

Longford Women's Link

Annual Report 2020



LWL
Strategic Plan
2017-2022



Linking women with resources to change their lives and transform their community.



LWL Longford Women's Link

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*We confirm that our organisation is registered with the Charities Regulator
We confirm that LWL is compliant with the Charities Governance Code
We confirm LWL is GDPR compliant*

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE:

On March 6 2020, the rooms of Longford Women's Link were full of chat and laughter for the International Women's Day celebrations organised by the LWL Friendly and Sociable Group. It was a wonderful event with women from across the county coming together to hear inspirational speakers including RTE's Sinead Hussey, a proud Longford woman, and others talking about everything from empowerment to sustainable fashion. The atmosphere was celebratory and joyful with a very serious undercurrent - the distinct vibrations of women getting together, getting inspired, getting ready to make change.

Change came, but not in the way any of us would have imagined. Just over two weeks later, Ireland was in lockdown and it was clear that nothing would ever be the same again. The pandemic has not been kind to women. Women have borne the brunt of job losses, the closure of schools and crèches, or juggling work and home life all under one roof 24 hours a day. Many have been living in fear, have been in danger or under the dark cloud of anxiety. Covid shone a brutal light on the shadows of inequality that permeate every single aspect of society in Longford, and everywhere else. One thing is abundantly clear, never has the work of Longford Women's Link been needed more.

In this time of unprecedented crisis, the management and staff of Longford Women's Link have shown an unwavering level of commitment and dedication to the values of LWL and the women and children who use our services. The domestic violence team, in particular, have dealt with a surge in demand for their services and have helped an unprecedented number of women and children who find themselves in difficult, frightening and maybe life-threatening situations. Training and education has continued virtually, Catkins Early Years Childcare Service operated when restrictions allowed, counselling has continued and, in fact, the service has grown in the past twelve months. See Her Elected, the joint project with 50:50 North West, pivoted overnight to an online politics school. Hundreds of women have attended the virtual SHE sessions throughout the year.

It has been an extraordinary logistical challenge yet, where possible, staff have continued to shine at a time when people need beacons of hope and solidarity. We should never forget the roles they played in making the lives of local women and families a little better at the worst of times. Thank you all.

This year, LWL bid farewell to our CEO Louise Lovett who retired in November. Louise was at the helm of LWL for over 10 years and in that time, she led from the front with an incredible work ethic and a clear sense of purpose to fulfill the vision of our founders to provide a space for women of Longford to have their voices heard. Louise's tenure as CEO of LWL has built a solid structure around the foundations laid by those founders and she continued with their work in building a team who are motivated to change the lives of others where they can.

However that strength of purpose and vision will undoubtedly continue under the tenure of our new CEO Tara Farrell. We welcome Tara as CEO of LWL.

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As Deputy CEO for 10 years, Tara has been a driving force in the growth of LWL and we look forward to working with her in the years ahead. We welcome Angela Keaveney to the role of Director of Operations where she will provide management support to Tara and continue the great work that she has carried out in LWL for many years.

I would like to thank my fellow board members on the Board of Longford Women's Link who have gone over and above the call of duty in 2020. The current board members are: Tess Murphy, Elsie Moxham, Mary Carleton Reynolds, Olive Quinn, Pat Murphy, Stephanie Igoe, Nancy Bermingham, Vicky Crosby and Teresa Kearney. We bid farewell to Pauline Orohoe and would like to thank her for joining the board. We met 7 times in 2020, 6 of those meetings were held virtually. We continue to work towards ensuring that the objectives of LWL are attained and that the integrity of the organisation is protected.

I would like to thank our auditors O'Brien and Co., for their continued support and our funders without whose financial support we would be unable to provide services.

Sheila Reilly, Chairperson, Longford Women's Link



CEO REVIEW OF 2020

At the start of 2020, LWL looked forward to continuing its work at local and national level, continuing the diversification of services and programmes to meet the ever-changing needs of those who come through our doors. The arrival of Covid-19 to our shores forced the organisation to alter its plans; however the dedication of the LWL Team never wavered. It has undoubtedly been one of the most challenging years of LWL's existence, yet both board and staff were steadfast in their commitment to the work of the organisation. With this in mind, the reporting on LWL's Strategic Priorities takes into account the impact of Covid-19.

SP1 Crisis & Practical Support

2020 was a year like no other for the LWL Domestic Violence Service. The team saw an increase of 11% in client support, bearing in mind that for much of the year, the service was open for crisis cases only. Covid-19 highlighted the epidemic of domestic violence within the context of the pandemic and the work of the DVS team in 2020 was phenomenal with over 200 court accompaniments taking place. Work continued with 44 children and young people being supported to stay safe. A targeted social media and publicity campaign around the work of the service was implemented and manifested itself in LWL's social media channels but also in the form of new collaborations with Longford Gardaí around the provision of information and supports to victims of domestic violence. LWLDVS were one of the few services who remained open nationally throughout the pandemic, ensuring that the women and children of Longford were able to access crisis support, often in very high-risk situations.

SP2 Economic and Social Choice and Opportunity

No service emerged unscathed from the impact of Covid-19 and in March 2020, all of the training and education programmes at LWL migrated online. This was a significant undertaking and the dedication of all involved (Education Manager, tutors and learners) ensured that learner retention was 100%. Although it has proven difficult to continue recruitment for programmes such as Community Employment during lockdown, the DEASP team maintained strong links with all learners, ensuring that they stayed connected to LWL. We continued to participate in advocacy work conducted by AONTAS and their work resulted in the establishment of the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund. LWL secured funding under this initiative and will be establishing a learner laptop loan scheme in early 2021. Community Employment progression rates continued to be impressive with over 80% of participants progressing to employment/education on completion of the scheme.

SP3 Leadership, Networking & Influence

As Covid-19 highlighted the many inequalities and barriers within our society, which had been present long before the pandemic arrived, LWL continued its programme of advocacy work both locally and nationally. The firm establishment of the SHE Programme (in partnership with 50:50 North West) was critical in providing a platform for women to become informed about the Irish political system and although there were very few positives as a result of Covid-19, the founding of the online SHE School was definitely one. LWL continued to be represented on national bodies such as Irish Rural Link, AONTAS and the NWCII, holding the chairperson's role of the latter two.

SP4 Governance

The long-term financial impact of the pandemic is, as yet, unknown. LWL continues to ensure that the organisation is in a position to deliver on its strategic priorities but until government departments and agencies move to a model of core and multiannual funding, the precarious nature of the sector looks likely to remain for some time. However LWL is currently on a sound footing and will continue to advocate for funding to support our core services.

In addition to the changes brought about by the pandemic, LWL also witnessed a seismic change of a different nature in 2020 with the retirement of Louise Lovett as CEO after ten years in the role. Louise will be very much missed as CEO and as a colleague and we look forward to a time when we can properly celebrate her retirement!

I would like to thank LWL Chairperson Sheila Reilly and the LWL board for their support and dedication throughout the year and for placing their trust in me by appointing me as the new CEO of LWL in 2020. Finally, I would like to thank the entire staff team at LWL for the commitment and drive they have shown in a very challenging year.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir as bhur dtacaíocht.

Tara Farrell, CEO, Longford Women's Link



LWL – KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2020

- **LWLDVS** supported 410 people (366 women, 44 children and young people under-18) directly, an 11% increase on 2019 numbers. There was an associated 6287 interactions with these clients in 2020 representing a 14% increase on the 2019 figures. 130 once-off Helpline calls were received.
- **LWLDVS** delivered six summer camps for children living with DV.
- **LWLDVS** continues to be represented on regional and national forums.
- **Key partnerships** established e.g. joint publications with **Longford Gardaí**
- LWL's **Counselling** service provided 498 counselling sessions to 45 individuals (18% increase in sessions provided).
- **DEASP Community Employment Childcare Scheme** progression rates continue to be impressive – of the 124 participants who have participated on the scheme in the past five years, all have participated in training and 85% of those who completed their time on the scheme progressed into employment (55) or further education (5).
- **Catkins Mobile Childcare Solutions** continued to provide mobile childcare solutions with 921 bookings in 2020, despite lockdown closures.
- **Catkins Early Years** provided early years care to 66 children. The team participated in the Bigstart protest to campaign for better supports for the sector.
- **LWL's Training and Education** collaboration with **IT Carlow** continued including the commencement of the Masters in Early Years Education to 14 Longford learners.
- Online **graduation** took place for 24 Longford learners who completed the **IT Carlow BA in Early Childhood Education and Care**.
- During Covid-19, a **Mitigating Educational Disadvantage Group** was established by the Department of Education and Skills and chaired by AONTAS. CEO Tara Farrell was part of this group representing community education.
- LWL continues to represent **Women's Community Education** on the Board of Directors of AONTAS via CEO Tara Farrell and on the CEN via Education Manager Pamela Latimer. Pamela is the **Co-convener of the RPL Practitioners Board**
- As part of the advocacy work with AONTAS, a **Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund** was established – LWL were successful in their application.
- LWL completed its Female Entrepreneurship Programme supported by the **Ulster Bank Skills & Opportunities** called **WISE (Women Into Self Employment)**. The end of the programme was marked by the publication of the WISE Booklet, featuring programme participants.
- LWL continued to make submissions at local and national level on issues of critical importance to both the organisation and our service users.

- **The Longford Women's Manifesto Group and the Women's Manifesto project** continued its work in supporting increased participation of women in public life:
 - The Women's Manifesto project continues in the Centre for Cross Border Studies '**Towards a New Common Charter**' project
 - LWL are now part of the newly established **Ad-Hoc Group for North-South and East-West Cooperation** and the CEO has attended a number of meetings on all-island collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Northern Ireland Office and the UK Office.
- LWL commenced a new **Erasmus+ project (DEAL)** lead by Equal Ireland.
- **Fundraising**
 - A number of fundraising events contributed to the final fundraising total. In particular we had:
 - Walktober
 - CSR support from industry
- **LWL was successful in securing a number of grants in 2020 including:**
 - Funding for the SHE project with 5050 North West (€104,000)
 - Pobal Stability Fund (€104,806)
 - Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund (LWETB €26,056)
 - EU-funded programme (DEAL) in conjunction with Irish Rural Link (€40,000 over two years)
 - Healthy Ireland (€32000, over two years) for the establishment of a teen counselling service
 - Rethink Ireland (Willow Traders)
 - Longford County Council Community Enhancement Funds
 - Longford County Council Covid-19 Support Funds
 - Ireland Funds Covid-19 Support Fund
 - Community Champion (IRL and The Wheel)
 - LWL received €20,000 from the Court Poor Box
- **Impact of Covid-19**
 - The impact of the pandemic is evidenced throughout this report. Key points to note:
 - LWLDVS remained open for crisis appointments throughout the pandemic – one of the only DVS teams in the country to do so.
 - LWL Education and Training transferred all learning online and retained every learner.
 - Catkins Early Years and Catkins on the Move were among the first services to reopen after Lockdown 1.
 - LWL held the Community Champion Role as part of the national Covid Supports.

Introduction and Overview

About Longford Women's Link

Longford Women's Link is a dynamic social enterprise which was founded in 1995 initially, to provide back to education and training opportunities for women who had left school early or who had to leave work when they got married. Over the past 25 years LWL has diversified and expanded to become a substantial organisation that advocates effectively on the issues that impact women and their families. It does this by providing practical supports such as affordable childcare and transport where possible and also providing the essential services of domestic violence support, counselling, women's community training, education and support in employment/self-employment options for women and their families. LWL has always been guided by a fundamental purpose of providing a space for women to 'develop their voice' in order to address the myriad issues that they and their families face. Despite major changes within the organisation and also locally, regionally and nationally over these years, LWL remains committed to this guiding purpose.

Vision:

Our vision is a world where every woman can determine her own life journey, where the voice, expertise and experience of women is heard, respected and celebrated in every aspect of our lives and all women can fulfil their potential, in a safe, just and equal society.

Values:

Welcoming:

Our aim is to provide a warm and friendly welcome for all women whatever their background, experience, needs or the story they wish to share with us

Respectful:

Our approach is to form mutually respectful relationships where we take time to listen and establish trust and understanding through our conversations and our actions

Diversity & Inclusion:

We are a learning organisation, committed to diversity and inclusion which involves questioning our thinking as always being open to new ways of working and engaging with women.

Solidarity:

The solidarity of women is crucial to real change. We believe in solidarity between women in all their diversity, through enabling, collaboration and participation and providing a safe space for women to have their say and be themselves.

Strategic Priorities

At the heart of our work are LWL's four Strategic Priorities, all of which have community development and service delivery at their core

Strategic Priority One - Crisis and Practical Support

Inform and support women practically and emotionally in immediate crisis in their personal and family lives. Ensure support and information is provided by professionally trained staff and women are supported to take the action they need to act on the crisis which is actually a social crisis experienced personally

Strategic Priority Two – Economic and Social Choice and Opportunity

Encourage women to broaden their horizons and explore learning opportunities in previously un-imagined ways. Harness women's ambition by encouraging networking and peer support in achieving social and economic independence

Strategic Priority Three - Leadership, Networking and Influence

Develop responsive engagement structures that enable rural women to take up their leadership and influencing capacity in any context

Strategic Priority Four - Governance and Sustainability

The first three strategic priorities are underpinned by good governance and purposeful organisational collaborative and interlinked relationships (ISD, Inter-agency work, Local Regional & National Advocacy), resulting in capacity-building for the organisation and all stakeholders.

Integrated Model of Service Delivery - Strategic Priorities

PURPOSE: LINK Women with RESOURCES to CHANGE their lives and TRANSFORM their community



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



GOVERNANCE Sustain a Strong, Stable, Visible and Diverse Organisation

Strategic Priority One - Crisis and Practical Support

The purpose of this strategic priority is to inform and support women practically and emotionally in immediate crisis in their personal and family lives. Ensure support and information is provided by professionally trained staff and women are supported to take the action they need to act on the crisis which is actually a social crisis experienced personally.

The services delivering on this priority are:

- **LWL Domestic Violence Service (page 15)**
- **LWL Counselling Service (page 17)**
- **Catkins Early Years and Afterschool Service (page 18)**
- **Catkins Mobile Childcare Solutions (page 20)**

LWL Domestic Violence Service

2020



- Supports & Services:
- 1:1 Support
 - Group Support
 - Court Accompaniment
 - Advocacy
 - 16 Days Campaign
 - Interagency Collaboration
 - TY & Safe Space Programme



Key Focus 2020

Crisis Accommodation plans in place and effective

226 court accompaniment supports (177 during Covid-19)

Service remained open throughout the pandemic

Group Work

6 Summer camps

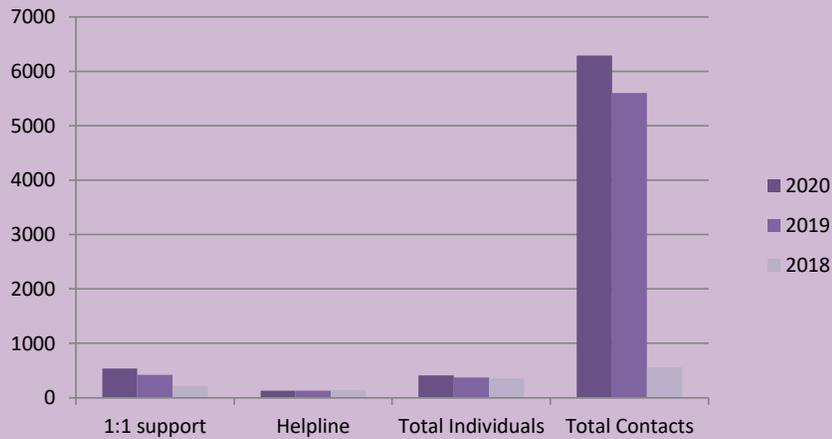
Coming Back Home
Went on line

Parenting Group went on line

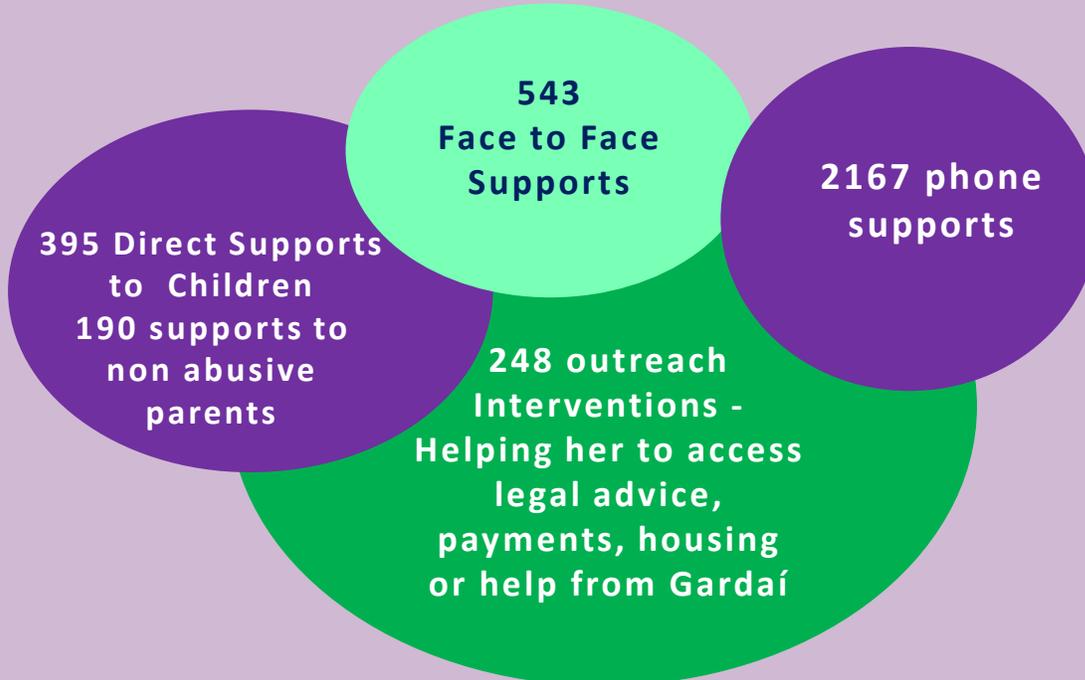


LWL Domestic Violence Service

LWLDVS annual figures



How we helped 2020



LWLDVS Advocacy

2020



LWL Counselling Service



Counselling Service at LWL

Choice -> Agency -> Mastery of own life

Grant aided – accessible to all

Different support to meet different needs

Catkins Early Years Service

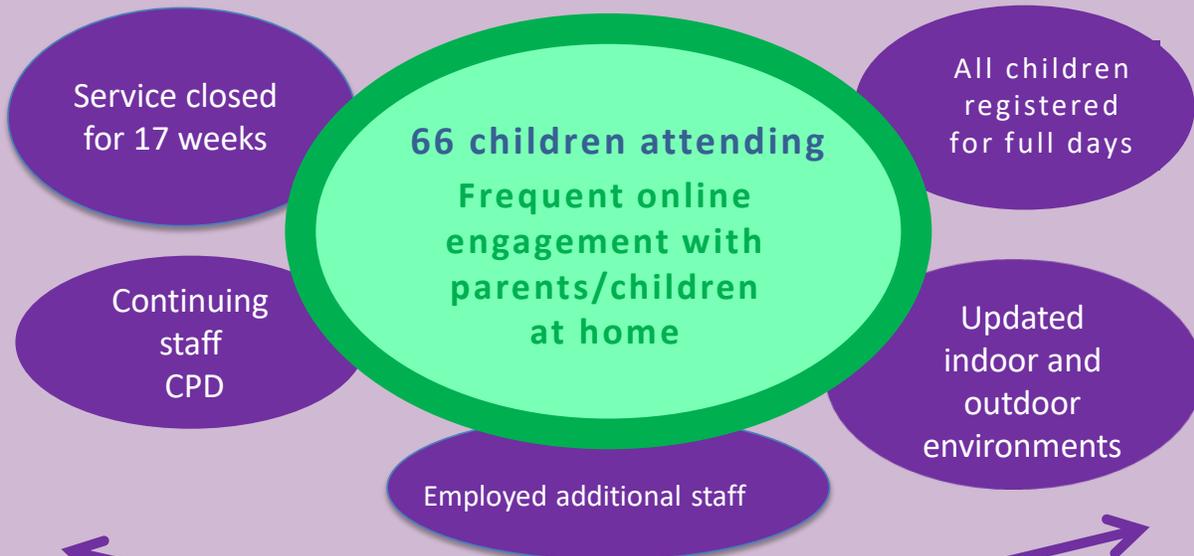
2020

Community Childcare service:

- Full Day Care
- Sessional
- Drop-in

*Síolta National Quality Framework

*Aistear Early Years Curriculum Framework



Key Issues 2020

CE Qualified Participants

Impact of National Childcare Scheme

Covid-19 compliant

Initiatives & Programmes



AIM – Access & Inclusion Model for three children

Developed & Delivered COVID-19 training

Another staff member enrolled on LINC programme





*Catkins Early Years & Afterschool
Bigstart Protests, Dublin 2020*

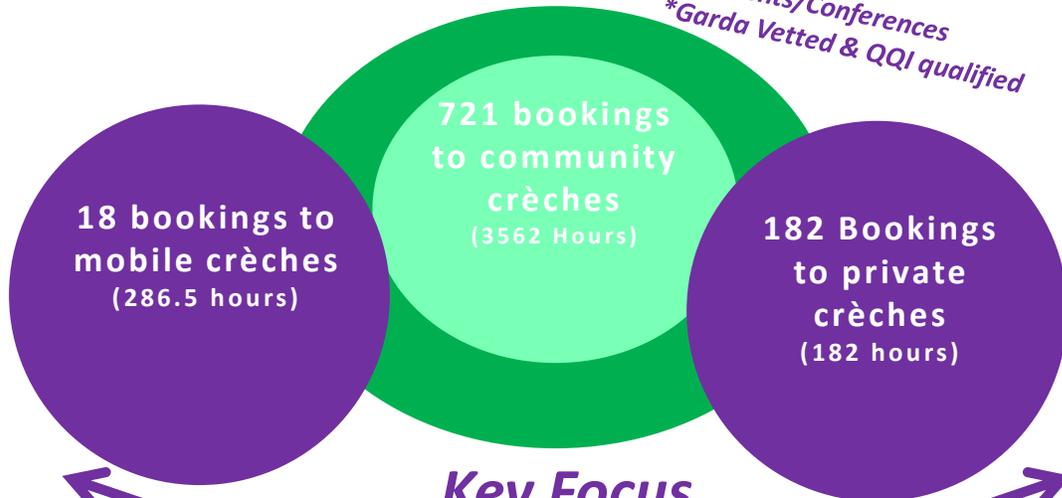


Catkins on the Move Mobile Childcare Solutions

2020



- Childcare Relief Service:
- Community & Private Crèches
- Mobile Childcare Service:
- Training
 - Events/Conferences
- *Garda Vetted & QQI qualified



Key Focus
2020

Minimum wage rise –
important for workers but
needs support from Pobal.

Balancing demand with
costs

Covid Compliant

Our Transport (Catkins Mobile and Catkins
Afterschool)



Strategic Priority Two – Economic and Social Choice & Opportunity

The purpose of this strategic priority is to encourage women to broaden their horizons and explore learning opportunities in previously un-imagined ways and to harness women's ambition by encouraging networking and peer support in achieving social and economic independence

The services delivering on this priority are:

- **LWL Education and Training Service (page 22)**
- **LWL DEASP Community Employment Childcare Scheme (page 23)**
- **LWL WISE (Women Into Self-Employment) Programme (page 25)**
- **LWL Willow Traders (page 26)**

LWL Training & Education

2020



Courses:

- QQI Childcare Levels 5, 6 & 7
- QQI Special Needs Assisting Levels 5 & 6
- ECDL Test Centre
- Manual Handling/Fire Safety
- First Aid Response (FAR) & Refresher
- QQI Level 8 Certificate in Meeting the Challenge of Challenging Behavior
- QQI Level 7 Childcare Degree and Level 9 Masters
- Lamh
- Covid Protocol Training

236 Learners

+48 with IT Carlow Degree and Masters Level courses

Graduation of IT Carlow BA Early Childhood Education and Care Level 8 group online – 24 learners.

QQI award:
114 Component Awards
10 Major Awards
3 submissions to QQI

10,218 hours of learning (ITC additional)

Key Focus 2020

- Commenced a Masters of Arts in Leadership in Early Years Education and Care – Level 9.
- Introduction of Lámh Module One.

As an emergency response to the Covid 19 pandemic and the recommendation to cease all face to face learning, LWL successfully transition to online Blended learning via Zoom from March 28th 2020.

Worked with learners and tutors to ensure they had the resources and capacity to move online - all learners successfully transitioned. This represented a tremendous effort by LWL staff, tutors and learners.

Community Partners/Outreach

- IT Carlow – We continue to host IT Carlow courses, introducing the Level 8 Certificate in Meeting Challenge of Challenging Behavior funded by the Ireland Funds.
- The IT Carlow Masters programme which commenced in Sept 2020, also offers progression for our learners who have completed their degree.
- Continue to work on QQI reengagement working closely with QQI and Aontas Community of Practice

- As a result of the Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage fund LWL has invested in laptops, software and stationery. A laptop loan scheme is available from Easter 2021
- We continue to provide training to Rehab Care in Longford and Leitrim and other CE Schemes in the community.

- Continued active participation in AONTAS/CEN initiatives
- Active members of Aontas weekly throughout lockdown.
- Participated in Adult Learning Festival 2020 – Contributed to the Aontas Policy Day Community Education Video.



DEASP Community Employment Childcare Scheme

2020

- Support for training & employment:
- QQI qualification
 - On-The-Job training
 - 1:1 Support
 - Career Planning
 - Experience working in an Active working environment.
- *Supported by the DEASP



Key Focus
2020

Created new opportunities at Willow Traders
Recruited 3 additional CE participants - 2 maintenance and 1 retail assistant.

DEASP team participated in AONTAS Adult Learning Week 2020 by assisting in the delivery of LWL International Women's Day 2020 event.

2 CE participants graduated from Carlow IT with a BA in Early Childhood Care & Education
3 CE participants completed safe pass training.

At the end of December 2020 44.4% of the existing Childcare staff were qualified with a minimum QQI L5 childcare award

March 1st 2020 only 8% CE learners were engaged in online learning however during lockdown, continuous mentoring led to an increase of 80% participating online.



83% Progression at LWL 2020

124 participated on the scheme since 2016- ALL have engaged in training

Since 2016, 79 participants finished on CE of these 62 secured employment (55 childcare) and 5 progressed to further education

In 2020, 18 participants finished on CE of these 15 secured employment (13 childcare) - 4 progressed to further education.

DEASP CE training modules offered in 2020

QQI Level 5 Childcare

QQI Level 6 Childcare

QQI Level 8 Honours Degree in Early Childhood Care & Education (IT Carlow)

QQI Level 8 Certificate in Challenging Behaviour (IT Carlow)

QQI Level 5 Special Needs Assistant

QQI Level 6 Special Needs Assistant

QQI Level 5 First Aid

QQI Refresher First Aid

Child Psychology

Fire Safety

Manual Handling

HACCP Food Safety

Basic Computers

CPC (Bus Driver Module)

Epipen Training

Advanced Manual Handling

Child Protection

Lámh

Therapeutic Play Skills

Covid-19 training – Infection Control and Return to Work

Safe Pass

Women Into Self Employment



Specifically aimed at women who are in the early and initial stages of Business Development:

- Weekly meetings
- Themed workshops
- Interactive seminars
- Tailor-made training

Supported with
Childcare
Transport
Flexible schedule

Ongoing one to one mentoring & Peer lead support

Networking Nationwide via Longford Women in Business

23 Female Entrepreneurs involved.
15 Trading

Professional Training in Business administration and Business practices



Collaboration with LEO, Ulster Bank Women in Business Network,

Longford Women's Link



Women Into Self-Employment programme (WISE.)



Willow Traders

2020



Charity Social Enterprise:
• Quality Furniture
• Clothing
• Household Items
• Books
New volunteering opportunities for Longford



Key Focus 2020

Providing retail volunteering opportunities

Delivery service (supported by Ireland Funds grant towards van purchase)

5,000+ likes on social media
40% increase on 2019



Strategic Priority Three - Leadership, Networking and Influence

The purpose of this strategic priority is to develop responsive engagement structures that enable rural women to take up their leadership and influencing capacity in any context.

The services delivering on this priority are:

- **Longford Women's Manifesto Group/SHE Programme (page 28)**
- **LWL Women In Leadership (page 29)**
- **LWL International Women's Day (page 30)**
- **LWL Policy, Submissions & Media (page 31)**
- **Farewell to Louise Lovett (page 32)**
- **LWL Advocacy and Representation (page 33)**

Longford Women's Manifesto Group/SHE

2020

- Supporting women to engage in the local democratic process:
- Regular meetings
 - Seminars
 - Training for candidates
 - Networking via Women's Manifesto members

Networking & Support

Supported by Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

*16 Events in 2020
*Founding of SHE School

Advocacy and promotion of Gender Equality in Irish Political Systems

Key Focus
2020

Representation on:
LCDC, SPCs, PPNs

367 women registered for
SHE Events

56 Elected Representatives
participated in SHE Events



Women in Leadership 2020 - #SHESchool established



#SHESchool commences in 2020

*International Women's Day 2020
LWL celebrates!*



LWL Policy and Submissions

Policy Submissions/Consultations

Submissions were made in relation to the following policy documents:

- Submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development on the National Volunteer Strategy
- Input to AONTAS and Irish Rural Link Pre-Budget Submissions
- Ongoing consultation with Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in relation to the participation of women in the 2024 local government elections (with 5050 North West)

Media Work

LWL continues to engage with local media, both print and broadcast and has a wide following on social media with over 6,000 Facebook and Twitter followers. LWL Willow Traders has a Facebook following of almost 5,000.

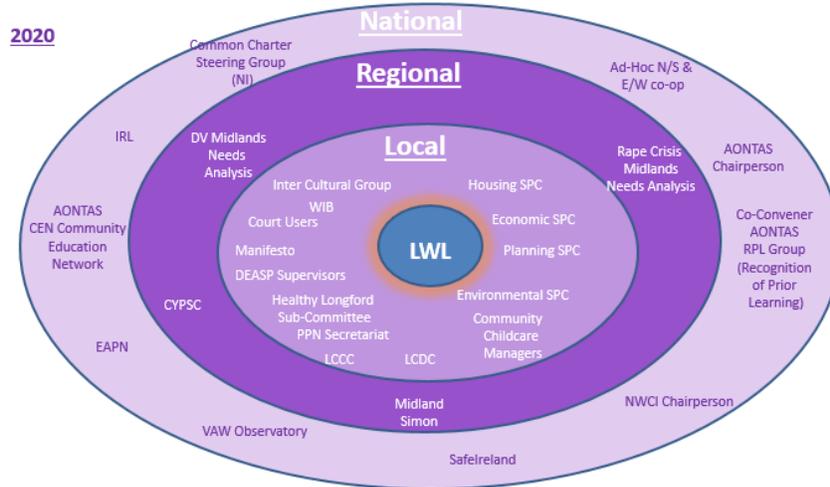
Throughout the pandemic, LWL has ensured there is clear information on our service provision on our social media channels and has also engaged in active and concise messaging, providing up to date information to all those who may need it.

Farewell to Louise Lovett

In 2020, we said goodbye to Louise Lovett who retired as CEO of LWL after ten years at the helm. Although we did not get to celebrate Louise's departure in style due to the pandemic, both board and staff expressed their thanks for all Louise had done during her time at LWL.



LWL Advocacy and Representation



LWLDVS
Advocacy



LWL & Longford Gardaí



LWLDVS launch
information leaflet
with Longford Gardaí

Strategic Priority Four - Governance and Sustainability

The first three strategic priorities are underpinned by good governance and purposeful organisational collaborative and interlinked relationships (ISD, Inter-agency work, Local Regional & National Advocacy) resulting in capacity building for the organisation and all stakeholders.

Organisational Development

Directors

During 2020 the LWL Board met 7 times with the CEO/Deputy CEO. The following Board members continued to participate in 2020: Tess Murphy, Elsie Moxham, Sheila Reilly, Mary Carleton Reynolds, Teresa Kearney, Olive Quinn, Stephanie Igoe, Pat Murphy, Nancy Bermingham and Vicky Crosby. Pauline Orohoe resigned in 2020.

Figure 1 shows the LWL Board attendance for 2020.

Figure 1: LWL Board Attendance Record 2020

Board Member	February 17th	March 24th	June 15th	July 20th	September 21st	October 19th	November 30th	Total Attendance
Elsie Moxham	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 of 7
Mary Carleton-Reynolds	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	5 of 7
Pauline Orohoe	✗	✓	✗					1 of 3 **
Nancy Bermingham	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6 of 7
Olive Quinn	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	0 of 7
Pat Murphy	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	3 of 7 *
Sheila Reilly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 of 7
Stephanie Igoe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 of 7
Teresa Kearney	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 of 7
Tess Murphy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 of 7
Vicky Crosby	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	3 of 7
								*post op recovery
								**resigned July 2020

Staff

As a result of increased funding and income generation, staff were able to undertake a substantial amount of training and CDP during 2020 compared to the dearth of opportunities in preceding years. This is a very significant for a community development NGO. Due to low programme directed salaries with no additional benefits, the only method of rewarding staff is through their professional development.

Compliance

During 2020 LWL ensured that it was compliant with the Charities Governance Code (the required compliance date is 2021). LWL is also GDPR compliant and compliant with all its Funders requirements.

Financial Overview

Key issues that emerged during 2020 and which have had a positive impact on Finances or which will impact the organisation negatively and must be addressed during 2021 are:

- Key Covid-19 were supports provided in 2020 including the Pobal Stability Fund, Business Restart Grants (Willow Traders) and Covid-19 funding from Longford County Council. There may be similar supports in 2021 as we emerge from the pandemic.
- LWL appealed a reduction in the Special Category Band A places from 4 to 2.5 places, based on the clear lack of understanding demonstrated by both Pobal and DCYA around the dynamics of DV and the use of this service by victim's children. It is hoped this will be resolved in early 2021.
- The Department of Housing & Local Government's support for the SHE programme will be instrumental in sustaining the Manifesto project and in positioning LWL as one of the go-to Rural NGOs in this field.
- Restoration of pay awards and increments for public sector employees with no increase in funding to provide similar to NGO employees. The DV sector is now looking at pay restoration which must be funded by the state as NGO's cannot afford additional remuneration.
- Planned universal pension scheme. LWL will, with partner organisations, be lobbying State funders to include the employer contribution in future funding.
- Continued lack of support for adult learners from LWETB. The majority of LWL's Education & Training supports come from philanthropic sources. However the establishment of the MAEDF fund as a result of AONTAS advocacy is a positive step towards core funding for community education.

- Difficulties in attracting new participants to the DEASP CE Scheme. LWL fed into the national review of CE during 2019, which has not progressed to date. LWL continues to make recommendations which would support better recruitment processes.
- The need to keep a watching brief on whether or not to separate out some services by forming independent companies in order to maximise the potential earning capacity of these services e.g. Training & Education and Willow Traders

In addition there is the longstanding issue of state funders not providing full cost recovery for the services they procure via NGOs.

Figure 2 below provides a breakdown of income received during 2020 as well as income projections for 2021. **Figure 3** provides the same information for summarised expenditure. Please note that **Figure 4** reflects Audited Accounts figures for 2020 and therefore takes into account pre-payments and accruals from 2020 and for 2021 in addition to depreciation and the release back to income of capital outlay. The outturn for 2020 is very positive i.e. a surplus of €191,654 however there is a need to be mindful of the very likely financial challenges which will be faced post-pandemic and into 2022.

Expenditure for the period was managed well with individual budgets implemented and monitored for each service area and progress on actual spend against budget reviewed regularly. The main difficulty experienced with the budgeting process is the uncertainty of some funding allocations until well into the fiscal year e.g. DCYA and TUSLA/Family Support Agency.

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Figure 2: Income Received 2020 & Projected 2021

Overall Income - Longford Women's Link	2020	2021	
Grant Income			Funder Explanation
Pobal for DCYA Childcare Grants	318,390	373,615	State support for the provision of Community Childcare - allowance based on parents welfare status, childrens age pre-school & parental training participation - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Pobal CSP Grant - Mobile Childcare Solutions	110,474	111,238	Subvention towards development and running of mobile childcare service - 3 year contract to be renegotiated in 2021 - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Tusla Child & Family Agency DV Support Services Grant	193,962	192,662	Salaries and associated costs for running Domestic Violence Services - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies) + once off Covid-19 salary support</i>
Commission for the support of Victims of Crime	21,000	25,000	Support for court accompaniment-must be applied for annually - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
DEASP Community Employment Scheme	853,447	950,541	Return to work placement & training for 50 participants and 4 project supervisors - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
POBAL Covid-19 Stability Scheme Scheme	96,871	55,360	2020/2021 Stability Scheme to cover loss of income generation due to Covid-19 Lockdown - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Longford County Council	12,196	6,000	Various Local Authority Community Support Grants
Longford County Council - Healthy Ireland Grant	11,750	20,250	Two year Teen Counselling Programme
Pobal for DCYA - Covid'19	9,596	0	TWSS Childcare Salary Difference
Revenue TWSS & EWSS	230,792	113,609	Revenue Covid-19 Salary Support
Wheel Community Champion	9,000	0	Once off for Covid-19 support in the community
Ulster Bank Skills & Opportunities Grant	9,404	0	Towards 18 month Female Entrepreneurship programme - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Safe Ireland Emergency Accommodation & Transport - Grant	7,279	15,172	Safe Ireland Small Grants for Victims of Domestic Violence - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Ireland Funds	15,605	32,895	Two year Business Studies - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies) + once off Covid-19 salary support</i>
LWETB Grant - Training	10,867	0	Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage Fund
Erasmus+ DELSA & DEAL Grants	14,767	20,183	Two year Digital Skills Programme - - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Rethink Ireland Social Innovation Fund	10,000	0	Once off mentoring programme
Longford Westmeath CYPSC - Teen Trauma Counselling	0	9,800	Once off Teen Covid-19 Counselling Supports - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Tusla Child & Family Agency DV Counselling Grant	7,477	26,334	Subvention towards counsellors fees -must be applied for annually - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Community Foundation	0	20,000	Once off Covid-19 Supports - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
Department of Housing & Local Government - SHE Grant	71,364	104,000	One year to support rural women into local government - <i>(Restricted Funding with Dependencies)</i>
	2,014,241	2,076,659	
Generated Income			
Room Rental Main	4,491	5,000	Used for Overheads, Heat, Light, Maintenance, Insurance etc.,
Other Income Main <small>(interest, awards, court donations etc.)</small>	3,888	65,931	Some projects provide a contribution towards these costs but this is minimal an nowhere near the true economic cost. Also used to address barriers to participation i.e. Transport, childcare etc.,
NET Fundraising	4,706	5,000	
Child Care Fees - Main Childcare	52,080	68,742	Creche running costs
Mobile CC Income - CSP	61,206	62,000	Mobile Childcare Running Costs and contingency for VAN
Counselling Fees	7,792	15,000	Retained to make up cost of providing counselling service
Training income <small>(NB: this is figure - must be looked at in conjunction trainig costs i.e. Coordinator Salary, Training Course Expenditure bbelow and also Training Grants above)</small>	54,510	66,596	Used to cover running costs and training Co-ordinator Salary
Willow Traders Sales	74,516	65,000	Used to cover running costs and retail staff salaries
Related Party Discount Received - Willow Traders	6,563	7,500	Discount received on haulage & delivery of donated furniture
Building Grants Released	7,508	7,500	Accounting mechanism
Sml Capital Additions - Grants - Released	18,043	16,071	Accounting mechanism
Generated Income Sub-Total:	295,303	384,340	
Total Income:	2,309,544	2,460,999	

Figure 3: Summarised Expenditure Incurred 2020 & Projected 2021

Overall Budget - Longford Women's Link	Actual 2020	Projected 2021
Operating Expenses		
Salaries	1,730,451	1,871,565
Overheads	175,907	198,000
Programme Costs	120,068	208,951
Training & Ed - Tutors and Materials	38,046	66,380
Depreciation (Property, Equipment etc.)	53,418	53,418
Total Operating Costs:	2,117,890	2,398,313
Period Surplus/Deficit (Reserves & Salary Accrual going forward)	191,654	62,685

Reserves Policy

The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecast cycle.

The Organisations Reserves policy was reviewed and updated by the Directors in June 2017. It states:

- Reserves to be maintained at a level which ensures that Longford Women's Link's core activity could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty.
- A proportion of reserves to be maintained in a readily realisable form.

At any given time readily available cash reserves should be sufficient to cover 6 months core salaries and total organisational operational costs

In addition it is prudent to carry forward 13 weeks core unfunded salaries until earned income begins to accumulate. This policy has been agreed with the Company's external auditors

See **Appendix 1** for copy of LWL's Reserves Policy

Longford Women's Link Annual Report 2020

Figure 4: LWL Audited Accounts 2020

(A company limited by guarantee not having a share capital)			
Detailed Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st Dec 2020			
Profit & Loss Account	Dec 20	Dec 19	
Income	Current €	Previous €	Variance €
Longford County Council - Healthy Ireland	11,750	9,092	2,658
Longford County Council - Community Support	1,200	-	1,200
Net Fundraising Income	4,706	3170	1,536
Court donations	3,888	2576	1,312
Counselling fees	7,792	4945	2,847
Rental Income	4,491	19249	-14,758
Course fees	54,510	78442	-23,932
Willow Traders sales	74,516	123755	-49,239
Related Party discount received - Willow Traders	6,563	9863	-3,300
Catkins Mobile Childcare Solutions Income	61,206	102545	-41,339
Fees - Catkins Early Years & Afterschool Service	52,080	108956	-56,876
TUSLA Child & Family Agency - DSGBV Prog.	182,662	183208	-546
Pobal for DRCD - CSP Mobile Childcare Solutions	110,474	112532	-2,058
Pobal for DCYA Childcare Grants	308,390	380066	-71,676
DEASP Community Employment Scheme	853,447	920543	-67,096
POBAL Covid-19 Stability Scheme Scheme	96,871	-	96,871
TUSLA Child and Family Agency - Counselling Grant	7,477	14,850	-7,373
CSVC Grant	21,000	21,000	-
Release EOCP extension fund	3,164	3164	-
Release RDP New building fund	4,344	4344	-
Release Ireland Funds Mini Bus Grant	1,250	1250	-
Release Ireland Funds Van Capital Grant	1,687	1688	-
Release DCYA Childcare Capital Grant 2015	2,914	2914	-
Release EYCP New Prefab & Creche Toys 2016	625	625	-
Release EYC Capital Grant 2017	6,241	6241	-
Release EYC Capital Grant 2018	2,102	2214	-112
Release - EYC Capital Grant 2020	750	-	750
Release - Community Enhancement Fund	625	-	625
Release - LWETB Grant	1,774	-	1,774
Release - Scholol Aged Childcare	75	-	75
Release - Longford County Council Business Restart	-	-	-
Jobsplus grant	-	3333	-3,333
Community Foundation Older Persons Grant	-	3951	-3,951
Community Foundation - DV Survivor Group	-	7500	-7,500
Department of Housing Planning & Local Government - SHE	71364	33925	37,439
Ireland Funds - Van Operation Grant	-	6500	-6,500
Ireland Funds - Business Studies Grant	7,105	0	7,105
Safe Ireland Resilience Fund - Grant	708	2640	-1,932
Charity Bazaar	-	4729	-4,729
QCBI Innovation Fund - Dormant Accounts	-	10000	-10,000
DELSA Training & Education Grant	14,767	22237	-7,470
RBS Skills and Opportunities Fund	9,404	25536	-16,132
Avant Card	-	5000	-5,000
LWETB Grant - Training	10,867	-	10,867
Longford Co Co - Covid'19	4,000	-	4,000
Pobal for DCYA - Covid'19 - Salary topup?	9,596	-	9,596
Grant - Tusla - Covid'19	11,300	-	11,300
Revenue TWSS & EWSS	230,792	-	230,792
Longford Co Co Covid 19	6,996	-	6,996
Longford Co Co - PPN	-	-	-
Pobal for DCYA Covid -19 Re-Opening Support Grant	10,000	-	10,000
Wheel Community Champion	9,000	-	9,000
Safe Ireland Covid 19	6,571	-	6,571
Rethink Ireland Social Innovation Fund	10,000	-	10,000
American Ireland Funds	8,500	-	8,500
Longford Westmeath CYPSC - Teen Trauma Counselling	-	-	-
Community Foundation - Trauma Counselling	-	-	-
Community Foundation - Comic Relief	-	-	-
Total Income	2,309,544	2,242,583	
Total Administration Expenses	2,117,890	2,204,160	
Bank interest received	11	53	
Retained profit	191,665	38,476	

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	Dec 20	Dec 19	
	Current €	Previous €	Variance €
Administration Expenses			
Wages and Salaries	860,131	865,676	-5,545
DEASP CE Scheme Wages & Salaries	751,865	772,905	-21,040
Employer's PRSI contributions	70,852	88,631	-17,779
DEASP Employer's PRSI contributions	19,340	19,427	-87
DEASP CE Fuel Allowance & Christmas Bonus	28,263	28,389	-126
Staff training (incl. DEASP CE)	31,301	34,044	-2,743
Safe Ireland DV Resilience Support		1,932	-1,932
Course participant childcare costs	0	1,049	-1,049
Course Participant Transport & Accommodation costs	11,596	6,980	4,616
Room rental	549	2,467	-1,918
Rent of Premises & Rates Willow Traders	6,745	7,380	-635
Course Expenditure & General Training costs	47,616	70,349	-22,733
Haulage & delivery of donated furniture	10,938	16,438	-5,500
Insurance	12,773	16,081	-3,308
Light and heat	19,610	19,498	112
Cleaning and maintenance	27,439	21,855	5,584
Service charge payable	9,189	10,538	-1,349
Printing, postage and stationery	10,292	11,171	-879
Recruitment and public relations	13,047	7,715	5,332
Telephone	10,908	9,586	1,322
Computer costs	14,854	11,987	2,867
Motor expenses	10,609	12,359	-1,750
National travel and subsistence	12,996	25,228	-12,232
Legal and professional	1,001	411	590
Consultancy fees	6,045	0	6,045
Audit & Accountancy	8,770	9,084	-314
Counselling expenses	19,226	17,189	2,037
Bank charges	2,904	2,553	351
Catkins EY&AS - Running expenses	12,095	20,959	-8,864
Catkins Mobile Childcare Solutions	-	700	-700
Catkins EY&AS - Relief Staff Cover	4,240	5,723	-1,483
Doubtful debts - Provision	2,693	-1,167	3,860
Canteen and catering	2,522	4,484	-1,962
Health & Safety including Staff Welfare	19,907	25,568	-5,661
Subscriptions	4,156	4,140	16
Depreciation on freehold property	19,489	19,489	-
Depreciation on long leasehold	1,057	1,057	-
Depreciation on FF & Equipment	28,872	28,285	587
Depreciation on motor vehicles	4,000	4,000	-
Total Administration Expenses	2,117,890	2,204,160	
Bank interest received	11	53	
Total Overheads	2,117,879	2,204,107	
Retained profit	191,665	38,476	
There are no recognised surpluses or deficit other than the surplus or deficit for the above two financial years.			
All activities are in respect of continuing activities.			

Appendix I: LWL Reserves Policy



Longford Women's Link Reserves Policy

The Organisation's Reserves policy was reviewed and updated by the Directors at the LWL Board Meeting dated June 19th 2017. It states:

The directors have set a reserves policy which requires:

- Reserves to be maintained at a level which ensures that Longford Women's Link's core activity could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty.
- A proportion of reserves to be maintained in a readily realisable form.

The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecast cycle.

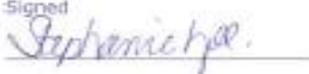
It takes into account:

- Risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure being different from that budgeted
- Planned activity level
- Organisation's commitments
- Fluctuations in income
- Unplanned expenditure

A substantial proportion of the reserves shown in the balance sheet are represented by assets other than cash such as the buildings necessary to provide the service

At any given time readily available cash reserves should be sufficient to cover 13 week's salaries and organisational operational costs. It does not include DSP CE Participants as these are covered by an advance salary grant

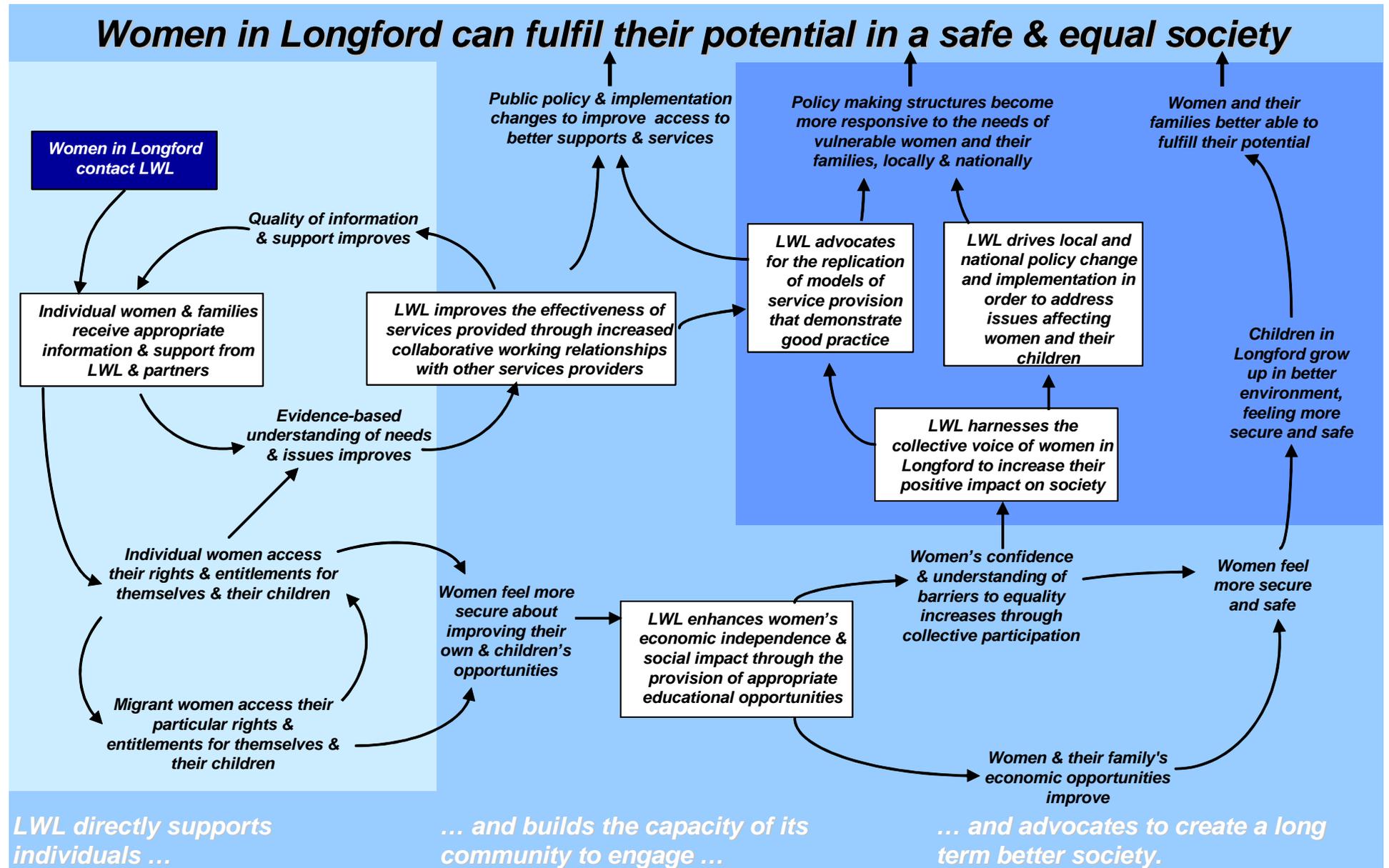
13 weeks Salaries inc. ERPrsi - (excluding DSP CE Participants only)	218,744
13 weeks Direct & Indirect Overheads (Core & Programme)	77,222
Contingency	25,000
Redundancy	50,000
Total	371,466
<i>In addition it is prudent to c/ff 13 weeks Core Unfunded Salaries until earned income begins to accumulate</i>	66,931
Total liquid reserves required at y/e	438,398

Signed

 Chairperson
 Date June 19 2017

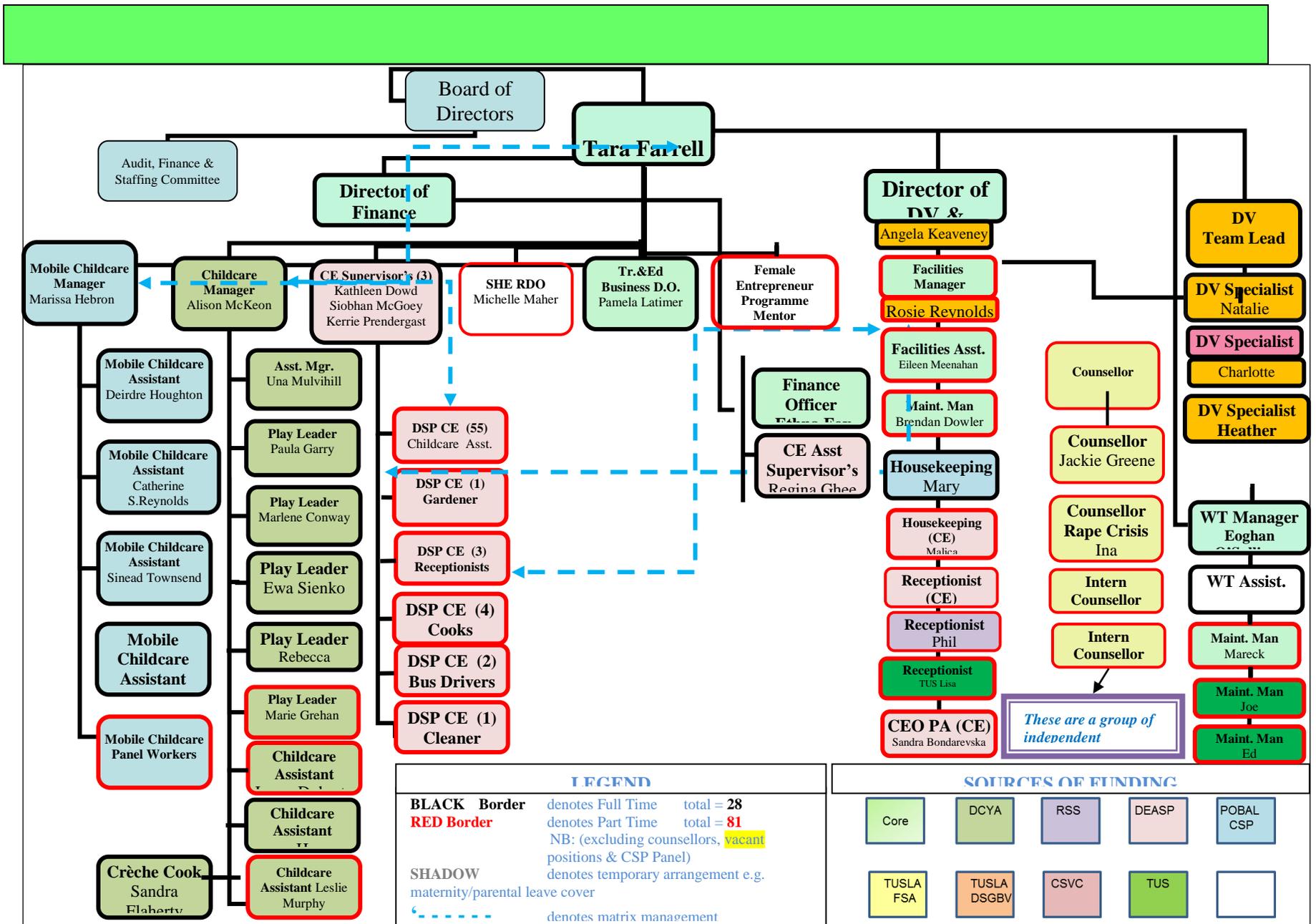
Signed

 Treasurer
 Date 19th June 2017

Appendix II: Theory of Change Framework



Longford Women's Link Annual Report 2020



Longford Women's Link Annual Report 2020

Appendix IV: Our Funders



EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND:
helping develop employment by
promoting employability, the business
spirit and equal opportunities and
investing in human resources



An Roinn Gnóthaí Fostaíochta
agus Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Employment Affairs
and Social Protection



The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence
An Oifig Náisiúnta um Fhoréigean Baile, Gnéasach agus Inscnebhunaithe a Chosc



THE IRELAND FUNDS



An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs

Company Registration Number 241515 Registered Office: Willow House, Ardnacassa Avenue, Longford.
Chairperson: Sheila Reilly. Directors: Elsie Moxham, Tess Murphy, Stephanie Igoe, Nancy Birmingham, Teresa Kearney, Pat Murphy,
Mary Carleton Reynolds, Vicky Crosby, Olive Quinn