

## Hope 4 U Foundation

### Trustees' Report

The trustees present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023.

#### Objectives and activities

##### *Objects and aims*

The objects of the Foundation are as set out in the trust deed:-

- 1 Assisting people (without prejudice to any) who are in need or are suffering hardship because of their social, personal or economic circumstances including (though not by way of limitation) through :-
  - the provisions of social care, such as advice, counselling and childcare
  - the provision or use of items of basic necessity
  - the provision of help and advice to persons in need in relation to debt and personal financial management, welfare benefits, accommodation and homelessness and similar matters.
  - promoting the preservation and protection of health and particularly (though not by way of limitation) to provide advice and education into the dangers of drug, alcohol or other substance addition or abuse
  - promoting the rehabilitation of persons affected by drug, alcohol or other substance addiction or abuse
  - relieving persons who are experiencing mental or emotional suffering and to relieve distress associated therewith, including by means of providing advice, counsel, assistance and support to such persons
  - the provision of spiritual help, support , advice, education, personal prayer and encouragement in relation to any of the above or otherwise.
- 2 The advancement of the Christian faith including ( though not by the way of limitation) through the provision of places of worship
- 3 The provision of recreational and community facilities in the interests of social welfare and cohesion

##### *Public benefit*

The foundation operates a community Christian Outreach Centre based in the old Courthouse building in Clogher, serving the community of the wider Clogher Valley area. Our core activities during the first two months of the year were

- Providing a community meeting place where locals can relax, enjoy food and social engagement, in a coffee shop environment
- Providing welfare services through the provision of cooked meals at significantly reduced prices to individuals/families in times of crisis and in severe financial need.
- Providing free food to individuals/families in particular times of crisis or need.
- Hosting a fortnightly men's bible study and fellowship group
- Providing a space for young adults (18 +) to socialise in an environment free from alcohol or drugs
- Providing a free parent and toddler group, a club for primary school children and a group for retirees
- Providing pastoral care (and onward referral for professional help/counselling where appropriate) for those suffering from drug and alcohol abuse, relationship breakdown, anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts

The provision of free food/vouchers to individuals/families in need continued to be a very important aspect of the charity's work. The 'cost of living crisis' replaced covid as the key contributory factor to financial hardship

## **Hope 4 U Foundation**

### **Trustees' Report (continued)**

The coffee shop continued to prove a vital neutral space for the local community, both in terms of somewhere to socialise and also acting as an access point to the other services the charity provides. Price rises in the coffee shop were kept to a minimum and the associated costs were absorbed by the charity in an effort to continue to provide reasonably priced food for the local community. This was a deliberate decision by the trustees, as increased prices in the coffee shop would have prevented some families from bringing their children in, which in turn increases social isolation, mental health issues etc

#### **The beneficiaries and how they benefited from the Core activities(as listed above)**

The community meeting space/coffee shop was open on Thursdays and Fridays, and in addition it was manned for a minimum of a further two days per week which enabled the community to access the other services. It continues to be used as a social meeting place by the entire community irrespective of age group, gender, social status or religious background. There is seating capacity for approx. 50 people. It continues to provide the older generation in the local rural community with a neutral meeting place where they can meet up with neighbours and friends in a relaxed atmosphere.

During the year free food and food vouchers to the value of approx. £ 12,000 was distributed to families in need in the local community.

The demand for the in-house professional counselling service remained high. The counsellor had appointments for a full day every week, and later in the year a second counsellor was introduced to handle some of the referrals. Recipients (of all ages) received help with issues such as addictions, anxiety, depression, relationship breakdown and loss. The charity receives counselling referrals through a number of agencies as the waiting times are only a fraction of those in the NHS. A number of different schools(from both sectors) refer children to the counsellors

The new group for retirees launched in 2022, is now well established, with a consistent attendance of 45-50 every month, from all sections of the community. The free 3-course lunch ensures that those who live alone get a nutritious meal, as many of them admit to not cooking much when they live alone. The short programme afterwards helps inform them of important practical issues such as telephone scams, maintaining physical & mental health etc

At Christmas, the charity distributed approx. 50 free hampers in the community, focusing on the elderly, the isolated or those struggling with wider 'life issues'. Some of these were in response to referrals from local Social Workers.

A number of special community events were hosted during the year, this included a free family fun night and the now annual pre-Christmas event called the 'Hope of Christmas'. Both of these events attracted over 350 people from the local community and the fact that everything was free was greatly appreciated by parents who were already feeling the impact of the 'cost of living crisis'.

A new 8 week addiction course was introduced in Q4, for those struggling with alcohol and drug addiction. This provided practical help in identifying, understanding and fighting addiction.

#### **Restrictions on who could benefit**

There were no restrictions as to who could benefit from the charity's services during the year. Promotion of the community food programme was obviously targeted towards lower income families and those in associated financial need, however there were no restrictions as to who could benefit.

#### **Mitigation re harm flowing from Charity's purposes**



## Hope 4 U Foundation

### Trustees' Report (continued)

Our staff are trained and monitored against the food hygiene standards as documented in the 'Safe Catering Plan' published by the Food Standards Agency. This mitigates any potential harm which could arise from the provision of food to the public as part of the Foundation's purposes. Our adherence to these standards is also monitored by the local Environmental Health Dept. Our current food hygiene rating given by Environmental Health following our last inspection was a '5' – the highest rating available.

#### Private benefit


One of the trustees, Len Keys provides management consultancy services to the Foundation on a self-employed basis, and because he is supportive of the objectives of the charity, he provides his services far below commercial rates. The private benefit is only incidental as his services are absolutely vital to the foundation being able to achieve its objectives. He has approx. 20yrs Management experience in various senior roles with a high street bank. The services he provides for the foundation includes: day to day management of staff, payroll, stock control, ordering supplies, managing maintenance of the building & equipment, adherence to food safety & environmental health standards, and ensuring all local authority & regulatory requirements are adhered to. None of the trustees receive any remuneration for the discharge of their duties as trustees.

#### Compliance with the Commission's guidance on public benefit

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year ending 31st Dec 2023, the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 29 October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

  
.....  
Mr Len Keys  
Trustee

  
.....  
Mr Fred Maxwell  
Trustee