



SLIGO

SOCIAL SERVICES

SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Sligo Social Service Council CLG

Registered Office:

Retreat House

Charles Street

Sligo

Company Register Number 140759

Registered Charity Number 20024390

CHY Number 97 31

BANKERS

AIB

Stephen Street

Sligo

Irish Permanent TSB

SOLICITOR

Hegarty & Armstrong

Millennium House

Stephen Street

Sligo

AUDITOR

Gilroy Gannon

25 Stephen Street

Sligo

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Our Vision

To achieve long-term, sustainable improvements in the quality of life of those needing our services and support in the Sligo region, delivered in partnership with statutory agencies and other non-profit organisations, and through the support of our local communities.

To be flexible and innovative in our response to those who are experiencing difficulties in our community, recognising their changing needs and circumstances, in order that they will never find themselves alone and without support.

We work in partnership with a range of other agencies from both the statutory and voluntary sectors to provide targeted interventions in respect of identified needs within Sligo and adjoining areas.

We provide services for older people to enable to remain in their own home, and a number of services to support children and families. We also provide a range of homeless services including emergency accommodation for single adults, short-term family accommodation and Housing Liaison Service for those identified as homeless in Sligo University Hospital. We work with communities, supporting them to identify and find solutions to issues which affect their daily lives.

This year we helped over 1300 people in our services including



22,586 meals were cooked and delivered to older people



91 men and women used our Emergency Homeless Hostel



67 children accessed our childcare services



There were 597 contacts to our Open Access service



350 children received school packs



79 people were supported by our Housing Liaison

A Word From The CEO

2019 was a special year for Sligo Social Services as it was 50 years on from when a small group of people, led by the then, Fr. Christopher Jones came together, to form the organisation. While the 1960s saw the beginning of major social and economic change in Ireland many did not feel the benefit of these changes. Poverty continuing to be prevalent throughout the country. The newly formed Sligo Social Services began providing a meals on wheels service to older people and over time grew to provide a wide range of services to those in need. Over the past five decades we have helped to improve life for tens of thousands of people. In 1969 we believed we could make a difference, and in 2019 we still do.

In looking back on 2019, a number of key developments stand out. We began our new Housing Liaison Service working closely with Sligo University Hospital. This service supports people within the hospital who have been identified as being homeless or having a housing need. Our work with the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme came to its planned conclusion in 2019, having successfully resettled 20 families, 103 Individuals. At the close of the project, families were availing of health and social services and the majority of families expressed their increased feelings of safety, happiness and connectedness in relation to their local area. The aims of this project could not be achieved without the commitment and dedication of a team of voluntary befrienders, who over a 15 month period played a crucial role in empowering families to achieve their identified goals.

Our Open Access service continued to be in high demand, with 587 contacts to the service in 2019. With the support of the FEAD programme we distributed school packs to 350 children. We cooked and distributed 22,586 meals through our meals on wheels service in 2019, a decrease of 704 meals on the previous year. It is a cause of concern for us that a service such as this, which supports older people to remain in their own home, has seen a decrease in referrals, despite the increasing age profile of this demographic and the ongoing pressure on acute medical services.

In 2019 we saw our homeless services busier than ever, with all the homeless emergency beds we had available full on a regular basis. This year also saw us successful in our tender to deliver 'Housing First' for the North West Region – Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal. Housing First is a service model which aims to provide a person sleeping rough, or someone who has been long-term homeless, with their own secure accommodation as well as access to intensive and specialised support services. Housing First is being rolled out nationally and represents a significant moment for us in our development as an organisation as we move from being a local to a regional organisation.

Our Board is committed to maintaining the highest standards of good governance. An independent Board plays a vital role in ensuring we maintain the trust of all our stakeholders. In 2019 The Board of Directors adopted the Charities Regulator, Charities Governance Code. The company is reliant on grants from Government and donations from the public to have sufficient funding to deliver its work. The directors monitor the organisations cash position carefully and strive to maintain sufficient reserves at all times to enable the organisation to continue to operate for at least six months should cash inflows deteriorate for a sustained timeframe.

Like other not for profit organisations, Sligo Social Services must maintain and grow its income sources to ensure the sustainability and continuation of its work and services. Without additional sources of income and people, we run the risk of not being able to meet the need and demand for our services. Fundraising as always remains a challenge. We significantly depend on the generosity of individuals, schools and businesses to support us to sustain our services. We are exceedingly grateful to the many individuals who support our work each year by donating to us, attending our fundraising events or creating their own event in their local communities to support our work.

I would like to thank our statutory funders who supported our work over the course of the year including, the H.S.E. West, Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, Sligo County Council, The North West Regional Drugs Task Force, Tusla Child and Family Agency, and The Office of the Minister for Children. Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund via Department of Justice and Equality, Irish Refugee Protection Programme

My sincere thanks to all our volunteers who give so graciously of their time to Sligo Social Services. We are exceptionally fortunate to have so many committed and dedicated volunteers, without whom we could not provide our services that impact so positively on so many people in our community. I also want to thank all our staff and supporters of for all their hard work and dedication to the organisation.

Thank you.



This year we celebrated



In 1969 a small number of people came together who wanted to make life better for those most in need in Sligo. This led to the creation of Sligo Social Services. Fifty years later Sligo Social Services has been responsible for providing over one million hot meals through our Meals on Wheels service and more than 1,500 children have passed through our childcare services. We provided the first ever service to people who were homeless in Sligo and continue to do so today.

We have supported hundreds of families throughout Sligo and helped to establish many services for families and young people which are today run by other organisations. We have done this only with the phenomenal support of the people of Sligo through the years.

In 2019 we took some time to mark the many people, stories, programmes and achievements which make the organisation what it is today.

In June we held a family fun day which took place in the Peace Park, which despite the rain saw many families come to enjoy the food, games, petting farm and off course Tom and Jerry.



Sligo Social Services have always believed that education plays a central role in reducing the risk of poverty and helping people find a way out of poverty. We have worked with children and families for over forty years preparing children for school and supporting them



Sligo Social Services Art Competition Winning entries

through afterschool's. This year in recognition of our 50th anniversary we decided to engage with schools in a different and creative way. This led us to the Art competition which was open to all primary schools in Sligo town and county. 26 schools participated in the competition with 900 children submitting entries. Our thanks to all the teachers and pupils who took part.

Volunteers and the spirit of volunteerism has always been an integral part of Sligo Social Services. In December we gathered together with our volunteers to acknowledge and thank our hundreds of volunteers for their dedication and commitment to the work of the organisation.



Directors Report

The Directors submit their report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019.

Objectives and Activities

We aim to achieve long-term, sustainable improvements in the quality of life of those needing our services and support in the Sligo region, delivered in partnership with statutory agencies and other non-profit organisations, and through the support of our local communities.

The principal activities of the organisation consist of the provision of services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including homeless hostels for single adults, short-term family accommodation, substance misuse support and housing liaison service. We provide services for older people including a meals on wheels service and a befriending service. Our children and family services include pre-school, after-school, family resettlement and counselling services. We provide targeted community development support, advice and information services and operate a large community employment scheme.

The main areas of attention are the development of the company's existing activities, securing financial and human resources to make these sustainable and achieving the highest standards of corporate governance.

Under the Strategic plan of 2018 – 2022 agreed by the Board our aims include:

- ensuring that those in need in Sligo have access to the support they need when they need it enabling them to live life to the full
- provide services which have a real and positive impact on the lives of our services users while being accountable to Supporters
- improve awareness of the work we do and influence local and national policy
- grow and manage our income ensuring that we can sustain and develop the services needed by our clients

Financial Review, Achievements and Performance

The financial results for the year are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities on page 13 of the financial statements.

Our work in programmes and services continued throughout the year reaching greater numbers of people in 2019.

The Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme came to its planned conclusion in 2019. Our counselling service for young people was increased to allow us to offer a service to all those on our waiting list which we succeeded in doing by the end of the year.

Our Open Access service continued to be in high demand. With the support of the FEAD programme we distributed school packs to 350 children. We distributed 22,586 meals through our meals on wheels service in 2019, this is a decrease of 704 meals on the previous year. It is a cause of concern for Sligo Social Services that a service such as this which supports older people to remain in their own home has seen a decrease in referrals despite the increasing age profile of this demographic and the ongoing pressure on acute medical services.

We saw our homeless services become busier than ever with all homeless emergency beds we had available full on a regular basis. There was a notable increase in the number of women presenting as homeless also this year. Our new housing Liaison service commenced in December 2018, and 2019 saw the Housing Liaison Worker support 79 people who were in Sligo University Hospital and had been identified as being homeless or having a housing need.

2019 saw us successful in our tender to deliver 'Housing First' for the North West Region – Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal. Housing First is a service model which aims to provide a person sleeping rough, or someone who has been long-term homeless, with their own secure accommodation as well as access to intensive and specialised support services. Housing First is being rolled out nationally and it is a significant moment for us as an organisation as we will move from being a local to a regional organisation.

Directors Report continued

Income generation is an important feature of Sligo Social Services work as we significantly depend on individual and corporate support to sustain our services. In particular our Thrift shop contributes considerably to our income and also makes a contribution to the community within which it is based.

In common with not for profit organisations, the organisation must maintain and grow its income sources to ensure the sustainability and continuation of its work and services. In order to sustain and grow the organisation the directors review the sources of income on an ongoing basis and monitor the reserve levels to ensure that they are maintained at a reasonable level in the context of planned expenditure and future commitments. Income generated from fundraising has declined over recent years and in July 2019 the Board approved further investment in the Fundraising team as part of a plan to grow this income. The Board also committed to review the fundraising programme in 2020.

The Board has implemented a reserves policy which is reviewed on an annual basis. Currently that policy is to create and maintain reserves equivalent to a minimum of six months.

Volunteers continue to play a key role in the organisations work. These volunteers provided a range of help including:

Delivering services including:

Meals on Wheels

Advice and Information Services

Homeless Services

Befriending

Assisting bucket collections

Helping out working in our thrift shop

Structure, Governance and Management Structure

Sligo Social Service Council Company Limited by Guarantee ('Sligo Social Services') is an Irish company incorporated under the Companies Act 2014. It is a company limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is governed by a memorandum and articles of association, which were last amended at the Extraordinary General Meeting on 30th August 2016. Sligo Social Services is a public benefit entity - the benefit we provide is demonstrated through our work with individuals, children, families and communities.

Governance

The Board of Directors of Sligo Social Services is committed to maintaining high standards of corporate governance. Sligo Social Services prepares an annual report and financial statements and makes them available to the public on our website. Members of the Board are elected by the members of Sligo Social Services at the Annual General Meeting and, subject to early retirement, serve for a four-year term which may be renewed once (a total of eight years). The Board has the power to appoint directors in the interim until the next Annual General Meeting.

When recruiting new directors, the Board aims to attract a diverse range of candidates with the skills Sligo Social Service's needs. The Board give their time to Sligo Social Services on a voluntary basis and receive no remuneration. Out-of-pocket expenses may be reimbursed. All new directors are required to go through an induction process, which includes coverage of the aims of Sligo Social Services and how they are being fulfilled, the role and duties of the directors, and financial and risk management. Directors meet with the Chief Executive (CEO). When required, further training is arranged for individual directors or for the Board as a whole.

The Board ensure that the activities of Sligo Social Services are consistent with its charitable objectives and aims.

Directors Report continued

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

The role of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee is to keep under review the adequacy, scope and effectiveness of the internal control systems of Sligo Social Services. The Committee have oversight of the external audit process and they review the findings of internal audits carried out by external consultants (on behalf of funders). This Committee consists of three Board members. The CEO is in attendance along with required members of the Executive Management Team.

During 2019 the items reviewed and approved by the audit committee included the registration of the Company on the Register of Beneficial Ownership and the tendering for auditing services.

Board Recruitment

When recruiting new directors to the Board, the Board aims to attract a diverse range of candidates with the skills Sligo Social Service needs. When vacancies arise the Board identifies the skills, experience and knowledge required from the new Board member by considering the collective skill profile of the current Board. Recommendations will be made to the Board. Potential candidates are identified through a number of channels including from members and from the non-board members.

Training & Induction

All new directors are required to go through an induction process, which includes coverage of the aims of Sligo Social Services and how they are being fulfilled; the role and duties of the directors; and financial and risk management.

Directors meet with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), managers and other staff. All new directors are encouraged to visit one of our projects in order to gain a better understanding of the services Sligo Social Services provides. When required, further training is arranged for individual directors or for the Board as a whole.

Conflicts of Interest

Sligo Social Services has a Conflicts of Interest policy in place for all Board members, which was reviewed and updated in 2019. The Board make annual declarations of conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were declared in 2019.

Protected Disclosures

Sligo Social Services has a protected disclosures policy in place to promote the disclosure of information relating to wrong-doing in the workplace. The policy offers protection for workers from penalisation in circumstances where they make a protected disclosure “whistle blow” about concerns they may have about work, standards of practice or other areas of malpractice, dangerous, illegal or improper activity. No disclosures were made during 2019.

Decision Making

The Board ensure that the activities of Sligo Social Services are consistent with its charitable objectives and aims. There are clear distinctions between the roles of the Board of Directors and the Executive Management Team, to which day-to-day management is delegated. Matters such as policy, strategic planning, and budgets are drafted by the Management Team for consideration and approval by the Board, who then monitor the implementation of these plans. The Executive Management Team are the Key Management Personnel of Sligo Social Services.

In December 2019, the Board carried out a self-assessment of its role and effectiveness – following on from this assessment it was agreed that the Board should have an external evaluation every three years and that more project visits are needed to build on the Boards understanding of the work of Sligo Social Services.

Directors Report continued

Standards

The Board of Directors of Sligo Social Services is committed to maintaining high standards of corporate governance. In 2019 Sligo Social Services Board adopted the Charities Regulator, Charities Governance Code. In addition, Sligo Social Services prepares an annual report and financial statements in full compliance with the Charities SORP (Statement of Reporting Practice under FRS102) each year and makes them available to the public on our website.

Board meets ten times a year. Attendance was as follows:

NAME	MEETING ATTENDANCE 2019
Pat Forde	9/10
Barry MacMahon	9/10
Pat McCaffrey	9/10
Mary Harkin	6/10
Johnny Watters (resigned April 2019)	3/4
Dan Scannell	7/10
Orla Barry	4/10
Fr. Michael Drumm	8/10
Frank Murphy	10/10
Liam McGurrin	8/10
Maeliosa O'Brien (appointed October 2019)	1/1

Directors and Secretary

The names of the individuals who were directors at any time during the year ended 31 December 2019 are set out below.

All directors served for the entire year unless otherwise stated.

Pat Forde

Pat Mc Caffrey

Barry MacMahon

Orla Barry

Dan Scannell

Frank Murphy

Mary Harkin

Johnny Watters (resigned April 2019)

Liam McGurrin

Maeliosa O'Brien (appointed October 2019)

Company Secretary

Barry MacMahon

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

Business risks and mitigating actions are regularly scrutinised by the Board and management team. The principal risks identified that could have a serious impact on performance are:

Financial Risk

The organisation has budgetary and financial reporting procedures, supported by appropriate key performance indicators, to manage credit, liquidity and other financial risk. All key financial indicators are monitored on an on-going basis.

Insufficient Funding

The company is reliant on grants from Government and donations from the public to have sufficient funding to deliver its work. The directors monitor the organisations cash position carefully and strive to maintain sufficient reserves at all times to enable the organisation to continue to operate for at least six months should cash inflows deteriorate for a sustained timeframe.

Going Concern

The directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual financial statements. Further details concerning the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in note 3 to the financial statements.

Events Subsequent to the Financial Year End

Aside from the ongoing COVID-19 situation, there have been no significant events affecting the company since the year end.

Directors Report continued

Accounting Records

The measures that the directors have taken to secure compliance with the requirements of Sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014 with regard to the keeping of the accounting records are the employment of appropriately qualified accounting personnel and the maintenance of computerised accounting systems. The company's accounting records are maintained at the company's Registered office at, Retreat House, Charles Street, Sligo.

Statement of Relevant Audit Information

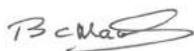
In the case of each of the persons who are directors at the time his report is approved in accordance with Section 332 of the Companies Act 2014:

So far as each director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the statutory auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps he or she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's statutory auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

Gilroy Gannon, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm, have expressed their willingness to be re-appointed in accordance with Section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014.

Signed on behalf of the Board on 17th April 2020



Barry MacMahon
Director



Pat Forde
Director

Updated Going Concern Disclosure – Note 3 (n) to Financial
Statements



Children and Families



Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme

The Sligo Refugee Resettlement Support Project resettled 20 Families, 103 Individuals, in County Sligo between September 2017 and March 2019. An interagency approach ensured that all individuals were provided with access to practical supports and universal services in order to assist their transition into their new home. Following this a focus is placed on opportunities for pro-social integration in their local area with the aim of empowering project participants to live Independent and fulfilled lives in County Sligo.

At the close of the project families were availing of health and social services, felt that their house was physically acceptable and was being maintained in good condition. Families had a good understanding of the supports available to them and where they could go if they needed assistance. All have families reported their satisfaction in their treatment during engagement with public services. The only issue reported is if or when interpretation is not available at public services appointments.

By the end of the Resettlement Project many of the Adult Syrian Refugees who had gained increased command of the English Language by attending classes provided by the Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education Board, had become volunteers in their local community and provided spectacular food for Sligo events such as the Cairde Festival. Before winding up in March 2019 individual learning plans for school children were prepared in partnership with schools to ensure the continuous meeting of educational needs following the end of the Resettlement programme and withdrawal of English Language support provided by the programme.

Overall the resettlement worker noted an increased independence and capacity of all families resettled in Sligo. 18 of the families had their own transport by project end. 80 percent of families articulated their increased feelings of safety, happiness and connectedness in relation to their local area. All families reported a significant increase in their ability to resolve problems in an efficient and effective manner and demonstrated an increased understanding of the function and workings of different services in their local area. The aims of the project could not be achieved without the commitment and dedication of a team of voluntary befrienders who over the course of the last 15 months have played a crucial role in empowering families to achieve their identified goals.

Childcare

Sligo Social Services offers a number of community-based childcare services including early year's childcare and afterschool's. All services are provided by fully qualified and experienced staff. Our early years' service offers a range of activities, opportunities and experiences that will enable all children who attend, to develop skills, confidence and independence, ensuring a positive transition to Primary School. Where a need is identified, staff make referrals to outside agencies such as speech and language therapists, PHN's and Child Protection.

The Early Years Inspectorate of Tusla has full responsibility of inspecting preschools and this in turn promotes a very high standard/quality of practice within the service. We are guided by Aistear (The National Curriculum framework for Early Childhood Education) and Siolta (The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education) in our practice re: learning and development of the child.

Sligo Social Services, provide two afterschool's in partnership with Cranmore/Abbey quarter Community Centre, and St. Edwards School Ballytivnan. Children receive support and encouragement in doing their homework, within safe, friendly environments. The children also receive a meal and have a wide range of activities to take part in once their homework is complete. These activities are based around sport, music, arts and crafts and play outside. The afterschool also runs activities during out of school periods within the academic year and offers Summer Activities in July.

Counselling Service

Sligo Social Services offers a counselling service to young people. The service is supported by Tusla and Foroige who provide a space for the counsellor to see young people on a one: one basis. This is a very limited service with 13hrs per week available. At present the counselling service is delivered entirely through one: one counselling sessions. After its establishment in March 2018 the service very quickly developed a lengthy waiting list with the number of young people referred to the service reaching 50 in its first nine months. In the absence of any additional funding to expand the service in November 2018 a decision was made not to accept any further referrals until the young people on the waiting list had been offered a service.

In 2019 a small amount of additional funding was available from Tusla which allowed us provide the counselling service for 17hrs per week. In November 2019 the service had been able to offer a service to all who had remained on our waiting list and was able to reopen for new referrals. At the end of December 2019 the service will once again reduce down to 13 hrs per week.

Out of Home



Sligo Social Services provides a number of services for people who are homeless or in housing need including:

1. Accommodation Services including short-term and emergency accommodation services ;
 - Maryville Emergency Hostel
 - Ballytivnan Short-term Accommodation,
 - McAuley House Short-term Accommodation
2. Substance Misuse Support Worker
3. Housing Liaison Worker

Maryville Emergency Accommodation

Maryville Hostel provides emergency accommodation to single adults, men and women, who have been assessed by Sligo County Council as homeless. Every service user is allocated a keyworker to support them to identify and address issues which have contributed to their becoming homeless. Each person is helped to link with other services they may need in order to improve their quality of life, such as addiction counselling, mental health supports, health related services, resettlement, and education & training courses.

In 2019, 98 adults; 71 men and 27 women presented as homeless, this was a very slight increase (4) on last year. However it is notable that women represent 28% of the total individuals presenting in 2019 an increase of 10% on 2018.

2019 saw rented accommodation being in extremely short supply with rents always outside the HAP limits available to clients. The net result being greater difficulty for service users accessing move on accommodation. On many occasions the emergency hostel was full to capacity and all services had to work in partnership to ensure that resources were maximised to ensure emergency beds continued to be available.

Clients who seek a service out of hours present directly to Sligo Social Services Emergency Service. They will receive a service for the night and present to the Local Authority the following day for assessment. 25% of those who accessed the service were assessed by the Local Authority as not having a center or interest and therefore would not receive housing supports in the area. A further 16% of clients returned to family or friends. 7% moved to external short-term accommodation (often to make beds emergency beds available), while a further 17% moved to permanent housing.

Similar to the previous year 2019 saw rented accommodation being in extremely short supply with rents significantly outside the HAPM limits available to clients. The net result being greater difficulty for service users accessing move on accommodation. On many occasions the emergency hostel was full to capacity and all services had to work in partnership to ensure that resources were maximised to ensure emergency beds continued to be available.

We continued to face the ongoing challenge of working in an older building which required considerable upgrading. In 2019 we were very fortunate to receive significant support from local business AbbVie who carried out major refurbishment projects in Maryville which included :

- Complete refurbishment of the sitting room, including installing a solid fuel stove which is both safer and more energy efficient, replacement of all furniture and TV, new flooring and painting and decorating the room
- Refurbishment of bathrooms
- Installation of electric water boiler in the kitchen



Maryville sitting room before work



Maryville sitting room after work completed



Mc Auley House Short-Term Housing

McAuley House offers four self-contained apartments, one and two bedroom units, which provide excellent quality short-term accommodation for up to four families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The service also provides one: one support to families to help them to build their capacity in areas which are likely to cause difficulties in their family and their future accommodation. Families remain in the service for up to a maximum of twelve months. During 2019, 5 families accessed the service. One family moved on to permanent housing in 2019. Securing housing for families in 2019 has been extremely difficult.

Ballytivnan Short-Term Accommodation

This service provides short-term accommodation with support for five single men who have been identified as needing more intensive support before they move on to live independently in the community. Staff are not on site all the time rather staff visit the project daily to meet with clients for informal contact and to carry out key-working sessions. In 2019, 8 individual clients accessed

Housing Liaison Service

In December 2018 Sligo Social Services began to oversee the delivery of an advice and assessment service for people who are in acute medical services and are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This role is funded by the HSE and the worker engages with service users to ensure the housing needs of people in acute medical services are identified and met. The Housing Liaison Worker works closely with hospital services, homeless service providers, housing providers and support agencies ensuring that service users housing and support needs are assessed and met in line with the homelessness legislation and statutory guidance. The Housing Liaison worker works with patients who are in hospital and have an identified housing issue and/or are at risk of becoming homeless.

In 2019, the HLW worked with 79 persons, of which 70% were Male and 30% were Female. While many of those whom accessed the service did not have an address or were/had accessed emergency homeless accommodation approx. 40% of those supported were in insecure housing situations and in our experience we believe it would have been unlikely that they would have engaged with traditional homeless services.

Substance Misuse Support

The Substance Misuse service complements and enhances existing treatment and recovery services in Sligo, targeting and engaging with service users through the delivery of an outreach based harm reduction and support service to drug and/or alcohol users in Sligo. The service aims to improve the individual's overall health and help clients to engage in and sustain rehabilitation, by supporting them in accessing mainstream services and specialist rehabilitation services and by focusing on contributory factors that impact on personal health status such as mental health, diet and nutrition, stress management, employment status and living conditions. The service operates in Sligo town 4 days per week and provides a satellite clinic in Tubbercurry one day per week. In 2019, the Substance Misuse worker worked with 56 service users, 43 male and 13 female. 54% of services users were receiving support regarding their alcohol use while 38% were receiving support regarding their misuse of drugs. A number of service users also were being supported regarding the addiction of a family member. The majority of service users were actively engaged in substance misuse (72%) and as such much of the work related to reducing harm and working towards stabilisation and recovery.

Community Services



Open Access

Sligo Social Services provides an Open Access service which assists families and individuals with advice, information regarding entitlements and welfare issues. This service operates on a walk in basis four afternoons per week and offers:

- Crisis intervention to service users, undertaking initial assessment, offering support and taking appropriate action in response to their immediate circumstances/difficulties
- Advice, information and advocacy, assist in accessing rights, entitlements and services if necessary assistance to service users in identifying and addressing contributory causes of their difficulties and obstacles to addressing these difficulties and assists them in finding appropriate solutions
- Supporting service users in accessing and integrating into the facilities and services of their local community.

The service is provided by a committed team of volunteers. In 2019, a total of 327 individuals availed of the Open Access Service, in total this resulted in 587 contacts with the service. While there was a small decrease in the number of individuals (24), who presented in 2019 compared with 2018, there was a considerable decrease (15%) on recurring presentations in 2019 when compared to the previous year.

A very high percentage (91%) of the 587 contacts were seeking material aid i.e. food which we receive through the FEAD programme and donations or a food voucher. Christmas is always a time of greater need for families and in 2019 175 families/individuals received material aid at Christmas, this included assistance with food and with toys.

In 2019 the FEAD programme also provided School Packs for distribution through our services. A total of 350 children received packs.

Managing finances and exploring budget plans is an area staff are continuously working on with service users in order for them to manage their finances better. Some of the other issues service users also presented with included difficulties relating to their rights and entitlements, mental health, addiction and domestic abuse issues. Advice, information and signposting to other services was also provided by the Open Access team regarding these issues.

New Ballytivnan Community Hub

In 2018 Sligo Social Services identified the need to provide services in the New Ballytivnan area of Sligo. In May 2018 we opened an Afterschool in St. Edwards School. In addition Sligo Social Services committed to supporting a Pilot Project to establish a Community Hub in the New Ballytivnan area.

The Aim of this Hub will be to provide a focal point and facilities to foster greater local community activity and bring residents, and other service providers in the area together to improve the quality of life in their areas. A part time community worker is employed whose role it is to build relationships with organisations and residents. An ongoing challenge has been the absence of a suitable and available

venue to operate from. Unfortunately there is no community centre. Highlights of our work in Ballytivnan in 2019 included:

- Working with Sligo Leader Partnership, Ballytivnan Community Partnership, St Edwards NS and Northside Community Partnership in organising community meetings in order to support the community in taking an active role in the development of much needed services in the Ballytivnan area.
- St. Edwards School has continued to show its huge commitment to children and families in the area by making space available for the establishment of a parent and toddlers group. This group meets weekly in St. Edwards School and is facilitated by the Sligo Social Services Community Worker with support from Lifestart Family Support staff.
- Working with other organisations to organise a number of activities for children and families including a Family Fun day during the summer holidays and a Christmas party which took place in St Joseph's church hall.
- Pobal funding was sourced through the CYPSC Healthy and Active working group to deliver a community cookery course to Ballytivnan and surrounding areas. Collaboration has taken place with Ballytivnan Community Partnership, SLETB, YAPS, Northside Community Partnership, and Diversity Sligo in order to deliver this training to a diverse population over 2020/21.
- Our work also saw us work closely with Ballytivnan Community Partnership in sourcing funding to plant raised beds for the green area in Ballytivnan. This work was completed by Sligo Men's Shed and is being followed up this year with workshops in gardening and bio-diversity for the community.

Despite our effort to secure a premises in the area to date this has been unsuccessful however 2019 ended on a positive note in the ETB offering us the opportunity of weekly access to a space which they have available. This will allow us to provide a weekly advice and information clinic to the local community in their local community.

Services to Older People



Ireland has an ageing population with the proportion of the population over 65 years is increasing. There is significant variation among counties in the proportion of the population over 65 years, but all counties in the West of Ireland have more people in this category (16.2% in Sligo) than the Rest of State (13.0%).

Some of the most significant change in population structure is occurring among the 'older old', those in the 80+ year's category, with increased longevity and ageing of the older population. Some 3.7% of the Western Regions population is over 80 (3.0% in the Rest of State). Sligo has 3.9% in this category. In contrast, in Kildare only 1.91% are in this category while in Meath it is 2.21%. Sligo Social Services provides a number of services to older people including a Meals on Wheels and a Befriending Service

Meals on Wheels Service

The service is available to people who need a cooked meal, including people who are elderly, those who may be housebound or disabled and to people who are unable to provide a hot meal for themselves.

Meals are prepared in the kitchen at Sligo Social Services, Charles Street by qualified chefs and staff and with the input of Community Employment (CE) participants and volunteers. The meals are collected from Charles Street by a large team of volunteers and then delivered to clients in and around Sligo town in the middle of the day. Workers on the CE team deliver meals to locations in the more rural areas in the north of the county and are equipped with special ovens in their vehicles to keep meals warm.

In 2019, 198 individual recipients availed on the service, this was an increase of 21 recipients on the previous year. 113 recipients were female and 85 were male. The majority (93%) of clients were over 65yrs of age with a small number under 65yrs. Of the recipients over 65yrs 26 of these were over 90yrs, with one over 101yrs of age.

A total of 22,586 meals were provided in 2019. While there was a slight increase in the number of individual recipients there was

a decrease of 704 meals on 2018.

Over the past number of yeas the service has had a significant reduction in the total number of meals being provided per year. In the past the service primarily responded to the need identified by HSE services in particular by Public Health Nurses with individual recipients being financially assisted through HSE subvention to Sligo Social Services. This has however changed greatly over the past number of years, with decreasing numbers of recipients being referred to the service in this manner and receiving financial assistance for meals provided. These factors have contributed to the service becoming less self-sufficient in recent years.

	Avg. No Service Users Per Month	No. Meals Served	No Of Meals In Receipt Of HSE Subvention
2015	140	27,402	24,513
2016	136	24,243	21,701
2017	126	22,988	17,907
2018	125	23,290	15,638
2019	130	22,586	14,011

BEFRIENDING SERVICE

Sligo Social Services offers a Befriending Service to persons who are:

- Aged 65 and over
- Residing in their own home in Sligo
- Experiencing social isolation
- Wishing to increase their social interactions and decrease their loneliness

The primary aim of the Befriending Service is to reduce the service user's social isolation providing social and emotional support for people who are isolated and living alone through regular visits. The service also seeks to expand the service user's social contacts and link them into existing services within their community. Each client is matched with a volunteer befriender – one with similar interests if possible. Befrienders

visit clients in their on a weekly basis. Where the client is interested and able to get out of the house the volunteer may go for a walk or do some other activity with the client. All volunteers receive training prior to commencing their role. In 2019, 11 people availed of the service. Unfortunately due to very limited resources growing the service has presented as a challenge.

In late 2019 we were successful in our application for funding to the HSE Community & Voluntary Supports Grant. This funding will assist us dedicated resources to grow the Befriending Services both in terms of expanding the home visiting aspect of the service and to establish a Friendly Call service.

Community Employment



Community Employment Programme

Sligo Social Services Main Stream Community Employment (CE) programme comprises of 34 CE participants located within Sligo Town. This CE programme was designed to help people who are long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged people to get back to work by offering part-time and temporary placements in jobs based within our local community. Individual training plans are designed to incorporate the skills each participants brings to the CE programme and also what they would like to achieve for themselves. Participants are encouraged to take up other part-time work during their placement within the programme. This has led to many of the participants being successful in securing part-time employment. Through engaging in this CE programme, our CE participants have gained various benefits from developing their skills, achieving many and varied educational qualifications, while also securing a supportive network of colleagues. A number of our CE participants have secured fulltime employment with employment with employers in Sligo Town and County and further.

The Community Employment project has had another successful year with many of our participants finding both part time work and full time work. Many participants are engaged in QQI major awards in Healthcare and Social Care whilst others have undertaken work experience to help them develop their skills to re-enter the workforce.

The Community Employment Rehabilitation Programme

The Community Employment Rehabilitation Programme is a Department of Social Protection programme designed to assist those recovering from addiction to return to work through Training and Work Experience. There are 15 places for participants and 2 for support workers awarded. Participants on the programme provide vital work in the community including maintenance work such as painting and decorating, garden maintenance or cleaning. Other participants work in various Charity Shops in Sligo Town. The service is open to all Charitable and Voluntary organisations around Sligo town.

In 2019 we worked with several organisations such as, The North West Hospice, Sligo Volunteer Centre, MS Therapy Centre, Woodhaven Supported Holiday Facility, Sligo Rowing Club, St Marys Cathedral, Focus Ireland, Dolly's Cottage Strandhill, Sligo Rape Crisis Centre,

DVAS and Shalomar Hostel. The feedback received from these organisations has been excellent.

Within the project, participants are taking part in various types of industry led training and QQI training to enhance their Individual Learner Plans and future career options. Non-Accredited Training is a large part of the Rehabilitation Scheme. The schedule takes into consideration three themes: Health and Fitness, Recovery and Addiction and Social Inclusion/Activities. The project aims to provide beneficial Non Accredited Training using local providers and incorporating feedback from the participants. Some Non Accredited Training we have completed has been, Yoga, Cooking Classes, Mindfulness Workshop, CBT workshop, Walking club, Carpentry course, pottery course, nutrition workshop. The 6 week carpentry course which was completed in summer of 2019 resulted in a new bench for the peace park to mark the 50th Anniversary.

Celebrations of Sligo Social Services.



Fundraising

Each year Sligo Social Services and their supporters fundraise in a variety of ways to help finance the various services provided. In 2019, we raised a total of €164,869. €107,747 of this income came from our Thrift Shops and Recycling.

Sligo Social Services receives donations from people in Sligo of good quality clothing, household goods and bric-a-brac to sell in our Thrift Shops. Funds generated are vital in order to allow us operate our various services. The running of the Thrift Shop is undertaken by a large team of volunteers with the support of a small team of Community Employment participants and one staff member. Clothes which we are unable to sell can be recycled and this also generates an income for the organisation.

Schools, individuals, local business and their staff continued to give very generously donating food and toys at Christmas. This allowed us to assist many families and ensure a better Christmas for many children. We have benefitted greatly from the support of the people of Sligo over the years, support which we continue to rely greatly on. As always the Friends of Sligo Social Services continues to support our work with a total of €40,000 received from The Friends Of Sligo Social Services in 2019.

Our annual golf classic also took place during the year. Other fundraising events included our annual Flag Days and Christmas Carol Singing. As always the people of Sligo continue to give generously through a variety of events which raised a total of €10,194

Local churches continued to support the work of Sligo Social Services with a church gate collection, and an envelope collection on the 8th December raising a total of €6,930.

Donations received from various businesses, community groups and individuals towards our work. In 2018 Sligo Social Services received €39,189 in this way.

Volunteering

Sligo Social Services encourages active citizenship and invites volunteers to become involved in our activities.

Volunteers are a central to the work of Sligo Social Services. Volunteers work alongside professional staff to deliver vital services to those in need. The time dedicated by individuals ranges from new volunteers to those who have been involved in various services for almost all of the life of the organisation. There are more than 250 volunteers at present in the organisation. They have and continue to be involved in many specific aspects of the organisation. In 2019 volunteers worked in the following services:

- Meals on Wheels
- Open Access
- Maryville Emergency Accommodation
- Befriending Service
- Refugee Resettlement
- Thrift Shop
- Fundraising
- Board of Directors

Sligo Social Services also benefits from the support of professional services, who often give advice and guidance on a voluntary basis.

All of our volunteers are dedicated to providing a caring and professional service and continue to receive support and guidance from staff and Management. Each year we take some time out to recognise and thank all our very committed volunteers for the contribution they make to Sligo Social Services.

In 2019 we developed and began delivering an organisational wide volunteer induction programme. This allows us to provide a comprehensive induction to volunteers, giving them a good overview of all the various services we provide. It also allows volunteers to meet and interact with others who will be volunteering in different services.

Finance

SLIGO SOCIAL SERVICE COUNCIL (CLG)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Notes	Designated Funds €	Restricted Funds €	Unrestricted Funds €	Total Funds €	Total Funds €
		2019	2019	2019	2019	2018
INCOME						
<i>Charitable Activities</i>						
Revenue Grants and Subsidies	4	-	863,039	-	863,039	1,071,522
CE Programme	7	-	644,776	-	644,776	652,424
Capital Funding/Grants	4	-	18,484	-	18,484	30,510
Income Generated from Services	4	-	207,041	-	207,041	199,907
<i>Donations and Legacies</i>						
Donations		-	-	39,189	39,189	35,607
<i>Fundraising</i>						
Fundraising Activities/Events		-	-	57,122	57,122	20,604
Charity Stores		-	-	107,747	107,747	119,175
<i>Other Income/Gains</i>						
Sundry Income		-	-	562	562	-
Interest Income		-	-	5,014	5,014	12,708
Gain/(Loss) on Financial Assets Held at Fair Value		-	-	262	262	(172)
Waiver of CAS Principal Amounts		-	29,631	-	29,631	28,767
Total Income		-	1,762,971	209,896	1,972,867	2,171,052
EXPENDITURE						
<i>On Charitable Activities</i>						
Programmes and Services Expenditure		-	1,299,618	-	1,299,618	1,573,678
CE Programme	7	-	642,194	-	642,194	659,451
<i>On Raising Funds</i>						
		-	-	39,131	39,131	58,212
Total Expenditure		-	1,941,812	39,131	1,980,943	2,291,341
Deficit for the Year	5	-	(178,841)	170,765	(8,076)	(120,289)
Total Funds Brought Forward		600,000	377,265	69,365	1,046,630	1,166,919
Transfer of Funds		-	(49,177)	49,177	-	-
Total Funds Carried Forward		600,000	149,247	289,307	1,038,554	1,046,630

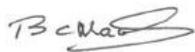
Finance continued

SLIGO SOCIAL SERVICE COUNCIL (CLG)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	Note	2019 €	€	2018 €	€
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	8	3,457		4,888	
Tangible assets	9	516,737		526,300	
			520,194		531,188
Current assets					
Debtors	10	94,755		59,514	
Investments	11	751,585		679,636	
Cash at bank and in hand		468,235		570,051	
		1,314,575		1,309,201	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(231,192)		(211,832)	
Net current assets		1,083,383			1,097,369
Total assets less current liabilities		1,603,577		1,628,557	
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	14	(565,023)		(581,927)	
Net assets		1,038,554		1,046,630	
Funds of the Charity					
Designated Funds	15	600,000		600,000	
Restricted Funds	15	149,247		377,265	
Unrestricted Funds	15	289,307		69,365	
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	16	1,038,554		1,046,630	

These financial statements were approved by the board of directors on 17th April 2020 and signed on behalf of the board by:



Barry MacMahon
Director



Pat Forde
Director

Sligo Social Services wish to acknowledge all our funders including:

Health Service Executive

Office for the Minister for Children and Department of Justice and Equality, administered by Pobal

Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government via Sligo County Council

Northwest Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force

Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund via Department of Justice and Equality, Irish Refugee Protection Programme

Dept. of Employment Affairs & Social Protection

Tusla Child and Family Agency

Mercy Ministry Support Fund

Sligo County Council Rapid Fund

Friends of Sligo Social Services

Diocese of Elphin

Revenue Generated by Thrift Shops

Income from Services

Benefactors

