additional benefit of contributing to young people's social language skills and provides an opportunity for fluent Irish speakers to use their language in a safe, social environment. The benefits as identified above can be demonstrated by the number of young people who attend Irish-medium youth clubs and by the number of youth clubs which are being run. Consultations with young people and research carried out by Fóram na nÓg and others has shown that the provision of Irish-medium youth services and the assistance provided to the clubs which carry out these activities are an essential part of the educational experience of these young people. There is no harm arising from the purposes. The beneficiaries of Fóram na nÓg's work will be young Irish speakers who engage in youth work. There is no private benefit flowing from the purposes.

Financial review

The results for the year are set out on page 7 & 8. The charity returned net receipts/payments for the year of (£5,349), (2022: £21,261). At 31 March 2023 the total funds of the charity amounted to £19,547 (2022 £24,896) of which restricted funds were £2,071 (2022 £9,642) and £17,476 (2022 £15,254) were unrestricted.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)

Reserves policy and going concern

Of the total funds reported above, £18,967 is made up of cash at the bank of which £17,476 is unrestricted reserves. The trustees are confident that the cash reserves, together with expected future incomes, will be sufficient to meet the working capital requirements for the forthcoming year. The trustees have also considered the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should the need arise.

Plan for the future

To maintain the same level of services in the area.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)

Structure, governance and management

Fóram Na Nóg is a registered charity, number NIC106317 and is governed by its constitution.

New trustees are appointed when appropriate. Suitable candidates are considered on the basis of their skills, experience and sympathy with the aims of the charity. New trustees will be agreed at a trustees meeting before being invited to join.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As the charity's trustees we are aware of our responsibilities for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is also our responsibility to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are responsible and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with CCNI guidelines. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence to take reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosures of Information to Independent Examiners

To the knowledge and belief of the Trustees there is no relevant information of which the organisation's independent examiners are not aware. The Trustees have taken all the necessary steps of which they are aware, provided relevant information and established that the organisation's independent examiners are aware of the information.

Signed on behalf of the board of the Trustees



Ciaran Mac Giolla Bhéin
Chair

18/12/2023

Date