

This time last year my report was all about the rapid changes forced upon us by Covid and how, under intense pressure, we had rebuilt our service and its management into an online organisation. Towards the end of the year, we were approached by a local Primary Care Network to provide paid counsellors for their network. The time scale they envisaged was horrendously short, but as this project fitted in with our ambition to get paid work for our alumni we pulled out all the stops and had our side of the deal sorted in record time. To our dismay our “partners” missed deadline after deadline and in the end it turned out that we were caught in the middle of inter-NHS rivalry - and all our hard work came to nothing. I guess that in order to pull off a princely partnership, first you have to kiss a lot of frogs! We still would like to get work for our alumni, and work more closely with our NHS colleagues but we need to be more aware of the politics of the local NHS to avoid being caught in this way again.

It was a relief to get back to our basic service and the major issue to address was (and still is!) how quickly we should get back to face to face. Our previous base, the 3rd Age Centre, had folded; Covid seems to speed up change that probably would have happened anyway. This helped with our cost pressures but left us with the “problem” of searching for new premises. Like many Covid problems this can be made to work to our advantage. With the uncertainties over how quickly we should get back to “normal” we decided to spread the risk by avoiding a single centre in favour of multiple venues, spread across the city and with several different organisations. The process is ongoing and we expect that some venues may be more successful than others - and that we will gradually migrate to these better venues. Clients and counsellors will hopefully benefit by working and attending at a centre local to themselves. Last and not least we may end up not paying for some and possibly all the venues. A big thankyou to Tim Miller and Ed Kennedy who led on the University and NHS sites in this project and of course to Imelda Byrne who has driven this with 15% of appointments now back to face to face, increasing to 30 - 40% by the end of Nov.

Trustee Paul Beard had done sterling work beginning to get our policies and protocols (the things that underpin the organisation and help it remain current, safe and effective) up to date. Sadly he felt he was unable to continue with the amount of work this involved and resigned. We are very grateful for the years’ work he gave us; there is more to be done in this vein and his going made me realise that the rate of change that any organisation undergoes needs to be kept within bearable limits and I deliberately took my foot off the pedal to give us a breather amidst the unavoidable pressures of Covid. That said we are extremely lucky to be able to welcome back Melani Morgan to share the load, and continue our pursuit of excellence, albeit at a less intense rate. Melani is a national expert on the treatment and support required by victims/survivors of Domestic Abuse, has huge experience of charity work in general and a particular interest in training. She has taken the lead on this latter area and is developing a training scheme informed by a needs analysis of counsellors, supervisors and trustees. This is a really exciting appointment for the charity.

Financially we obtained 1 major and three minor grants, and with the demise of the 3rd Age centre we had no accommodation costs at all. We are thus in the fortunate position that we need no further grants to remain solvent at the moment and indeed have a current reserve of over 50% of our projected expenditure and a decent projected income from client donations (although still short of target). It has been our ambition to remain self-funding as far as possible, but it is likely that we will require to once more seek grants in 2022, and once our reserves fall to less than 50% of required

income these will be easier to obtain. My thanks to Cathy Jones who continues to handle the finances, budgets and reporting with superb efficiency.

It is now a year since the Co-ordinator's role was divided in two and we welcomed Liz Rose on board to help Imelda. Liz has enabled Imelda to concentrate on developing the service and one major success has been the implementation and general acceptance of CORE 10 assessments. Not only is this contributing towards initial understanding of client's problems, but it is demonstrating to both us and outside agencies that our work has objective as well as subjective improved outcomes. The newsletter is also a big success, making an invaluable contribution to our stated ambition of further developing a team spirit throughout the organisation. Thank you again Imelda. Counsellor recruitment continues to be a issue with perhaps more turnover than pre-Covid due to general stress and illness - but we continue to have far more applications than we can accept. Perhaps the biggest issue is the business systems. As noted last year we have migrated from an entirely paper-based system to a rather ad hoc set of online forms. A dedicated data base that tied all our administrative processes together would be the logical next step and would save a huge amount of Imelda's time. Off the peg solutions have been tried and rejected as being inappropriate or too expensive - and resolving this remains a key objective.

Last but not least, Liz Rose, Jo Heap (one of our wonderful supervisors) and Imelda took part in the great South Run and have raised £500. Well done, we applaud you - not only for the run but also showing the rest of us what can be done on the fund raising front. £500 will pay for 36 appointments or 6 complete courses of counselling, and the same amount of money would fund only 4 appointments in a typical NHS or large charity organisation. We should all be proud of this difference, and the fact that Life Changes has come through Covid in good shape to continue our service for the foreseeable future.

The Trustees confirm that they have followed the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and that they have conducted the affairs of Life Changes in accordance with its aim to benefit the public. Amidst all the uncertainty one thing shines clear - there will never be a time when services such as Life Changes Counselling are more needed. Keep it up!

Life Changes Counselling

Registered Charity No. 1114553

Company Limited by Guarantee No. 05750613

Registered Office: Lands End House, Lands End Road, Southampton SO31 8DN

Accounts for the year to 31st March 2021

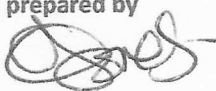
Income and Expenditure Account	2020/21	2019/20
Income	£	£
Unrestricted donations	16,877	21,525
Restricted donations Southampton Community Chest Fund	2,500	-
Individual donations Southampton Primary Care (SPC)	1,896	-
Individual donations TNL Covid response	9,999	-
Individual donations Other	-	5,314
Interest & faster payment	-	27
Total	31,273	26,866
 Expenditure		
SPC specific	1,896	-
TNL specific	9,999	-
Room Hire	-	9,106
Supervision	4,711	7,345
Operating/Admin. Expenses	-	1,347
Operations	274	-
Stationery	148	-
Legal	486	-
Registrations	293	-
Co-ordinator	10,505	11,152
Insurance (PI)	849	804
DBS	174	100
Web site	781	354
Telephony	197	204
Subscriptions	-	1,382
Total	30,314	31,794
 Net movement in year	959	- 4,928
 Opening Bank Balance	29,451	34,379
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Closing Balance	30,409	29,451
 Cash at Lloyds Bank	30,410	29,451

The above accounts have been independently examined and found to be in accordance with the books and records of the Life Changes Counselling Charity.

Accounts prepared by

Catherine Jones

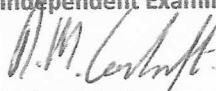
Date


10/8/21.

Independent Examiner

Richard Cockroft

Date


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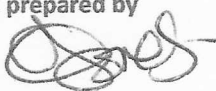
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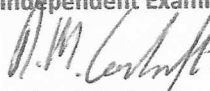
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