



**The Local Carers Network**

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Charity Number: 1155280

Company Number: CE000647

Annual Trustees' Report and Financial Review

For the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

## Reference and Administrative Details

Registered Address:

The Welcome Centre

43 Hamilton Street

Birkenhead

Merseyside

CH41 5AA

Contact Details:

Email: [support@tlcnetwork.co.uk](mailto:support@tlcnetwork.co.uk)

Telephone: 0151 647 9584

Bankers:

Barclays Bank, Liscard Branch, Wallasey

Trustees serving during the year:

- Laura Carman – Chair
- Louise Reecejones – Secretary and Founder Trustee
- Selena Chisholm – Trustee

## Structure, Governance and Management

The Local Carers Network is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The charity is governed by its Constitution and managed by a Board of Trustees. Trustees are appointed in accordance with the governing document and are responsible for strategic direction, financial oversight and regulatory compliance.

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

## Objectives and Activities

The charity exists to improve the lives of individuals with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families.

The charity achieves its objectives by:

- Providing independent advocacy support.
- Offering family support and practical guidance.
- Operating a Direct Payments Hub.
- Supporting Deaf families and raising awareness.
- Delivering training and development programmes.

## Achievements and Performance

2024–2025 has been a year of growth, stability and strengthened financial resilience. Demand for SEND advocacy and family crisis intervention has continued to increase. The charity expanded responsibly and delivered measurable impact across the region.

Key highlights include:

- Continued 100% tribunal success rate in supported cases.
- Growth of Direct Payments Hub services.
- Expanded reach across Merseyside and Cheshire.
- Increased safeguarding referrals and crisis interventions.

## Safeguarding Statement

The Local Carers Network is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is central to our organisational culture and underpins all service delivery.

We maintain robust safeguarding policies and procedures for both children and adults at risk. These policies are reviewed regularly in line with statutory guidance, including *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and the Care Act 2014 safeguarding duties.

All staff, trustees and volunteers:

- Undertake mandatory safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- Receive regular safeguarding updates and refresher training.
- Are subject to full Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to commencing regulated activity.
- Adhere to our Code of Conduct and professional boundaries policy.

The organisation operates safer recruitment procedures, including structured interviews, identity verification, reference checks and safeguarding suitability assessments.

A designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead are appointed to oversee safeguarding practice, manage referrals and liaise with local authorities, police and partner agencies where required. Clear reporting pathways are in place to ensure that concerns are escalated promptly and appropriately.

In addition, the charity maintains:

- A comprehensive Adult Safeguarding Policy
- A Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- A Whistleblowing Policy
- A Safer Recruitment Policy
- A Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
- Risk assessment procedures for all activities and premises

The Local Carers Network is committed to equality and inclusion. We actively promote a culture of dignity, respect and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that individuals are safeguarded from harm regardless of disability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

We foster a culture of openness and transparency, encouraging individuals to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. Safeguarding responsibilities are understood at every level of the organisation, and Trustees provide active oversight of safeguarding governance.

## Financial Review 2024–2025

Total Income: £73,578.26

Total Expenditure: £60,795.05

Surplus for the Year: £12,783.21

Opening Balance: £51,932.28

Closing Cash Balance: £51,607.34

The Trustees are satisfied that the charity remains financially stable, with appropriate reserves in place to ensure continued service delivery. Income streams remain diversified across provision services, local authority funding and small-scale fundraising activity.

The surplus generated during the year strengthens the charity's reserves position and ensures sustainability amid increasing demand.

## Reserves Policy

The Trustees maintain reserves to ensure continuity of services in the event of unforeseen financial pressures. The current level of reserves is considered appropriate to meet operational needs and contractual obligations.

## Trustees' Responsibilities Statement

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards. The Trustees confirm that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity.

## Chair of Trustees' Statement

### Laura Carman – Chair

It is my privilege, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, to present the Annual Trustees' Report of The Local Carers Network for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

This year has been one of continued growth, strengthened governance and increased demand for our services. Families of children and adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) continue to face complex and often overwhelming challenges. Against this backdrop, The Local Carers Network has remained steadfast in its

commitment to providing independent advocacy, practical support and meaningful intervention at times of crisis.

Demand for tribunal advocacy, direct payments support and family safeguarding intervention has increased significantly. I am proud to report that the charity has responded responsibly and sustainably, maintaining high-quality provision while strengthening its financial resilience. Our surplus this year reflects careful stewardship of resources and a clear strategic focus on long-term sustainability.

The Trustees have maintained strong oversight of governance, safeguarding and financial management throughout the year. We have continued to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and have had due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. Safeguarding remains central to our work, and we are confident that robust procedures and training standards are embedded across the organisation.

I would like to place on record my sincere gratitude for the endless hard work, dedication and commitment shown by our volunteers. Their generosity of time, lived experience, empathy and professionalism underpins everything we do. Many of our volunteers support families through highly emotional and complex situations, often going far beyond what is expected. Their contribution is invaluable, and the impact they make within our community cannot be overstated.

The dedication of our staff and volunteers continues to be the driving force behind our impact. Together, they ensure that families who often feel unheard and unsupported are empowered, informed and protected.

Looking ahead, the landscape for SEND families remains challenging. However, the Trustees are confident that The Local Carers Network is well-positioned to continue delivering essential support, advocating for systemic change, and strengthening community resilience.

On behalf of the Board, I extend my sincere thanks to our staff, volunteers, funders and supporters. Your commitment enables this charity to continue making a measurable and meaningful difference.

Laura Carman

Chair of Trustees  
The Local Carers Network

## Financial Overview 2024-2025

Category	Amount (£)
Total Income	73,578.26
Total Expenditure	60,795.05
Surplus	12,783.21
Opening Balance	51,932.28
Closing Cash Balance	51,607.34

## Income Breakdown

Source	Amount (£)
Fundraising	84.06
Interest	230.98
Over 18 Day Provision	47,997.58
Refund	649.12
Sensory Sales	1,357.44
Stock Sales	265.00
Under 18 DP Provision	2,994.08
Wirral Council Household Fund	20,000.00
Total Income	73,578.26

## Expenditure Breakdown

Category	Amount (£)
Administration	16,870.30
Audit & Accountancy	453.60
Direct Expenses	600.00
Direct Wages	14,511.00
Electricity	7,580.00
General Expenses	386.71

Insurance	6,372.84
IT Software	1,629.04
Misc Expense	382.11
Premises Rent	8,153.47
Staff Training	1,950.00
Telephone & Internet	1,092.86
Waste Disposal	813.12
Total Expenses	60,795.05

### Independent Examination

The Trustees confirm that the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 have been independently examined by **Ms C Jones FCCA**, a qualified Chartered Certified Accountant.

Ms Jones holds Fellowship status with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (FCCA) and has the requisite professional qualification and experience to carry out an independent examination in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.

The independent examination has been conducted in accordance with the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission. The examiner has reported that nothing has come to her attention which gives cause to believe that proper accounting records have not been kept, or that the accounts do not accord with those records.

The Trustees are satisfied that the accounts present a true and fair view of the charity's financial position for the year ended 31 March 2025.