

Minutes of the Community Centre AGM 18th November 2020. Meeting held by Zoom due to government Covid Restrictions

Present: Clodagh Jennings, Derek Connolly, Diana James, Hugh O'Rourke, Jane Smith, John & Jackie Quinn, Mary Duffy, Michael Woodnutt, Morgane Lemarie, Sean Carroll, Stephen Smith, William Smith, Rita Carey, Miriam Johnston, Philip Mc Galey, Damon Ackland, Sean McIlwaine Kim, Harris & Mary Woodnutt.

Welcome. Jane Smith opened the meeting welcoming everybody and thanking them for attending the AGM which will take place from 19.30 to 20.00 and which will be followed by the Residents Association AGM at 20.00. Jane asked permission for the meeting to be recorded and there were no objections.

Apologies. Irene Carey, Ian Calder Judy Stringer and Eilis Fitzgerald.

Minutes. Copy of minutes of 2019 AGM were sent out with the Agenda. Minutes were taken as accurate, in order and can be signed off. Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Miriam Johnston and seconded by Philip Mc Galey.

Treasurers Report. Hugh O'Rourke gave an update of the detailed Income & Expenditure account for 2019 and comparison with 2018. Income for 2019 was €19,141.00 which was very much in line with income for 2018 of €19,123.00. Grants were received from Capital Sports Programme of 20,000.00 and Wicklow Co Council of €1,000.00 Hugh expressed appreciation of the generosity of the benefactors for the grants which were announced in 2018 and all other income. Hugh advised that there would be a big decrease in income in 2020 due to Covid Restrictions with rents impacted. Income currently stands at 36% of what it was in 2019. Highlights of expenditure were increases in light and heat & repair and maintenance due to extensive and necessary repairs to the heating system which was highlighted at 2019 AGM. There was an increase in depreciation due to the construction of the disability toilet last year. There was a small net surplus of €66.00 for the year. The assets of the centre increased due to the installation of the disability toilet and the installation of the CCTV system. Current account balance is €14,826.00. Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Diana James and seconded by Philip McGaley.

Chairperson's Report

Welcome to everyone and thank you for attending the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Newcastle Community Centre. The AGM will be from 20.00 to 20.30 hours and will then be followed by the Residents Association AGM from 20.30 hours to 21.00

Report for 2020

This year's committee are:

Jane Smith - Chairperson

Mary Woodnutt – Company Secretary

Hugh O'Rourke – Treasurer

Directors/Trustees: Niamh Becton, Diana Stringer and Ben Doyle.

Committee Members: Craig Holmes and Morgane Lemarie

I want to thank the committee for their support during this difficult period since the outbreak of the Covid 19 virus. At the end of March when the first lock down happened the Centre was closed to all clubs and groups, and then before it could be opened in July the committee worked to ensure that it would be compliant with Covid-19 recommendations. A policy was drafted and adopted by the Board, Covid-19 signage was erected, hand sanitizers installed, to manage the safe use of the toilets, the ladies and men's toilets were closed, with only the disability toilet in use with a one way system implemented. Each club and group were contacted and sent a copy of the Policy and asked to furnish a method statement of how they would manage their club/group in the Centre in line with the Covid-19 stay safe recommendations.

The closure of the Centre has had a financial impact due to the loss of rent revenue. Thankfully the opening cash balance c/f from 2019 was €14,445.69, but due to the loss of revenue and incoming overheads for insurance/light/heat/ this was reduced considerable by June, thankfully due to the re-opening of the North Wicklow Country Market each Saturday and the Playschool we are in a better financial position presently.

The impact of this uncertain time is that only necessary maintenance has been carried out in the year and projects that were proposed to commence in 2020 have been delayed until 2021. We have received in principal a Capital Sports grant of €35,800 for the refurbishment of the existing toilets, to include a Ladies and Gent's changing/showering facility, but we will need to raise additional funds to the cover the total cost and this is not an option in this present climate. We have also applied for a grant to upgrade the kitchen facilities and are awaiting news of our success with this. Other work that was planned for 2020 was painting of the interior of the Centre and some more additional electrical work. These will all be carried over into 2021

Development of the Centre for Clubs/Groups

The longstanding clubs and groups using the centre up to March 2020 were Playschool, Ladybirds, Brownies & Guides, the Craft Group, the Wednesday Coffee Morning, The North Wicklow Country Market and once again the Badminton club recommenced. New activities were Yoga, Sound Bath, Activator Pole Walking, Go for Life Physical Activity Sessions & Social Dancing. Unfortunately due to Covid 19 it has not been possible to keep these groups going, the Badminton and Yoga were able to return for a short time but then when the restrictions went to level 3 and 5 they had to be postponed. Thankfully, the Playschool and the Market have been able to continue since July, following strict Covid 19 Guidelines. Following the success of Stage 1 in basic horticulture from September to November in 2019, Stage 2 started this September as an outdoor activity. Three raised vegetable beds have been built on the grassy area at the rear of the Centre. The cost of this work was funded by a Wicklow County Council (WCC) grant of €350, a donation from the Newcastle Residents Association of €760.00 and a private donation of €500.00. Our thanks to Damon Ackland for the wonderful work building the raised beds and William Power our caretaker for the work he did also.

Compliance:

The NCC Governance Code subgroup of Jane Smith, Mary Woodnutt and Miriam Johnston (Compliance advisor) are close to the end of the journey to be fully compliant with the Charities Regulator's Code. The final step will be at the December Committee meeting when Mary will go through the Charities Governance Code Compliance form, which once approved by the Board, the journey will be completed with just a few outstanding actions. A book of evidence of our compliance has been compiled also. I want to thank Mary and Miriam for their work over the past few years to complete this.

After the 2019 AGM there was a Special Resolution meeting to amend the Memorandum & Articles of Association, the amended Constitution was adopted, and it has now been approved by the Charities Regulator and the Companies Registration Office.

Training

Opportunities for training this year have been limited due to Covid-19, Niamh Beckton completed an online training in Community Leadership with the KWETB. The Wicklow Public Partnership Network (PPN) in conjunction with Carmichael House & The Brockagh Resource Centre organized a 2-session workshop on Peer Support for Community Centre & Halls, focusing on best practice in managing your facility in line with the Covid 19 stay safe recommendations. They also organized a 2-session workshop with Carmichael House on New Options for Funding Your Community Group/Organization. Jane Smith, Mary Woodnutt and Niamh Beckton attended these sessions.

Grants

We have been successful in our application for funding for the refurbishment of the existing toilets to include changing/shower facilities, we have received in principle a Capital Sports grant of €38,500. A Grant of €350.00 was received from WCC for the raised beds/vegetable garden.

Fundraising

Due to the Covid 19 restrictions it has not been possible to fundraise this year. In December 2019 we again held a successful Christmas Craft Fair, this is a community event, with Santa for the children and plenty of Christmas spirit, raising €355.00. Many thanks to The Wicklow Choral Society carol singers who raised €410.00, and Ben and Bridge Doyle for holding the carols in the Castle Inn.

Community Scheme Employee

At the end of last year Marc O'Connor (Caretaker) finished his time with us and then in August

Ger Kavanagh (Cleaner) finished up as well. I thank both Marc and Ger for their work in the Centre for the past 3 years and wish them every success in the future. We have been fortunate in replacing Marc, William Power started working in the Centre when we reopened in July and John Daly will be starting in January 2021 subject to the Covid-19 restrictions being reduced.

Special Event

On the 28th December, 2019 there was a special event held in the Centre, the Newcastle Craft Group got funding from the Wicklow Partnership to organize a day in the Centre for the residents of the Direct Provision Centre in Wicklow. They were transported to the Centre by the local Garda, Greystones Bouncy Castle donated castles for the children to play on, the residents used the kitchen facilities to cook a traditional meal, meat was supplied by John Synnott in Newtownmountkennedy, local residents dropped in presents for the Children and the adults, that were wrapped and distributed by volunteers on the day. I thank all those who gave their time and support, who helped in any way to make this day successful. I want to give a special thanks to Niamh Becton who was the instigator of this day and put a lot of hard work into making it successful.

Volunteers

The importance of volunteers to support the activities in the Centre cannot be underestimated, and therefore we have appointed a Board member, Diana James, as our Volunteer Co-Ordinator. Our committee is a small group, and to ensure that we have the skills needed to manage the running of the Centre and extend the activities we need to increase our pool of volunteers.

Again, I thank everyone who has supported the Centre during the year, and please come along on the 6th December for the Annual Craft Fair and Santa. The Craft Fair will be held in the car park, so fingers crossed that the weather is kind to us.

That concludes my report for the year.

Election of Officers.

Each year one third of the existing committee stand down and are eligible for re-election. This year Diana James and Hugh O Rourke are standing down but available for election. Morgane Lemarie proposed Diana James and seconded by Clodagh Jennings to be elected on to the committee. Hugh O Rourke was proposed by Sean Carroll to be re-elected. This was seconded by Ben Doyle. Both are elected back on to the committee. There were no further nominations for the committee.

Jane thanked everybody for attending and for their continued support during the year and concluded the 2020 AGM.