



A.G.M. 2023-2024.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT.

On behalf of the Management Committee of M.U.C.C.C. it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our A.G.M.

I am pleased to begin by saying that following our annual meeting with our NORTHERN TRUST providers (N.H.S.C.T) MUCCC has enjoyed another positive year. I can also confirm that funding is secure for another 2 years. For this we are very grateful.

It is with out hesitation that I can state that the harmony and quality of service offered at all sessions in MUCCC is in no small way due to our highly experienced and well-informed Coordinator Vanessa. Her management and motivational skills, her ongoing and proactive liaison with all relevant outside agencies has ensured that despite the complexity of many of the referrals all sessions have been competently and ably managed. For this we thank you Vanessa.

However, no voluntary organisation can /could survive without a team of volunteers. While many organisations have struggled to retain/ attract volunteers since COVID, in MUCCC we are very fortunate to have an outstanding team of volunteers... the quality of service available in our centre could not be offered without their unstinting commitment and generosity of spirit. The dictionary definition of a volunteer is "a person who freely offers to do something especially for an organisation willingly and without out being forced or paid to do it." This definition in no way defines the volunteers in MUCCC who go way beyond the basic objectives, contributing of their time, effort and talents to meet the needs of the organisation. In recognition of this commitment the volunteers enjoyed a team building weekend at ROSS HARBOUR on the shores of LOWER LOUGH ERNE. As a Management Committee we feel it is imperative to recognise and reward our volunteers.

All new volunteers receive appropriate induction and further updated training sessions are provided for all volunteers. At the heart of contact centres are the core values of impartiality, discretion, sensitivity and reliability. It is our ongoing aim to provide an ever-improving service for the children/families using our centre.

It is all too easy for the needs and feelings of children to become secondary to what is happening for parents. The Royal College of Psychiatry indicates that children may experience a range of emotions... a sense of loss, fear, worry and rejection where the ending of a relationship is characterised by short/long term conflict. All indicators would suggest that early childhood experiences have a major impact on the development of positive mental health. The consistent, enabling and supportive approach by contact centres such as MUCCC does significantly improve the quality of the lives of the children of families referred for Contact. The many complimentary written and oral feedback comments are testimony to the positive work carried out in our centre by our team of caring, empathetic and dedicated volunteers and our coordinator Vanessa. As volunteers you may never be able to measure the influence you have had, you may not be able to change outcomes but at a critical time in a child's life and indeed the life of the contact parent you will have been an invaluable support.

At recent meetings of NINCCC and our most recent meeting with NHSCT a focus has been on the importance of a HUMAN RIGHTS policy for all contact centres.

A child's future should never be defined by their past:" EVERY CHILD HAS RIGHTS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION OF ANY KIND... Article 2 THE U.N CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD. This is a legally binding document of 54 articles covering all aspects of a child's life. It is an agreement signed by 196 countries which outlines the fundamental rights of every child regardless of race religion and abilities. As an organisation as we focus on developing a Human Rights Policy for all centres it should further inspire us in MUCCC to build on existing good practice to ensure all who use our centre experience "WORTH AND DIGNITY."

Finally, a very sincere thanks to all at both sessional and management level for your hard work, diligence, dedication and indeed at times resilience over the past year. Without the countless hours given generously MUCCC would not be the centre of excellence it is today... but we cannot be content with the status quo. We must continue to build on good practice, working positively ensuring inclusivity and being fully focused on the needs of the children of separated families who use our centre. There will be challenges and it would be naïve to think otherwise given the complex myriads of difficulties faced by families in today's world, but I am confident that in MUCCC we can meet those challenges, and I look forward to the development and growth of our services in the coming year.

THANK YOU

Geraldine Mc Garvey

