

## ACFA Trustee Annual Report

April 2022 – March 2023

Trustees at period ending 31/03/2023

Katherine Tanko – Trustee and Chair (appointed 05.09.2022)

Karen Bowers – Trustee and Vice Chair (appointed 05.12.2022)

Alice Tibbert – Trustee and Secretary (appointed 05.09.2022)

Dr Robert France – Trustee and Treasurer (appointed 05.09.2022)

Frances Begley - Trustee

Michael Harris – Trustee

William Cotterill – Trustee (appointed 05.12.2022)

### Governing Document

ACFA: The Advice Network is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It was established on 19.12.2019 under a constitution which established the objects, powers and governance of the charity.

### Trustee Induction

Trustees who are currently in post are already familiar with the practical work of the charity having been working for a member organisation. They therefore possess familiarity with the advice sector locally and/or nationally. Additionally, all new trustees will be provided with a copy of the constitution of the CIO, a strategic plan and previous minutes of trustee meetings. All trustees are encouraged to attend training related to the obligations and responsibilities of charity trustees.

### Organisational Structure

ACFA: The Advice Network has a trustee board (as of 31.03.2023) of 7 members who meet quarterly and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. Membership of the CIO is open to anyone who is interested in furthering its purposes. Usually, membership is sought by advice giving agencies working in Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) and Bath and Northeast Somerset. There are two categories of membership: Full membership is for non-statutory, not for profit organisations who provide free social welfare

advice and information – for example, advice centres, law centres and Citizens Advice services. Full members receive all member benefits and have the right to vote on ACFA business or policy, such as at ACFA meetings and at our AGM. Affiliate membership is for statutory services, private companies, educational establishments, housing associations who provide free social welfare advice and information. For example, local authority services, private practice and university student advice etc. Affiliate members receive all member benefits but do not have the right to vote on ACFA business or policy, such as at ACFA meetings and at our AGM.

## Risk Management

The Trustee Board has conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Significant external risks to sustainability have led to the development of a strategic plan that considers options for development and diversification. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of transactions and projects.

The charities purpose is set out in the objects of the organisations constitution:

The promotion of the voluntary advice service sector in Bristol and the surrounding areas for the public benefit by:

- Supporting advice service organisations;
- Encouraging closer working relationship amongst all advice providing organisations;
- Sharing information with members and providing training on a range of issues including technical updates and wider social policy issues;
- Representing the advice sector in Bristol and the surrounding areas to external bodies and in both local and national issues.

## The focus of our work

ACFA is not just for specialist organisations that provide advice to the public on social welfare law issues; it is for all voluntary sector and community organisations that provide advice, information and/or support. We are keen to ensure that organisations work together effectively to ensure people get the help they need, when they need it. Our mission is to work in partnership to combat poverty and promote social justice by improving the quality & provision of free, independent advice. ACFA supports advice agencies based in and around Bristol who provide free, independent and confidential advice services. Individually and collectively, ACFA members will be more effective and efficient in order to provide great advice services.

ACFA has five key priorities that have guided its activity throughout the year:

One: Voice

We represent and express the collective views and opinions of the advice sector on matters that are important to them and promote the advice sector to a wide audience.

#### Two: Sustainability

We work towards ensuring that the advice sector and ACFA enjoy a sustainable future.

#### Three: Partnership

We encourage and facilitate a collaborative and strategic approach to the funding and delivery of advice services and provide a platform for sharing best practice, exchanging information, knowledge and experience.

#### Four: Evidence

We facilitate the collating of evidence which illustrates the impact advice has on the communities we serve and the social policy issues the sector has identified through its work.

#### Five: Support

We provide resources and services that help member agencies deliver high quality advice services, and enable sector wide support for common goals.

### Main Achievements of 2022/23

After a long period of online members meeting (in response to COVID restrictions), we were able to begin meeting in person together, a great opportunity to network and catch up on organisational changes. Most organisational changes included a number of staffing changes at leadership level. These changes also resulted in a significant shift in ACFA Trustee roles, including Chair of Trustees, Steve Woodcock stepping down from his role as Chair/Trustee and Executive Director at St Paul's Advice. Another 3 trustees retired their posts and we undertook recruitment to fill these spaces. The trustees recruited and coopted 5 new trustees and the wider membership appointed specific trustees to designated roles of responsibility at the Annual General Meeting, including Katherine Tanko (Director, North Bristol Advice Centre) to the role of Chair of Trustees.

The Board started to seek income from local funders, in order to commission a strategic lead and some administrative cover for the organisation. Although funding was not secured by the end of the financial year, we have some promising prospects and hope to achieve this goal early in FY24.

### Plans for 2023/24

After a year of focusing on reconnection of advice agencies and assessing our overall post pandemic service deliveries we're looking forward to a year of pursuing more collaborative work. Key objectives for the year ahead include:

- Securing funding for ACFA to commission administrative and strategic support

- Reviewing the ACFA offering and exploring new opportunities for ACFA members including: regular members' meetings, networking opportunities for frontline workers, more shared free and discounted training opportunities etc.
- Exploring the advice sectors alignment with the health sector.
- Having a collective voice and presence at key forums and steering groups.
- Recruit new trustees to the ACFA board to help strengthen the governance of the CIO.

#### Sources of funds

ACFA's income is predominantly self-generated via membership and training fees.

#### Investment Policy

The charity has maintained a prudent amount in its reserves each year and have previously not invested surplus cash. Trustees are currently reviewing whether there are any suitable opportunities for investment of cash balances held.

#### Public Benefit

The Trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the organisation should undertake and confirm that all the organisation's activities are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
ACFA: The Advice Network

No (if any)  
1187070

CC16a



## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01/04/2022	To	Period end date 31/03/2023
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Savings interest	34	-	-	34	1
Easy Fundraising	22	-	-	22	24
Training Income	660	-	-	660	1,120
Membership Fees	1,927	-	-	1,927	2,200
Test Payments	-	-	-	-	3
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>3,349</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>3,349</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Policy Library updates	1,200	-	-	1,200	1,200
Payment Processing charges	101	-	-	101	42
Website Design & Maintenance	1,796	-	-	1,796	5,025
Software	-	-	-	-	264
Training Expenses	1,350	-	-	1,350	1,300
Publicity	-	-	-	-	-
Meeting Costs	719	-	-	719	-
Expenses	33	-	-	33	-
Membership refunds	-	-	-	-	100
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>5,197</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,197</b>	<b>7,931</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>5,197</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,197</b>	<b>7,931</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>- 2,555</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>- 2,555</b>	<b>- 4,582</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>11,135</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,135</b>	<b>15,617</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>8,580</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,580</b>	<b>11,035</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Current Account Balance	914	-	-
	Savings Account Balance	7,666	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>8,580</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		Robert France	29.01.24	
		Katherine Tanko	29.01.21	