



An Rialálaí
Carthanas

Charities
Regulator

ANNUAL
REPORT
2019



Our Vision is:

A vibrant, trusted charity sector that is valued for the public benefit it provides.

Our Mission is:

To regulate the charity sector in the public interest so as to ensure compliance with the law and support best practice in the governance, management and administration of charities.

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Charities Regulator

The Charities Regulatory Authority ('Charities Regulator') was established on 16 October 2014 and is responsible for the regulation and protection of charitable trusts and organisations (charities). We have a number of general functions under the Charities Act 2009 ('the Act') which are to:

- Increase public trust and confidence in the management and administration of charities;
- Promote compliance by charity trustees with their duties in the control and management of charities;
- Promote the effective use of the property of charities;
- Ensure the accountability of charities to donors and beneficiaries of charitable gifts, and the public;
- Promote understanding of the requirement that charitable purposes confer a public benefit;
- Establish and maintain a register of charities
- Ensure and monitor compliance by charities with the Act;
- Encourage and facilitate the better administration and management of charities by the provision of information or advice, including in particular by way of issuing and approving guidelines, codes of conduct, and model constitutional documents, where deemed appropriate;
- Carry on such activities or publish such information (including statistical information) concerning charities and charitable trusts where deemed appropriate;
- Provide information (including statistical information) or advice, or make proposals, to the Minister on matters relating to the functions of the Charities Regulator.

Our Values



**An Rialálaí
Carthanas
Charities
Regulator**



Statement from the Chairperson and Chief Executive



Helen Martin
Chief Executive



Patrick Hopkins
Chairperson

During 2019 the Charities Regulatory Authority made significant progress on activities to support its vision of a vibrant, trusted charity sector that is valued for the public benefit that it provides. This progress was made against a backdrop of substantial organisational change with a number of vacancies on our senior management team arising in late 2018 and early 2019. However, by the end of the year, a number of key vacancies on the senior management team had been filled including the positions of Chief Executive, Head of Compliance and Enforcement, Head of Registration & Projects, Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement and Finance Manager. The Board of the Authority and the Chief Executive were delighted to welcome these new additions given their expertise and wealth of experience. We remain focussed on further building up our staff resources to ensure that we can continue to delivery on our statutory remit.

In February 2019, two Board vacancies were filled with the appointment of Ms Rosemary Keogh and Mr Martin Sisk as Members of the Authority following a Public Appointments process. It was with great sadness however, that in April of this year we learned of the untimely passing of former Member of the Authority, Ms Sandra Chambers who made such a significant contribution to the work of the Authority and its committees during its formative years.

During 2019, we continued to work closely with the Department of Rural and Community Development in relation to corporate governance and staff resourcing and wish to thank the Minister and his officials for their support. We also continued to provide input to the Department in relation to a number of proposed amendments to the Charities Act 2009 including amendments required to facilitate greater transparency for the public in relation to the finances and activities of registered charities.

We launched our second Statement of Strategy for 2019 – 2021, which was published in June 2019. In determining our strategic priorities for the period, the Board sought to build on the considerable progress made under our first Statement of Strategy.

During 2019, we continued to focus on strengthening public trust and confidence in the sector. We refreshed the user interface for our online portal based on feedback received from staff and users of the portal and launched a suite of guidance materials and templates to provide practical assistance to registered charities to implement the Charities Governance Code. We also undertook a survey and a national ‘Meet the Charities Regulator’ roadshow, which had a particular focus on the Code. The purpose of this engagement with charity trustees was to identify common issues of concern to charities and to promote compliance with enhanced standards of governance across the sector. We would like to take this opportunity to thank registered charities for their engagement as it enabled the Charities Regulator to ensure that its activities were targeted at areas of greatest concern to charities.

We also continued to process applications for registration and applications under the older Charities Acts with our registration contact centre dealing with 19,146 contacts from charities by e-mail, telephone and through our website during 2019.

Our Compliance & Enforcement team continued to process and address concerns including 649 concerns raised with us by members of the public in 2019. Concerns regarding clothing collections constituted a significant number of the concerns that we received in 2019 and so, with the support of our colleagues in An Garda Síochána, we ran a national radio campaign urging members of the public to check the Charities Register before donating. This particular campaign highlighted the importance of engaging with the wider public to tackle issues which have the potential to divert much needed donations from registered charities in Ireland.

During 2019 we also sought to further enhance our operational efficiency and service delivery by building on and extending our new IT Platform. Working with our IT supplier, we launched Phase 2 in July 2019, which consisted of a new back-office case management system for our Compliance and Enforcement team. We also introduced a suite of new online forms to facilitate electronic applications under the older Charities Acts including a new online Charitable Bequest form, which was launched with input from the Probate Office and

the Law Society. This progress could not have been achieved without the hard work and commitment of all staff and we are grateful for their efforts in delivering these considerable projects while continuing to deliver on the Charities Regulator’s day-to-day activities. We have no doubt that the online facilities and back office systems that were put in place during 2019 will greatly facilitate all aspects of our work and will assist our stakeholders in terms of their engagement with the Charities Regulator.

We could not conclude this introduction without acknowledging that at the time of writing, we are facing a considerable public health crisis the likes of which we have never faced as a country. Like all parts of society, the Charities Regulatory Authority and the charities sector are not immune from the effects of this crisis. We are committed to ensuring that those volunteering at the front line and all those working tirelessly across our communities to deliver much needed services have the information and guidance available to them to ensure that their charities can continue to provide those services in a manner that enhances public trust and confidence in the sector. Ensuring that we continue to engage with registered charities and all of our stakeholders has never been more important. On behalf of the Board and the staff of the Charities Regulator, we would therefore like to thank all of our stakeholders for their continuing support and engagement with our work.

Patrick Hopkins
Chairperson

Helen Martin
Chief Executive

June 2020

2019 Highlights



Our Operations

The work carried out by the Charities Regulator is aligned with the strategic priorities set out in our second Statement of Strategy 2019 - 2020. Our four Strategic Priorities are:

- Strengthen Public Trust & Confidence in Charities
- Provide Proportionate Risk-Based Regulation & Protection
- Promote Compliance & Enhance Engagement
- Enhance Operational Efficiency & Service Delivery

These Strategic Priorities form the basis of our work in the following areas:

- Registration of Charities
- Compliance & Enforcement
- Charity Services & Legal Affairs
- Communications & Engagement
- Guidance & Research
- Governance & Management of the Charities Regulator

Registration of Charities

The Charities Regulator maintains the Register of Charities. The Register listed 10,514 charities as of 31 December 2019, a net increase of 715 from the end of 2018. Anyone can search the register at www.charitiesregulator.ie.

By law all charities which operate or wish to operate in the State must apply for inclusion on the Register of Charities regardless of their size, legal structure or income. The Register provides details about all registered charities and plays a crucial role in strengthening public trust and confidence in charities. By necessity, the application process is a rigorous one and there are a number of benefits which come with successful registration, for example:

- Only a registered charity can legally use the terms “charity” or “Irish charity” when describing their organisation.
- Charities have the right to apply for a number of tax exemptions, tax rebates and other beneficial schemes.
- Charities can apply for certain grants and certain sources of funding.
- Charities are provided with an RCN (Registered Charity Number) upon registration which shows donors and the public that they are a regulated entity.
- Registered charities each have a page on the Register of Charities where donors or the public can find important information about the charity.

Charities registered by decision under section 39 of the Charities Act 2009 represent 38% of the total number of charities on the Register – an increase of 6% from the end of 2018. At the end of 2019, 62% (6,511) of charities on the Register were registered under section 40 of the Charities Act 2009. Section 40 provides that when the Charities Regulator was established on 16 October 2014, those organisations who already held a valid charitable tax exemption and associated CHY number issued by the Revenue Commissioners, were deemed automatically registered on the Register of Charities. There were 8,452 charities deemed automatically registered in this manner on 16 October 2014. Such charities remain registered with the Charities Regulator as long as they are entitled to hold the relevant charitable tax exemption. At the end of 2019, 1,941 Section 40 charities – an increase of 130 – were no longer entitled to hold that charitable tax exemption and had been removed from the Register.

The legal form of registered charities

Charities can take one of three types of legal form: Incorporated, unincorporated or charitable trust. Charities on the Register of Charities can be broken down in following way:

Table 01: Legal forms of charities

Legal form	Type	Amount	% of total
Incorporated	Companies	4,660	44.3%
Unincorporated	Association	1,589	15.1%
	Board of management (schools)	2,861	27.2%
	Other	785	7.5%
Charitable Trust	Trust	619	5.9%
Total		10,514	

Charitable purpose of charities

The Charities Act 2009 sets out specific categories of charitable purpose. They are:

- The prevention or relief of poverty or economic hardship;
- The advancement of education;
- The advancement of religion;
- Any other purpose that is of benefit to the community*

*There are 12 sub-categories under this purpose.

Table 02: Charities by charitable purpose

Charitable purpose by category	Amount	% of total
Advancement of education	5,656	30.2%
Advancement of religion	1,409	7.5%
Other purpose of benefit to the community	10,022	53.6%
Relief of poverty or economic hardship	1,627	8.7%
Total	18,714**	

**There are 10,514 registered charities in Ireland. Charities may have more than one charitable purpose, for example a charity who provides grant funding to other charities may support almost all of the charitable purposes provided for within the Charities Act 2009.

Annual reporting by charities

Charities are required to report annually on their finances, resources and activities. Annual reports are due 10 months after the charity’s financial year end. This is a legal requirement under section 52 of the Charities Act 2009 and is essential in promoting public confidence and trust in charities through the provision of accurate, timely and reliable information.

Compliance with annual reporting
The first full year of annual reporting was for 2016. The Charities Regulator measures two key performance indicators: charities’ compliance with their annual report deadline and charities’ compliance within 7 months of the end of the year that the annual report should have been filed.

Table 03: Annual reporting by charities

Year	Charities Filing on Time	Compliance at Y/end +7 months
2016	42%	89%
2017	54%	98%
2018	70%	95%
2019	75%	N/A

Compliance with filing obligations continues to improve.

Contacts received from charities

The Charities Regulator received 19,146 initial contacts and queries from charities, the public, beneficiaries and other stakeholders – a decrease of 11% on 2018. Telephone is the most popular means of engagement and represents almost two-thirds of all contacts. The reduction in in email volumes has been due to enhancements of our Digital Platform.

Table 04: Contacts from charities

Method/Channel	2019	2018	Change
Telephone	12,129	11,004	10%
Email	4,836	9,415	-49%
Website / MyAccount	2,181	1,102	98%
Grand Total	19,146	21,521	-11%

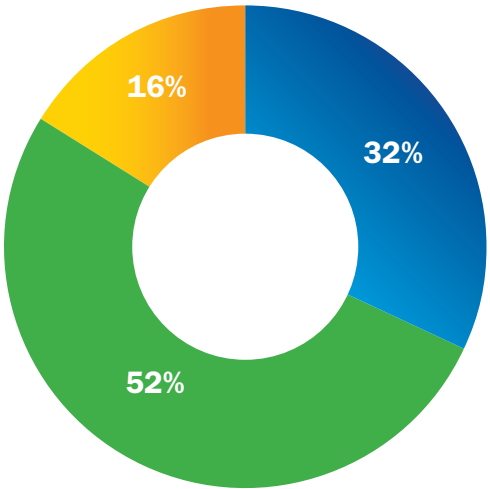
Financial information on charities in Ireland

The annual report filed by an individual charity provides information on the activities of that charity in a given period, and demonstrates how that charity furthers its charitable purpose. It further indicates how a charity has used its

funding for the public benefit, gives details of its income, expenditure, numbers of employees, types and estimated number of beneficiaries in the reporting period.

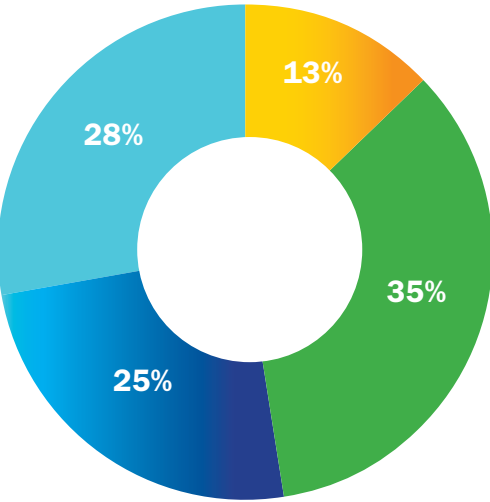
Of the 2,165 charities reporting an annual income of over €250,000 in 2019, 875 of the category had income in excess of €1million. This is up from 855 in 2018.

- Large (more than EUR100k)
- Medium (EUR10k - EUR100K)
- Small (less than EUR10k)



“875 charities had income in excess of €1million in 2019”

Taken from the annual reports submitted by charities in 2019 Table 03 show the percentage of charities by bands of volunteers and employees. 72% of charities have fewer than 20 volunteers per year to assist them in the good work that they do, while 43% of charities do not have any employees.



“72% of charities have fewer than 20 volunteers”

- Charities income >€250k
- > €0.25 million
 - > €0.5 million
 - > €1 million
 - > €5 million

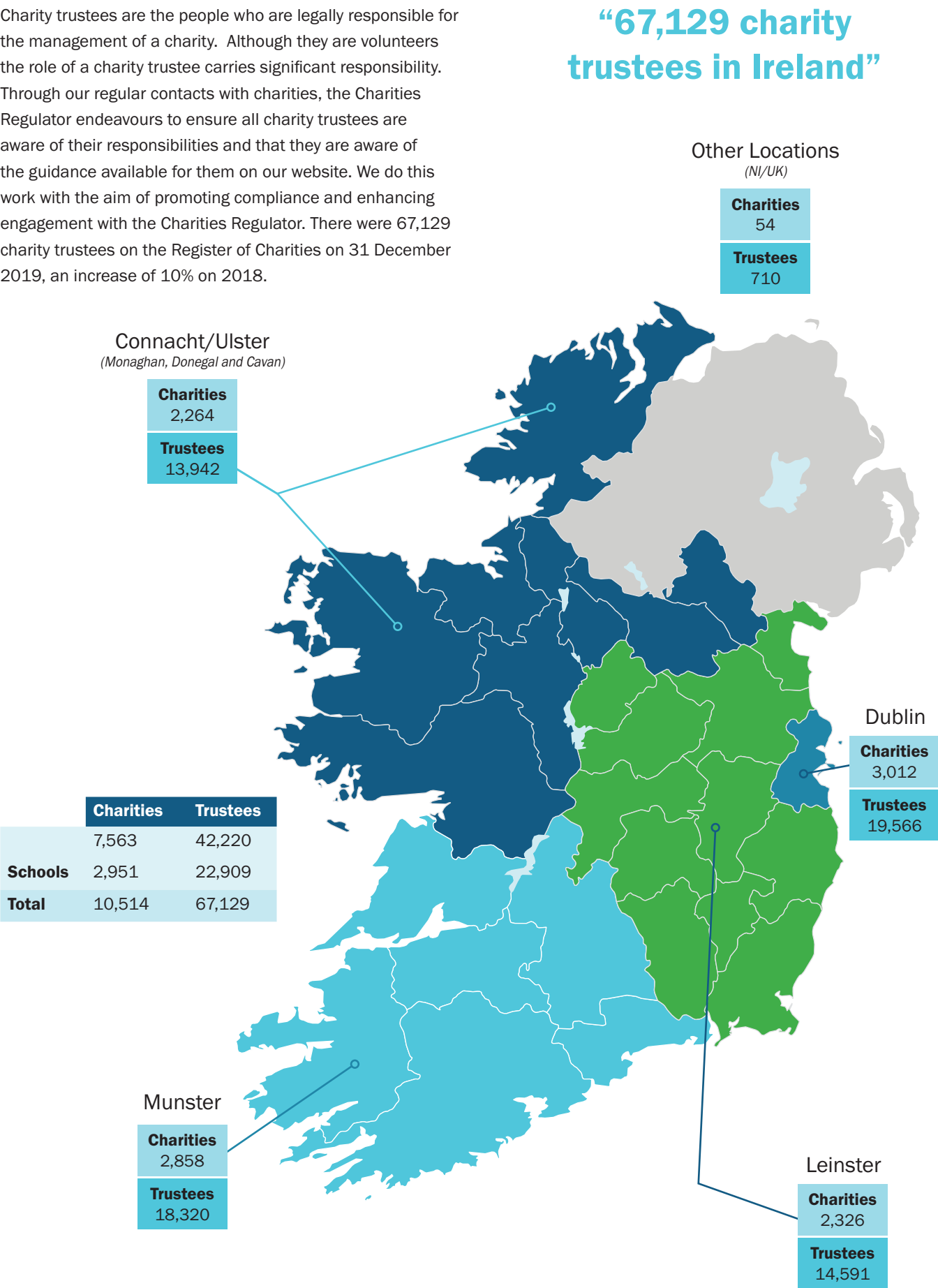
Table 05 – Employees and volunteers working for charities in 2019

No. of volunteers	No. of charities	% of charities	No. of employees	No. of charities	% of charities
None	896	15%	None	2,569	43%
1-9	2,258	38%	1-19	2,498	42%
10-19	1,115	19%	20-49	456	8%
20-49	917	16%	50-249	286	5%
50-249	545	9%	250-499	106	2%
250+	184	3%			
Total	5,915		Total	5,915	

*While charity trustees are also volunteers, this figure generally refers to the number of other volunteers working with a charity.

Charities by County

Charity trustees are the people who are legally responsible for the management of a charity. Although they are volunteers the role of a charity trustee carries significant responsibility. Through our regular contacts with charities, the Charities Regulator endeavours to ensure all charity trustees are aware of their responsibilities and that they are aware of the guidance available for them on our website. We do this work with the aim of promoting compliance and enhancing engagement with the Charities Regulator. There were 67,129 charity trustees on the Register of Charities on 31 December 2019, an increase of 10% on 2018.



Compliance and Enforcement

A key function of the Charities Regulator is to monitor and ensure compliance by charities with the provisions of charities legislation, in particular, the Charities Act 2009. Our concerns process is underpinned by our Concerns Policy which is publicly available on our website. During 2019 our Concerns Policy was reviewed and updated to reflect operational experience. We published the amended version of our Concerns Policy in May 2019.

Concerns arise through contacts from members of the public, contacts from charities, media reports and from proactive monitoring work by the Charities Regulator. When we receive a concern, we examine the information provided, conduct a risk assessment, and if warranted seek assurances and information from the charity or organisation. Where the Charities Regulator is not assured by the assurances or information provided, then we may use powers under the Charities Act 2009 to require information, issue directions, apply sanctions and, where necessary, appoint inspectors to investigate the affairs of the charity.

Concerns Raised

In 2019, 649 individual concerns were raised with the Charities Regulator in respect of 521 organisations. The number of individual concerns raised represents a decrease of 5% on the number of concerns raised in 2018, when 686 concerns were raised.

“Concerns down by 5%”

The number of organisations which had concerns raised about them increased by 23% from 423 in 2018 to 521 in 2019. These figures reflect a trend where although the incidence of multiple concerns being received in relation to individual organisations has reduced, the number of organisations in relation to which we received a concern has increased.

“Number of organisations reported to the Charities Regulator up 23%”

Categories of issues raised

The varied nature of the issues raised with the Charities Regulator, reflects the wide range of organisations, charitable purposes and beneficiaries that make up Ireland’s charity sector. However, from the concerns raised it is possible to discern a number of broad categories.

Of the concerns raised with the Charities Regulator in 2019, approximately 91% raised issues in the combined categories of ‘Legitimacy of Charity’, ‘Governance Issues’ and ‘Financial Control & Transparency’.

46% of all concerns received referred to the ‘Legitimacy of Charity’ category. This reflects public awareness of unregistered organisations seeking donations, particularly in the area of organisations running clothing collections. Due to the significant number of concerns in this area the Charities Regulator ran a public awareness campaign in November, in partnership with An Garda Síochána, to highlight the issue.

“46% of all concerns in 2019 referred to Legitimacy of Charity”

The full breakdown of the categories of issues raised in 2019 is set out in Table 06.

Table 06 - Categories of Issues Raised in 2019

Category	2019	2018	% variance
Number of individual concerns received	649	686	5% decrease
Number of individual concerns closed	597	722	17% decrease
Number of individual concerns open at year end	359	294	22% increase
Number of concerns open at year end by organisation	237	158	50% increase

During 2019 a total of 597 individual concerns were closed, as set out in Table 06. This figure represents a decrease of 17% on the overall number of individual concerns that were closed in 2018, which was 722.

A loss of staff working in the area of compliance and enforcement in 2019, resulted in a reduction in our capacity

to close concerns at the same rate as previous years. However, the Compliance & Enforcement Unit has since been strengthened through the recruitment of a Head of Compliance & Enforcement in November 2019 and the appointment of additional specialist staff to the Unit.

Table 07 - Categories of Concern 2019

Key Action / Milestone from day of receipt	Performance Indicators	Actual Performance
Concerns recorded	85% within 5 days 100% within 10 days	96% within 5 days 100% within 10 days
Acknowledgement of concerns issued	85% within 5 days 100% within 10 days	99% within 5 days 100% within 10 days
Initial risk assessment conducted	75% within 15 days 100% within 20 days	75% within 15 days 99% within 20 days
Concern cases allocated	75% within 20 days 100% within 30 days	98% within 20 days 99% within 30 days
Concerns closed	75% within 180 days	96% within 180 days

Part 4 Powers – Protection of Charitable Organisations

The enforcement function of the Charities Regulator provides proportionate risk-based regulation and protection of charities. In September 2016, Part 4 of the Charities Act 2009 was commenced, providing investigative and protective powers for the Charities Regulator. This includes the capability to impose sanctions if a charity breaches certain obligations such as the requirement to keep proper books of account or to submit its annual report. It also gives the Charities Regulator the authority to appoint inspectors to conduct statutory investigations into the affairs of charities.

During 2019, the Charities Regulator exercised its powers under Part 4 in a number of instances, which included:

- Publication of an inspectors' report into Galway University Foundation;
- Directions to charity trustees under section 53 of the Charities Act 2009 to provide information to the Charities Regulator;
- Directions to charity trustees under section 68 of the Charities Act 2009 to produce books, documents and other records.

Galway University Foundation Inspector’s Report

In December the Charities Regulator published an inspector's report into Galway University Foundation (Registered Charity Number 20038823) following an investigation into the affairs of the charity.

We received concerns about the charity and following our preliminary inquiries a decision was made to appoint inspectors to carry out an investigation under Part 4 of the

Charities Act 2009. We received the inspector's report in November and a decision to publish the Report was taken by the Charities Regulator pursuant to section 66(3)(c) of the Charities Act 2009.

A copy of the Report is available at www.charitiesregulator.ie.

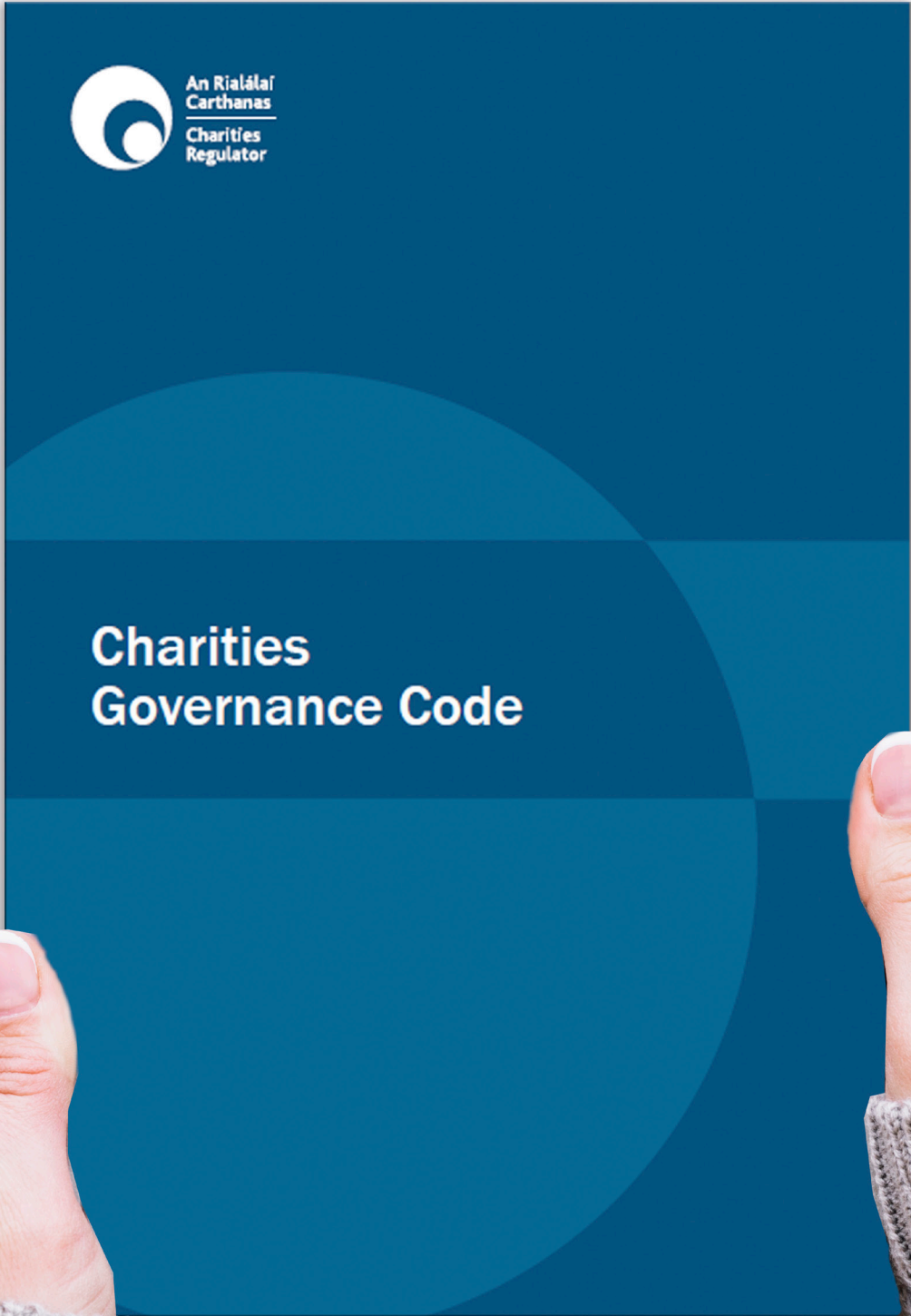
Compliance Report 2018

During 2019, we compiled and published the Charities Regulator's Compliance Report 2018, which included an analysis of our compliance activities in 2018, and the utilisation of powers under Part 4 of the Charities Act 2009.

The Report included an analysis of the concerns raised during 2018 and reported on other compliance activities during the year, including public notices on compliance matters, statutory actions taken and thematic reports.



The Charities Governance Code – Year of Learning



In November 2018, the Charities Regulator launched the Charities Governance Code, which sets the minimum standards which charity trustees (i.e. anyone serving on the Board or a committee of a charity), should ensure their charity meets in order to effectively manage and control their organisation.

The Charities Governance Code recognises the huge diversity which exists within Irish charities, ranging from organisations with millions of euro in turnover and hundreds of staff, to charities that are volunteer-led with very low incomes. It aims to be proportionate and it is written primarily with volunteer-only charities and charities with small numbers of paid staff in mind.

As set out at its launch, 2019 was a learning year in relation to the Charities Governance Code. As part of our commitment to supporting charity trustees to implement the Charities Governance Code, we developed a Charities Governance Code Toolkit, which comprises a suite of guidance documents and templates, including a completed 'Sample Compliance Record Form' designed to assist charity trustees with the implementation of the Charities Governance Code. These guidance documents and templates are published on our website under the following headings:

- **Sample Compliance Record Form**
- **Charity Trustee Duties and Role**
- **Meetings and Minutes**
- **Planning and Risk**
- **Recruitment and Induction**
- **General note on 'other' legal and regulatory requirements**

As part of our commitment to working with charities, we carried out a survey to better understand the areas of greatest concern to charities arising from the Charities Governance Code. The results of the survey informed the content of presentations on the Code, which were delivered at our regional Meet the Charities Regulator seminars in the second half of the year.



Jelena Griscenko delivering a presentation on the Charities Governance Code at Charity Trustees' Week



Martin Sisk and Helen Martin, CEO, discuss the Charities Governance Code



Attendees discuss the Charities Governance Code at our Meet the Charities Regulator event in Limerick

Charity Services & Legal Affairs

On the date of its establishment, the Charities Regulator assumed the roles and functions previously carried out by the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland. This function includes processing requests from charities and their legal advisors arising under the Charities Acts 1961 and 1973. Staff of the Charities Regulator support the work of the Charity Services Committee, which considers applications under the 1961 and 1973 Acts.

The types of requests and applications which are processed by the Charities Regulator under this function include:

- **Authorisation of disposition of lands held upon charitable trust:** The Charities Regulator may authorise the sale or other disposition of lands held upon charitable trusts where the charity trustees do not otherwise have such a power.
- **Appointment of new trustees:** Upon the application of a trustee (or any person having an interest), the Charities Regulator may, where there are no surviving trustees of a charitable trust or where the personal representative of the last surviving trustee cannot be located, appoint a new trustee or trustees.
- **Framing of schemes applying charitable property**
Cy-Près: The Charities Regulator has the power to settle schemes for applying charity property Cy-près (as near as possible to the intentions of the original donor), where the original objects have failed or are not possible to implement.

- **Compromise of claims by or against a charity:** Upon the application of the charity trustees of a charity, the Charities Regulator may sanction a compromise in relation to a claim made by or against a charity.
- **Advice to charity trustees experiencing difficulty in administering a charitable trust:** The Charities Regulator may advise charity trustees who have a difficulty in relation to the administration of a charitable trust, or executors of a will experiencing difficulty in administering a charitable devise or bequest.
- **Making of vesting orders in relation to leases:** The Charities Regulator may make vesting orders freeing charity property from the operation of onerous covenants in leases made pursuant to the Leases for Schools (Ireland) Act 1881 and other leases for charitable purposes, where the person entitled to the lessor's interest is unknown or cannot be found.
- **Examination of Charitable Bequest Forms received from Probate Office:** The Charities Regulator examines forms received from the Probate Office, which supplies details of all charitable bequests, for the purpose of establishing if receipts for such bequests were obtained.

The Charity Services Committee considered 191 matters in 2019. The matters dealt with are broken down in the following table.

Table 08 – Categories of Matter Considered 2019

Type of Matter	Number of matters dealt with in 2019
Non-routine applications (miscellaneous matters e.g. where the Charity Regulator's opinion or advice was sought; Cy-Près applications)	42
Litigation	4
Routine applications - property disposals (e.g. authorisation of mortgages, sales, transfers, leases, redress)	68
Executive matters e.g. amendments to policies and procedures	16
Power of sale	7
Appointment of new trustees	37
Formal items e.g. Cy-Près Schemes sealed, Opinion/Advice sealed	17

Digital Platform System and Charity Services

The second phase of the new Digital Platform System was rolled out in 2019 pursuant to which all new applications under the 1961 and 1973 Acts must be submitted electronically to the Charities Regulator via the 'MyAccount' online portal. We published user guides in relation to the different types of applications on our website www.charitiesregulator.ie.

In October 2019 we launched a new online Charitable Bequest Form, following consultation with the Probate Office. This new form replaced the PAS3 Form which was available

from the Courts Services website. The new Charitable Bequest Form introduced a revised practice whereby executors/solicitors applying for grants of representation to the Probate Office (where the will contains a charitable legacy) must now complete and submit the Charitable Bequest Form electronically to the Charities Regulator via the 'MyAccount' online portal. The Charitable Bequest Form is then printed, signed by the executor/solicitor and lodged with the application for a grant in the Probate Office. This development is key for enhancing operational efficiency and service delivery in line with our strategic priorities.



The crowd at our Meet the Charities Regulator event in Donegal

Legal Affairs

The Charities Regulator has a legal affairs team to provide in-house legal support across the organisation. In 2019, the

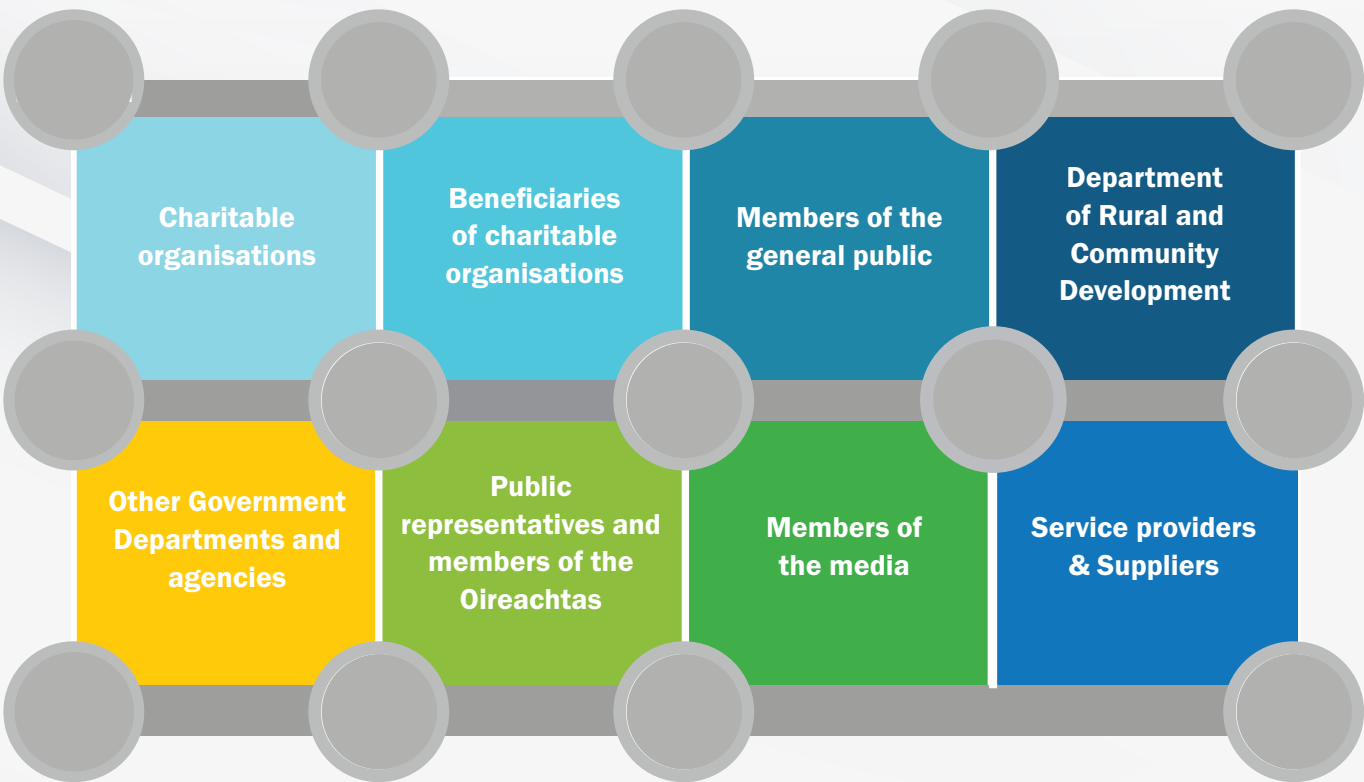
legal affairs team provided legal advice on a wide range of day-to-day regulatory issues and corporate affairs matters.

Communications & Engagement

Communication has been a core feature of the work of the Charities Regulator since its establishment, in terms of creating awareness of the Charities Regulator amongst charities and amongst the public and its wider stakeholder base. We aim to highlight key messages through a robust communications program which reaches out charity trustees

and the wider public. We seek to engage stakeholders through a range of traditional and social media as well as face-to-face activities. In order to work effectively, it is important to recognise who our stakeholders are and tailor our communications activities to relevant audiences to ensure key messages are delivered in a manner that maximises impact.

Charities Regulator’s stakeholders include:



We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity and we put in place measures to ensure our website and all stakeholder events are both inclusive and accessible. We

aim to assist our stakeholders as much as possible and we welcome comments and suggestions as to how we can meet expectations.

Public Awareness Poll

Our second public awareness poll was carried out in December by Behaviours and Attitudes (B&A) who were selected following a competitive procurement process. The survey of a representative national sample of over 1,000 adults took place in November/December and took the form of an online survey of people drawn from the B&A Online Panel.

A comparative study against the 2018 poll carried out for the Charities Regulator showed an increase in public awareness of the Charities Regulator and our regulatory activities.

Key findings of Charities Regulator Public Awareness Poll:



Media/Advertising

The Charities Regulator published a total of 18 press releases in 2019. We received coverage in the national and regional media for a number of specific announcements, including the launch of our second Statement of Strategy 2019-2021.

In November we launched an advertising campaign, supported by An Garda Síochána, in relation to 'bogus house-to-house collections'. The campaign was designed to warn the public to be vigilant when donating goods to these collections, and to always check the Register of Charities before donating their time or money.



Website and social media

There was an increase of 4.25% in visitors to our website in 2019, with 123,800 people logging on to www.charitiesregulator.ie. We use the banner on the home page of the website to highlight key developments on the site, such as the publication of any new guidance documents, and continue to keep track of which pages are of most interest to our stakeholders with the use of Google Analytics. Our social media platforms play a growing role in our

communications. In 2019 we grew the number of LinkedIn followers from 1,075 at the end of 2018 to 1,727 at the end of 2019, an increase of 61%. Our Twitter followers also grew with the account gaining an additional 373 followers, bringing the total number of followers to 2,619 at the end of 2019, an increase of 17%. We use social media to highlight key messages and developments of the Charities Regulator. Our Social Media Policy can be viewed on our website.



Eamon O'Halloran gives a presentation at our Meet the Charities Regulator event in Waterford



Two Trustees conversing at our Meet the Charities Regulator event in Athlone

Charities Regulator E-zine

We circulate a quarterly e-zine (digital newsletter) to keep charities and interested members of the public up to date with what is happening in the area of charity regulation, and about events and opportunities. In 2019 we published four

editions of the E-zine which were delivered to over 20,000 subscribers. Anyone who wishes to subscribe can do so via the homepage of our website.

Stakeholder Engagement Events

Events play a key role in promoting the role of the Charities Regulator. We do our best to ensure we maintain engagement with charities from all over Ireland and one way we do this is through our Meet the Charities Regulator events. From September to December 2019 senior members of staff from the Charities Regulator spoke to charity trustees in Waterford, Athlone, Donegal, Cork, Limerick and Dublin. The events consisted of a range of presentations to inform and support charity trustees, followed by a chaired panel Q&A session. Questions and feedback received during these events help to inform future stakeholder engagement and our broader regulatory work. A campaign to publicise the Roadshow

included email flyers to registered charities, regional radio and newspaper notices, social media posts, and updates in our E-zine.

"I thought it was an excellent idea to come out to various centres around the country and to give people the opportunity to attend, and learn their responsibilities going forward" - *Quote from event attendee*



Attendees at our Meet the Charities Regulator event in Waterford



Attendees at our Meet the Charities Regulator event in Limerick



Attendees at our Meet the Charities Regulator event in Waterford



Helen Martin, CEO, and Patrick Hopkins, Chairperson, before addressing charities in Athlone

Charity Trustees' Week 2019

Charity Trustees' Week 2019 took place from 12-16 November. It consists of a structured set of wide-ranging events organised by the Charities Regulator in partnership with seven other umbrella bodies who work with and represent charity trustees: Carmichael, The Wheel, Volunteer Ireland, Charities Institute, Boardmatch, Pobal, Dóchas. The aims of Charity Trustees' Week are to:

- Celebrate and thank charity trustees for the key role which they play in the governance and leadership of Ireland's charities;
- Highlight the importance of good governance of boards, promote the need for a thorough knowledge of trustees' roles and responsibilities, education and upskilling of trustees;
- Highlight the need for new trustees to come forward, and highlight the means by which new trustees can be connected with charities that need trustees;
- create a greater understanding and awareness among the public of the role of trustees, and the awareness that trustees are members of the public.

A week-long series of events was organised by groups represented on the steering committee. For its part, the Charities Regulator organised public meetings for charity trustees in Dublin and Cork during the week with a particular focus on the Charities Governance Code.

In order to reach charity trustees across the country, a national and local media ad campaign ran for the week preceding Charity Trustees' Week. The Charities Regulator hosted the Charities Trustees' Week website through our own website.

The website hosted an up-to-date calendar breakdown of all events with hyperlinks to register attendance. It also featured useful links, as suggested by members of the steering committee, and links to the various podcasts and webinars offered.

Each member body of the steering committee garnered feedback from attendees and all members were pleased with the response:

"It was great to meet key personnel face to face" -
Quote from event attendee

"Informative and very well worth attending"
- Quote from event attendee

"Clear progressive presentations with reassurance regarding procedures involved in complying with the Governance Code" -
Quote from event attendee



Helen Martin, CEO, addressing charity trustees during Charity Trustees' Week

Charity Trustees Awareness

Charity trustees are the people who exercise control over, and are legally responsible for, the management and control of a charity and include committee members, council members, board members and directors.

In 2019, work was carried out on communicating the meaning of the term 'charity trustee' in order to ensure those who hold these responsibilities are aware and appropriately equipped to carry out their duties. We did this by using our ezine, website and social media platforms to draw attention to the term and to direct charities to the Who is a Charity Trustee? guidance on our website.

The term was explained and expanded upon and at our Meet the Charities Regulator roadshow and at other public-facing engagements.

Public Facing Engagements

The Chief Executive and staff from the Charities Regulator attended thirty events during 2019. The Chief Executive spoke at eleven conferences and seminars, and senior staff from the Charities Regulator spoke at thirteen conferences and seminars during the year. These events included:

- The Voluntary Assistance Scheme of the Bar of Ireland's Charity seminar
- Law society of Ireland on Charity Law
- Meath, Wicklow Monaghan Public Participation Network (PPN)
- Charity SORP Governance Review
- Community First Responders (CFR) Workshop

Parliamentary Questions

The Charities Regulator received 11 Parliamentary Questions during 2019.

Oireachtas Committee

In 2019, the Charities Regulator was invited to attend a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee. The meeting was held on 21 November 2019 and was attended by the CEO and the Charities Regulator's Head of Registration & Projects and Finance Manager.

Charity Trustees' Week



Eamon O'Halloran, Head of Registration and Projects, at a Charity Trustees' Week seminar

Guidance and Research

In our ongoing efforts to promote compliance by charities and enhance engagement with the Charities Regulator, we consistently develop and update guidance for charities and the public. A cornerstone of this work in 2019 was the publication of the Charities Governance Code Toolkit – a suite of documents designed to help charities comply with their duties in a straight-forward and comprehensive way. The Toolkit covers areas including:

- Meetings and minutes
- Risk management
- Internal financial controls
- Legal duties

In addition to the Toolkit, we also published guidance documents for charities including, *Guidance on Winding up Charity*, and *Schools Annual Report Guidelines*. As noted earlier in this Annual Report, a Compliance Report relating to the year 2018 was also published and provided a source of learning for charity trustees in terms of understanding the kinds of concerns that are reported to the Charities Regulator and the types of compliance issues that charities have encountered.

We are happy to publish our documents in English and As Gaeilge in line with the Official Languages Act 2003.

In our efforts to strengthen public trust and confidence in charities, we identify and commission research into issues of relevance to the regulation of charities to ensure that policies and regulatory activities are underpinned by data, expert knowledge and experience.

In 2019, further to Recommendation 6 of the Report of the Consultative Panel on the Governance of Charitable Organisations (April 2018), the Charities Regulator commissioned Indecon to carry out research into the potential in Ireland for a centralised database to streamline compliance and reporting obligations between State Bodies by reference to models developed in other jurisdictions, most notably the ‘report-once, use often’ system used by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), known as the ‘Charity Passport’ scheme. Indecon’s Report into the Potential for a ‘Charity Passport’ Facility for Charity Data in Ireland was published in November 2019. This comprehensive study involved engagement with 41 stakeholder organisations and a survey of nearly 1,000 charities. The Report set out a number of key findings and made recommendations for how some of the issues highlighted might best be addressed.

The full Report can be accessed on our website: www.charitiesregulator.ie

“There is a significant cost for some charities in meeting the information requirements of funders and other agencies in Ireland”
– Finding, page 58 of the Report

“A ‘Forum of Funders/Regulators’ should be established to help coordinate reporting requirements, and identify areas where information requests could be streamlined.”
– Recommendation, Page 60 of the Report.

Governance and Management of the Charities Regulator

Organisational and financial resource review

The Charities Regulator is fully committed to promoting a positive working environment that takes account of the needs of individuals, while at the same time meeting the needs of the organisation.

With our second Statement of Strategy 2019 – 2021 came a renewed vision for the organisation.

Strategic Priority 4 provides for the enhancement of operational efficiency and service delivery. We ensure this is achieved by:

- working with the Department of Rural and Community Development to enhance our internal governance structures and to enable the Charities Regulator to achieve corporate independence over the life of our second Statement of Strategy;
- ensuring the Charities Regulator is appropriately resourced with suitably qualified, experienced and skilled staff;
- deploying resources in line with regulatory priorities;
- developing a communications strategy that builds greater awareness of the Charities Regulator and delivers targeted and consistent messaging about the organisation and its activities.

In line with our Statement of Strategy 2019-2021, during 2019 we saw further organisational development of the Charities Regulator as part of our efforts to continue to build an effective, efficient regulatory authority. We continued to focus on strengthening and supporting our senior management team and ensuring that staff of the organisation have the skills and expertise to deliver on our overall strategic priorities.

The loss of key members of the senior management team in late 2018 and early 2019, meant that the Executive was without a number of key senior staff for the first 6 months of the year. During 2019, the Charities Regulator worked closely with the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Public Appointments Service and an external recruitment

agency to identify suitably skilled and experienced staff to fill vacancies within the organisation. By the end of 2019, a number of key vacancies had been filled including the appointment of a new CEO, a Head of Compliance & Enforcement, a Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement and a Finance Manager.

The Charities Regulator also worked with external service providers to ensure that key roles, such as that of Data Protection Officer, were filled using outsourced resources pending the appointment of fulltime staff members.

At the end of 2019, the Charities Regulator had 38 members of staff.

Risk Management

Risk and control functions are overseen by the Authority’s Finance, Audit, Risk and Governance Committee. We maintain a Corporate Risk Register and our Risk Management Framework is aligned with the Department of Public Expenditure Reform’s guidelines on Risk Management.

The Charities Regulator’s main Strategic Corporate Risks in 2019 were as follows:

1. Insufficient staff with the appropriate competencies and skill sets in key posts, affecting the Charities Regulator’s ability to develop and provide effective service;
2. A major ‘event’ occurs in the charity sector, which the Charities Regulator cannot respond to effectively due to a shortage of suitably skilled staff resources;
3. Failure to engage with stakeholders effectively thereby affecting the ability of the Charities Regulator to provide acceptable service delivery.

We put plans and actions in place to successfully mitigate identified risks in 2019. These included the recruitment of a number of senior managers, the procurement of outsourced specialist resources in the areas of finance, HR, procurement, legal advice, data protection, IT Project Management,

public relations and event management. Engagement with stakeholders was strengthened through further resourcing of the our existing Communications & Stakeholder Engagement team and the identification of new means of engaging with stakeholders to understand service expectations and emerging issues for the sector.

Corporate Governance

The Charities Regulator is an independent statutory body established under and governed by the Charities Act 2009. As a public body, we work to ensure that we meet the requirements set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) (‘the Code’).

As required by the Code, an external evaluation of Board performance was carried out in 2019. Annual self-assessment evaluations were also carried out by the Finance, Audit, Risk and Governance Committee, the Charity Services Committee and the Regulatory Committee. The results of the evaluations are reflected in the work programmes of the Board and its Committees for 2020.

The Board’s reserved functions include decisions to refuse an application for charitable status under the Charities Act 2009 and decisions under the Charities Acts 1961 and 1973. Functions delegated to the Chief Executive include functions relating to day-to-day compliance and other regulatory activities.

Further to the Code, in 2019, the Charities Regulator concluded an Oversight and Assurance Agreement 2019 – 2020 with the Department of Rural and Community Development. The Agreement sets out in broad terms the corporate governance arrangements in place and the roles and responsibilities of the parties in terms of supporting and delivering on those arrangements in a number of areas including reporting on strategic plans, financial statements and our internal audit. It also addresses performance delivery by reference to required financial and human resource inputs.

Public Sector Human Rights and Equality Duty

In 2019, we continued to ensure that our policies, procedures and communications enable us to perform our functions as a public body with due regard for our obligations in relation to human rights and equality under section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. Our work in this area includes:

- Using communications that are straightforward and use plain language.

- Publishing and distributing information across a wide range of media.
- Ensuring accessibility at stakeholder events for those with varying physical abilities.
- Establishing ways of communicating with those with limited hearing, for example:
 - o Subtitled videos on our website;
 - o Employing the services of sign-language translators at events when requested.
- Establishing ways of communicating with those with limited sight, for example:
 - o Availability of the Charities Governance Code in braille;
 - o Use of audio guidance videos on our website.

We continue to build on our work in this area to ensure continued compliance with requirements relating to human rights and equality.

Procurement

A number of procurement competitions were successfully completed by our Corporate Affairs unit in 2019 and included the following:

1. Media buying services were procured for the implementation of public notices. The company used was drawn down from the Office of Government Procurement’s (OGP) Framework for the Provision of Media Strategy, Planning and Buying services.
2. Print and design services for the 2018 Annual Report.
3. Public Relations Services
4. Service for the provision of guidance and training on Safeguarding, Risk Assessment and Safety Checks
5. Data Protection Officer Services
6. Provision of a Public Awareness Poll
7. HR Support Service
8. Provision of Power BI Specialist
9. Recruitment Service
10. Cyber Security Penetration Testing Service
11. Event Management Services
12. Provision of a Franking Machine
13. External Board Evaluation

Customer Engagement Digital platform

The Charities Regulator is an independent statutory body established under and governed by the Charities Act 2009. As a public body, we work to ensure that we meet the requirements set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016) (‘the Code’).

The Digital Platform System, the first phase of which was launched in July 2018, continues to be the prime means for charities and members of the public to interact with the Charities Regulator. It provides an integrated basis for the collection and storage of data related to charities and their activities. Work completed in 2019, has facilitated the delivery of comprehensive analytical management reports and the improvement of our services.

Following the successful launch of Phase One of the Digital Platform System in July 2018, Phase Two was launched in July 2019. This phase introduced 12 new online forms for accessing services provided under the Charities Acts 1961 and 1973; these relate mainly to the disposition of charity assets, charitable bequests and appointment of new trustees. An integrated case management system was implemented for our Compliance & Enforcement function, greatly enhancing our ability to achieve high standards of consistency and accuracy, and providing the ability to record and analyse data more efficiently and identify risks to inform our regulatory work.

A dedicated Annual Report form for Primary and Post-Primary schools was made available to help reduce the administrative burden for these charities in complying with their reporting requirements under the Charities Act 2009.

A major upgrade to the *MyAccount* dashboard was deployed in February 2019. Navigation of application forms, submissions and correspondence was improved and the display of information within forms was simplified to create a more intuitive user experience.

Table 09 - Freedom of Information requests

Total Requests received in 2019	Total	Granted	Part Granted	Refused	Withdrawn or handled outside FOI	Internal Review
Personal	3			1	2	
Non-Personal	24	1	9	8	1	
Mixed	1			1		
Total	28					
Open at year end	5					

Telephone System

The Charities Regulator’s contact centre includes telephone support. Lines are open from 10am-5pm Monday to Friday for general and registration queries.

Anyone wishing to raise a concern about a charity can call the dedicated Concerns phone line.

Analytics tools are employed to measure call handling activities and performance to improve response times and the overall caller experience.

Complaints Policy

The term ‘complaints’, as referenced in this section, refers to complaints made against the Charities Regulator, as distinct from ‘concerns’ made against charities or those purporting to be charities.

Eleven complaints were investigated and closed under our Complaints Policy in 2019.

Access to Information Freedom of Information

As a public body, the Charities Regulator is committed to being a transparent and accessible organisation. The Freedom of Information Act 2014 (“FOI Act”) is one method through which a member of the public can request access to information where they have been unable to access information using alternative routes.

We resolved a total of 24 non-personal FOI requests, three personal and one mixed (a combination of personal and non-personal) under the FOI Act during 2019. Five requests under the Act remained open at the end of the year.

Data Protection Requests

The Charities Regulator received five requests for information under the Data Protection Act in 2019. One set of records were released and four were withheld. Typically the type of information that was withheld in these four cases was information which was not considered to be personal data of the requester, for example, mobile phone numbers, email addresses or signatures of third parties.

Table 10 - Data Protection requests

Total Requests received in 2019	Total	Released	Partly released	Withheld	ID not provided	Submitted incorrectly
Personal Information	5	1		4		
Total	5	1		4		

Access to Information on the Environment

The Charities Regulator received no requests in 2019 in relation to the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulation 2007 (S.I. No. 133 of 2007).

Protected Disclosures

The Charities Regulator’s policy on Protected Disclosures is intended to facilitate and encourage workers to raise any concerns they may have about potential wrongdoing in the workplace so that such concerns can be duly investigated having regard to rules of natural justice and appropriate action taken where required.

No internal protected disclosures from staff of the Charities Regulator were raised in 2019.

The Charities Regulator is a “prescribed person” for the purposes of section 7 of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 (the “2014 Act”) and is a person to whom protected disclosures relating to the Charities Regulator’s functions under the Charities Act 1961 (“1961 Act”) can be made. Those functions relate to the provision of services to trustees of charities and the carrying out of the intentions of persons making donations and bequests to charities which are functions which were transferred from the Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland to the Charities Regulator under section 82 of the Charities Act 2009. Although the Charities Regulator has not yet been prescribed under section 7 of the 2014 Act for the purposes of the

Charities Act 2009, the Charities Regulator accepted one protected disclosure made to it in 2019 and is dealing with the matters raised in that disclosure as a concern under its concerns process.

Health and Safety

The Charities Regulator is committed to providing a safe place to work in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Six Fire Safety Officers presided over two fire drills, which took place at the Charities Regulators Offices in 2019.

Several staff members attended and received certificates in ‘First Aid Response Training’ in 2019.

There were no reportable workplace accidents in 2019.

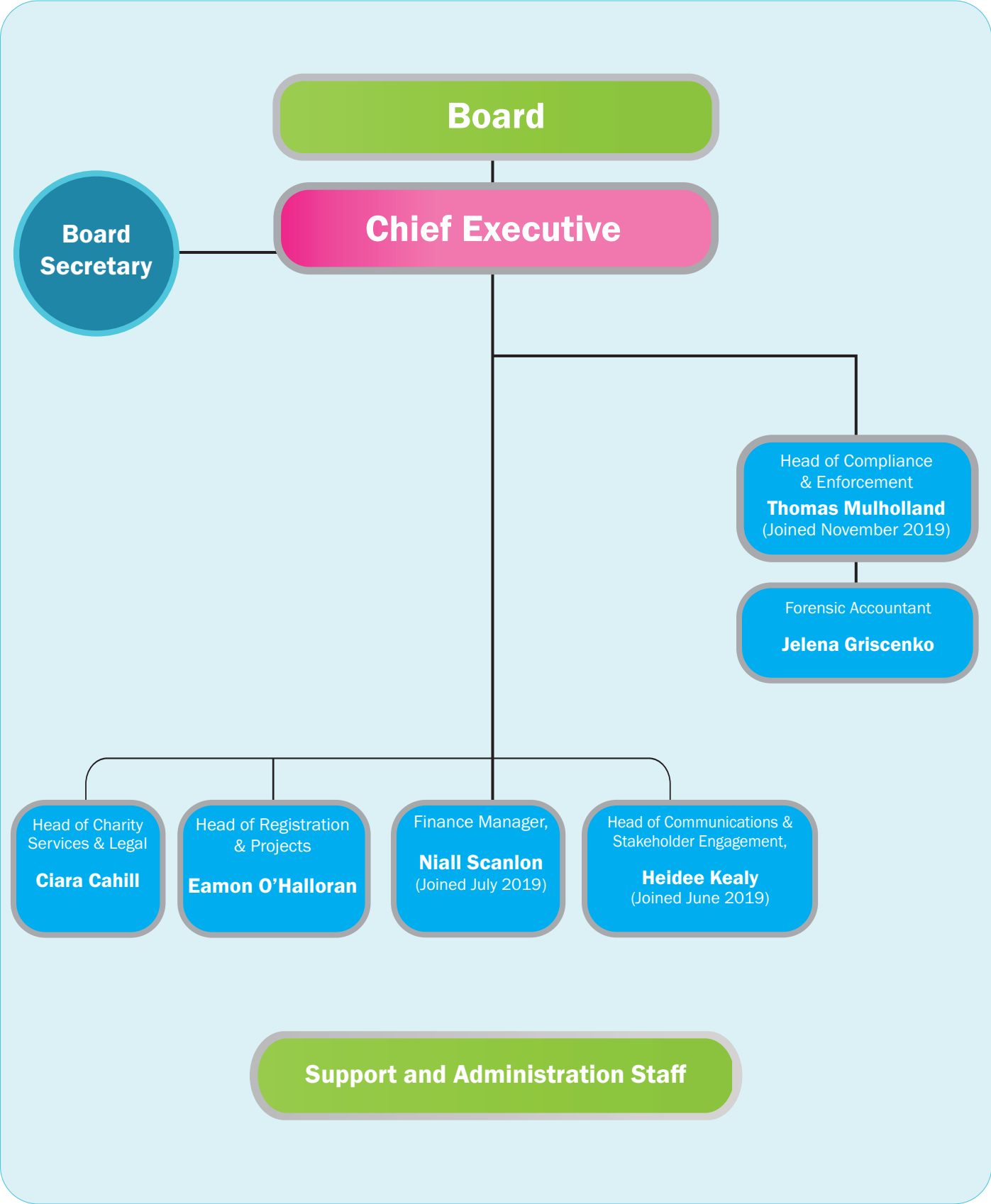
Facilities

Our Corporate Affairs unit is responsible for maintaining fit-for-purpose and safe premises, and for facilitating arrangements for internal meetings, stakeholder meetings and other events.

The Charities Regulator continues to operate from offices at 3 George’s Dock, IFSC, Dublin 1, for which we have a 10-year lease. The offices are open-plan and designed to accommodate both independent and team working. There remains sufficient space to accommodate new staff members as required.

The premises is not an ‘open office’ and all visitors are seen by appointment only.

Organisational Structure



The work and strategic direction of the senior management team of the Charities Regulator is overseen by a Board of 12 Members comprising a Chairperson and 11 other members appointed under the Charities Act 2009.

Authority Members



Patrick Hopkins – Chairperson
Patrick was Company Secretary and manager – Corporate Services Division at Enterprise Ireland (EI) prior to his retirement in November 2013.



Patricia Cronin
Patricia is a solicitor who has worked in both the private and public sectors, including over 25 years in various roles with IDA Ireland.



David Brady
David Brady is a Chartered Accountant, consultant and advisor to the charity sector.



Fergus Finlay
Fergus was Chief Executive of Barnardos children’s charity for 13 years. He has founded a number of organisations that campaign for the rights of people with disabilities, and was Chairperson of Special Olympics Ireland for four years.



Katie Cadden
Katie is a solicitor experienced in advising in matters of charity law, public law and litigation. She also has specialist knowledge in corporate governance and has advised a range of organisations on various governance issues. Katie regularly lectures in charity law at the Law Society of Ireland.



Rosemary Keogh
A qualified accountant, Rosemary is currently CEO of the Irish Wheelchair Association. She is the current Chair of the Not for Profit Association, and a former CEO of Order of Malta.



Niamh Cahill
Niamh Cahill is a barrister with extensive legal experience and a keen interest in corporate governance.



Máire McMahon
Máire McMahon is a solicitor in Tipperary, trustee of a small charity, and active volunteer and former trustee of the SVP.



Tom Costello
Tom has held leadership positions in philanthropy, in the non-profit and public sectors, and in management development. He currently advises on policy and practice in the children’s and ageing sectors in particular.



Graham Richards
Graham is a Notary Public and a retired solicitor. He was a Commissioner of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland from 2004 to the dissolution of the Commissioners and transfer of their functions to the Charities Regulator in 2014.



Martin Sisk
A solicitor by profession, Martin has spent most of his career in regulation, both financial and otherwise. He is Chairman of the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA) and is also a member of the Board of the Irish League of Credit Unions.



Ercus Stewart SC
Ercus Stewart SC has practised at the Bar for over 40 years and practises also as an arbitrator and mediator.

Membership and Meetings

Table 11: Board meeting attendance January to November 2019

Board Members	Total	24 Jan 2019	27 Feb 2019	*14 March 2019	28 March 2019	**2 April 2019	23 May 2019	27 June 2019	22 Aug 2019	26 Sept 2019	24 Oct 2019	28 Nov 2019
Patrick Hopkins	10 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Patricia Cronin	11 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Graham Richards	11 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
David Brady	8 out of 11	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Tom Costello	11 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Katie Cadden	10 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Fergus Finlay	10 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Máire McMahon	10 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Ercus Stewart	11 out of 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Niamh Cahill	10 out of 11		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Martin Sisk***	9 out of 9			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rosemary Keogh***	6 out of 9				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓

* Board Meeting held in camera; ** Board Meeting held electronically;
*** Martin Sisk and Rosemary Keogh were appointed to the Board on 1 March 2019.

The Authority has established four committees:

Finance, Audit, Risk & Governance Committee

The Finance, Audit, Risk & Governance Committee is responsible for advising the Board of the Authority on whether an appropriate regime of internal control, financial and other, is in operation but not for the formulation or implementation of such a regime, which is the responsibility of the Executive of the Authority. The Committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the ‘Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies’ (2016).

The Committee met five times during 2019. Members of the Committee:

- **Fergus Finlay (Chairperson and Authority Member, appointed Chairperson in February 2019)**

- **Rosemary Keogh (Authority Member, appointed to Committee in May 2019)**
- **Máire McMahon (Authority Member)**
- **Adrian Clements (External Member)**
- **Nuala Comerford (External Member)**
- **David Brady (Chairperson and Authority Member, resigned from Committee in February 2019)**

Table 12: Finance, Audit Risk & Governance Committee attendance

Committee Members	Total	25 Feb 2019	15 April 2019	10 Jun 2019	09 Sept 2019	09 Dec 2019
Fergus Finlay	5 out of 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rosemary Keogh	3 out of 3			✓	✓	✓
Máire McMahon	5 out of 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adrian Clements	5 out of 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nuala Comerford	4 out of 5	✓	✓	✓		✓
David Brady	1 out of 1	✓				

Regulatory Committee

The Regulatory Committee’s role is to oversee the effectiveness and controls around the delivery of the Authority’s registration, reporting and other regulatory functions.

Members of the Regulatory Committee:

- **Katie Cadden (Chairperson and Authority Member)**
- **Tom Costello (Authority Member)**
- **Patricia Cronin (Authority Member)**
- **Martin Sisk (Authority Member)**

Table 13: Regulatory Committee attendance

Committee Members	Total	12 Feb 2019	7 May 2019	20 Jun 2019	30 July 2019	23 Sept 2019	3 Dec 2019
Katie Cadden	6 out of 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tom Costello	6 out of 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Martin Sisk	3 out of 5		✓	✓		✓	
Patricia Cronin	5 out of 6		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Performance, Resource Planning and Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Performance, Resource Planning and Advisory Committee is to review the performance of the CEO and senior management, evaluate the adequacy of resources in place, and advise the CEO and senior management on associated matters. There are four Members on the Committee, all of whom are Members of the Authority.

The Committee met six times during 2019.

Members of the Committee:

- **Patrick Hopkins (Authority Member and Chairperson)**
- **Tom Costello (Authority Member)**
- **Patricia Cronin (Authority Member)**
- **Fergus Finlay (Authority Member)**

Table 14: Performance, Resource Planning and Advisory Committee attendance

Committee Members	Total	15 Jan 2019	12 Mar 2019	23 May 2019	17 Jun 2019	19 Sept 2019	17 Dec 2019
Patrick Hopkins	6 out of 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tom Costello	5 out of 6		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Patricia Cronin	6 out of 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fergus Finlay	5 out of 6	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Charity Services Committee

The Committee was established to assist the Authority in carrying out the functions previously vested in the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests. These include authorising disposal of charity property, appointment of new charity trustees and vesting of charity property in charity trustees, framing of schemes of incorporation and Cy-près schemes and approval of grants and scholarships.

Members of the Committee:

- **Graham Richards (Authority Member and Chairperson)**
- **Niamh Cahill (Authority Member)**
- **Ercus Stewart (Authority Member)**
- **Judge John O’Connor (External Member)**

Table 15: Charity Services Committee attendance

Committee Members	Total	10 Jan 2019	12 Feb 2019	14 Mar 2019	2 May 2019	19 Jun 2019	1 Aug 2019	9 Sept 2019	3 Oct 2019	18 Nov 2019
Graham Richards	9 of 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Niamh Cahill	9 of 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ercus Stewart	9 of 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Judge John O’Connor	6 of 9	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Sandra Chambers*	1 of 7			✓						

*Sandra Chambers was absent for much of 2019 due to illness.

Senior Management Team



Helen Martin – Chief Executive

Helen was appointed Chief Executive in April 2019. She joined the Charities Regulator as Director of Regulation in March 2017. Helen is a solicitor and previously worked in the Office of the Attorney General. Helen also worked in the private sector for over 10 years and during that time worked as a senior associate in the Regulatory and Competition law unit of a large firm and as an in-house legal and regulatory adviser for two telecommunications companies.



Thomas Mulholland – Head of Compliance & Enforcement

Thomas joined the Charities Regulator in November 2019 as Head of Compliance and Enforcement. He oversees the concerns function within the Charities Regulator and also has responsibility for investigations. An ACCA qualified accountant, Thomas has significant experience in investigations and insolvency having previously worked in the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement (ODCE).



Ciara Cahill – Regulatory Lawyer and Charity Services Manager

Ciara Cahill joined in August 2015 as Legal Advisor. She provides legal advice to the Registration, Compliance and Enforcement and Corporate Affairs functions of the Charities Regulator. She also manages the Charity Services function. Ciara previously worked as an in-house legal advisor in the private sector for over 7 years. She is a solicitor and member of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP).



Heidee Kealy – Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement

Heidee joined the Charities Regulator as Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement in June 2019. She is a communications specialist, having worked as a senior editorial journalist in national media for 17 years. Heidee was a judge for the Newsbrands Newspaper Awards for four years.



Eamon O'Halloran – Head of Registration & Projects

Eamon was reappointed as Head of Registration and Projects in February 2019 having previously served in a similar role for 3 years. He leads on the establishment and maintenance of a Public Register of Charities, including annual reporting. He has overall responsibility for coordinating the development and delivery of projects to support the efficient achievement of business objectives.



Niall Scanlon – Finance Manager

Niall was appointed Finance Manager in July 2019. He is responsible for leading the finance function of the organisation, overseeing all aspects of financial control, including statutory and regulatory requirements, financial reporting, and budget development. As a member of the senior management team he actively contributes to the achievement of the Charities Regulator's strategic objectives. Prior to joining the Charities Regulator, Niall held various senior finance positions within the private sector. He holds a Bachelor of Business (Hons) and is a Fellow member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).

Financial Statements

The summarised financial information that is set out in this report is derived from the Audited accounts from the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Table 16: Summarised Income and Expenditure Account for year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Income		
Department of Rural and Community Development	3,763	3,960
Total Income	3,763	3,960
Expenditure	€'000	€'000
Staff Costs	1,844	2,132
Administration	1,902	1,465
Audit	17	17
Depreciation	156	63
Total Expenditure	3,919	3,677
(Deficit)/Surplus of Income over Expenditure	(156)	283
Transfer to Capital Account	(3)	(236)
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	(159)	47
Opening reserves	130	83
Closing reserves	(29)	130

More detailed information is available in the full Financial Statements for the period ended 31 December 2019, along with the Comptroller and Auditor General's certificate for the accounts, on our website www.charitiesregulator.ie.

Financial Statements – Charity Funds

The summarised financial information that is set out in this report is derived from the Audited accounts from the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Table 17: Summarised Income and Expenditure Account for Charity Funds year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Receipts		
Common Investment Fund/Other receipts	1,245	2,031
Interest	1	3
Total Receipts	1,246	2,034
Payments	€'000	€'000
Common Investment Fund transfers and other payments	(1,758)	(1,930)
Total Expenditure	(1,758)	(1,930)
(Deficit)/Surplus of Income over Expenditure	(512)	104
Opening reserves	1,382	1,278
Closing reserves	870	1,382

More detailed information is available in the full Financial Statements for the period ended 31 December 2019 along with the Comptroller and Auditor General's certificate for the accounts on our website www.charitiesregulator.ie.

Statement on Internal Control

Scope of Responsibility

On behalf of the Charities Regulatory Authority (Charities Regulator), we hereby acknowledge our responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control that the Charities Regulator operates is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or detected in a timely way.

Our system of internal control, which is in line with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, has been in place in the Charities Regulator for the year ended 31 December 2019 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Charities regulator has a Finance, Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (FARG) comprising three Board members – the Chairperson being one – and two external members with financial and audit expertise. The FARG met five times in 2019.

The Charities Regulator has also established an internal audit function, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, which was adequately resourced and conducted a programme of work agreed with the FARG in 2019.

We also have a risk management policy that is reviewed by the FARG, which sets out risk appetite, the risk management processes in place and details roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to risk. The policy has been issued to all staff, who are expected to adhere to it. We have a robust risk management process to alert management on emerging risks

and control weaknesses and to assume responsibility for risks and controls within their own area of work.

Risk and Control Framework

The Charities Regulator has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the actions being taken to address those risks, and to mitigate them where possible.

A Risk Register is in place which identifies the key risks facing the Charities Regulator and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The Register is reviewed and updated by senior management and reviewed by the FARG on a quarterly basis. These reviews are used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level.

The Risk Register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for operation of controls assigned to specific staff.

We maintain a control environment ensuring the following elements are in place:

- Procedures for all key business processes are documented;
- Financial responsibilities are assigned at management level with corresponding accountability;
- There is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management;
- We have systems aimed at ensuring the security of information and communication technology systems;
- We have systems in place to safeguard the assets.

Ongoing Monitoring and Review

Formal procedures have been established for monitoring control processes. Control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action and to management and the Board, where relevant, in a timely way. We confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- Key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies;
- Reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned;
- There are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual performance and financial reports which indicate performance against budgets/forecasts.

Procurement

We confirm that the Charities Regulator has procedures in place to ensure compliance with current Office of Government Procurement (OGP) rules and guidelines. Matters arising regarding controls over procurement are highlighted under Internal Control Issues below.

Review of Effectiveness

We confirm that the Charities Regulator has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. Our monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal financial control is informed by the work of internal and external auditors, the Finance, Audit, Risk and Governance Committee which oversees their work, and senior management within the Charities Regulator responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal financial control framework.

The 2019 annual review of the effectiveness of the internal controls scheduled to take place in Q1 2020 was postponed due to the Covid 19 pandemic, and will be rescheduled whenever the current restrictions allow.

Internal Control Issues

Non-Compliant Procurement.

During 2019, expenditure of €116,941 was incurred in relation to accountancy services where the procedures employed did not comply with procurement guidelines. This was due to the rollover of an existing contract. The accountancy services ceased in December 2019. Our procurement procedures have been strengthened to prevent any similar recurrence in the future.



An Rialálaí
Carthanas

Charities
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