

**Ireland’s organisation for people parenting alone, sharing parenting and those separating**

**Director’s Report | 2024**

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# **Company Information – Reference and administration**

**Name** Cherish CLG t/a One Family

**Registered Office** 8 Coke Lane, Smithfield

 Dublin, D07EN2Y

**Company Registration No.** 45364

**Charity No.** CHY 6525

**Charities Regulatory**

**Authority No.** 20012212

**Principal Bankers** Bank of Ireland

 College Green, Dublin 2

**Solicitors** Shannon & O’Connor Solicitors

6 Hatch Street Lower, Dublin 2

**Auditor** Raheny Accounts Limited T/A Irish Accounts

Chartered Certified Accountants and Statutory Auditors

6 Abbey Business Park

Baldoyle Industrial Estate Dublin13N738

**Insurance Brokers** BHP Insurance

Plaza 211, Blanchardstown Corporate Park 2,

Dublin, D15 AP2D

**Directors as of** Helen Hall (Chairperson)
**31st December** Éimear Fisher (Treasurer)

Jack Eustace

Jennifer Good

Nuala Haughey

 Donagh McGowan

Rosemary Wokocha

Breda Murray

Aoife Desmond
 (Appointed 14thSeptember2024)

John Mannion
 (Appointed 14th September 2024)

**Secretary** Jack Eustace

**CEO** Karen Kiernan

## **1** **Vision | Mission | Values**

### **1.2.1** **Our Vision**

One Family believes in an Ireland where **every family is cherished equally**, and is enabled to enjoy the **social, financial, and legal equality** to create their own positive futures.

### **1.2.2** **Our Mission**

One Family is working to ensure a **positive and equal future** for people **parenting alone, sharing parenting and parenting around separation** – changing attitudes, policies, services, and lives. We are committed to achieving **equality, inclusion, and respect** for all families.

In addition to striving for **fundamental legislative and structural change** in our society, our services **offer support in a family-centred way** to individual families through times of change and difficulty, as well as supporting those experiencing an **unplanned pregnancy**.

### 1.2.3 Our Values

**Respect**, **compassion** for and **acceptance** of the parents, children, and organisations that we encounter, are at the heart of what we do. We connect with others in a relationship of equals and are **completely non-judgmental.**

We believe that we can hold the hope for the families we work with, especially when they are unable to. We achieve this through innovation, excellence, accountability, and our **family-centred approach**.

Since being **founded as Cherish in 1972**, One Family has been an organisation of determination, passion, and courage, working with integrity towards **achieving equality for all families** in Ireland.

## **2.** **Statements**

### 2.1. Statement from our Chairperson – Helen Hall:

2024 was the **third and last year** of implementing our **2022-2024 Strategy** and was another busy and successful year for the organisation. Our focus remained on our three strategy areas, which involved **practical support** and representation to members of families parenting alone or sharing parenting, and to women experiencing **unplanned pregnancy**, while simultaneously continuing to **build One Family** as a strong organisation. Across these areas, the Chief Executive’s report and mine will outline achievements worthy of specific mention this year.

**Represent, Champion, and Celebrate**

We continued our excellent work on **policy change**, **research**, and **external communications**. Receiving funding to develop the **One Family Advocacy Project** from the UBIDAC fund via the Community Foundation was a really positive development, bringing to fruition a **long-term ambition** to have specific resources to support parents directly impacted by adverse policies and a pathway for them to share their experiences and stories with policy makers, media and the public. We began this project with a National Survey to develop a baseline of issues impacting one-parent families and look forward to the **development of this new project**.

**Policy**

2024 policy submissions included several to the Department of Social Protection and the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection on issues such as c**hild poverty targets, means-testing of one-parent families, and our annual Pre-Budget Submission** for 2025.

We also made submissions to the Department of Energy, Climate & Communications regarding the next **Energy Poverty Action Plan**; to the **Court Services of Ireland** on the Development of its Strategic Plan 2024-2027; and to the Department of Justice on its Expert Report Guidelines 2024. We participated in consultations with the Health Service Executive (HSE) in relation to its next **National Sexual Health Strategy**; the Court Service of Ireland on its ICT, Digital and Data Strategy; and with the **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission** (IHREC) on the draft guidelines as part of a civil society focus group.

We were delighted to again work with our colleagues in the **National One Parent Family Alliance** (NOPFA) and participated in lobbying events adjacent to the Houses of the Oireachtas, highlighting our **priorities for Budget 2025**. We appeared before two Oireachtas Committee hearings, giving One Family an opportunity to raise **family homelessness** and issues around **means-testing** as it relates to one-parent families.

We met with public representatives across the political spectrum as part of our **Budget 2025** work, and then again in relation to their election manifestos in **November’s general election**, taking the engagement opportunity to highlight the ongoing challenges for one-parent families and advocating for necessary political action.

While there were some positive developments in Budget 2025, we were disappointed that universal benefits were once again delivered, instead of **targeted measures for the children and families most in need**. We hope that this type of decision-making, which is not based on evidence, will end in the formation of the next government.

**Research**

We continued to collaborate with academics and researchers on key pieces of evidence-based research in relation to one-parent families, including work with Professor Conor O’Mahony in the **Child Law Clinic of UCC** (University College Cork) on the voice of children in family law cases; work with Dr Fiona Dukelow in UCC in relation to **lone parents’ experience of higher education**; and the review process of the **United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, the expert body responsible for examining Ireland’s implementation of its human rights obligations enshrined under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). We were also a member of the  **Economic Social Research Institute’s (ESRI)** steering group for its **research on housing and communities**.

We were delighted to receive funding for **our own research from the What Works Initiative** in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. This research will be undertaken in partnership with The Separation Network and will lead to the **development of guidelines** on how to support **children in primary schools** living in separated families.

**Referendum**

One Family **campaigned for decades** to achieve a **referendum proposal** on the definition of family in our Constitution. **Our vision has, and remains, to have equality for all family types, regardless of marital status or number of parents.** We are acutely aware of the systemic discrimination inflicted on unmarried parents and their children over the years due to societal attitudes underpinned by the Constitution, and unequal laws and policies enshrined in our legislation. Unfortunately, the referendum was lost when put to the people of Ireland and whilst we were devastated by this, **we will continue to work for equity and understanding for all families in Ireland.**

**Governance**

I am happy to report that our Board, its committees, and membership, continue to operate to **high standards** and that we **met all our governance requirements** and obligations. We retained all Board members in 2024 and worked to bring **new observers to the Board** to ensure **smooth succession in 2025** and beyond.

We invested significant time during 2024 to develop and complete our **new Strategic Plan 2025-2027.** We appreciate the support from Rethink Ireland and Mantra Strategy to achieve this.

It was challenging to manage the **Section 39 pay agreement** backpay for funded staff, as the process was extensive, and we only received additional funding from Tusla and the HSE. We also had to find funding to ensure pay parity for other roles in One Family. We need to do more to **educate and influence our funders**, and the Charities Regulator, to ensure that funding of key services must also include funding for the financial systems, governance, and other background operations needed to deliver these essential public services.

Finally, sincere thanks to the funders, supporters and policy makers who trust us to support and represent one-parent families and those with unplanned pregnancy in Ireland. **There is much urgent work to be done** to improve the lives of many living in one-parent families and we will continue to operate as strategically and authentically as possible to achieve this.

### **2.2 Statement from CEO – Karen Kiernan**

###  2024 was an active year of **service delivery, campaigning, policy development and advocacy work**. There were challenges due to f**unding and staff gaps** and, as a result, many of our service statistics decreased slightly in 2024 as compared to the previous. Despite the challenges, we had a **massive increase in our online workshops** for parents with over **866 people attending** in 2024, and we provided **350 in-person parenting course** places through our outreach and partnership with other organisations in the community including St Vincent de Paul, New Communities Partnership, Merchants Quay and the After Care Recovery Group.

**Services for Families**

We **expanded some of our therapeutic services** through a series of small grants focussing on increased individual and group-based play therapy for children, and the **provision of Rainbows groups** for children of bereaved and separated families, in partnership with local schools.

We continued to coordinate **The Separation Network** and were delighted to **launch a toolkit** focussing on supporting **front line practitioners** in their work with separated families at Tusla’s Parent Support Champions National Symposium.

We secured funding to establish an **Infant Mental Health & Training Network** for Dublin 7 and Dublin 1 in partnership with ABC Grangegorman and The Wheel.

We continued our critical work to raise and **dispense funds to families for groceries, Christmas, and social outings**. We continued to provide confidential listening support and information on our national askonefamily helpline and through information pages on our website.

Short-term **funding from Indeed** enabled the **Counselling Service** to work with **additional parents** in 2024. We promoted internally to fill a vacant position on our counselling team.

The **My Options** phoneline for unplanned pregnancy recruited a **Team Leader** and a new telephone counsellor for this service, delivered on behalf of the HSE. We finalised a **successful Service Level Agreement** for My Options, committing to a further **three years of delivery**.

**Employability Programmes**

Our **New Futures Employability Programmes** secured two new funders in 2024, Rethink Ireland’s **Mná na hÉireann**, Women of Ireland Empowerment Fund and the **Beachaire Fund**. Monies from Rethink Ireland will support **90 female lone parents** through self-directed e-learning, online group workshops, regular one-to-one support, parent mentoring and our laptop loan scheme. The project is also part funded by **Bank of America** and the **Dormant Accounts Fund** and is committed to running until 2026.

Investment from the **Beachaire Fund** was secured after **New Futures** provided a case study for research which Beachaire commissioned on the value of community education for lone parents. Our **New Futures Employability Programme** is now funded to deliver both online and in-person programmes until June 2026.

2024 also saw the conclusion of our **European project** partnering with the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and partners in Greece and Finland to **support lone parents towards employability** and social inclusion. The project was funded by the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), and the DSP **supported 60 parents**. We participated in project dissemination events and awaited final evaluation reports. Our goal is **secure funding to ensure mainstream provision** of our specialist employability bridging programmes to parents nationwide.

**Sustaining a Strong Organisation**

**Governance, strong cybersecurity**, **accessibility** for service users and health & safety were significant focusses for our work in 2024. We began work on a major **upgrade of our website** and **consolidated IT changes** with staff.

We completed a critical project that enhanced our operations, **improving service delivery** to one-parent families. By focusing on **data protection** and **service evaluation**, the project modernised internal systems and brought tangible benefits to the families served. Funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth, the initiative was a collaboration with Enclude, a partner specialising in technology-driven development for community organisations and charities in Ireland.

**With What Works funding**, we successfully migrated our programmes service monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to **Salesforce**, improving data management and service evaluation. **Efforts are ongoing** to integrate all services into Salesforce for better impact assessment. A **GDPR audit** led to strengthened database security, limited access to user data, and automated data retention processes, including anonymising user data per our retention policy. These steps are vital for enhancing **data security** and **supporting both staff and service** users.

It's a joy and privilege to work with the amazing team of staff, volunteers and Board members that are committed to One Family, our service users and to necessary policy and societal changes to achieve inclusivity and equality for all one-parent families in Ireland. **We are only as strong and informed as the parents and children who continue to place their trust in us**, and it is our greatest privilege to play a small role in their life’s journey.

It is critical that organisations such as **One Family continue to survive and thrive**, so that we can work strategically and in partnership with others to build an Ireland where every family and child is respected and cherished equally.

## **3** **Strategy 2022-2024**

2024 was the final year of our three-year strategic plan and we focused on reviewing what was achieved and planning for the future.

**How will our vision become a reality?**

One Family is a **specialist service provider to people living in one-parent families.** We work to capture their experiences and our service practices into policy positions so we can deliver improvements for the families we represent at a national level. This focus on improving the lives of one-parent families is fundamental to our work. In our current plan we want Ireland to have achieved the following by 2030:

* **Child poverty**
Child poverty rates in Ireland will be dramatically reduced as Government reaches its new child poverty target through a **National Child Poverty Action Plan** which will provide a range of universal and targeted services; targeted income transfers; inclusive employment and educational opportunities; and the necessary targeting of one-parent families for additional supports based on evidence.
* **Family support services**
To ensure availability for people parenting alone, sharing parenting, separating and for their children so that conflict and disruptions are minimised. These will be developed as part of the **Family Law Justice Reform** process and services such as a child centred **Family Law Service Model** and a statutory **Child Maintenance Service** will be rolled out.
* **One-parent families**
For all one-parent families to be **widely recognised, understood and celebrated as positive family forms**. All families will have appropriate access to statutory **services, policies, and laws**. Our **Constitution** will be updated so all families are protected and respected.

To make this happen, we will **fearlessly name the challenges** faced by the families we represent and work with. We will speak out and **challenge laws, policies and services** that are **discriminatory or inadequate**. We will work with others to strategically achieve shared goals, while continuing to be accountable to all our stakeholders, uphold excellent governance standards and deliver quality specialist services.

### **3.1** **Policy Framework and Approaches**

One Family works under several overarching national and international policy

frameworks.

These include:

* Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures II
* First 5: A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children, and their Families 2019-2028
* EU Child Guarantee
* UN Millennium Sustainable Development Goals
* National Parenting Policy Framework
* Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025

One Family also uses the best interests of the child approach, a trauma-informed, and human rights-based approach in our work.

### **3.2** **Development of the Strategy**

One Family conducted a thorough consultation with families, funders, policy makers, and other stakeholders to shape its 2022-2024 strategy, alongside reviews of its organisation and external environment. **The strategy has three main pillars**, each with specific activities that guide annual operational work plans. These activities are tracked through various metrics, including service data, policy submissions, funding, and staff engagement. In 2024, consultations and research were conducted to develop the **new 2025-2027 strategy**, which was finalised in December 2024.

## **4.** **Our Strategy in Action**

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| **Impact** |
| **More high-quality family support and therapeutic services provided to more one-parent families around Ireland.** |

This goal accounts for 96% of One Family’s overall expenditure and includes 19% of service support costs.

### 4.1 Family Support Services

*Objective: Providing an excellent range of specialist services for all members of one-parent families through a collection of parenting, therapeutic, training, information and support services that are accessible to all*

**Progress in 2024**
In 2024, the **Parenting Service supported over 500 children and parents,** securing funding from sources like Dormant Accounts, the RTÉ Toy Show Appeal, and the Katharine Howard Foundation. They engaged with the **Separation Network** and provided **professional training**, though participation in employability programs decreased due to funding shortages.

HSE funding allowed for the recruitment of a **Team Leader** and new telephone counsellor for the **My Options** phoneline. The **One Family helpline** managed **2,386 contacts and responded to 6,384 queries**, mainly related to parental access, family law, and finances. Critical funding through REACH supported improvements to the website and e-courses.

The Parenting Service also launched **group therapy for children**, established the **Infant Mental Health Network**, and created a **breakfast club** for parents and children. The **Counselling Service** engaged with **173 new clients**, offering support for unplanned pregnancy and post-abortion issues. The Indeed grant for counselling to support one-parent families’ return to education or employment ended in 2024.

**Looking to 2025**
The Parenting Service will **integrate infant mental health** into family support for parents with children aged 0-3 and **continue group programs** and therapy for children from one-parent families. Additional funding is needed to address the **increasing demand** from s**eparated parents, those facing domestic violence, and high interparental conflict**.

The **My Options** service aims to strengthen partnerships with **abortion providers** to improve **support and information** for callers.

The **Programmes Service** will keep offering specialised **employability programs** through e-learning, online group classes, and in-person sessions, supported by Rethink Ireland's Mná na hÉireann Fund and the Beachaire Fund.

The **Counselling Service** will continue offering face-to-face and online support to individuals facing **complex unplanned pregnancy and post-abortion issues**, with a focus on migrant women who need specialised support.

*Objective: Supporting children’s ability to thrive in challenging family situations*

**Progress in 2024**
With additional once-off funding we provided **increased play and art therapy** sessions for children aged 4-14 years. We also introduced **Rainbows Ireland groups** to schools in our local community and group therapy for children living in one-parent families.

**Looking to 2025**
We are seeking funding to **re-introduce teen counselling** and **increase our provision** of counselling for their parents.

*Objective: Supporting parents’ ability to cope with challenging situations through strengthening their mental health and social inclusion*

**Progress in 2024**
In 2024, we continued offering **in-house parenting groups** for babies and social supports for isolated parents to help build their social networks. Due to a lack of mainstream funding, the number of employability courses decreased, but **83% of participants** in the **New Futures** Employability Programme's e-course reported **improved confidence and skills**. Counselling services were provided to women who faced a crisis pregnancy but later parented alone, with some using counselling to overcome barriers to education or employment. Listening support through the **askonefamily helpline** remains crucial for parents in distress or crisis.

Looking to 2025
We will introduce **Baby Massage** and continue to provide supports for infants and their parents. We want to seek strategic funding to **expand the provision of counselling** for people living in one-parent families as we know their mental health and social isolation is higher than other families.

*Objective: Providing specialist services to support those using the family law courts*

Progress in 2024
Our **Separating Well for Children** service continues to be in high demand as some families experience ongoing interparental conflict post-separation, often due to early life traumas.

Our **askonefamily helpline** continued to respond to queries pertaining to family law, offering information and signposting; **28%** of all helpline queries related to **family law**.

Looking to 2025
We will seek funding to pilot a **regional model of Separating Well for Children** with Family Resource Centre partners. We will commence a **promotional campaign for our national helpline** to raise awareness of this important, specialist service.

*Objective: Expanding the provision of our proven services and programmes into local communities and in partnership with other service providers*

Progress in 2024
With our colleagues in The Separation Network we developed a **Practitioners Toolkit** around supporting separated families. This was designed to help disseminate the **Best Practice Guidance from Seen and Not Heard** research in 2022.

Looking to 2025
We will establish a **local Infant Mental Health Network** in our community. We will continue to offer **professional training** opportunities and seek to develop further **bespoke One Family training** to support front-line practice.

*Objective: Promoting the understanding and provision of services to families sharing parenting of their children*

Progress in 2024
We were successful in securing funding from What Works (DCEDIY) and partnered with The Separation Network to carry out research and develop **Best Practice Guidance** around how school communities at primary level can support children’s needs post-separation.

Looking to 2025
We will undertake the research above and continue to partner with several academic institutions on relevant research.

*Objective: Mainstream those services which are proven to be effective and needed by one-parent families around Ireland*

Progress in 2024
We secured funding to deliver our **New Steps and New Futures** Employability Programmes online and in-person **until 2026**.

Looking to 2025
We will seek funding to pilot our **Separating Well for Children** service on a **regional basis** as a step towards mainstream national provision of this
highly successful and cost-effective employability, so it is available nationally to lone parents.

*Objective: Providing services on a hybrid basis (remote and in-person) to ensure families across Ireland have greater access to services*

Progress in 2024
All parenting supports were made **hybrid**, increasing accessibility to parents. All **employability supports and programmes** were delivered **online during 2024**, increasing nationwide provision. Our adult **counselling services were offered as a hybrid** (in-person, by phone and online) to increase accessibility nationwide.

Looking to 2025
We will seek funding to **develop our suite of programmes** for lone parents. We will **resume in-person** delivery of our **New Futures Employability Programme** and continue to provide programmes through live online classes and self-directed e-learning via our **online learning platform**.

*Objective: Providing training and development opportunities to professionals and employers working with one-parent families*

Progress in 2024
Through our coordination of The Separation Network, we enabled/provided professional training to 338 front line practitioners. We also authored the **new Practitioners Toolkit - Supporting Front Line with Separated Families**.

Looking to 2025
We will undertake an **audit of the professional trainings we currently provide**, look at gaps for frontline practitioners nationally, and seek funding for **new training courses** or workshops.

**4.2** **Strategic Goal 2: Represent, Champion, and Celebrate**

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| **Impact** |
| **Improved statutory services, policies and laws supporting one-parent families.** |

**This goal accounts for 4% of One Family’s expenditure and includes 0.72% of service support costs.**

We will fearlessly represent, champion, and celebrate the realities and needs of one-parent families; bringing these to government, policy makers, media, and wider society to bring about positive change in policies, laws, and attitudes. We will achieve this with the following objectives:

*Objective: Advocating to Government to develop and reach targets for the minimisation of child poverty and its negative impacts*

Progress in 2024
Through active participation in bodies such as the National One Parent Family Alliance, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), the Children’s Rights Alliance, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), the Labour Market Access Group, Roadmap for Social Inclusion Linkage Group, the Department of Social Protection (DSP) Consultative Forum re one-parent families, the National Child Poverty Target Public Consultation and the Community Platform. Through this work, we **highlighted the disproportional rates of child poverty in one-parent families** and called for **targeted measures** in our joint Pre-Budget Submissions for 2025 with National One-Parent Family Alliance (NOPFA) rather than high-cost universal measures. We participated in workshops with the Minister for Social Protection at the National Economic Dialogue and Pre-Budget Forum.

Looking to 2025
With our partners in NOPFA we will seek funding to resource the alliance to **work on decreasing child and family poverty in one-parent families**. We will maximise our participation in government consultation events such as the Social Inclusion Forum, National Economic Dialogue, Pre-Budget Forum, and post-Budget briefings. We will continue to use r**esearch and evidence to call for targeted investment** in Ireland’s poorest children and families.

*Objective: Advocating to Government to develop a child-centred Family Law Service Model as part of its Family Law Justice Reform programme*

Progress in 2024
We continued our membership of the Department of Justice’s Family Justice Development Forum, as well as the Family Justice Cross Functional Communications Group, the Court Service Board’s Family Law Development Committee, the Civic Society Forum, the Dublin Family Courts Project Board, the Legal Aid Board’s External Consultative Panel and Domestic Violence group, as well as the Dublin Circuit Family Court Users’ Group. We supported a campaign on the Family Courts Bill, submitted to the Court Service on its Strategic Plan and called for investment in out-of-court **family law supports** in our Pre-Budget Submission for 2025 and our General Election manifesto.

Looking to 2025
We will focus at least one event on family law reform policy and research work. We will seek engagement with the new Minister for Justice, relevant officials, and partners to ensure the next iteration of the **Family Justice Strategy** and implementation plan focuses on services for families. We will maintain active membership of all relevant committees and participate in consultations on expert reports for courts, and other relevant issues. Through our ongoing participation in the **Coalition for Children Living with Domestic and Sexual Violence** we will seek **funds to resource** the work of this important group.

*Objective: Responding to opportunities to provide policy expertise on a prioritised range of issues affecting people living in one-parent families*

Progress in 2024
We participated in **30 policy consultations**, **submissions, meetings, and advocacy activities.** We wrote eleven policy submissions, both independently and in partnership. We presented a **case study** on access to **bridging education for lone parents** at the Child Poverty Summit. Additionally, we presented to the Joint Committee on Social Protection regarding the impact of **means testing** on the social welfare system and used the **general election** to engage political parties about their manifestos and Programme for Government.

Looking to 2025
Our new strategy commits us to continuing to “Inform and influence policy makers using a wide range of tools, driving collaborative advocacy across the sector”. We will develop a suite of **short policy position papers based on parents’ priorities in our Advocacy Project**. We will use these, as well as the experiences of service users, to inform the development of responses in submission calls to policy makers as opportunities arise.

*Objective: Listening to one-parent families so we can directly translate their lived experience into relevant policy positions*

Progress in 2024
Our policy and media engagements are informed by our work with one-parent families as we use a practice to policy methodology. Our **new Advocacy Project** started in late 2024 with a **national survey** designed to capture the **experiences and priorities of people** living in one-parent families around Ireland. We secured funding from Department of Children, Equality, Disability and Integration and Youth’s (DCEDIY) What Works fund to **research guidelines** to support children from separated families in primary schools.

Looking to 2025
We will **develop research guidelines** to best support children from separated families in primary schools. We will continue to consult parents on our main policy positions, particularly our **Pre-Budget Submission for 2026**. Our Advocacy Project will provide a direct pathway to hear from parents impacted by budget-related decisions and what their lived priorities are.

*Objective: Sharing the reality of the stories of people living in one-parent families, and in particular stories of those sharing parenting across a range of media and to a multitude of audiences*

Progress in 2024
We participated in a dissemination event with the Department of Social Protection on an EU-funded project and an **EaSI** **webinar**. We attended the **IHREC conference** on socio-economic equality in employment, where **Michelle**, a parent who completed the New Futures program, **shared her inspiring story** of navigating education and work as a lone parent.

We secured **35 media placements** highlighting the experiences of one-parent families, including coverage in national outlets like **The Irish Times, Irish Independent, and RTÉ 6.1 News,** especially during the referendum campaign.

Through our Parents' Media Panel, we featured a piece in **The Irish Independent on Budget 2025**, addressing its limited impact on one-parent families. Geraldine Kelly, Director of Parenting and Professional Services, provided advice on managing separation and co-parenting over the Christmas period in the **Irish Examiner**. Additionally, we used data from our Advocacy Project's survey to **inform our General Election manifesto**.

Looking to 2025
One Family is excited by the **strong interest from parents** in our **Advocacy Project**. In 2025, we will offer **support and training** to empower **parents to advocate directly** to policymakers on issues that matter to them. We will also support parents who want to share their stories in the media.

We plan to **create a video** featuring parents from the **New Futures Employability Programme** to highlight their experiences for potential funders and policymakers.

Our new Strategy 2025-2027 includes a commitment to **strengthening storytelling** by creating a story bank of **families’ experiences** with issues such as poverty, family law, unplanned pregnancy, homelessness, and separation.

*Objective: Working for Constitutional reform of Article 41.3 to ensure equality for all families*

Progress in 2024
We worked with a coalition of civil society organisations calling for a **YesYes vote** in the referendums. The referendum proposal in relation to the definition of family was defeated in March 2024.

Looking to 2025
We will build on learnings from the referendum to continue to work to **improve the lives of lone parent and unmarried families** in partnership with others, in particular through the National One Parent Family Alliance (NOPFA).

**4.3 Strategic Goal 3: Sustaining a Strong Organisation**

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| **Impact** |
| **A sustainable and well-resourced organisation that can deliver our strategy.** |

**This goal supports the Strategic Goals 1 and 2**

Our success in achieving favourable results is reliant on the effectiveness of our supporting strategies, systems, resources, and teams. We remain committed to being a **reliable and responsible partner for funders** and policymakers, as well as a bold advocate for the families we serve. Due to the increased demands brought about by the **cost-of-living crisis and climate change challenges**, our current strategy will prioritise consolidating our organisation when necessary.

*Objective: Ensuring excellent governance and compliance*

Progress in 2024
We met all governance requirements including our **fourth compliance statement to the Charities Regulator**. Through widespread consultations and lots of research and meetings, we developed our next Strategic Plan 2025-2027.

Looking to 2025
We will ensure we continue to **meet all governance requirements** including to the Charity Regulator, the Companies Registration Office, our funders and the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO). We will implement our new Strategy, developing a suite of **dropdown strategies across the organisation.**

*Objective: Securing stable funding to meet the increasing demand for our family support services*

Progress in 2024
Our income remained stable at **€1.7 million** (€1.5 million in 2023) with many small grants increasing our ability to provide **additional services** to families.

Looking to 2025
We will focus on **larger, more strategic grants** to deliver services and meet our governance requirements. We will commission an expert to support us in an **audit of our financial planning** to strengthen our **unrestricted and multi-annual funding**.

*Objective: Working in partnership with others to be as effective as possible in-service delivery, policy work and communications*

Progress in 2024
We are involved in **40 committees, boards, and working groups**. We chaired the National One Parent Family Alliance, coordinated The Separation Network, and secured funding for a local Infant Mental Health Training Network. We also participated in an **international Single Parents Day campaign** and co-led the YesYes national civil society campaign for the Family and Care Referendums. In partnership with Bank of America, we provided **skills workshops and mock interviews** for parents in our employability programmes.

Additionally, we took part in the **inaugural seminar of the Vulnerability and One Parent Family Network** (VOPN) in Glasgow, an international group of academics, historians, and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

Looking to 2025
We plan to **review and focus our external representation** to align resources with areas of expertise. We will continue supporting The Separation Network, Infant Mental Health Network, and NOPFA, and **launch an animated video for VOPN on Single Parents Day** in March. **Microsoft will assist** with employability support for **New Futures learners**. My Options and the askonefamily helpline will **collaborate with a newly formed network** of helplines across Ireland.

*Objective: Ensuring excellent evaluation, monitoring, and data collection systems*

Progress in 2024
We completed the 'What Works' project to strengthen our Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) systems, producing a related video.

Looking to 2025
We are transitioning other services to a more **robust and appropriate M&E** framework, with the aim of **integrating them all into our CRM system**. We are seeking funding to incorporate e-course service user data as well, enabling us to gain a clearer view and understanding of our client journey.

*Objective: Managing and supporting our staff team positively and proactively*

Progress in 2024

We met the **funding agreement for staff pay increases**, had some lovely staff appreciation days, and invested in our outdoor terrace as a reflection space for staff.

Looking to 2025

As part of Strategic Plan 2025-2027 we will undertake an **organisation-wide culture audit and the develop a People & Culture plan**, with expert help. We will review and strengthen our internal communications and work to increase staff satisfaction.

*Objective: Generating unrestricted income to meet the additional needs of the organisation*

Progress in 2024
We upgraded one of our parent e-courses, “The Skill of Clear and Direct Communication”*,* to **increase learner engagement and course subscription revenue.** We are in the process of a website upgrade to help with engagement of our courses for parents and professionals.

Progress in 2025
We are **applying for funding** to upgrade three of our parenting courses which if successful will **increase learner engagement and subscription fees.** Our new Strategy 2025-2027 commits us to the development of unrestricted income streams to fund areas such as governance, ICT and data protection.

*Objective: Developing our communications, social* *media and brand presence on one-parent family issues.*

Progress in 2024

We issued **critical press releases** in response to key media stories, areas of policy/campaigning work, including; Department of Justice enforcement of child maintenance orders, Pre-Budget submission, Budget 2025, General Election and Programme for Government development. We maintained our **social media presence** and expanded into new channels including Bluesky and Threads.

Progress in 2025

We will continue to upgrade our website [www.onefamily.ie](http://www.onefamily.ie), review social media channels, internal communications, style guide and stakeholder mapping.

**Strategic development of external communications** to increase media coverage, build upon existing advocacy and policy maker relationships

*Objective: Using technology to strengthen service provision, accountability, and communications.*

Progress in 2024
Technology enabled us to **strengthen and expand our services** nationwide through online and telephone sessions. We delivered **1,940 interventions,** supporting 381 individual service users, and our seven **e-courses reached 220 learners**. Approximately **19% of our service users** accessed services **online.**

Progress in 2025
We will continue to extend our reach by **offering online services**. We will seek funding to upgrade three more of our e-learning courses to improve the learning experience. We will aim to link our e-course platforms to our database to better track the number of people supported and develop greater insight into our service user journey.

*Objective: Ensuring our physical and ICT facilities are fit for purpose, safe, secure, and more sustainable*

Progress in 2024

We **upgraded our office WIFI**, creating a more secure network. We increased our network speed and stability. We **improved equipment for staff** through new laptops, docking stations in the office, and smart phones for managers.

Looking to 2025

We will continue to replace older laptops and equipment to maximise efficiency and help provide excellent quality services. We will procure software to enable virtual signatures, enhancing security and reducing paper waste.

## **5** **Challenges in 2024**

* **Staff Recruitment and Retention:** As a charity with limited funding and operating in a tight labor market, we faced challenges in recruiting and retaining staff, especially for more senior roles that require higher salaries. Ensuring quality service provision requires experienced staff, which can be difficult to fund. Additionally, we need extra funding to cover governance costs, IT cybersecurity, and to support the national pay agreement between trade unions and two of our funders, as not all staff are funded this way.
* **Service User Needs:** The needs of one-parent families, especially those sharing parenting and navigating the family law court process, have become increasingly complex. In Ireland, separated families and children remain invisible and under-resourced compared to other countries, and there is a lack of appropriate early intervention programs across the country.
* **Lack of Services Nationally:** While remote and hybrid service delivery has allowed us to reach more people across Ireland, securing funding for our flagship services nationwide has been challenging. Parents across the country deserve access to our specialist bridging programs and the Separating Well for Children service, but these are limited due to short-term, geographically based funding.
* **Multiannual Funding:** Maintaining stable funding is a key priority for One Family, but it is challenging as only one of our funding sources is multi-annual. In 2024, our New Futures Employability Programme was particularly vulnerable due to the end of EU funding and the lack of European Structural Funds (ESF) funding. While we secured philanthropic funding to bridge the gap, our employability programmes will continue to be vulnerable in the future.

Looking to 2025

We will implement our 2025-2027 strategy through annual workplans and sub-strategies, including HR, Change Management, and Service Innovation. **We will collaborate with the new government and opposition to advance policy priorities for one-parent families.** Additionally, we will conduct a role mapping exercise and invest in understanding our culture to **develop a People & Culture Strategy**. Building on the 2024 National Survey of Lone Parents, we will strengthen our Advocacy Project and centre parents' voices in our social policy work.

# **6.      Governance**

## **6.1** **Organisation and Governance**

Cherish CLG, trading as One Family, is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Dublin. Its members’ liability is limited to €1 in the event of winding up. The company operates under a Memorandum of Association and is governed by a constitution managed by a Board of Directors. The Articles of Association and Constitution were last amended in July 2018.

The charity’s main purpose is to provide services and advocate for one-parent families, people sharing parenting, separated parents, and those facing crisis pregnancy, with a focus on the needs of children. It aims to promote equality and social inclusion for one-parent families in Ireland.

One Family is a registered charity (CHY 6525) and complies with annual filing requirements to the Charities Regulator, the Company Registration Office, and the Register of Beneficial Owners.

## **6.2**  **Employees and Volunteers**

As of December 31, 2024, One Family **employed 39 staff members, with 11 working full-time and 28 part-time**, totalling 24.8 full-time equivalents (FTE). There are no volunteers apart from the Board of Directors.

The Heads of Service team collaborates closely with the CEO on planning, delivery, and accountability to ensure the strategy is implemented. Staff follow a range of policies and procedures to ensure high-quality services and regulatory compliance. Work is managed through a line management system, with regular support and supervision sessions. Several staff-based teams, including the Heads of Service, Services, Policy & Communications, and Data & Services teams, work together to deliver the strategy.

## **7. Board of Directors**

### **7.1** **Board Overview**

The Directors of One Family are elected at the AGM and operate under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, guided by the One Family Board Handbook, which is regularly reviewed. **Board members can serve a maximum of nine years, stepping down after four years for re-election and can be reappointed for an additional five years.** This ensures a balance between maintaining organisational knowledge and expertise while introducing new skills and accountability.

### **7.2** **Board Succession**

Board members' skills and personal experiences are identified using a **Board Membership Matrix** to ensure a diverse mix of professional skills and backgrounds. Recruitment is conducted through various channels, including open calls, advertising, and Boardmatch events, in line with the **Board Recruitment Policy.**

Interested candidates are briefed by the CEO, apply using a standardised form, and meet with the Chair and another Board member. They may then observe a Board meeting for six months before being invited to sign a B10 for Directorship. New members are assigned a 'buddy' from the Board and attend induction training to familiarise themselves with the organisation, Board responsibilities, and culture.

**7.3** **Board Transitions in 2024**

There were several Board membership changes in 2024 detailed below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Director** | **Role on 1st January 2024** | **Change** | **Role on 31st December 2024** |
| Aoife Desmond | No role | Joined as an Observer in April and as a Director in September | Board member |
| Breda Murray | Board member and member of the Finance & Audit Committee | Resigned from Finance and Audit Committee | Board member |
| Donagh McGowan | Board member and member of the Governance Committee | No change | Board member and member of the Governance Committee |
| Éimear Fisher | Board member, Treasurer, and member of the Finance & Audit Committee | No change | Board member, Treasurer, and member of the Finance & Audit Committee |
| Helen Hall | Chairperson and Chair of the Support & Supervision Committee | No change | Chairperson and Chair of the Support & Supervision Committee |
| Jack Eustace | Board member, Company Secretary, and member of the Governance Committee | No change | Board member, Company Secretary, and member of the Governance Committee |
| Jennifer Good | Board member and member of the Governance Committee | Resigned as Company Secretary | Board member and member of the Governance Committee |
| John Mannion | No role | Joined as an Observer in April and as a Director in September | Board member |
| Mark Nother | No role | Joined as an Observer in September | Board Observer |
| Nuala Haughey | Board member, Vice-Chair, member of the Support & Supervision Committee and Chair of the Governance Committee | No change | Board member, Vice-Chair, member of the Support & Supervision Committee and Chair of the Governance Committee |
| Rosemary Wokocha | Board member and member of the Finance & Audit Committee | No change | Board member and member of the Finance & Audit Committee |

Full biographical information on the Board members is available online at <https://onefamily.ie/about-us/our-board-members/>

### **7.4** **Board Meetings**

**Conflict of Interest**
One Family Board agendas are developed between the Chair and CEO and include a standing item on conflict of interest which is covered at every meeting. There is also a **Register of Interests** form that all Directors complete annually.

Board meetings

Board committees include the **Finance & Audit Committee**; the **Governance Committee**; as well as the **Support & Supervision Committee**. These committees have approved Terms of Reference under which they operate, and they report regularly to the Board on activities, decisions, and proposals for approval.

The Board operates in accordance with the **One Family Board Handbook** which was updated in 2022. The Board meets up to eight times per year and holds an annual away day. In 2024, most of the Board committee meetings were held on a hybrid basis whilst several meetings and our annual away-day are fully in-person. As with good practice in charities, **Board members are voluntary and do not receive remuneration**. The CEO reports to the Board but is not a member. She participates along with other members of the staff team on committees as appropriate and as requested. The CEO reports to the Board at regular meetings.

This table details attendance at Board meetings by each Board member and observer for 2024:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Meeting Dates 2024** |  |
| **8th Jan** | **26th Feb** | **9th April** | **28th May** | **18th June** | **29th July** | **14th Sept** | **22nd Oct** | **2nd** **Dec** | **/****9 meetings** |
| Aoife Desmond | N/A | √  | X | √  | √  | X | √  | √  | X | **5/8** |
| Breda Murray | √  | X | X | √  | √  | X | √  | X | √  | **5/9** |
| Donagh McGowan | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | X | √  | X | **7/9** |
| Éimear Fisher | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | **9/9** |
| Helen Hall | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | **9/9** |
| Jack Eustace | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | X | **8/9** |
| Jennifer Good | √  | X | √  | √  | √  | X | √  | X | √  | **6/9** |
| John Mannion | N/A | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | **8/8** |
| Mark Nother(Observer) | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | √  | √  | √  | **3/9** |
| Nuala Haughey | √  | √  | √  | √  | X | √  | √  | √  | √  | **8/9** |
| Rosemary Wokocha | √  | X | √  | √  | X | X | √  | X | √  | **5/9** |
| Karen Kiernan (In attendance as CEO) | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | √  | **9/9** |

**7.5 Board Committees**
Board committees include the Finance & Audit Committee; the Governance Committee; as well as the Support & Supervision Committee. These committees have approved Terms of Reference under which they operate, and they report regularly to the Board on activities, decisions, and proposals for approval.

**Governance Committee**
In 2024 the Governance Committee focused on compliance with the Governance Code and reviewed our updated Remote Work Policy.

Terms of Reference

**Composition**

The Governance Committee (the ‘Committee’) shall be appointed by the Board. It shall comprise at least three Directors, at least one of whom shall have governance experience and shall not comprise a majority of the Board. The Committee members shall appoint one of its number as Chairperson of the Committee.  The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be two members.

A member of staff shall be assigned by the Chief Executive to provide administrative support to the Committee and Chief Executive shall attend to support and provide information for the Committee’s work, as appropriate.

**Functions and duties**

The functions of the Committee are to ensure good corporate governance and to advise the Board annually on One Family’s compliance with the Charities Governance Code.

In carry out these overall functions, its specific duties shall include:

* Overseeing and reviewing One Family’s compliance with the Charities Governance Code, including an annual review
* Making recommendations to the Board on any changes to governance practices that the committee regards as necessary or desirable

**Meetings**

The Committee shall meet as often as necessary, but at least four times per year. The Committee may invite any director, employee, or other person to attend any of its meetings and is authorised to seek any information it requires to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

**Reporting responsibilities**

The Committee shall regularly update the Board about Committee activities, including providing a **written report from the Chair to Board** meetings in the format agreed by the Board. The Committee shall make recommendations to the Board as it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed. The Committee shall communicate any significant governance issues as soon as they are identified.

Review

The Committee shall, at least once a year:

* Confirm to the Board that the functions and duties outlined in the terms of reference have been carried out
* Review its terms of reference and membership and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Board for its approval.

Attendance at Governance Committee meetings by each Board member for 2024:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **April 2024** | **August 2024** | **/2****meetings** |
| Jack Eustace | √ | √ | 2/2 |
| Jennifer Good | √ | √ | 2/2 |
| Nuala Haughey | x | √ | 1/2 |
| Donagh McGowan | √ | √ | 2/2 |
| Karen Kiernan | √ | √ | 2/2 |
| Aoife Lynch | √ | √ | 2/2 |

### **Finance & Audit Committee**

The Finance & Audit Committee undertook ongoing review of budgets, cashflow, policies, expenses, and expenditure.

**Terms of Reference**

### **Composition**

The **Finance and Audit Committee** (the ‘Committee’) shall be appointed by the Board. It shall comprise the Treasurer who will act as Chair and at least two other Directors, at least one of whom shall have experience of financial management. It shall not comprise a majority of the Board. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be two members.

A member of staff shall be assigned by the Chief Executive to provide administrative support to the Committee and the Chief Executive shall attend to support and provide information for the Committee’s work, as appropriate.

**Functions and duties**

The functions of the Committee are to keep under review the adequacy, scope and effectiveness of accounting, finance, and internal control systems of One Family. In carrying out these overall functions, its specific duties shall include;

Detailed review of the financial management of One Family on behalf of the Board, including:

* Quarterly review of the management accounts
* Monitoring expenditure against Board approved budget
* Ensuring that funding is drawn down on a timely basis
* Review of cash flow and investment
* Performing a review at least once a year of a full month of detailed financial
* transactions - advance notice of selected month not provided in advance
* Quarterly review of reserves
* Quarterly review of grants received
* Quarterly review of funder obligations and returns to ensure that they are appropriately completed including governance requirements
* Annual review and approval of Reserves Policy
* Annual review of Internal Financial Procedures
* Annual review of Apportionment Policy to ensure the method remains fair and logical
* Review and sign-off CEO’s expenses
* Review and sign-off monthly Credit card statements
* Review monthly Bank Reconciliations

Approval of banking and payment arrangements on behalf of the Board including:

* The opening of bank accounts and the appointment of cheque / bank signatories
* Limits on signing authorities
* Borrowing or overdrafts
* The addition of any new beneficiaries for banking online before payment
* On a quarterly basis, reviewing and approving the beneficiary list for banking online on a quarterly basis
* Annually reviewing the e-banking mandate documentation
* Approving payments made by virtue of the Chair of the Committee acting as second signatory with the Chief Executive on all payments made
* Approving the level of financial authority given to the CEO, Finance team and senior staff

Review of Financial procedures and internal control on behalf of the Board including:

* Advising the Board on the accounting policies and the financial statements
* Advising the Board on the systems of control underlying the financial management processes, including reviewing the results of the external audit and reviewing the procedures and practices associated with financial management and budgeting
* Reviewing significant accounting and reporting issues, including recent professional and regulatory pronouncements, and understand their impact on financial reports
* Recommending the annual draft budget to the Board for consideration of approval
* Recommending the annual financial statements to the Board for approval
* Considering the arrangements by which staff may, in confidence, raise concerns about possible improprieties in matters of financial reporting or other matters considering relevant protected disclosure legislation

Managing on behalf of the Board the relationship with the External auditor, including:

* Proposing the appointment of an external auditor to the Board for approval
* Proposing the remuneration of the external auditor to the Board for approval
* Reviewing all significant reports received from the external auditors and management’s responses thereto and to consider the implications of the issues raised
* Overseeing the implementation by management of any recommendations made by the external auditor and reporting on same to the Board.
* Considering the external auditor’s independence and the effectiveness of the audit process

### **Meetings**

The Committee shall meet as often as necessary, but at least four times per year. The Committee may invite any director, employee, or other person to attend any of its meetings and is authorised to seek any information it requires to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

### **Reporting responsibilities**

* The Committee shall regularly update the Board about Committee activities, including providing a written report from the Chair to Board meetings in the format agreed by the Board
* The Committee shall make recommendations to the Board, as it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed
* The Committee shall communicate any significant issues as soon as they are identified

### **Review**

The Committee shall, at least once a year:

* Confirm to the Board that the functions and duties outlined in the terms of reference have been carried out
* Review its terms of reference and membership and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Board for its approval.

This table details attendance at Finance & Audit Committee meetings by each Board member and staff member for 2024:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **20th** **Feb** | **14th****May** | **4th****June** | **13th** **Aug** | **10th****Sep** | **7th** **Nov** | **/6** **Meetings**  |
|  Éimear Fisher | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 6/6 |
|  Rosemary Wokocha | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 6/6 |
|  Breda Maguire  (stepped down in September) | x | x | x | x |  \_ | \_ | 0/4 |
|  Charlotte Moore  | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 6/6 |
|  Karen Kiernan | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | 6/6 |
|  Jennifer Good  (New member from November 2024) |   |   |   |   |   | x | 0/1 |
|  Aoife Desmond  (New member from November 2024) |   |   |   |   |   | x | 0/1 |
|  Mark Nother (Observer from November 2024) |   |   |   |   |   | √ | 1/1 |

### **Support & Supervision Committee**

The Support & Supervision Committee provided **ongoing opportunities** for support to the CEO and undertook a formal annual review on behalf of the Board in 2024.

**Terms of Reference**

### **Composition**

The Support and Supervision Committee (‘Committee’) shall be appointed by the Board. It shall comprise the Chairperson and at least one other experienced member of the Board. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be two members.

### **Functions**

It is the duty of the Board to attract and retain the best person possible to the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the organisation. The purpose of the Committee is to provide performance appraisal and development support to the CEO on behalf of the Board. As part of this process, it shall also annually review the training needs and remuneration of the CEO and make any recommendations for change if considered appropriate. This does not include becoming involved in the day-to-day operational aspects of One Family.

In fulfilling these functions, the Committee shall:

* Provide ongoing performance appraisal and development support to the CEO on behalf of the Board as needed
* Undertake a formal written performance and development appraisal at least annually. To facilitate this process, the CEO shall prepare a self-evaluation for discussion with the Committee. The Committee shall consult with Board members to allow for board members to contribute in a meaningful and timely way while still respecting the confidential nature of the process. A written report with conclusions and recommendations (if any) shall be signed by both the CEO and the Chair of the Board. A copy of the written final report will then be filed in the CEO’s personnel folder
* Consider the training and development needs of the CEO to facilitate training in line with the agreed annual budget for staff training and One Family policy in this regard
* Consider annually the appropriateness of the salary and terms and conditions of the CEO, in the context of the budget including making recommendations for change to the Board, if considered appropriate
* Consider any matters of grievance or discipline in accordance with the Grievance and Discipline Policy as contained in the staff handbook

### **Meetings**

The Committee shall meet as often as necessary, but at least twice per year.

Reporting responsibilities

The Committee shall regularly update the Board about Committee activities, including providing a written report from the Chair to Board meetings in the format agreed by the Board.

The Committee shall make recommendations to the Board as it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed.

The Committee shall communicate any significant issues as soon as they are identified.

### **Review**

The Committee shall, at least once a year:

* Confirm to the Board that the functions outlined in the terms of reference have been carried out
* Review its terms of reference and membership and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Board for its approval.

This table details attendance at Support & Supervision Committee meetings by Board member and CEO for 2024:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **9 April**  | **22 May** | **/2 meetings** |
| Helen Hall | √ | √ | 2/2 |
| Nuala Haughey | √ | √ | 2/2 |
| Karen Kiernan | √ | √ | 2/2 |

### **8 Decision Making**

Below is a list of matters specifically reserved for the Board:

**General**

* Accounting and management control policies and practices
* CEO appointment, removal, terms, and conditions
* Disposal or acquisition of major assets
* The entering into of major contracts
* Approval of Authority levels
* Budgets, strategies, mission, and vision
* Settlement of litigation involving material sums
* Internal control arrangements
* Health and safety policy
* Environmental policy
* Risk Management Policy
* Major investments or disposals.

**Companies Act Requirements**

* Approval of interim and final financial statements
* Approval of any notable change in accounting policy
* Appointment or removal of the company secretary
* Remuneration of auditor and appointment or removal of auditor
* Approval of the organisation’s annual operating budget
* Approval of the organisation’s annual capital expenditure plan
* Approval of the organisation’s commercial strategy
* Major changes to the organisation's management and control structure.

**Board Management**

* Board appointments and removals
* Terms of reference of CEO
* Terms of reference and membership of Board committees.
* Directors’ and officers' liability insurance
* Appointment and resignation of Directors.

The CEO and the staff team are delegated decision-making responsibility within the operational plans of the Strategy; within their role descriptions and through Board meetings.

### **8.1** **Reporting**

The **Board of One Family** has delegated day to day management of the organisation to the CEO and maintains an **oversight and monitoring role**. There are effective communication systems between staff and Board, policies are **regularly reviewed and updated** by Board and the strategy is developed jointly and approved by Board. A Head of Service attends the beginning of each Board meeting in rotation to brief Board members on their service, to take questions and develop a working relationship independent of the CEO.

The **Board receives reports from staff** in relation to service activity, and policy development. The Board is kept aware of key relationships with funders and policy makers and as appropriate, attending some events and meetings with same.

The **CEO reports to the Board** in several ways: through reports and papers to Board meetings and its committees; through regular reviews of performance; and through the development of strategy.

## **8.2** **Uncertainty Management**

One Family has an **Uncertainty Management Policy** which was developed as a broader concept than just risk, also looking at opportunities. Ongoing analysis for uncertainties is monitored under the following headings:

* Strategic
* Management
* Operational
* Financial
* By Service

Risks and opportunities are prioritised based on likelihood of occurring and potential impact, and an uncertainties register is drawn up which is regularly reviewed by staff and Board at meetings. This identifies the risk/opportunity; gaps; mitigations; future actions; those responsible; timeline and level of uncertainty. The Board and staff work to manage and leverage all uncertainties. The Board is satisfied that systems and processes are in place to monitor, manage, and mitigate the charity’s exposure to its major risks and to capitalise on available opportunities. All new projects and activities review uncertainties as part of planning.

**8.2.1**  **Principal Risks and Uncertainties**

The Directors of One Family are aware of the statutory obligations in relation to providing a fair review of the company's development and performance. The Directors are satisfied that the principal financial risk facing the company is the availability of continued funding from the government. **The Directors have addressed this uncertainty by competent spending of the funds received.**

The risk of fraud is mitigated by maintaining segregation of duties for receipt of funds, and the payment of creditors. The Directors have put processes and internal controls in place to ensure that detailed checking is carried out at all stages to ensure the accuracy and validity of all transactions as part of the Financial Procedures and related policies.

The effect of a **tighter labour market, increased wage costs and cost of living crisis presents some risks for One Family**. The Directors have identified the recruitment and retention of staff as a key challenge. One Family works to ensure its salaries and terms and conditions remain competitive within the sector and within the constraints of available funding.

The Directors also note the **ever-increasing threat of climate change** to the people and ecosystems of the planet; our economic and social systems as well as **unknown changes and threats**.

## **9** **Remuneration and Performance**

One Family has a staff grade and salary scale system in place that was devised according to role size and was aligned to the ‘National Guide to Pay & Benefits in Community, Voluntary & Charity Organisations 2022’ report. One Family updated its Remuneration policy in 2024 to incorporate the 8% WRC pay agreement for Section 39 staff. We worked hard to extend this increase to all staff.

The CEO receives a salary in line with the grade for the role. She is the only person to receive a salary over €65K.

All staff members participate in monthly support and supervision with their line managers. In addition, certain roles attend external clinical and role clarification supervision. Each service holds regular team meetings.

All staff work under a service and/or individual work plan which is devised based on the current Strategic Plan. Performance is regularly reviewed through this system and all staff members participate in an annual review in Q1 with their line manager. All staff work in accordance with One Family’s Employee Handbook; the One Family Manual; the Health & Safety Policy; the Data Protection Policy; Child Protection Policy and their individual service policies and procedures.

**9.1 Key Management Remuneration**

Remuneration paid to key management staff in 2024 amounted to €462,118 (2023: €405,401) key management staff include the CEO (full-time), Director of Parenting Services (full time), Programmes and Information Manager (full time), My Options Manager (full time), Finance Manager (part-time), Communications Manager (part time), Policy Manager (part-time) and Admin & Operations Manager (full time).

## 9.2 Quality Standards

One Family has signed up to several voluntary and required quality standards including the following:

* Charity Regulator’s Governance Code
* Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising
* The Charities SORP (FRS 102)
* The Companies Act 2014

### **9.3 Legal Compliance**

The strategic plan commits the organisation to ensuring that the Charity’s Board and management complies with **relevant legal and regulatory requirements** and that appropriate internal financial and risk management controls are in place. In 2024, One Family submitted its **Annual Report** to the Charities Regulator, its report under the **Lobbying Register** and returns for the Companies Registration Office on time.

The Charity is compliant with the European Union (Anti-Money Laundering: Ownership of Corporate Entities) Regulations 2019. As a charitable company there are no ‘beneficial owners’ of the entity, and therefore the senior managing officials, comprising the Directors/ Trustees and CEO appear in the Central Register of Beneficial Owners.

The Charity demonstrates its commitment to data protection by adhering to the Data Protection Act 2018, which transposes the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) into Irish law. A designated Data Protection Officer oversees compliance, ensuring robust implementation of our policies and procedures. Our comprehensive Privacy Notice, detailing our data processing activities and individuals' rights, is readily accessible at <https://onefamily.ie/privacypolicy/>.

# **10.**  **Financial Review**

**10.1** **Results for the year ended 31 December 2024**

The financial results for the year ended 31st December 2024 are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities. These results show a net surplus of €33,011 (2023 – surplus €22,051).

Income totalled €1,707,391 which was an increase of 13.7% on the prior year (2023: €1,501,234). In 2024 One Family received a total of €1,053,815 in grants from state sources (a full list of state funders is provided on the following page), €128,054 from philanthropic organisations, €516,827 from earned income and €8,696 in corporate and individual donations.

Total resources expended amounted to €1,674,380 which was an increase of 13.2% on 2023 (2023: €1,479,183).

**10.2** **Reserves policy**
Reserves of at least one month and up to 6 months of the estimated running costs will be held in liquid funds in a bank deposit account at any one time. **All funds held are unrestricted.**

One Family will if able maintain sufficient reserves for the following:

* Working capital (cash flow): To have adequate cash flows to provide a stable service and to provide working capital when funding is paid in arrears
* Capital maintenance: To have sufficient funds to maintain its Fixed Assets to include where possible contingency costs
* Other Contingencies: To maintain sufficient reserves for unforeseen events and unexpected expenditure.

The Finance & Audit Committee and CEO will be responsible for monitoring and maintaining the reserves at the agreed level. The **Reserves policy will be reviewed and approved annually** by the Board of Directors.

One Family’s reserves held on deposit on 31 December 2024 are €467,217 (2023: €466,969). Current monthly costs for the organisation are approximately €150,000 (salaries, programme, and overheads costs). Therefore, current reserves are sufficient for 3.1 months. It is expected that reserves will equal 3.4 months operating costs in 2025, and that this target will be met from the 2024 surplus projections.

**Sinking Fund**

A Sinking Fund is a contingency fund established to provide for future capital improvements or repairs to 8-10 Coke Lane building, and for any unexpected remedial works outside the normal scope of the annual maintenance budget. This amount will be kept on an ongoing basis and will be added to each year where possible. **Up to 1% of the annual budget will be maintained for the Sinking Fund purpose.** The Sinking Fund will be reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Directors. One Family’s sinking fund held on deposit on 31 December 2024 is €69,840 (2023: €69,810).

Where reserves exceed the target minimum level of running costs and the sinking fund allowance, the Finance & Audit Committee propose to designate the excess to address the increasingly high governance requirements costing One Family additional staff and consultancy time and increased expertise. Information technology, security, finance, human resources, and data protection are crucial in providing support for the delivery of our services. We are not funded by the state to the level we require to adequately meet these demands, and we need to build a fund from our unrestricted reserves to support the relevant staff roles on an ongoing basis.

**10.3** **Investment Policy**

One Family’s policy for investments is to retain reserves in cash form at all times. Reserves will not be invested in speculative assets e.g. stocks, bonds. Monies will be deposited with government guaranteed institutions at the highest possible rate of return.

**10.4** **Apportionment Policy**

One Family records the income and expenditure of each grant/programme separately. Expenditure that is general to all services and programmes will be apportioned across the various funding streams/services being managed by One Family. Directly attributable costs that relate to a specific programme will be charged in full to that programme. Shared costs such as overheads (heating, light, telephone, audit, legal, printing, advertising, H&S, security, cleaning, repairs, computer, and website maintenance), management and administration time will be apportioned on the basis of the number of staff employed in each service provided by One Family.

**10.5** **Tax Clearance**

One Family complies with all relevant circulars, including Circular 44/2006 ‘Tax Clearance Procedures Grants, Subsidies and Similar Type Payments’.

**10.6** **Events since the year end**

The Board of One Family have considered the impact on the organisation of the events after the balance sheet date. The Board consider that the balance sheet has not been impacted on events since the year end and as a result no adjustment has been made to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024.

**10.7** **Accounting Records**

The measures taken by the directors to ensure compliance with the requirements of Sections 281 and 285 of the Companies Act 2014 regarding adequate accounting records include the implementation of necessary policies and procedures for recording transactions, the employment of competent accounting personnel with appropriate expertise, and the provision of adequate resources to the financial function. The accounting records are maintained at 8 Coke Lane, Smithfield, Dublin 7.

**10.8** **Going Concern**

In common with other companies operating in Ireland in this sector, One Family is dependent on both voluntary income, donations, and grant income from state organisations. The Board of Directors are of the opinion that the company is well positioned to manage the costs of running the company for the foreseeable future.

**10.9 Principal Funding Sources**

 A full list of state funders is provided on the following page. All grants listed in the table are restricted.

**11. Funding**

### **11.1 Grants 2024**

One Family received the following grants in 2024, and they are disclosed in line with circular 13/2014 issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of Grantor and amount of the grant taken to income** | **Name of Grant** | **Purpose of Grant** | **The amount and term of the grant** | **The amount of the grant taken to income 2024** | **Deferred at year end** |
| **HSE |Sexual Health Programme** **€405,000** | Funding via a HSE Service Arrangement to provide family supports in Counselling, Information, Adult Education, Reception and Childcare | Salaries, training, events, and overheads | €405,00012 months | €405,000 |   |
| **HSE |Sexual Health Programme** **€18,802**  | S39 Pay Restoration agreement | Salaries | €18,80212 months | €18,802 |   |
| **HSE |Sexual Health Programme** **€3,889**  | Once off Inflationary grant | Overheads | €14,83612 months.  | €3,889 |   |
| **HSE |Sexual Health Programme)****€39,963**  | WRC S39 Pay agreement  | Staff salaries  |  €39,963  | €39,963 |   |
| **Department of Rural and Community Development** **€90,968** | Funding via Pobal under the Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO) contract. This core grant is restricted to part-fund Administration, Policy, and Communications  | Salaries | €273,000 over a three-year period from July 2022 – June 2025  | €90,968 |   |
| **TUSLA Child and Family Agency** **€208,542** | Separating Well for Children Service.To provide family supports in Counselling, Parenting, Creative therapies for children | Salaries, overheads | €191,083.80 plus once-off pay restoration funding, €17,458.33 deferred €6000 | €202,542 | €6,000 |
| **TUSLA Child and Family Agency |HSE | South Western** **€45,425** | This funding contributes towards the cost of overheads, office administration and staff salaries | Salaries, overheads | €40,173.24 plus once-off pay restoration funding €1,782. €3,470 was received on the 31/12/24 and was deferred to 2025.  | €41,955 | €3,470 |
| **TUSLA Child and Family Agency | Dormant Accounts** **€50,000** | To provide family supports in Counselling, Parenting and Play & Creative therapies for children | Salaries, overheads | €50,000 over a 9-month period from till July 2024-March 2025. | €23,126 | €26,874 |
| **Dept of Social Protection and European Commission** **€79,750** | Lone Parents Digital Activation Project. This project is co-funded by the European Commission under the European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) 2014-2020 | Salaries, training, events, and overheads | €314,999 over a three-year period from Nov 2021 – May 2024.  |  €79,750 |   |
| **Dept of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science | SOLAS | City of Dublin ETB | Adult Literacy & Community Education (ALCE) Grant Aid****€41,407** | Programme Funding, for the payment of Tutors to deliver a suite of parenting courses, designed by One Family, to parents living in diverse and one-parent families | Salaries |  €41,407 12 months | €41,407  |   |
| **Dept of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science | SOLAS | City of Dublin ETB | REACH Grant****€53,513** | Improved & Supported Learner Engagement. Website navigation upgrade and e-learning course redesign | Consultants and overheads.  | €53,513  | €53,513 |   |
| **OLC Ireland Trust Fund | Community Foundation Ireland****€5,000** | Develop e-learning and on-line parenting courses  |  Salaries |  €5,000 May 2023 – February 2024 | €1,088 |   |
| **Indeed Ireland | Community Foundation Ireland****€40,000** | Therapeutic support and vouchers to lone parents who want to progress to education and employment |  Salaries, vouchers, and overheads. |  €40,000 September 2023 – September 2024. | €27,609 |   |
| **Bank of Ireland Cost of Living Ireland | Community Foundation Ireland****€50,000**  | Support for One-Parent Families in Cost-of-Living Crisis |  Salaries, vouchers, and overheads. |  €50,000 May – January 2024 | €1,067 |   |
| **Toy Show Fund | Community Foundation Ireland****€40,000** | Therapeutic supports - in Counselling, Parenting and Creative Therapies  | Salaries and overheads. | €40,000 10 Month project from September 2024- June 2025 | €7,810 | €32,180 |
| **Beachaire Fund | Community Foundation Ireland****€129,704** | Supporting Lone Parents into Education or Employment | Salaries and overheads. | €255,408 over a Two-year period from Sept 2024 – September 2026.  | €19,564 | €110,140 |
| **UBIDAC Legacy Fund | Community Foundation Ireland****€38,250** | One Family Advocacy Project | Salaries, consultancy, and overheads. | €76,500 over a 2-year period from September 2024-August 2026.  | €11,105 | €27,145 |
| **Rethink Mná na hÉireann****€60,103** | New Futures Employability Supports for Women Parenting Alone | Salaries and overheads. | €135,000 over a 3-year period from October 2023-May 2026  | €39,746 | €20,357 |
| **Dept Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth | What Works Fund****€50,000** | Building Evidence – Monitoring and evaluation and Customer Relationship Management development  | Salaries and overheads. | €50,000 12months | €50,000 |   |
| **Katherine Howard Foundation****€15,000** | Infant Mental Health - family support  | Salaries, Training and Overheads | €15,000 over 10 months from September 2024-June 2025 | €3,364 | €11,636 |
| **Training Links Programme | The Wheel****€23,800** | Infant Mental Health Training Network | Salaries, Training and Overheads | € 23,800 July 2024-January 2026 18 months. | €6,257 | €17,543 |
| **Children’s Rights Alliance****€10,140**  | Address holiday hunger by providing food vouchers, to families during Christmas 2024 | Food vouchers | €10,140 December 2024 | €10,140 |  |