



Rape Crisis Network Ireland
2018
Annual Report

Rape Crisis Network Ireland

2018 Annual Report

CHAIRPERSON'S Introduction

Welcome

Many thanks for your presence here at RCNI's AGM and your continued support over the last twelve months. While 2018 proved to be a challenging year particularly in relation to funding concerns, GDPR, Governance, Retrospective Reporting; public events such as the Belfast Trial and the impact it had on survivors; it was also not without its highlights.

There were so many great achievements in the past year accomplished by our team.

Rape Crisis Network Ireland committed early to being compliant with the Governance Code, a code of practice for good governance of community, voluntary and charitable organisations in Ireland and in developing supports for Rape Crisis centres and other NGOs to support their best practice. We showcase our transparency and accountability by us effectively communicating our performance, governance, services, and financials in our annual report. RCNI Board is committed to maintaining the highest standards of good governance and is already preparing for compliancy with the Charities Governance Code for 2019.

Our executive Director, Clóna Saidléar, along with her Finance Administrator Claire Gledhill were always one step ahead in terms of on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the new European Union-wide framework which came into force across the EU on the 25th May 2018. They were responsible for the development and execution of the 'Mapping Document' a Template enabling member Rape Crisis Centres to invest in and to adapt it to their own organisational activities.

An initiative that is of significant importance to all those working with survivors of sexual violence was the Retrospective Reporting interagency roundtable organised and led in partnership by RCNI and One in Four. We were delighted with the great representation from various agencies and the quality of the dialogues.

Clóna, our Executive Director as always was active and committed to her role in responding to the national media;

she is always on top of her game when it comes to responding to media reporters

particularly and was particularly so around the Belfast Rape Trial reaching out to as many survivors and supporters where possible.

RCNI board was also very focused on ensuring best practice and Good Governance with the appointment of a QAS sub-committee working actively to review the code and actions along with the Policies and renewal dates.

In 2018 we were also delighted to be of some small help to the new Belfast Rape Crisis Centre. And we welcome them warmly to the feminist rape crisis community in Ireland.

Also in 2018, Caroline, our Legal Director was responsible for the RCNI's legal submissions, including two written submissions to the Law Reform Commission, one on the Fifth Programme and the other on the Law Reform and Knowledge or Belief concerning Consent in Rape Law respectively. RCNI also made submissions to the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland, and one to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice and Equality, on the proposed Sex Offenders (Amendment) Bill. The Legal Director also made an oral presentation to the Committee on the same topic. The full list of submissions is too long to include here but they are listed elsewhere in the report.



Grace McArdle, RCNI Chairperson

CHAIRPERSON'S Introduction

RCNI delivered various training in 2018 included legal briefings and two training sessions to rape crisis staff and volunteers on various legal topics. Our ongoing training of trainers in the RCNI partnerships with Foróige on the Real U youth education programme. Workshops towards developing and streamlining best practice in intake data collection and consent protocols for data collection. As well as delivering the national programme of training for court and garda accompaniment for staff and volunteers across Ireland working with survivors of sexual violence.

2018, saw the Legal Director's advance work on the second edition of the RCNI Guide to the Legal Process for Survivors of Sexual Violence. It was nearing completion by year's end and is now available online on our website. The second edition of the Guide to the Legal Process for Survivors of Sexual Violence was also completed and is available to order from the RCNI office.

Core funding is key to all our efforts and impact to our organisation. We were fortunate to secure funding from SSNO which we are truly thankful. However, the three year cycle of SSNO funding was ending in 2019 and the new application opened in January 2019. This funding is not guaranteed and once again RCNI found itself in that critical position of planning for possible closure while envisioning the future.

We thank the Department of Justice and Equality and the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime for their continued support.

At this point I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Margaret Barry who stepped down as independent chair after 15 years of service to RCNI. Margaret was very passionate and devoted to her role as independent chair of RCNI.

Thank you to all my fellow board members for your continued participation, support and efforts on behalf of Rape Crisis Network Ireland which are warmly welcomed and greatly appreciated. I welcome our newest director Loretta McDonagh from Mayo Rape Crisis Centre to the Board for 2019. I also thank our

Executive Director, our Legal Director and RCNI's Finance Administrator for their diligence and on-going commitment to the organisation.

On behalf of RCNI staff and Board of Directors, I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to our colleague Miriam Duffy. Miriam recently suffered three bereavements, her brother, her mother and her dear friend and working colleague Ingrid Wallace. We are truly sorry for your losses, and please know that we are here for you.

And finally, acknowledging the significant challenges that lie ahead, we as Directors and staff of RCNI will continue to be optimistic and look forward to the possibility of a future that is more financially viable and sustainable which will lead to a more sustainable National Specialist body for Rape Crisis in Ireland.

Grace McArdle

Chairperson

Rape Crisis Network Ireland

In 2018 RCNI were honoured to be awarded the Jim Kemmy, Thirst for Justice Award by Labour Youth.



Rape Crisis and Specialist Sexual Violence Services in Ireland

Maps, links and locations

RAPE CRISIS HELP

SPECIALIST HELP AND SUPPORT ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

16 Rape Crisis Centres in Ireland

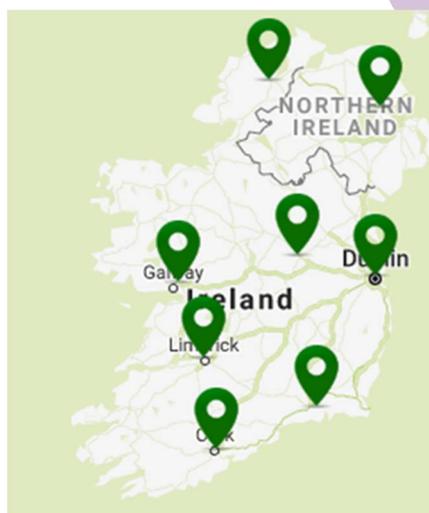


Rape Crisis Centres are independent charities that serve all survivors of sexual violence from 14 years upwards (with some variation). All run a helpline, provide face to face counselling, accompaniment and support engagement with an Garda Síochána and the Courts. All Centres will do a variety of awareness, prevention, outreach and community work too. They are primarily funded by Tusla the Child and Family Agency and the generous donations from their local communities. [Please click here for the live map to access each centre's own website](#)

Rape Crisis Centres rarely support survivors under 14. **CARI** is a Charity specialising in sexual violence services for children and their families. www.cari.ie/

One In Four are an Charity that provides a range of specialist services to adult survivors of childhood sexual violence. They also provide intervention for individuals who exhibit sexually harmful behaviour towards children. www.oneinfour.ie/

Sexual Assault Treatment services



SATUs provide for the emergency holistic needs of anyone over 14 who has experienced a recent sexual assault. At a SATU your immediate medical, justice and support needs are considered. You will have available to you medical, nursing, forensic, garda and rape crisis services and personnel. You do not have to make an immediate decision to report. The forensic material can be held for up to 6 months while you decide. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/sexhealth/satu/>

Child **Onehouse** or Barnahus services are being piloted in Galway at present. This is a medical, forensic and therapy service for children under 14.

The HSE National Counselling Service (NCS) is a free counselling service country-wide <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/national-counselling-service/>

RCNI, established in 1985, is a specialist sexual violence Charity representing survivors' interests and prevention and governed by member rape crisis centres who make up the RCNI board of Trustees. www.rcni.ie

Executive Director's Foreword

It is hard to put into words the breadth and depth of work and progress in ending sexual violence in 2018. Some concrete matters can be laid before you here as achievements and outputs but we were also working in a year with unprecedented population mobilisation on the issue in Ireland and globally demanding and effecting transformation. This was met with considerable political impetus to be part of and lead that change.

What a tiny organisation like the RCNI could achieve in that climate of opportunity was very much based on the work of decades building our expertise, specialisation, knowledge and capacity to be able to advise, guide and seize the opportunities in a strategic and coherent manner with our skeleton and part time staff of three.

Our only regrets for 2018 are that so many opportunities had to be passed by as our part time team simply could not step up to each opportunity.

Let me note four significant initiatives.

- The Minister for Justice and Equality's review of the criminal justice system for victims of sexual violence
- The Minister of Health's review of Sexual Assault Treatment responses
- The Minister for Education and Skills' review of the RSE curriculum &
- The Minister for Higher Education's development of the Framework for Consent for HEIs.

In any other year top of the list of achievements would have been other projects such as the extraordinarily significant tasking of the Central Statistics Office with establishing a sexual violence survey or the Minister for Justice's development of the first national campaign combating sexual violence and that is not to mention in the referendum to repeal the 8th and our engagement in this campaign over many years. But 2018 was no ordinary year.

The public donated generously in 2018 to Rape Crisis. Rape Crisis Centres outside of Dublin (where it is known to us) received donations ranging from €200 and €5,000 in the weeks following the Belfast rape trial. The RCNI itself received donations in this period of almost €2,000 which rose to €6,000 over the course of 2018. With these donations in the spring we were almost able to cover the cost of the publication and launch of the Hearing Every Voice Report on Vulnerable Witnesses. Support from other NGOs has been invaluable to our work given our limited means. Our

gratitude is due to ICCL who hosted our launch of this pivotal report at their conference on the 9th of April and for the Bar of Ireland for their kind use of their facilities.

No additional statutory funding was made available to the RCNI in 2018 to support our efforts to end sexual violence.

As you can imagine, with those resource challenges, our organisation's capacity to impact change is dependent on the staff team being both brilliant and highly motivated. It is my privilege to have worked alongside Claire Gledhill, Lorraine Quigley and Caroline Counihan in 2018. We set before you in this annual report what we achieved in 2018.

In 2018 the sector lost Ingrid Wallace of the Midwest Rape Crisis Centre. In her 31 years of indefatigable and joyful service to survivors she had not only walked beside 100s of survivors in their recovery but she also helped define who we are as a movement. Not only did Ingrid train so many of the specialist counsellors working today in rape crisis all across Ireland but she also regularly input into a range of policy and education development initiatives. Her legacy lives on and we miss her both personally and professionally.

None of this year would have been possible without the incredible support of our trustees, Grace McArdle, Vera O'Leary, Miriam Duffy, Marina Porter, Anne Scully and Loretta McDonagh. These veterans and newcomers of the rape crisis movement remained steadfast and visionary in their commitment to the vision of the RCNI and a society free from sexual violence. It remains of enormous value to us that the RCNI has the unique governance structure of being owned and governed by member rape crisis centres. I would like to thank the trustees personally for their engagement and support of me in my role and their considerable reflectiveness, generosity of time and emotion and ethical insight into all matters.

Thank you

Cliona Saidlear, PhD
Executive Director

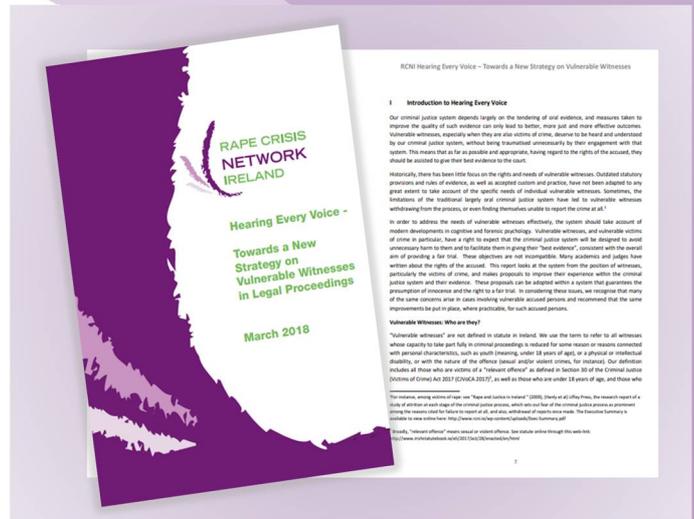


Dr Cliona Saidl ear, Executive Director

Hearing Every Voice Report

During 2018, the Legal Director Caroline Counihan finalised and launched the RCNI Report on Vulnerable Witnesses, "Hearing Every Voice", which had been in development for over two years. For this report we had convened and collaborated with other agencies and professionals on the research, with detailed discussions and revisions involved in gaining agreement on the 33 recommendations that went into the final report.

The Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan met with RCNI shortly after and set up the government's own Review of the protections for vulnerable witnesses in the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences, announced by the Minister for Justice and Equality in September 2018 and now being carried out by Dr Tom O'Malley, senior law lecturer from NUI Galway. The RCNI report's recommendations were included in the Terms of Reference. The Legal Director made subsequent submissions to this Review and attended related consultations.



At the launch of the report in the Law Library pictured, President of the District Court Her Honour *Judge Rosemary Hogan*, RCNI Legal Policy Director *Caroline Counihan*, Head of Circuit and District Court Operations *Peter Mullan*

Referendum to Repeal the 8th

RCNI were members of the Together for Yes Coalition heading into 2018. RCNI were the only rape crisis organization that developed a formal policy and position on the issue culminating in our written submission to the Citizen's Assembly and membership of Together for Yes. We were also the only sexual violence organization in the Together for Yes coalition. Saying yes to joining the campaign was not difficult as we had spent many years engaged in this policy area.

We had formally joined the Coalition to Repeal the 8th in 2012 and released our first information sheet, establishing the evidence base for talking about rape and abortion, in January 2013. Over the next five years we continually revisited our position with our member rape crisis centres as well as lobbying non-member centres.

We presented a thorough and reflective submission to the Citizen's Assembly in 2017 which we believe framed how rape survivors were treated during the coming campaign.

In 2018, for the most part, survivors were treated with dignity, empathy and respect and we are grateful to the many allies on both sides of the referendum campaign who upheld these values when talking about the question of rape and abortion. We'd like to acknowledge the efforts of the Rape Crisis staff and volunteers around the country who participated in panels, made media contributions and created video messages.

We remain wholly in awe of the survivors who told their stories and are mindful of the deep pain that the campaign has left behind even as it moved Ireland to be a kinder place in which to be a woman and a rape survivor.



[Video launch – Amal: a journey through conflict, rape and the 8th amendment](#)

A Yes vote this Friday will make it possible to provide safe, compassionate care to rape victims like Amal here in Ireland. Your vote matters.

Vote Yes on May 25th.



SAFE WORLD SUMMIT 2018

Talk by Dr Cliona Saidleár about survivors telling their stories and our responsibility when we hear those stories

'Testimony, Truth and the Labour of Change'

<https://youtu.be/hJ9NdG8Lnc>

Consent Framework for Higher Education Institutes

RCNI's long engagement in prevention, education and addressing sexual violence arrived at a key moment in 2018. The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills had examined the question of sexual prevention education and RCNI Director Cliona in her oral submission to it promoting the safe-to-learn, holistic model, RCNI had been advocating since 2014.

The Minister for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, in 2018 engaged on this question and was struck by the RCNI argument to move the conversation beyond the simple provision of consent classes, to a whole-of-system engagement on prevention. She committing herself to this project and convened a sector wide and multidisciplinary symposium in Dublin Castle at which Cliona was invited to be a speaker.

The Minister was fearless and strategic and committed considerable political will to not only bringing about this Framework for Consent but also ensuring it had real meaning. She did this by ensuring the Framework is embedded in the HEA and that public funding to third level institutions would become dependent on their performance at providing an education experience that



was safe from all forms of sexual violence. We are honored that the Minister invited our Executive Director Cliona Saidl ear to be a specialist on the working group that devised the Framework which would be completed and launched in early 2019.



The Framework for Consent working group, present were Padraig Mac-Neela, Sin ead Ring, Andrew Power, Siona Cahill, Cliona Saidl ear, Tara Brown, Louise Crowley & Damien McClean. Absent that day the chair Anne Looney

Confidentiality, Privacy and Dignity for survivors accessing Rape Crisis

RCNI continued to convene the **Charities Data Protection Working Group** in preparation for GDPR on the 25th of May 2018. These meetings became more frequent as the deadline neared and continued for the rest of 2018 as we addressed matters arising in implementation and compliance.

This year was an intensive year of GDPR policy and protocol development as well as training and

data collection, management and centring survivors and their rights to discuss Consent. From this RCNI devised a new and innovative approach to ensuring consent for data collection, 'You, Your Data, Your rights.' this is being piloted in Rape Crisis Centres across Ireland and we are seeking funding to be able to showcase and promote this approach much more broadly.



YOU, YOUR DATA, YOUR RIGHTS

**Your name, age and your life story is personal to you.
It's your data. You have rights over your data.**

conducting workshops with members and others. That the date for the GDPR coming into force and the Referendum fell on the same date, put immense pressure on our resources.

Again this work was supported by allies and partners. Our thanks to the Carmichael Centre who donated use of meeting rooms to the working group, to the experts who advised and informed the thinking of each of the key charities who then so generously shared and aligned our standards through the working group.

For the RCNI we remain grateful to the generous advice and support of solicitor Simon McGarr and Daragh O'Brien and his team at Castlebridge especially Dr Katherine O'Keeffe.

A very significant piece of RCNI internal policy development was to bring together all our expertise in

There is a cultural shift on Privacy and data that needs to take place, on the ground and within relevant statutory and government agencies which fund and partner with Charities who offer supports and services to vulnerable people, such as the Child and Family Agency. There remains much room for improvement so that we might fully respect and protect survivor safety in the data environment.

Transformation to vindicate data subjects' Rights continues to be uneven and RCNI continue to pay close attention to this area.

Working Towards Ending Sexual Violence

Vision

An Ireland where the whole of society is active in creating zero tolerance to sexual violence and earning the trust of all survivors

Mission

To work to prevent sexual violence in all its forms by identifying and supporting infrastructure and analysis which is fit to transform our culture and attitudes thus effecting the prevention of sexual violence. To be the independent voice for survivors, to work to ensure the conditions under which survivors heal, are safe, supportive, empowering and responsive to their needs.

Quality Assurance Sub Committee undertakes to review policy and identify gaps, providing a shared policy and governance development capacity for the membership. Where relevant this work is disseminated publicly.

Training Sub Committee led by Miriam Duffy of the Midwest Rape Crisis Centre has led the review of the RCNI Specialist Counselling training curriculum. The programme was extensively renewed and piloted by the Mayo Rape Crisis Centre.

RCNI Knowledge, Information and Data Collection System remains operational but without funding. In the absence of funding no reliable national statistics have been available to policy makers since 2015 when RCNI last published our statistical analysis.

The RCNI standard continues to be to remain true to our commitment to survivors, when they entrust us with their data, that their identities and personal data will be protected and that we will speak truthfully of their experiences. Therefore, we do not consider it either ethical or truthful to release statistics from these data until we can guarantee their accuracy and integrity. It follows that neither can any other agency relying on this data.

In 2018 we established a partnership with Dr Deirdre Healy in UCD who is now offering pro bono support in the absence of funding, alongside the longstanding partnership with our IT developers. 2017 and 2018 data is currently being cleaned for the first time. This only meets a part of the requirements of a fully functioning system. The RCNI Data Collection Officers in each centre have not been supported, upskilled or certified over the past few years and in some centres, through turnover, that function has moved to new people who have had little if any training. The essential regular definition and infrastructure renewal is also below optimal. These emerging gaps now show in the level of cleaning that is required to bring the data up to an acceptable standard.

Tusla: the Child and Family Agency has commissioned a number of Needs Analyses studies in the past few years, none have been publicly released but we are aware that most of the experts have recommended a data system akin to the RCNI system as a minimum requirement for good basic data. Until government properly supports data collection in the sector neither policy makers nor Tusla have available to them reliable and accurate data upon which to make decisions regarding public spending or policy development.

Substantive Submissions, Reports and National Training 2018

Substantive Written Submissions

1. RCNI Review of investigation and prosecution of sexual offences Autumn 2018
2. RCNI Sex Offenders (Amendment) Bill General Scheme Submission November 2018 (1)
3. RCNI Sex Offenders (Amendment) Bill GS and SOA Bill 2018 Opening Statement to JOCJE November 2018
4. RCNI Oral-Presentation-education-JOC-23-October-2018
5. RCNI LRC Knowledge or Belief concerning Consent in Rape Law Submission October 2018
6. RCNI Briefing Note Part 4 CLSOA 2017 dated 9 July 2018 d
7. RCNI Education and Awareness Submission April 2018
8. Mid-term review of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual. And Gender-based Violence RCNI Submission February 2019 1
9. RCNI LRC Fifth Programme of Law Reform Submission February 2018 IFebruary 2018
10. RCNI Submission to the Commission on the Future of Policing IFebruary 2018
11. RCNI Briefing to Sexual Violence Data Scoping group January 2018
12. RCNI Briefing on Recording Delay in CJS January 2018 I

Oral Hearing to the Oireachtas

- Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills on the effectiveness and timeliness of consent classes provided in third-level institutions, 23rd October 2018
- Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice and Equality on the Sex Offenders (Amendment) Bill General Scheme and the Sex Offenders (Amendment) Bill, 2018 November 2018

RCNI Publication

Hearing Every Voice – Towards a New Strategy on Vulnerable Witnesses in Legal Proceedings 2018 Report

Training and Education delivered

- 105 specialist Court and Garda accompaniment and Victim Impact Statement frontline trainees over four training events
- 60 (approx.) trainers trained in the RCNI modules of the Foróige Real U youth development programme
- Training to frontline specialists in the rights and duties under VoC Act 2017 and Children First
- 2 GDPR training, policy and protocol development days for rape crisis staff and volunteers
- Postgraduate training NUIG, the Wheel GDPR online seminar, The Law Society Diploma in Data Protection and a range of conference and workshop presentations on relevant topics of expertise.

ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

INCOME and EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2018

	2018	2017
	€	€
INCOME	210,527	170,669
Administrative Expenses	(205,025)	(204,853)
OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	5,502	(34,184)
DEFERRED (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME FOR THE YEAR	5,502	(34,184)

The income and excess of income over expenditure relate to continuing operations as no businesses were acquired or disposed of in 2018 or 2017.

A separate Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses is not required, as all gains or losses have been reflected above.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2018

	2018	2017
	€	€
FIXED ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	862	1,429
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	69,393	71,346
Trade and other receivables	-	-
	69,393	71,346
CREDITORS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	10,012	18,035
NET CURRENT ASSETS	59,380	53,312
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	60,242	54,741
REPRESENTED BY:		
Unrestricted funds	58,834	52,407
Restricted funds	1,409	2,333
TOTAL FUNDS	60,242	54,741

ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2018

	2018 €	2017 €
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash generated from operations	(1,954)	(25,856)
NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	<u>(1,954)</u>	<u>(25,856)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments to acquire fixed assets	-	-
NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Interest paid	-	-
NET CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
NET (DECREASE)/INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(1,954)	(25,856)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	71,346	97,202
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR	<u>69,392</u>	<u>71,346</u>

On behalf of the Board:

Director

Grace McArdle



Director

Vera O'Leary



BOARD MEETINGS 2018

Convened on:

BOARD OF Trustees 2018

- Grace McArdle, Chair, Attended 5 out of 6 Board Meetings
- Anne Scully, Attended 5 out of 6 Board Meetings
- Vera O'Leary, Attended 6 out of 6 Board Meetings
- Miriam Duffy, Attended 5 out of 6 Board Meetings
- Marina Porter, Attended 2 out of 6 Board Meetings
- Anne Kirwan-Finn, Attended 1 out of 6 Board Meetings— stepped down
- Loretta McDonagh—Appointed in Nov AGM
- Margaret Barry , Independent Consultant to the Board attended 2 meetings before stepping down.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



www.rcni.ie

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Carmichael Centre,
North Brunswick St.,
Dublin 7
November 2019