



Wexford County Childcare Committee CLG (WxCCC) 2022 Annual Report

Wexford CCC AGM -Chairpersons Address

I would like to welcome you all to today's AGM. I would particularly like to welcome Dawn to her first AGM since she joined the board.

2022 was another challenging year where Wexford CCC managed several unplanned and unprecedented actions. Covid 19 remained an issue, albeit to a lesser extent than 2021, where the first quarter focused on the staff team supporting services to maintain service delivery while operating in an unprecedented environment. The influx of refugees following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine brought its own pressures which the team managed with their usual professionalism, efficiency and empathy.

Aside from these extraordinary issues, I am happy to convey that WxCCC delivered on the planned actions of the 2022 LIP/SOW providing intensive supports to the sector throughout the year, in relation to the readiness of the national childcare programmes, administration and compliance support for service providers and information dissemination to parents. The CCC continued to administer the Parent + Toddler grants and Learner Fund bursaries with a total payment of €20,133.50.

The return of face-to-face training in the 2nd half of the year allowed for the delivery of four 6-hour Child Protection courses, two 15hr Diversity and Inclusion programmes, National Síolta Aistear Workshops, as well as online information webinars. WxCCC actively promoted the Childminding Development Grants and encouraged childminders engagement in regional and local events as part of the National Action Plan for Childminders. As a result, five new childminders joined the WxCCC's database in 2022.

The commencement of the Core Funding Model in September led to a substantial amount of extra work for the WxCCC team. With CCC's listed as the key support agency for service providers, the work involved facilitating 1:1 onsite support visits, an increased volume in phone support was required to support services through the comprehensive application process and Quality Action Plan submissions. WxCCC reported 958 Core funding interactions and reached all 149 EY's and SAC services in the County despite this work being captured as 1 indicator within 1 action out of 179 actions outlined in the 2022 LIP.

Continued engagement with local agencies contributes to the significant success of WxCCC,

placing the organisation at the helm of local early years, school age and family support developments. This is evident with 761 specific interactions associated with local agencies such as the community response forum-supporting Ukrainian children and families, Wexford child and young people services committee, Wexford Co Council Library services, and the Traveller Interagency Group, to name but a few.

With over 6,665 support interactions throughout 2022 and several demands and deviations to the agreed workplan (brought on by DCEDIY/POBAL) it reflects the high level of experience, responsiveness and adaptability of the staff team, across a vast array of knowledge areas, and is commendable.

The response and support provided by WxCCC to the sector considering the Covid Pandemic, the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, the implementation of the Core Funding Model and the successful re-registration of 98% early years services in the county, demonstrates to all stakeholders the instrumental role the organisation plays in the delivery of childcare provision at a local and national level.

The collation of weekly local data collection requests from DCEDIY/Pobal in relation to open/closed status of services', staffing levels and Covid 19 cases, capacity surveys as part of the Ukrainian response, core funding QAP and Tusla re-registration spreadsheets placed significant workload on the CCC, particularly within tight timeframes and quick succession demands. The vast amount of local data collection requests highlighted the Departments dependency on CCC's for local knowledge to guide the National response.

The Board received two resignations since our last AGM-Karen Finigan in July and Lillian Byrne in October, Lillian held the company secretary position since 2021. The Board welcomed the appointment of Andrew McCartan and Tom Finn in May and Dawn Murphy in October. Valerie Boggan took over the position of Company Secretary in October following Lillian's resignation. We now have a total of 8 directors. The collective knowledge and skillsets of all members is pivotal to the achievement of the core objectives of the organisation.

The Board remains committed, in the years ahead, to cooperate and engage with the DCEDIY to achieve the best quality outcome for our staff team and the sector in the establishment of the National Agency for Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School-Aged Childcare (SAC).

I would like to express my thanks to each Director for your ongoing commitment and valuable contribution in all matters concerning the Board throughout the past year. Thank you for attending today's AGM and I look forward to continuing to work with you all throughout 2023.

Finally, I would like to record my appreciation of Deirdre Power, our CEO from 2016 until February of this year. Deirdre made a huge contribution to the development and evolution of the CCC in her time with us and the children, parents and service providers of Wexford were the key beneficiaries of her commitment and dedication.

Of course, Deirdre's departure paved the way for the appointment of Siobhán Cummins as our new CEO and she has very quickly set about making her mark in the Company. I am delighted to formally welcome Siobhán to the Company and I am looking forward to working closely with her in the months and years ahead.

Jim Davidson
Chairman

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1.0 Wexford County Childcare Committee CLG 2022: Directors and Company Information

Directors

James Davidson
Boyd Scott
Bongile Mellon
Padraig Murphy
Andrew McCartan (Appointed May 2022)
Thomas Finn (Appointed May 2022)
Dr. Dawn Murphy (Appointed October 2022)
Valerie Boggan

Company Secretary

Valerie Boggan

Company Number 360658 (Ireland)

Charity Number

20048761 CHY14732

Registered Office and Business Address

Enniscorthy Enterprise & Technology Centre
Milehouse Road
Enniscorthy
Co Wexford

Auditors

Eugene T Doyle & Co Limited
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
T/a Doyle Fielding Chartered Accountants
Abbey Square
Enniscorthy
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Y21 TR53
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Bankers

Bank of Ireland
Abbey Square
Enniscorthy
Co. Wexford

Solicitors

Jacob and Twomey Solicitors LLP
Merrythought House
Templeshannon
Enniscorthy
Co. Wexford
Ireland

Members

James Davidson (Chairperson)
Bongile Mellon
Padraig Murphy
Boyd Scott (Treasurer)
Valerie Boggan
Dr. Dawn Murphy
Andrew McCartan
Tom Finn

2.0 WxCCC's Mission Statement

The main objective for which this company is established is to support the development of quality, affordable, accessible and inclusive childcare and family friendly services for all children in Wexford County.

2.1 WxCCC's Aims and Objectives

The Company's aims and objectives is to ensure:

- the co-ordination of the provision of quality childcare (Early Learning & Care (ELC), School Age Childcare (SAC) and Childminding (CM) in partnership with all interested and involved bodies from childcare providers to parents, statutory and community bodies and to ensure the 'added value' of the existence of the Committee.
- the needs and rights of all children and their families will be respected and inform all WxCCC's actions.
- implementation of childcare funding programmes and policies locally on behalf of the Government.
- the improvement of current services and supports alongside the consolidated investment in the sector, to support the continuing development of stable, integrated and sustainable childcare infrastructure and provision based upon a considered assessment of local needs.
- the provision of appropriate and necessary governance and operational quality supports for those providing or seeking childcare in the County.
- the monitoring of trends and developments to ensure that, as far as is possible, strategic and focused provision is available, including research to support governmental policies and strategies.
- that provision of childcare takes account of equality of access, the ongoing need for information, training and equity.
- that there is an increase in the supply and quality of childcare in County Wexford.

2.2 Introduction

Wexford County Childcare Committee (WxCCC) CLG was 1 of 33 City & County Childcare Committees set up in 2001 (30 in 2018), as part of National Childcare Policy to co-ordinate the development of childcare locally and to act as a local Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) advice and support agency for all Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare (SAC) owner/managers, practitioners and voluntary boards of management.

WxCCC also has a support remit to Parents, Childminders and Early Years students. The primary role of WxCCC is to implement current National Early Years Funding Programmes and Policy on behalf of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) at a local level. In doing this WxCCC collaborates where relevant, with ELC and SAC services, Statutory Bodies (Tusla, HSE, Dept of Education, Dept of Social Protection), Community and Voluntary Sector, Early Years Organisations, Parents, Children and elected representatives to continue the positive development of quality, affordable and accessible childcare in Co. Wexford. There are currently 149 ELC and SAC services in operation within the main towns and hinterland of Co. Wexford (Wexford, Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey).

3.0 Governance of WxCCC

3.1 Board of Directors and their role

WxCCC Directors are the Governing Body of the Company, they ensure compliance with all statutory obligations in line with the Company's Act 2014, WxCCC Constitution and Employment Law. The Directors oversee and are accountable to ensuring the company's financial management adheres to all reporting and regulatory procedures and that the company has clear plans, procedures, policies and resources in place to achieve its objectives, namely the DCEDIY Local Implementation Plan (LIP)/Statement Of Work (SOW). This is achieved by providing oversight to the CEO and staff team in their delivery of the LIP/SOW actions.

The Directors are independent members of the Board who possess combined skillset and expertise in the areas of Management, Corporate Governance, Charities Regulatory Governance Code, Employment Law, Project Management, Financial Management,

Childcare, Social Care, Health Consultancy, Human Resources, Public Policy, Regulatory Affairs, Communications and Business.

There are currently 8 Directors on the board of WxCCC, 3 of which hold positions of Chairperson (provides leadership and chairs board meetings, with particular role of support to the CEO and is the link person with board members between meetings), Company Secretary (oversight of company’s legal obligations) and Treasurer (overview of the organisation’s financial affairs).

3.2 WxCCC Staff Team

There are six members on WxCCC staff team, all of which provide professional support and advice to our key stakeholders (ELC and SAC service providers, parents and childminders) through the delivery of LIP/SOW actions that encompass quality, regulatory and compliance requirements.

Name	Title	Contract
Deirdre Power*	CEO	35hrs per week
Jillian Murray	Childcare Development Officer	28hrs per week
Eithne Hodnett	Childcare Development Officer	27hrs per week
Eve Doran	Childcare Development Officer	35hrs per week
Anne Lonergan	Finance & Programmes Officer	35hrs per week
Mary Murray	Information & Programmes Officer	28hrs per week

Table 2: WxCCC Staff Team

**Deirdre Power resigned as CEO on 17/02/2023 and was replaced by Siobhán Cummins on 17/04/2023*

CEO – reporting effectively to the Board of Directors, oversight in the delivery of LIP/SOW, support to staff team and management of company operations, finances, corporate compliance and organisational adherence to the Charities Governance Code.

Childcare Development Officers x 3 – provide information, support and advice on all aspects of ELC and SAC provision, including administrative support on National Childcare Funding Programmes, Tusla Regulatory support and Dept of Education Early Years Education inspection supports, quality and policy training delivery, policy and procedures and pre-development supports such as setting up as a ELC and SAC service.

Finance & Programmes Officer – is responsible for organising, supervising and coordinating office operations and procedures and all financial duties to ensure organisational effectiveness, funding and company regulatory compliance. This role involves supporting Parent & Toddler Grant Funding and Learner Fund Bursaries administration.

Information & Programmes Officer – is responsible for ensuring professional and up to date information on National programmes, policy and quality objectives is provided to all stakeholders, via social media outlets and website maintenance. The role involves supporting engagement with Childminders in the County, through the delivery of aims and objectives of the National Childminding Action Plan.

3.3 Overview of Role & Responsibilities of WxCCC Team

WxCCC operate **National Early Years Funding Programmes and Policy** at a local level on behalf of the DCEDIY, Tusla and Dept of Education through, i) the provision of administrative support and advice to ensure compliance with administration criteria of National Programmes, ii) supporting ELC and SAC services compliance with Childcare Regulations 2016 and School Age Childcare Registration Regulations (2018) and delivery of policy training such as Child Protection and Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Guidelines.

WxCCC acts as a **local agent of the DCEDIY**, communicating effectively and in a timely manner to the ELC and SAC sector on, i) new Funding programme announcements, ii) Covid-19 sustainability funding measures and iii) administrative support and compliance for programmes.

WxCCC has a significant role in the promotion of **The National Childcare Scheme (NCS)**. For the first time in Irish history this scheme places a statutory entitlement to financial support for parents for childcare. NCS establishes an equitable and progressive **system of universal and income-related subsidies** for children up to the age of 15. More information on www.ncs.gov.ie

WxCCC in response to National directives and provider identified needs, provide **continuous professional development training** in the areas of Child Protection, National Early Years Practice Frameworks such as Síolta (Quality) and Aistear (Curriculum), Diversity, Equality & Inclusion, Human Resources (Support & Supervision), Governance training for Community

Boards of Management and First Aid Responder (FAR). WxCCC tailor support sessions based on identified needs through the development team's engagement with services. WxCCC deliver this training through our development team and external trainers who are experienced in relevant fields.

WxCCC Grant Administration:

Parent & Toddler Grants are administered and approved in line with criteria guidelines for those that make applications within a set timeframe. WxCCC receive an allocated amount of funding towards these grants, applications are reviewed and appraised through our Grant Administration Sub-committee.

Learner funds, WxCCC administer this funding to support ELC and SAC practitioners to progress their qualifications through participation on accredited training courses, mainly third level bursaries for accredited Level's 7, 8 and 9.

Tusla Inspection preparation and inspection report outcome support, WxCCC development team offer support to ELC providers who need help in meeting Tusla Childcare Regulations (2016) and SAC providers in compliance with SAC Registration Regulations (2018).

Dept of Education (DE) Early Years Inspections, support and advice to services pre and post DE education focused inspections.

Access & Inclusion Model (AIM) introduced by the DCEDIY in early 2016, provides for inclusive needs led supports for children accessing the ECCE programme. WxCCC support services and parents through i) information delivery, ii) extensive promotion of DEI/LIN training, iii) levels 4-7 application support and iv) collating national data as required.

The **National Childminding Action Plan**, launched in early 2021, WxCCC supports engagement with existing and potential childminders, through information support, grant administration and network/training opportunities.

WxCCC works closely with aims and objectives of First 5 A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families (2019-2028) and Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy for Children and Young People (2014-2020).

4.0 WxCCC Funding

WxCCC is fully funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), which is administered through Pobal. In 2022, WxCCC received a core budget of €392,619. This funding is used towards operational running costs such as staff salaries, administrative and programme delivery. In addition, WxCCC received additional funding towards Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) supports of €18,495, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) €1,800, €2,000 towards Childminding Supports, €11,080 towards Ukrainian response supports, €6,750 for Learner Fund reimbursements, €15,310 for Parent and Toddler grants and €6,257 for Core funding fee management supports.

5.0 Local Implementation Plan/Statement of Work (LIP/SOW)

In 2022, the work of WxCCC was informed by objectives as set out by the DCEDIY in our LIP and SOW. The objectives include supporting DCEDIY's:

- Finance, Governance & Reform Unit
- Quality Unit
- (Schemes Oversight) and Communications Unit
- Projects Unit
- Schemes Oversight (and Communications) Unit
- Early Years Policy Unit
- Additional Actions

5.1 Overview of 2022

2022 commenced, for the second year running, with a heightened focus on Covid 19 where the key focus for WxCCC was to support services to maintain service delivery while operating with exceptional staff shortages and strict public health requirements. The first quarter focused on supporting DCEDIY to monitor this issue closely, with the weekly return of service status spreadsheets, reporting on services' open and closed due to Covid 19 and the timely dissemination of information updates and guidelines as announced by the HSE and DCEDIY. WxCCC recorded a 36% increase in Covid related interactions in Q1 compared to the last quarter of 2021.

Once Covid 19 public health measures were lifted WxCCC resumed face to face training, achieving our targets of delivering four Always Children First Child Safeguarding training and two Diversity, Equality and Inclusion 15hour training programmes.

The roll out of Core Funding quickly took priority resulting in the CCC team supporting the sector through one-to-one phone and email support, on site visits, delivering information sessions and using the training portal to troubleshoot issues to support providers in the complex application process.

As well as working in line with the commitments of the 2022 LIP/SOW, WxCCC responded to all additional requests in a flexible and timely manner such as the provision of supports under the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, the Tusla 2019 and 2022 re-registration follow up. The capacity survey linked to the Ukrainian response supports was a huge undertaking for WxCCC as it required direct engagement with every service in the county. The National Childcare Scheme (NCS) Programme support also continued to be a key element of WxCCC's work profile with annual interactions at 307.

WxCCC delivered on planned actions of the 2022 LIP/SOW providing intensive supports throughout the year to the sector, around compliance, queries on programme rules, AIM, administration of grants and bursaries (P&T, Learner Fund, CMDG) and programme readiness administration for 2022/2023. Throughout 2022, WxCCC continued to take pride in its ability to be adaptable, flexible, responsive and manage change effectively, evidenced by the multifaceted role that the CCC plays within the ELC and SAC landscape.

5.1 Highlights

5.2.1 WxCCC Team

The implementation of many LIP/SOW 2022 actions was a success. The team's readiness, adaptability, and willingness to change workplans to meet the needs of the sector and changing demands of DCEDIY/Pobal is commendable. WxCCC's significant support to services to engage with the Core Funding application process was a key highlight of 2022. Of the 4,434 interactions recorded in 2022, 22% (958) of these were Core Funding related (Figure 1). Despite this work being captured as only one indicator within one action of 179 actions (excluding additional actions) listed within the 2022 LIP/SOW, these figures reflect the sustained high-level of support provided by the WxCCC team.

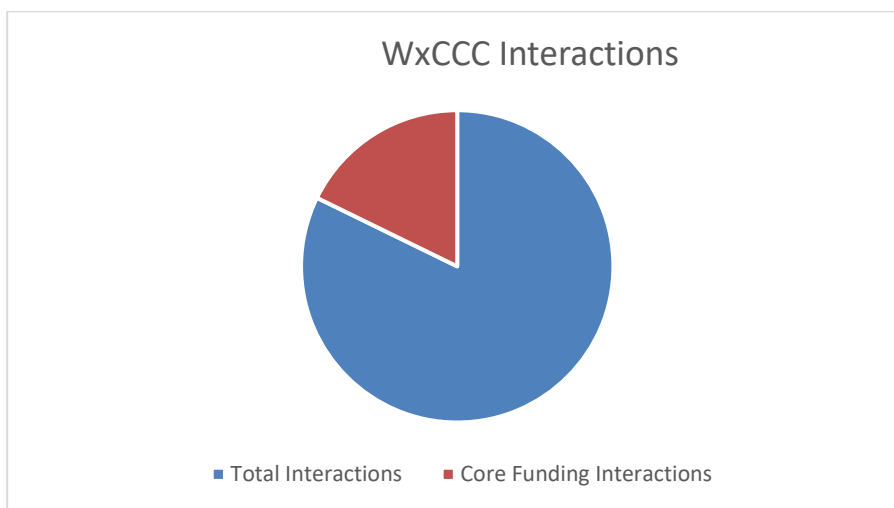


Figure 1

5.2.2 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

In 2022, in accordance with Covid 19 public health measures, WxCCC facilitated both online and face to face training. The following training delivery and supports were provided:

- **Governance & HR Supports**
Significant professional mentoring was made available to services in 2022. Mentoring on Governance was provided to one service. Five services benefitted from attending WxCCC's professional HR mentoring clinics. In addition to these hourly clinics, three services had individual mentoring sessions with a HR mentor. Finally, WxCCC also had a business mentor work with two services.
- **Always Children First: Child Safeguarding Awareness Training**
WxCCC delivered four in-person "Always Children First: Child Safeguarding Awareness

Training” events in 2022 to 60 participants. WxCCC's Child Safeguarding trainers were successful in the re-monitoring process that ensures a continuation of training across the next 3 years.

- **Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) workshops**

Along with the delivery of two AIM Information sessions, WxCCC organised three workshops with Barnardos for ELC services. The webinar titled “Sharing Development Concerns with Parents” was attended by 28 participants whilst the two in-person workshops “Understanding Young Children’s Behaviour” & “Building Trauma Awareness” were attended by 12 people. WxCCC also engaged Paul Dicker to deliver a webinar “Speaking Sensitively to Parents” with 15 participants in attendance.

- **National Siolta Aistear Initiative (NSAI)**

Two “Introduction to Siolta Aistear Practice Guide” was facilitated by WxCCC in 2022 with 27 attendees in total.

- **Trauma & Attachment in Practice (TAPin Training)**

WxCCC organised online TAPin training delivery in conjunction with Paul Harvey and Dr. Lynn Connor. There were 18 attendees.

- **Diversity Equality and Inclusion Training**

Two in-person Diversity Equality and Inclusion Training courses to ELC services in Wexford were delivered by WxCCC. The two sessions were attended by 28 participants.

- **Core Funding Information Sessions**

WxCCC facilitated two online Core Funding Information Sessions with 37 participants in attendance.

5.2.3 Tusla 2019 and 2022 Re-registration Supports

Key support was provided to ELC and SAC owner/managers in completing their Tusla re-registration of ELC and SAC services across the county. Supports included reviewing required supporting documentation such as policies and procedures and IT guidance to accessing and uploading their applications to the Tusla Portal.

5.2.4 Grant Funding, Bursaries and Reimbursements

WxCCC administered nine Learner Fund Bursaries totaling €6,750, which saw reimbursement supports to ELC and SAC educators who partook in upskilling to 3rd level 7, 8 or 9 qualifications. Twelve Parent & Toddler Groups received a Parent & Toddler Initiative Grant, totaling €15,310.

5.2.5 Childminding

WxCCC significantly promoted and encouraged Childminders (CM) engagement in regional and local network and CM training events as part of the National Action Plan for Childminding (NAPC). Events included the delivery of information sessions on First Aid, Childminding as a business, Core Funding and Childminding Development Grants. Five new childminders joined the WxCCC database in 2022.

5.2.6 Ukraine Response Supports

WxCCC worked closely with various local agencies in supporting Ukrainian families and children with accessing childcare places within ELC/SAC settings. The WxCCC team facilitated Stay and Play sessions within a local community hall situated between two accommodation centres. Due to low attendance by parents and children these sessions were ceased. Ongoing supports included continuous engagement with and reporting to the Community Response Forum and supporting children's access to ECCE and NCS funding. The Ukrainian Response Supports has placed CCC's as a pivotal resource at interagency level, in terms of childcare developments and supports within the county.

5.2.7 Connecting young children to the Outdoor Environment

Through CYPSC, WxCCC saw the delivery of a workshop titled "Connecting Young Children to the Outdoor Environment", facilitated onsite by the owner and educators of two Award winning Outdoor ELC and SAC settings in Co. Wexford. This was deemed a particular success with 18 participants in attendance. Many stated in their evaluations that the onsite visits supported participants to gain an understanding of how the use of open-ended resources and natural play materials supported and engaged children to interact more meaningfully with their environment and peers.

6.0 Challenges of 2022

6.1 Core Funding Model & Early Years Hive Access

The introduction of the Core Funding Model led to a very significant extra workload for WxCCC. Significant support and advice were provided to services throughout the application process. The WxCCC team not having access to a fit for purpose system to support providers who were experiencing significant difficulties submitting their applications via the Hive, meant that providers were contacting the team on numerous occasions for support. The naming of CCC's as a key support agency for service providers in relation to Core funding saw increased support from the team in facilitating 1:1 onsite support visits and increased phone support.

6.2 Covid 19

The provision of face-to-face training was further delayed in the first quarter of 2022 until government restrictions were lifted in their entirety. This left a shorter period to deliver on some actions, however WxCCC still met Children First training targets of four workshop deliveries and delivery of two Diversity, Equality and Inclusion programmes. The recruitment and retention of staff remained an ongoing issue for services due to staff stressors such as covid related concerns and educators leaving the sector for better paid positions. WxCCC continued to provide support in this area by posting recruitment adverts on our social media accounts. Support regarding projected financial sustainability was required by several services considering the cessation of EWSS and the introduction of the Employment Regulatory Order (ERO).

6.3 Review of ELC and SAC Operational Structures

The Irish ELC and SAC model operates across multi-level structures, including the DCEDIY, the Department of Education ('DE'), Pobal, 30 County and City Childcare Committees ('CCC'), seven National Voluntary Childcare Organisations ('NVCO'), and Tusla. The government favours the option to form a new Childcare Agency, however there is still some uncertainty as to what this means for WxCCC as work is yet to commence by DCEDIY, in terms of devising an implementation plan for this Childcare Agency.

6.4 High Volume of Information Requests and Data collections

Throughout 2022, the demand for information requests from service providers via surveys and data collections from DCEDIY and Pobal was vast. The weekly covid spreadsheets, the Ukrainian capacity surveys, submission of Core funding QAP and the Annual Sector Profile

along with the requirement to engage in Programme Readiness webinars was an administration burden on service providers.

6.5 Submittal of Financial Income Returns (FIRS)

The increased absence of community services FIR's submittal to Pobal remained an obstacle to case management in 2022. WxCCC no longer have any financial knowledge of services current or projected sustainability and is relying on the community service to contact the WxCCC team if they are experiencing sustainability issues, which poses a concern to pre-empting timely sustainability supports.

7.0 Emerging patterns/trends in ECEC for Co. Wexford

The staffing crisis, particularly retention in the sector, remains a concern. Anecdotal feedback from service providers is that there was a perception that the graduate premium would be paid to all graduates in the service, regardless of role, this condition of core funding may further prohibit retaining graduates in the sector. In the last quarter of 2022, two large community services self-referred to WxCCC with sustainability concerns. These concerns became evident following the withdrawal of EWSS and implementation of Core Funding, WxCCC closely monitored said services through case management process. The continued lack of places for babies and under 3's and full day places across the county further emerged from a survey, which WxCCC completed for DCEDIY, in relation to the placement of Ukrainian children in services. This data evidenced this need for the first time by highlighting 14 vacancies across the county for U1s, 7 vacancies for U2s, 51 vacancies for U3s, totaling 72 vacancies within 147 services across the county for U3s. In addition, the survey identified 262 ECCE vacancies and 227 SAC vacancies.

8.0 WxCCC's ongoing Collaboration with National, Regional and Local Agencies

Collaborative engagement with other CCC's, agencies, Pobal and the DCEDIY is a crucial part of WxCCC's work, as it ensures consistency of early childhood education and care (ECEC) policy, development and initiative supports at local level.

8.1 WxCCC National Collaborations

Pobal, DECDIY, CCI, Tusla, Department of Education Early Years Inspectorate, CCC

CM Cluster group, National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA), Access and Inclusion Model Cross Sector Interdepartmental Group (AIM CSIG) and Better Start AIM and Quality Service. WxCCC funded the publishing of a CCI National report regarding capturing the Ukrainian Response supports offered by CCC's, which was approved by DCEDIY. WxCCC had 1,470 specific collaborative interactions with national and regional agencies outside of specific LIP/SOW actions delivery reporting.

8.1.1 Department of Education Consultation

WxCCC, on behalf of the Department of Education Early Years Inspection, coordinated and facilitated consultation sessions with the ELC sector on the extension of the Early Years Inspection from birth to U3's with 12 early years practitioners in attendance.

8.2 Local Agencies

A significant success of WxCCC is our continued engagement with local agencies, placing WxCCC at the helm of local ECEC and family support developments. WxCCC team members proactively engage in committees and/or sub-committees of the following groups; Wexford Child and Young People Services Committee (CYPSC), Tusla Child Family Networks, Wexford Parents Hub, Books4Babies Steering Group, Wexford Parents Programmes and Family Supports, Traveller Interagency Group (TIG), Riverchapel Steering Committee, Wexford Coco - Library Services and Community Response Forum, Southeast Technology University, Wexford Chamber Skillnet and Wexford Waterford Education Training Board network (WWETB). WxCCC had 761 specific interactions associated with local collaborative actions.

8.2.1 Wexford Library Services

WxCCC continued to have a strong working relationship with Wexford Library Services with two-way communications in progressing relevant library services aimed at the ELC and SAC sector, such as the continuation of First 5 Little Library Book Gifting Initiative and development of ECEC library resources. WxCCC coordinated the dissemination of 2,054 little library initiative invites to children transitioning from preschool to primary via ECCE services.

9.0 Additional Actions

2022 saw a strengthened partnership approach between WxCCC and the Skillnet Network Manager of Wexford Chamber Skillnet, SETU and Wexford Waterford Education Training Board (ETB) in promoting Early Years practitioners' access to QQI and L8 and L9 ECE Information recruitment sessions. As a result, Wexford Chamber Skillnet funded 24 Early Years practitioners from Wexford services at Level 8 (BA degree) and 8 EY practitioners at Level 9 (Masters). WxCCC was a key agency partner in writing an Early Years section within the development of a County Wexford Emotional Based School Avoidance publication, which both Wexford CYPSC and National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS) lead out on.

9.1 ECCE Leaflet for Traveller Parents

WxCCC completed the development of a parental leaflet aimed to inform Traveller parents of the benefits of ECCE. This leaflet has been disseminated across all CPYSC agencies and TIG members, with feedback stating that it will support not only Traveller parent's engagement with ECCE services but also parents of the Roma community and young mother groups. The Director of Public Health Nursing in Co Wexford sought to have more leaflets delivered to their headquarters so PHNs could distribute them through their infant development checkups with Traveller parents. WxCCC worked in collaboration with a local ECCE Traveller support worker in ensuring this leaflet was Traveller inclusive. Due to the demand for more leaflets, additional copies were printed for further dissemination amongst agency partners.

9.2 Trauma and Attachment Informed Practice (TAPin) Programme

Another key action that WxCCC, in partnership with CYPSC, was involved in was the coordination and facilitation of a 3-day programme on Trauma and Attachment Informed Practice (TAPin) aimed at the ELC and SAC sector. This training was delivered by a Senior Social Worker and Clinical Psychologist from Northern Ireland, who devised the programme, which was wholly funded by CYPSC. This programme was rated as excellent by 18 educators from the ELC and SAC sector.

10.0 WxCCC Board of Directors

WxCCC Board of Directors held an AGM and 6 successful board meetings in 2022. WxCCC Board experienced two resignations in Directors, one in July and one in October who held the company secretary position since 2021. WxCCC were successful in recruiting a new Director in October (Early Childhood Education lecturer with SETU), which gives a total of 8 Directors. The combined expertise and skillset of all members is fundamental in the accomplishment of the core objectives of the organisation. WxCCC registered full compliance with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) Governance Code in 2022.

10.1 WxCCC Staff Team

There were no changes to the staffing complement in 2022. WxCCC continued to support a hybrid working model for the staff team. WxCCC team engaged in all training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) events organised by Pobal, DCEDIY and Tusla. In addition, team members collectively engaged in further CPD training; all staff engaged in Barnardos Trauma and Resilience workshop and two staff members completed Professional Diploma in Leadership and Management from UCD. WxCCC continues to offer all employees access to a Wellbeing and Employee Assist package.

11.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, 2022 was a busy but successful year for the WxCCC team and board members. The introduction of core funding is a very significant change within the sector along with the announcement of the NCS universal subsidy increasing significantly. It is perceived that this will impact on services and indeed parents in a positive way. It will hopefully achieve its aim of making childcare more accessible and affordable for parents and children. The introduction of the ERO is also a very significant change and hopefully this will encourage practitioners to remain and indeed join the sector. The Review of Structures is a very big sectoral change which will influence future planning and policy delivery, and this will obviously impact on WxCCC staff and Board, how this will manifest remains to be seen but WxCCC are reassured by the commitment to open communication which DCEDIY are providing to relevant stakeholders in relation to this process. WxCCC team and board look forward to another action-packed year in 2023 and working closely with its colleagues in CCI, Pobal, DCEDIY, Early Learning and Care

and School Age Childcare services, Childminders, Parents and all other relevant agencies to deliver the LIP/SOW for 2023.

