



ARDCOMM

The Heart of the Community

Ardmonagh Family & Community Group Ltd.

Trustees report: April 2022-March 2023

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1. Objectives and Activities

Strategic Context

Ardmonagh Family & Community Group (Ardcomm) has a long established history of delivering services to meet the needs of the most vulnerable within our community and 2023 marks the 30th anniversary of local people working to meet those needs. In that time, the organisation has come a long way. We employ close to 100 staff, and our services have expanded to provide much needed health and social care support for the elderly, adults and the most vulnerable of children in our community. Our vision as an organisation is clearly laid out in our Mission Statement and Values Statement.

Mission Statement

To provide high quality care and support services to improve the health and wellbeing of people in the community. Our person-centered and compassionate approach ensures services are fit for purpose and that our service users receive the standards of care to which they are entitled. We also foster a safe and supportive environment for our staff that encourages open communication and ongoing learning so they can maximise their potential to be the best they can be.

Our values are....

- We place the community at the heart of what we do and approach our work with compassion, dignity and respect for all.
- We act with integrity and are accountable for our actions.
- We listen to and advocate on behalf of our community, acknowledging their right to participate and influence decisions that affect them and their care.
- We work in partnership with various external agencies to fulfil our shared vision.
- We build respectful relationships with each other to promote honesty and authenticity in all that we do.
- We foster a safe and supportive learning environment that meet the needs of all.

Key Service Provision

To deliver our vision, we provide high quality support across a range of key services,

- **Domiciliary Care** – Delivering support and care services within our organisational setting and within the home to children with complex/medical needs and adults with physical and emotional disabilities.
- **Senior Services** –Good Morning West Belfast, Seniors Lunch Club & Befriending. Providing relevant services and bespoke activities to over 55's who may feel isolated in the community, and working with other charities and elderly care services to make sure our service users' needs are met to improve their daily living situations.
- **Family Time** – Supporting children and families through the provision of family time support. This service offers a safe and neutral place where children of separated families

can spend time with adults important to them, and where positive relationships and engagements are promoted and encouraged.

- **Family Support** - Supporting families Belfast wide through the provision of targeted family specific work looking at many different areas to improve a family situation. Some areas of focus are; health & development, family & social relationships, stability or Financial support and employment or advocacy support to navigate engagements with other professional bodies.
- **Outreach** – Supporting children experiencing different transitions in life, whether this be unplanned placement moves for Looked After Children, or school changes for children that have experienced disruption or trauma. Working with children on a one-to-one basis, the service aims to promote positive relationships and build life skills with the children they support. A varied and bespoke service for families in need of support.

These long-term and support aims are further defined by our priorities that provide more detail and areas for action in relation to achieving our aims. These priorities form the basis of the annual Operational Plans that exist for each of the services and set out specific action items or objectives that we work towards to achieve our goals. In addition, we determine performance indicators and work closely with our stakeholders from the Trusts and Health and Social Care organisations, allied statutory bodies, and academic partners in Queen's University Belfast, to demonstrate the ways in which our success and added social value is measured. These are constantly reviewed and adapted to ensure our services are evidence-based and our performance levels and of the highest professional standards.

Public benefit

To improve health and social care outcomes for vulnerable adults and children in disadvantaged communities or circumstances in the Greater Belfast area through the provision of quality services.

- The direct benefits which flow from this purpose is that by providing these services in health and social care, adults and children will experience significant and positive change to their social, emotional, and cognitive development which will impact upon their position within their community.
- These benefits are demonstrated through quarterly and annual activity reports and outcomes-based evaluation. This purpose does not lead to harm.
- A private benefit to trustees may arise if the knowledge they gain as a trustee in regard to good governance and health and social care promotion is transferable to another setting.
- These benefits are incidental and necessary to ensure the benefit is provided to the beneficiaries.

To improve the social and emotional development of children and young people living in disadvantaged communities or circumstances in the Greater Belfast area through programmes and services that support parents, in caring for their children.

- The direct benefits which flow from this purpose is that by providing family support services to parents, carers, and parents to be, they will be supported to develop healthy

attachments with their infants, good parenting skills, better family functioning and improved economic and environmental circumstances.

- These benefits are demonstrated through quarterly and annual activity reports and outcomes-based evaluation. A risk may arise if through the provision of family support services, a child or parent/carer is harmed by a member of staff or a member of staff is harmed in the course of their duties. These risks are minimised through the implementation of Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults policies, staff supervision and Lone Working policy and are outweighed by the overall benefits to children and families.
- A private benefit to trustees may arise if the knowledge and experience they gain as a trustee, in regard to good governance and family support is transferable to another setting.
- These benefits are incidental and necessary to ensure the benefit is provided to the beneficiaries.

To improve the quality of life of children and young people living in disadvantaged communities or circumstances in the Greater Belfast area through the provision of contact support services.

- The direct benefits which flow from this purpose is what through the provision of family support services, children are provided with a safe and neutral place of separated families to enable them to spend time with one or both parents and other siblings. The focus is on ensuring that organisations, professionals, and carers work together to deliver high quality care. This purpose does not lead to harm.
- The beneficiaries of this purpose are children and young people, their parents and carers primarily living in the Greater Belfast catchment area.
- A private benefit to trustees may arise if the knowledge and experience they gain as a trustee, in regards, to good governance and early years is transferable to another setting.
- These benefits are incidental and necessary to ensure the benefit is provided to the beneficiaries.

To improve the quality of domiciliary/palliative care of children and adults with physical and emotional disabilities living in disadvantaged communities or circumstances in North and West Belfast through the provision of care support services.

- The direct benefits which flow from this purpose is that through the provision of domiciliary/palliative care in the community to children and adults with complex medical needs, physical and emotional disabilities, can be provided with care packages specifically tailored to each individual requirement. The agency is registered with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority. Training is provided by specialist Health Professionals focusing on development of staff and continuous improvement. Delivery of a high quality domiciliary and palliative care service that focuses on core values and in keeping all basic human rights available to the service users' needs. This purpose does not lead to harm.

To provide a safe and neutral place for looked after children (in the care system) to meet with their birth families and spend time with one or both parents and other siblings. We believe all children have equal rights to protection and are encouraged to fulfil their potential. We believe inequalities should be challenged. Everyone has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.

- The direct benefits which flow from this purpose is that by providing this service in family contact, children will experience significant and positive change to their social

and emotional development which will impact upon their position within their community.

- The beneficiaries of this purpose are children and their parents/carers and adults primarily living in the North and West Belfast catchment area.
- A private benefit to trustees may arise if the knowledge and experience they gain as a trustee, in regard to good governance and early years, is transferable to another setting.
- These benefits are incidental and necessary to ensure the benefit is provided the beneficiaries.

2. Achievement and performance

The year 2022/23 continued to present challenges for the Ardmonagh Family & Community Group (Ardcomm), some of which were additional to the previous year ie 'Costs of Living' and political uncertainty, all of which had an impact upon our service users and staff alike. We were tested on our resilience and commitment to deliver our services in a manner that our users require, and which is expected of an organisation, which is 'fit for purpose'. However, as always, we stepped up to the mark: we had an exceptional year; we successfully delivered our services and where and when required we stepped forward to support the most vulnerable within the community.

There is an ongoing challenge to effect an equilibrium between our role as a voluntary organisation, delivering services to the most vulnerable members of our community, but also developing as a business, improving our services whilst keeping an eye on our costs/expenditure/profit and all that this entails. We are committed to meeting this challenge as the year has shown, as we have remained steadfast in our resolve to enhance our contribution as a vital part of the social and economic fabric of society through the development of services to the most vulnerable throughout Belfast.

We have a purpose in providing social value in all that we do within our immediate community and, as such, we have a vital role to play in its development and in building the capacity of its residents in their pursuit of protecting their health and well-being and, by so doing, building a better future.

Whilst our emphasis over the years has been on continuing to grow our services both in terms of the quality and quantity, 2022/23 has been focusing on developing and fundamentally restructuring the organisation against this continuing backdrop of immense challenge which does not seem to be easing.

The business plans which we developed for our services in 2021/22, continued to be implemented in 2022/23. We continued to develop our services, which involved having to make big decisions regarding where we invest our resources. This has resulted in us restructuring the senior management team and we are moving forward with our plan to open a residential care home for children aged between 6 to 12 years old.

We are a strong, well-structured organisation, we have our governance arrangements embedded and working to the level that illustrates our strengths: our Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-group; the Human Resource/Adverse Incidents Sub-group and Governance Sub-group are all supporting and delivering to the strategic direction of the organisation.

More importantly, we value all our staff who work extremely hard to deliver our services and who provide a vital leadership role in management and working alongside the Board to develop and deliver our strategy. They have built the organisation of which we are all immensely proud.

The vision, strengths, work and outcomes have not been achieved in isolation from our other main financial stakeholders: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust; The Southern Health and Social care Trust, The Department for Communities; The Belfast City Council and The Northern Ireland Housing Executive. They have all contributed to the success of this organisation in various ways.

Last, but certainly not least, we as a Board can provide a strategic direction. I as the Chair of that Board am indebted to the other Board members who so willingly give their time and expertise in the upward trajectory of this organisation.

Again, on behalf of the Board, I would like to commend everyone who is connected to the organisation for their efforts. The continuing success in not only meeting but also surpassing our objectives is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and commitment to those to whom we strive to provide quality services.

3. Financial Review

Reserves policy

The Charity's policy is to retain a level of free reserves, which matches the need for the organisation, both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. The reserves required should be sufficient to meet committed grant expenditure and the running costs for a period equivalent to six months annual expenditure.

We have invested into restructuring of the organisation to strengthen the Governance and Compliance and invested into developing and opening a residential unit for children. The Charity will continue to monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis and the board will review the appropriateness of the policy annually.

The company had net outgoing resources for the year of £180,907 (2022: net outgoing resources of £68,905), which reflected the decrease in trading activities during the year. Unrestricted funds decreased by £193,040, while restricted funds increased by £12,133.

While the charity has not yet undertaken any public fundraising initiatives, we have been successful in seeking and receiving grant funding amounting to £898,898, for this year ending 31 March 2023.

The funding received assisted the charity in continuing with our aims and objectives, offering vital services in supporting child development, providing support to children and adults with additional needs within all the areas of our services, providing domiciliary care to children and adults with complex medical needs and providing family support to families through difficult periods.

4. Future plans

The Charity's Statement of Financial Activities shows that the income generated over the period was restricted and unrestricted. The Trustees have identified that annually restricted funds, being made available to the charity may fluctuate.

The trustee's plan to continue with the existing services meeting the needs of people of Belfast. It promises to be an exciting year for the Ardmonagh Family and Community Group. Contracts are currently in place for the delivery of health a& social care services and our aim for next year is to secure registration for our residential care home for children aged 6-12 (Ardcomm House).

Business Development

We have an Operational Plan and 3-year Strategic Plan we use as a roadmap to deliver the organisations vision and mission in the present while keeping an eye on the future. All services, resources and activities link into these documents to ensure that we remain focused on achieving our goals. Our business strategy is centred on securing opportunities, and maintaining and growing our services throughout the Belfast Wide area and further afield.

Ardcomm plays a key function in the delivery of these strategies at a local level and seeks to ensure that our outcomes align well to our projected targets. The organisation has also embedded the OBA framework throughout our services showing clear outcomes which are aligned towards the program for government we ensure that the needs of the local community are reflected when responding to consultations issued and to exert influence through representation on local and regional strategic bodies and committees in each of the service delivery areas.

As the work of ArdComm continues to grow and develop, stakeholders and service users are increasingly drawn from outside of the West Belfast area and beyond in response to opportunities arising.

We also aim to focus on providing quality provision and employ more experienced and qualified professionals across health and social care disciplines. This will ensure we have the knowledge and skills to deliver our services with best practise at the forefront.

This past year, we have undertaken a programme of activities such as a review of the organisation and all of its services. This resulted in the identification of the following key priority areas that inform the trustees' perspective of the future direction of the charity.

- Development of our governance and compliance procedures;
- Development of a marketing plan for the organisation;
- Development of Business Plans for each service
- Benchmarking of remuneration for staff, and
- Succession Planning.

What have we learned

This review has ultimately helped us to identify gaps within the organisation, some of which we have actively sourced and rectified, others remain opportunities for us as we to continue to develop. Lessons learned, detailed below, have influenced future plans and decisions about developing our services and staff, and allocating resources to their best effect.

We have learned that,

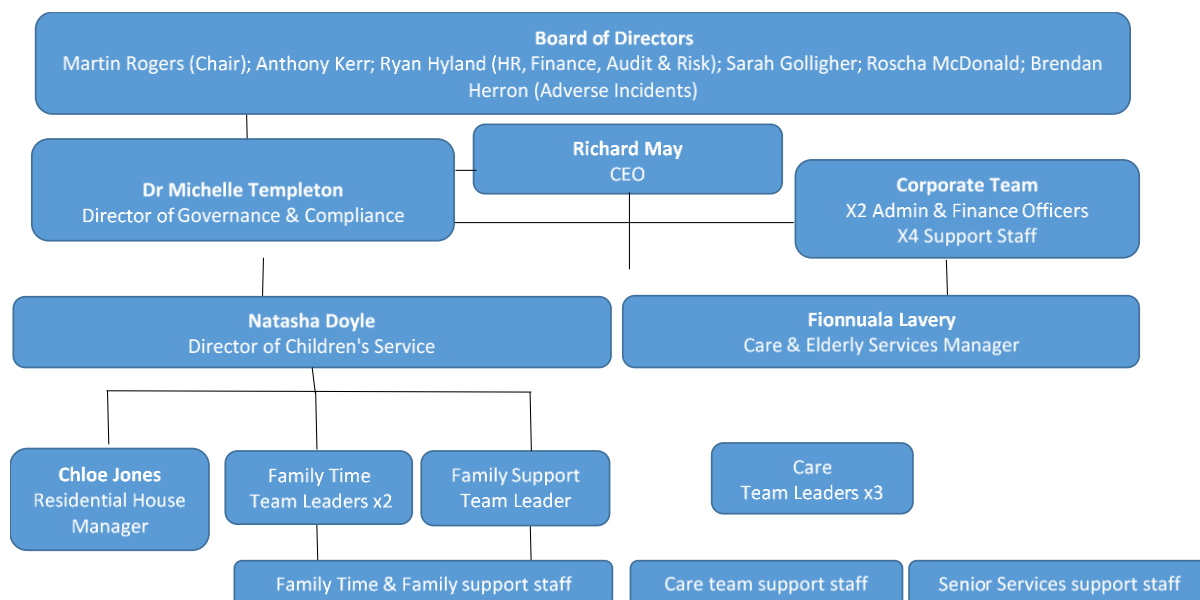
- organisation culture and ethos is the important bedrock on which high standards and good practice grow and that this filters down to frontline staff through good leadership and management.
- We challenge and advocate for our service users at all times – not for the sake of it, but to question it, because the ‘experts’ do not always get it right and so we can be involved in shaping good policy, practice and sustainable services.
- We need to keep a focus on our goals - it’s alright to be flexible and change gear so long as we achieve our desired outcomes.
- We must value and support our staff because they are working in challenging fields to deliver services to the most vulnerable and that sense of value does not always get recognised.
- We need to develop a professional approach in all that we do, we need to be passionate about our work but less emotional. There is a challenge in seeking change that can get too emotional, people do not truly understand what it is to be changed and when they realise that they may be part of the change, they may resist and push back.
- We do not work in silos but in collaborative partnerships with other stakeholders. We must nurture our professional working relationships, and become more strategic in our networking, to enable us to reach-up and share experience and knowledge for the benefit of all.

We feel this internal scrutiny and interrogation has brought about, and we are continuing to, change our organisation, which brings with it fresh understandings, dilemmas and challenges. The main challenge for us is to keep going in the pursuit of excellence and we have realised that whilst the funding assisted us to review what had to be done, we are now in the position that we need to continue with implementation of what we have found, which requires additional resources.

5. Structure, governance and management

Organisational Structure

Below are details of the organisational structure as of end of March 2023.



Role of the Board

The Board of ArdComm currently consists of 6 members made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds in industry and public life who have specialist knowledge, experience, and skills in areas such as commerce, finance, academia and health & social care.

Overall, the role of the Board is to govern and not to manage the organisation. Operational management is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Senior Management Team (SMT). It is recognised that the Board may step into operational matters to protect the interests of the organisation, when it is clear that the Board believe the SMT are not performing their duties up to the standard required which may result in placing the organisation at risk.

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

Governance of the Charity

During the period of under review the directors met monthly. Trustees/directors are appointed by nominations made in writing by any existing director. At the General Meeting nominated directors are appointed by election.

Induction and Training of new Trustees

New Trustees are interviewed, screened and provided with full information to brief them on their legal obligations under the charity and company law. Two new Trustees were appointed during the year, using the flexibility provided by the Articles of Association.

6. Reference and administrative details

The Board of Trustees, which can have between 4 and 8 members, administers the charity. The Board meets six times each year. It sets strategic direction for the organisation, which is implemented by the employed staff, through an annual operational plan. The CEO, Mr Richard May, the Finance Officer Ms Leanne Magill, and the Directors of Care and Children's Services are responsible for the day to day running of the organisation and have devolved authority to take decisions between Board meetings.

We employ the services of the following professionals to oversee our financial affairs.

Auditor and Accountant

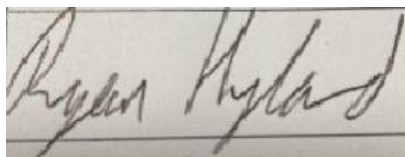
Billy Drake FCA
Lynn drake & co ltd chartered accountants
1st floor, 34 b-d Main Street
Moir
Co Armagh
BT67 0le

Bank

AIB
35 University Rd
Belfast
BT7 1NH

Signed by current Chair of Board

Mr Ryan Hyland

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Ryan Hyland".