

Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru North Wales Advice and Advocacy Association

Annual Report

Report and Financial Statements for Financial Year 2022-23

Chair's Summary

We are pleased to present the Accounts and Trustee report for the financial year 2022-23. This past year has seen the Association continue to deliver high quality Advocacy services, and other support services, across the region in our various projects.

Our core service of Independent Professional Advocacy is delivered to individuals with a range of needs, and in a range of settings including community, residential and nursing home settings. Within these projects we have supported some 542 individuals directly with Advocacy support. Additionally, the service has supported over 90 individuals across Gwynedd and Anglesey who are subject to Deprivations of Liberty Safeguards through acting as their Relevant Persons Representative. Furthermore, some 160 individuals on Anglesey have received our payroll support services to manage their Direct Payments. Each of these projects involves different forms of support, with different regulatory and legislative frameworks. The common theme that runs through them all is that we seek to work with individuals to ensure their rights are upheld, their voices are heard, and they retain as much choice and control in their own lives as possible. In doing this we provide an independent source of support, led by the people we support and directed by their wishes and view to maximise the quality of their lives and wellbeing. Social care services across the board have never faced such pressures as they do now, be that in community or residential services, and no matter what the need of the client groups is. Those pressures include the financial impacts of increased cost in providing social care and the reduction in funding available to do so. They also include pressure in recruiting and retaining a suitably robust and skilled workforce across the sector to provide support services. Advocacy is not immune to these pressures, but we remain committed in our focus that no matter what the pressures are, we must place the needs of individuals we support at the heart of our service and fight to ensure that they get the best they can and wherever what they need and are entitled to.

As said, Advocacy is not immune from funding pressures. As a service, our financial position is on one hand relatively healthy. While we see a reduction in annual income this year, this has been the result of projects coming to an end from the previous year and has been offset with a commensurate reduction in our expenditure. We have remained within budget once again in 2022-23 and expect to do so in 2023-24 as well. This is not easy when we have seen inflationary pressures increase costs in so many of our supply chains. More critically, as we look to coming years, other pressures are on the horizon. We have benefitted from stable funding arrangements throughout the last few years but, as with all third sector organisations, we are entering a period of contractual retendering that is based on a competitive model. The outcomes of this will be what they are but they will involve our key contracts and funding streams and as such we cannot ignore the potential pressure that places on the organisation for its future.

We remain grateful to all our funders who have provided the organisation with the means to carry out its work in the last year. Likewise, we are thankful to all the many partners and networks we have that allow for the flow of referrals into the service and support us with the resources help the individuals who use Advocacy.

We are thankful to the members of the Board of Trustees who provide their expertise and guidance to the Association management to ensure the continued success of the Association. It has been heartening to welcome to the Board this year Hassim Ganiyu and his contributions and commitment are gratefully welcomed and valued. It is bittersweet that we also bade farewell this year to Eileen Clarke, who sadly passed away earlier this year. She had been a founding signatory to NWAAA in 1997 and had remained with the organisation since. While her health declined, her commitment to those with disabilities and ensuring their rights were respected and their opportunities promoted remained as strong as it ever was. She was great champion for Advocacy.

We thank of course the staff of the Association, without whom the support given to the individuals we referred to, would not happen. It is a small band of staff to cover the region that it does, so successfully and consistently. We have been fortunate to welcome some new members to the team and they have been supported and welcomed by their colleagues. Sadly, we lost a member of our staff this year in sudden and tragic circumstances. Helga Uckermann had been our Self Advocacy Co-ordinator for some 5 years, developing groups and embedding the ethos and principle of self-advocacy across the region. It was fitting that in November 2022, she was instrumental in facilitating the "Hear Our Voice" conference, which was a day long conference for over 100 people, that covered key issues affecting the learning disability community across North Wales, attended by both self-advocacy group representatives, members of the LD community and Local Authority, Health Board and Policing representatives. Helga worked with the self-advocacy group members to allow them to plan and deliver this conference, with

funding sourced by the groups themselves. It was overwhelmingly positively received, and its impact went beyond the day itself and into decision making and planning of services with individuals for the future. She was a champion for self-advocacy and is much missed by her colleagues and the members of the groups she supported.

Finally, we thank those who have used the services of NWAAA over the last year. We are asked to work with individuals who are often at the most vulnerable points of their lives, facing great challenges and often hardship. At these points it is hard to accept the input of another service, to share the problem with another person and we are always of the trust placed in us as a service.

Diolch,

E P Thomas

Chair NWAAA

Executive Summary of 2022-23

As we have moved on through this year, the first full year of life post-Covid, we can begin to see, in a way that we could not previously what the legacies of the last few years might be on our services and our wider social care sector.

As mentioned last year, the transition from the situation we were all in left a sense of uncertainty. Significantly this in respect of our future funding and the retendering of key contracts. It was anticipated that during 2022-23 a number of these exercises would be undertaken. They have not. Consequently, we are really experiencing a period of limbo in respect of funding. While some projects such as the Co-Operative Working Project and our Self-Advocacy funding have come to end, we have ameliorated the loss of these contracts by redeploying staff into other areas and reducing costs across the services. That is, of course, no mean feat when we are in the middle of a significant cost of living crisis coupled with a general funding contraction in health and social care. We expect the coming year to be one where we will see retendering exercise undertaken, and where we will also see what the funding available is, in what will arguably be more straightened times.

However, is that really such a different picture to the one we face as a third sector organisation every year? Perhaps not. What is different about the current environment we operate in is the pressure to retain high quality and experienced staff in a sector where wages have not significantly changed in 10 years, but the expectations of role, both in level of knowledge and training required to be an effective Advocate have massively increased. Coupled with an ever-growing complexity of casework, and ever limited resources and services across able to meet the support demands we advocate for, our staff have felt massive pressures over the last 12 months. In many other Advocacy services in Wales there is a crisis of retention, with staff leaving for either more lucrative or less stressful yet equally recompensed roles. There is little hope that this situation will alleviate, despite representations to the Welsh Government, with a sector wide strategy to solve the issues. Therefore, we must look to ourselves as a service and address these problems from within. It is heartening that board and management team have worked constructively together to do this and avoided an exodus of staff. Moreover, the acknowledgement to staff that we as a service recognised the real-world pressures on them has done much to enable us to keep our core team together.

The management team at NWAAA has sought to focus on reviewing and maximising the working processes and patterns of staff; to enable them to achieve maximum efficiency in their roles and to ensure their continued wellbeing in the workplace. This has involved a full review of policy and process to capture the hybrid working opportunities the post pandemic has presented us and embed them as an effective long-term measure. In doing this we have balanced the wellbeing of staff and the effectiveness of the service, working with in consultation with our team and stakeholders to find the best balance for us to provide our services. We feel that we are building an approach to Advocacy that will inform our provision of service for the coming years. We also feel that by investing in technology and training to work differently, we are inbuilding efficiencies that will lead to long term cost savings.

The coming year will not be one where things remain in the state that has characterised the last one. however, we are as team, as a service and an organisation, ready to face the challenges to come.

Aims and Objectives of NWAAA

NWAAA offers high quality, independent Advocacy across the range of health and social care settings, to as broad a range of individuals who require support as possible. We see Advocacy as being a dynamic and collaborative process that requires us to work in partnership with individuals to have their voices heard, be treated fairly, secure the rights to which they are entitled and obtain the services they require. In addition to working with individuals on their issues, NWAAA actively seek to involve ourselves in wider conversations about health and social care services, raising broader issues and themes of inequality and disadvantage, and advocating for solutions to these at local, regional and national levels.

NWAAA seeks to be not only a service that is responsive to the current needs of the individuals it supports, but also a proactive service in that anticipates developments, issues and trends that will impact those individuals and require new strands of service delivery and developments in Advocacy support.

NWAAA is guided by the principles of the Advocacy Charter and our ethos, focus and service delivery is designed to reflect these core values. We are proud to have been awarded the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark which has assessed NWAAA against these key principles.

NWAAA has been delivering its services for over 30 years and operates across the North Wales region. As a charitable entity, our activities are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit *"to promote and provide advice and advocacy for people facing disadvantage through disability, illness, age or social exclusion, who live, in particular but not exclusively, in North Wales"*.

In shaping our objectives, operating our projects, planning and delivering our activities we draw upon a skilled and experienced trustee, management and staff team who all play vital roles in ensuring NWAAA meets its aims and objectives.

NWAAA relies on a range of funding sources from public sector and private sector bodies to deliver its services. Funding comes from a range of organisations and bodies who contract with the Association to deliver particular services to specific projects and eligible groups. We see the relationships built and maintained with funders as a vital part of achieving the aims of both NWAAA and the individuals who use our services. NWAAA seeks to work with its funders to develop services to adapt to new circumstances, new challenges and new demands.

Funding Sources 2022-23

NWAAA provides services across the North Wales region. These include several Independent Advocacy Service contracts with local authority and private sector providers. Additionally, we deliver a range of additional projects in Self Advocacy, Direct Payments Support and Community Development. We have continued to provide a range of projects that had commenced funding in previous years, consolidating and building on the aims and objectives of these projects.

Independent Advocacy Services

Gwynedd and Anglesey Advocacy Service

Gwynedd and Anglesey jointly commission an Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA) service. The IPA service is provided as part of the Local Authorities duties under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. Additionally, the project lower level one to one advocacy and signposting for those issues outside of the remit of IPA. This service is open to any adult funded by Gwynedd or Anglesey who have care or support needs, whether or not they are being met. The project has been granted a further extension in funding to March 2024.

Paid Relevant Persons Representative Services - Gwynedd and Anglesey

Paid Relevant Persons Representative services are provided to those individuals subject to Deprivation of Liberty Authorisation under the Mental Capacity Act 2005. This is a vital safeguarding role which aims to protect the rights of some of the most vulnerable individuals in care homes and other settings, who lack capacity. For some time, the government has been endeavouring to implement the Liberty Protection Safeguards, which may see the role of Paid RPR change. However, no set date has been agreed on the change due to the impacts of Covid and delays in producing a Code of practice for the new arrangements. The project is therefore funded until March 2024.

Supporting People (Gwynedd)

NWAAA is funded to provide an Advocacy to individuals with a Learning Disability who are in receipt of funding under 'Supporting People, around tenancy and housing matters to sustain their tenancies and homes.

Wrexham Advocacy Service

The service provides Independent Professional Advocacy to all client groups (excluding those with mental health issues) in receipt of, or eligible for, adult social care. Similar to other projects there is both IPA and advocacy for lower level issues provided. This project has been reviewed by the authority and a further extension of service to June 2023 has been agreed.

Flintshire Learning Disability Advocacy

The Association is funded by Flintshire County Council to deliver Independent Advocacy services to Adults with a Learning Disability in Flintshire, and to those residents of Flintshire who are placed out of county. This project is funded until June 2023.

Denbighshire Learning Disability Advocacy

A new project opportunity with Denbighshire Council to provide Independent Advocacy services for individuals with a learning disability and in receipt of, or eligible to, social care services. The project was extended to March 2024.

Mental Health Care UK Ltd

The Association provides Independent Advocacy services to MHC UK Ltd, a large private sector provider of rehabilitation and nursing/residential services. This project is funded on a rolling basis.

Delfryn House and Lodge

The Association provides a generic advocacy service at Delfryn independent Psychiatric Rehabilitation Unit in Flintshire. Advocates support patients at all stages of their rehabilitation journey, from initial admission, through ongoing care planning and into discharge planning and moving on.

Other services

Denbighshire Self-Advocacy Project

Denbighshire Council commissioned a new discrete service to support and develop self-advocacy groups for individuals with learning difficulties living in Denbighshire. This service has supported self-advocacy groups across Denbighshire, to have a real and independent voice within their communities on a range of issues. This project is funded until March 2023.

Direct Payments Support Service (Anglesey)

On Anglesey we provide payroll support and processing and support services for people who receive a Direct Payment in order that they can successfully manage their own care through employing carers and support services directly shaped to their own individual needs. NWAAA supports individuals to understand set up and effectively maintain their Direct Payment through administrative and practical support with payroll, employing staff and ensuring changes in needs are responded to. The project has been funded both through charging individuals for payroll services at a fixed cost, and through an element of funding via the Local Authority to provide the support element to employers and employees. This funding has been agreed for the project into 2023-24.

Financial Review

The Association carries out its activities across a wide geographical area and with a wide community of interest. NWAAA benefits from a range of funding sources and these have widened in the last few years. However, all funding is time limited and there is always the need to seek and secure new funding through a range of sources, be they local authority, health or private sector and grant making bodies. NWAAA management continues to explore opportunities for extending existing funding and securing new funding through opportunities afforded within the advocacy sector both in existing locations worked in and beyond. NWAAA operates in its own right in these matters and in partnership with other similar organisations as applicable.

Principal Funding Sources

Income was derived from a variety of contracts with local authorities and private companies. Income from projects is slightly lower than the previous year, £410,857 compared with £452,273. This is due to the company seeing some reduction in funds as projects came to an end, notably the Co-Operatives Project and the AWPf Self Advocacy Project.

Reserves Policy

NWAAA has conducted an assessment of what its minimum reserve should be to meet liabilities to staff and other long-term liabilities such as office rent, in the event of either cash flow shortfalls, emergency unplanned expenditures, or in respect of winding down costs if the Association were to cease trading. The Trustees are satisfied that sufficient funds exist for the Association to meet its financial requirements

in the event of any such scenarios. Reserves are monitored throughout the year and any expenditure to be met from reserves must be approved by the Trustees.

NWAAA operates a range of projects, as detailed above. The major bulk of funding for the Association's projects comes from Local Authority contracts. Many of these have been extended in line with performance targets being met but also due to Authorities being uncertain of the direction of travel post-Covid. These contracts remain likely to be retendered in some form in the next twelve months or so. NWAAA retains plans to restructure and adapt in the event of any such losses. NWAAA continues to assess and pursue other opportunities for funding outside existing streams. In reviewing the circumstances of the NWAAA, it considered that adequate resources remain in place to fund the activities of the Association into the foreseeable future. The Trustees are of the view that the association remains a going concern.

The net assets of the organisation show an increase in total charity funds from £321,350 to £378,634. Of this fixed assets made up £1,257 in 2023. There were no restricted funds at the year end. Free reserves can therefore be calculated as being £378,634.

Structure Governance and Management

Charity name: Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru

Charity Registration number: 1060826

Company Registration Number: 3308387

Country of Incorporation: England & Wales

Registered office and operational
Address: 14a Ash Court,
Parc Menai
Bangor
LL574DF

Directors and trustees of NWAAA

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purpose of charity law.
The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees' and Directors

Mr Emlyn P. Thomas	Chair
Mrs Eileen Clarke	(resigned Jan 2023)
Mrs Betty Williams	
Mr Arfon Thomas	
Mrs Debbie Tebbutt	
Mr Hassim Ganiyu	

Jon Stevens	Company Secretary
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Key Personnel Management Team

Jon Stevens	Chief Executive
Kathy Slinn	Strategic Development manager

Staff
Nia Harrison
Adrian Jones
Mel Roberts
Beth Hayward
Helga Uckermann
Rebecca Roberts
Catherine Cordova
Danny Garrod
Angela Morris
Ceri Griffiths Bell

Auditor	WJ Matthews and Son, 11-15 Bridge St, Caernarfon
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Bankers	HSBC, 274 High St, Bangor.
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Governing Document

NWAAA was born of the Bryn y Neuadd Advocacy Service and became registered as a charity in January 1997. It is also registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee. The scope of organisational activity is beginning to change, not least in response to Commissioners changes away from disability specific services to generic services. As such the NWAAA has agreed with Charity Commission to change its main objects to the following;

"To promote and provide advice and advocacy for people facing disadvantage through disability, illness, age or social exclusion, who live, in particular but not exclusively, in North Wales".

Membership and Directorship

All members of NWAAA are Directors. Directors are recruited through a variety of sources including word of mouth, business contacts and open advertisement through relevant Voluntary Sector networks.

Trustee Training

The Association is committed to supporting trustees both existing and new to access suitable training opportunities to enhance their skills in areas of governance.

Pay policy for senior staff

The directors consider the board of directors, who are the Trust's trustees, and the senior management team comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day to day basis. All directors give of their time freely and no director received remuneration in the year.

In view of the nature of the charity, the directors benchmark against pay levels in other comparable organisations of a similar size and structure and related to similar role and responsibilities.

Risk Management

The Association has continued to review risk to the Association on an ongoing basis from both internal and external perspectives. The main external areas of concern continue to lie in the reality that all sources of funding are time limited and therefore there will be the potential for funding sources (if not extended or renewed) expire. Several contracts fall due for retender in the coming year, including Gwynedd and Mon, Wrexham and Flintshire. NWAAA continue to mitigate this by seeking and securing new funding opportunities and this process will continue. NWAAA continue to look for further diversification and partnership working opportunities. We continue to maintain contingency plans against a range of possible scenarios, such as loss of contracts.

Internally, the main areas of risk again lie in the field of finances, more specifically, the increasing costs of those staff and non-staff aspects of the operations needed to deliver what has become much larger service. Investment in technology has grown and continues to do so in light of the pattern of home working. There are also potential risks from this way of working, it is not to everyone's tastes and we may see staff depart which would lead the recruit, employ and train new staff, potentially adding extra cost and also denting delivery. We retain robust induction and supervision programmes to avoid this. Mitigations helped by the changed pattern of work due to COVID e.g., costs of travel have helped. However, these mitigations are a product of circumstance and we must be mindful of how we emerge from the pandemic to retain these benefits. By securing contracts we have increased our sustainability, but growth potentially brings greater risk. The Management of the Association is proactive in planning contingencies and seeking new avenues of secure funding not least as new opportunities arise as post pandemic priorities in social care become evident.

Organisational Structure

Directors approve annual budgets and have devolved operational responsibility to Management, whilst maintaining their monitoring role The Association's Staff Handbook Policies and Procedures detail these fully.

Responsibilities of the Management Committee

Company law requires the Management Committee to prepare financial statements for each financial year. These statements must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company. Accounts will be prepared to show incoming and outgoing resource and the balance sheet made up to the year end. In preparing these statements the management committee will follow best practice and;

- Select suitable accounting policies.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare the financial statements.

The management committee is responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The management committee is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Members of the Management Committee

Members of the management committee who are directors for the purpose of company law and trustees for the purpose of charity law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out above (page 6).

Directors' Statement As To The Disclosure Of Information To Auditor

The directors' confirm that so far as each director is aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company's auditors are unaware. Each director has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditor

WJ Matthews and Son were reappointed as the company's auditor for 2022-23.

Approved by the Management Committee on 13.12.2023

Signed E. P. Thomas

E.P Thomas – Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru for the year ended 31st March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Material uncertainty related to going concern

We draw attention to note 18 of the financial statements, which details the uncertainty regarding the sources of income from local authorities for the next 12 months. This indicates that a material uncertainty exists that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issues.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru (Continued)

If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and the returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities including fraud is detailed below:

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru (Continued)

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including legislation such as the Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and noncompliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias;
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the company's legal advisors.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit, we also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru (Continued)

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



David Chidley (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
W. J. Matthews & Son
Statutory Auditor and
Chartered Accountants
11-15 Bridge Street
Caernarfon

Dated: 13.12.2023

Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2023

	<i>Note</i>	2023	2022
		£	£
Income			
<i>Donations</i>			
Donations		500	-
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>			
Grants and contracts	3	410,857	452,273
<i>Other income</i>			
Bank interest received		509	14
Other income		79	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total income		411,945	452,287
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Expenditure			
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>			
		354,661	392,438
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenditure	4	354,661	392,438
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net (expenditure)/ income for the year and net movement in funds for the year		57,284	59,849
Funds brought forward at 1 April 2022		321,350	261,501
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Funds carried forward at 31 March 2023		378,634	321,350
		<hr/>	<hr/>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities. The figures given here reflect the information held in the full accounts.


Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru

Balance sheet at 31 March 2023
(Company number: 3308387)

	<i>Note</i>	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	<i>12</i>		1,257		2,626
Current assets					
Debtors	<i>13</i>	51,360		55,907	
Cash at bank and in hand		330,477		278,262	
		<u>381,837</u>		<u>334,169</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<i>14</i>	(4,460)		(15,445)	
		<u></u>		<u></u>	
Net current assets			377,377		318,724
			<u></u>		<u></u>
Net Assets			378,634		321,350
			<u></u>		<u></u>
Funds					
Unrestricted funds	<i>16</i>		378,634		321,350
Total Charity Funds			<u>378,634</u>		<u>321,350</u>

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies

Approved by the Board of directors on 13th December 2023 and signed on its behalf by


..... Trustee
Mr. E. Thomas

Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2023

	<i>Note</i>	2023 £	2022 £
Cash used in operating activities	17	51,706	63,243
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest income		509	14
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	(1,100)
Disposal of tangible fixed assets		-	70
Cash provided by/(used by) investing activities		509	(1,016)
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		52,215	62,227
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		278,262	216,035
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		330,477	278,262

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a. Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP(FRS102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

b. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that the most significant uncertainties in respect of the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern relate to the pressures and uncertainties arising from the difficulty in securing sustained funding from Local Authorities.

c. Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met or are fully within the control of the charity, there is sufficient certainty that receipt of the income is considered probable and the income can be measured reliably. Income is deferred if the performance related conditions have not been met or if the income is earmarked for future periods.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital grants' or 'revenue grants' is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount, can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Income is deferred where the conditions for entitlement to the income have not been met or where the income has been given specifically for a future period.

d. Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for a particular restricted purpose.

e. Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

f. Support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include costs of administration, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which supports the charitable programmes.

g. Operating leases

The charity classifies the renting of properties as operating leases; the title to the properties reside with the lessor and the economic life of the properties is far in excess of the term of the leases.

h. Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. The costs of minor additions or those costing under £250 are not capitalised. The cost of tangible fixed assets is written off over their expected useful lives as follows:

Motor vehicles	20%	reducing balance
Computer equipment	33%	straight line
Office alterations	33%	straight line over the term of the lease
Other	25%	reducing balance

i. Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid after taking account of any trade discounts due.

j. Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

k. Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts.

l. Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as a basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

m. Pensions

The Company contributes to a pension scheme which is a defined contribution scheme. The cost of pension benefits is charged to the statement of financial activities, so as to accrue the cost over the service lives of employees. The cost for the year was £13,386 (2022 - £11,745). There were outstanding contributions of £NIL, (2022 - £NIL) at the year end.

2. Legal status of the Charity

The company is limited by guarantee. If upon the winding up of the company, there remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the company, but shall be given to some other charitable institution having similar objects to the company. As members will not receive any surplus from the company, a Reconciliation of Members' Funds is not required.

Gwasanaeth Adfocatiaeth a Chynghori Gogledd Cymru
Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

3. Grant income/ Service Level Agreements	2023	2022
	£	£
Gwynedd Council – Independent Advocacy	83,810	78,001
Ynys Mon Council – Independent Advocacy	41,500	41,500
Gwynedd Council – Supporting People	4,438	4,472
Ynys Môn Direct Payments Scheme	19,292	19,938
Gwynedd Council – Relevant Person Representative	8,610	9,766
Ynys Môn – Relevant Person Representative	9,083	9,360
Flintshire Council – Learning Disability	41,215	41,215
Wrexham Council – Independent Advocacy	82,683	78,216
Denbighshire Council – Self Advocacy	24,017	24,017
Mental Health Care (MHC) Limited	23,625	31,500
Psychiatric rehabilitation contract	5,206	8,924
Bespoke Services	24,860	25,724
Co-operative Project Ynys Mon ICF	-	20,800
Denbighshire - Learning Disability Advocacy	41,618	41,570
Ynys Mon – SAG	-	2,000
All Wales People First - SAG	900	15,000
	<u>410,857</u>	<u>452,273</u>
4. Total Resources Expended	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff and Facilitators salaries	215,184	246,620
Staff and Facilitators travel expenses	13,794	12,239
Vehicle expenses	1,705	7,881
Room hire	760	500
Project costs	-	1,000
Governance costs	9,372	9,487
Support costs	113,846	114,711
	<u>354,661</u>	<u>392,438</u>

All expenses are in respect of advocacy services. Expenditure on charitable activities in the year was £354,661 (2022 - £392,438).

5. Analysis of governance and support costs

Initially, the charitable Company identifies the costs of its support functions. It then identifies those costs which relate to the governance function

	General Support	Governance	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
General office and finance staff	33,332	6,672	40,004	45,700
Training, supervision and affiliation	8,926	-	8,926	2,740
Premises expenses	22,458	-	22,458	25,775
Communications	9,010	-	9,010	8,211
Office expenses	17,666	-	17,666	17,588
Repairs, renewals and maintenance	11,894	-	11,894	12,025
Auditor fees	2,088	2,700	4,788	4,282
Professional fees	7,103	-	7,103	5,880
Depreciation etc	1,369	-	1,369	1,997
	<u>113,846</u>	<u>9,372</u>	<u>123,218</u>	<u>124,198</u>

6. Net income for the year	2023	2022
	£	£
<i>This is stated after charging:</i>		
Depreciation	1,369	1,854
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	-	143
Operating leases – land	24,819	24,125
Auditor's remuneration	2,700	2,600
Accountancy and payroll services	2,088	1,682
	<hr/>	<hr/>

7. Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	228,665	262,720
Employers national insurance	13,137	17,855
Pension contributions	13,386	11,745
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	255,188	292,320
	<hr/>	<hr/>

No employee had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 a year (2022 – £Nil).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2022 - £Nil) neither were they reimbursed expenses during the year (2022 – £Nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2022 - £Nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and management team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £74,086 (2022 - £88,507).

8. Staff numbers

The average number of employees during the year, calculated on the basis of full time equivalents, was as follows:

	2023	2022
	Number	Number
Chief executive	1	1
Advocates	9	10
Administration and support	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	11	12
	<hr/>	<hr/>

9. Related party transactions

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year (2022 – Nil).

10. Government Grants

Income from government grants comprise service level agreements with local authorities to provide advocacy services to the charity's beneficiaries.

11. Corporation Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the Charity.

12. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	56,843	2,000	58,843
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	54,636	1,581	56,217
Charge for the year	1,285	84	1,369
Eliminated on disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	55,921	1,665	57,586
Net book value			
At 31 March 2023	922	335	1,257
At 31 March 2022	2,207	419	2,626

13. Debtors	2023 £	2022 £
Contracts due	48,785	51,090
Prepayments	2,575	4,817
	51,360	55,907

14. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2023 £	2022 £
Accruals and deferred income	4,460	15,445
	4,460	15,445

15. Commitments

Operating leases

The charity has commitments under operating leases as follows:

	Land and Buildings		Other	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Leases expiring:				
Between one and five years	-	-	16,502	5,670

16. Funds

	Balance 31 March 2022 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	Balance 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	321,350	411,945	354,661	-	378,634
	<u>321,350</u>	<u>411,945</u>	<u>354,661</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>378,634</u>

	Balance 31 March 2021 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	Balance 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	261,501	452,287	392,438	-	321,350
	<u>261,501</u>	<u>452,287</u>	<u>392,438</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>321,350</u>

If the company is wound up or dissolved and after all its debts and liabilities have been satisfied there remains any property, it shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the company, but shall be given or transferred to some other charitable company having objects similar to its own, and similar objects prohibiting the distribution of its income and property.

Unrestricted Funds

The main activity of the company is to provide an advocacy service to adults with a learning disability, physical disability or mental health problems.

17. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net movement in funds	57,284	59,849
Add back depreciation charge	1,369	1,997
Deduct interest income shown	(509)	(14)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	4,547	(7,072)
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	(10,985)	8,483
Net cash used in operating activities	<u>51,706</u>	<u>63,243</u>

18. Going concern

The company's main source of income is from service level agreements with local authorities to provide advocacy services. Several of these contracts expire at the end of March 2024. The company is currently in the process of re-tendering for these contracts. As a result, the income for the Company over the next 12 months is uncertain. The Board are looking at other possible sources of income including partnerships with other advocacy services.

19. Direct Payments Scheme

The charitable company provides payroll processing, payment and support services for people whose care is funded through direct payments. The company receive monies on behalf of these individuals from the local government, process the payroll and pay the employees of the individuals. As a result, the company holds money in trust on behalf of these individuals. As at 31 March 2023 the balance held was £340,371 (2022 - £282,706). As the monies are held in trust they are not included within the company balance sheet.

20. Prior year fund breakdown

Statement of Financial Activities (Incorporating an Income and Expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Income		
<i>Income from charitable activities</i>		
Grants and contracts	452,273	469,453
<i>Other income</i>		
Bank interest received	14	60
Job Retention Scheme	-	1,560
Total income	452,287	471,073
Expenditure		
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>	392,438	384,673
Total expenditure	392,438	384,673
Net (expenditure)/ income for the year and net movement in funds for the year	59,849	86,400
Funds brought forward at 1 April 2021	261,501	175,101
Funds carried forward at 31 March 2022	321,350	261,501

Appendix to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Expenditure in furtherance of the charity's objects	2023 £	2022 £
Staff/ Support staff/Facilitators salary	255,188	292,320
Staff/ Facilitators travel expenses	13,794	12,239
Maintenance, repairs and renewals	637	465
Training expenses	4,393	2,337
Office rent and rates	24,819	24,125
Premises expenses	(2,361)	1,650
Room hire	760	500
Conference fees and expenses	3,774	170
Trade insurances	3,644	4,974
Vehicle expenses	1,705	3,911
Vehicle leases	-	3,971
Affiliation fees	759	232
Computer expenses	11,256	11,560
Telephone	9,010	8,211
Postages	-	5
Leasing	7,635	7,637
Advertising and website	-	461
Stationery	3,737	2,737
Translation costs	345	1,106
Auditor fees	4,788	4,282
Professional fees	7,103	5,880
Project costs	-	1,000
Bank charges	94	85
Sundry expenses	2,212	583
Depreciation and loss on disposal of fixed assets	1,369	1,997
	<u>354,661</u>	<u>392,438</u>