

ARMAGH AND DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31 March 2017

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017. The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 4 February 2004. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

Objectives and activities

Objectives

The company's objectives and principal activities are: to ensure individuals do not suffer through lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities; to ensure individuals do not suffer through a lack of knowledge of the services available to them; to ensure individuals do not suffer through an inability to express their needs effectively; and to exercise a responsible influence on the development of social services both locally and nationally.

Values

The company: is committed to a social just, tolerant and pluralist society; is opposed to all forms of discrimination; and is an equal opportunities employer that welcomes the participation of ethnic and religious minorities at all levels of the organisation.

Achievements and performance

The main area of charitable activity is the provision of advice and information either by using the drop-in service, by telephoning through outreach work, via home visitation or through email/letter.

Financial review

There was a continued demand for appointments and telephone helpline advice. Additional funding from Armagh City & District Council and new funding received from Citizens Advice Regional Office have helped to achieve a surplus in 2016. The Trustees with the support of staff and voluntary advisors continued to meet the significant demand for its services.

Principal funding sources

Funds received Armagh City & District Council increased by £11,120 during the year compared with 2016. This was to implement the new welfare reform and universal credit service.

Funds received from Social Health & Social Care Trust remained steady during the year.

New funding of £8,134 was received during 2017 from Citizens Advice Regional Office to provide a money advice service.

Pension Wise monies reduced by £16,344 compared with 2016. Funding for hosting this service ended during 2017.

This led to an overall surplus of £18,872 arising during 2017.

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Expenditure

Expenditure increased by £2,880 compared with 2016.

Staff Training increased by 1,923 compared with 2016. This was to enable implementation of the new welfare reform and universal credit service.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees believe that the charity should hold financial reserves in order to ensure that the charity can continue to operate and meet the needs of clients in the event of unforeseen and potentially financially damaging circumstances arising. The Trustees have determined that the aim should be to have reserves equivalent to three months normal operating expenditure. In setting the reserves target the Trustees have to balance out the demands of delivering much needed services to current clients against the requirements of maintaining adequate reserves to cover future uncertainty.

The trustees believe the additional services the Bureau is being funded to provide will require new members of staff. The current level of reserves will allow the Bureau to invest in new paid members of staff.

Principle Funding Sources

The Trustees extend their gratitude to Armagh City & District Council and the Southern Health & Social Care Trust who continue to support the core operating capacity of the charity. Pension Wise funding helped the charity host pension guidance services. Funding received from Citizens Advice Regional Office will help provide a new money advice service. Funding from Armagh District Safety Partnership and grateful client donations also helped to fund the charity operations.

Plans for future periods

The Bureau plans continuing the activities outlined above in the forthcoming years subject to sufficient funding being made available.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

ARMAGH AND DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31 March 2017

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 1964 . They are 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.

On behalf of the board

Lynd Roper
Trustee

Eamon Donnelly
Trustee