

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

---

SEPTEMBER 13

---

WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG  
Authored by: G O'Connor



---

# Annual Report 2020

## Introduction

Established in 1997, West Limerick Independent Living was setup to develop and deliver personal support services to people with disabilities in the Mid-West, as well as to project a positive image and perception of people with disabilities. As a community based, consumer driven, nonprofit organization, our services are designed to enable persons with disabilities to achieve maximum independence and fully participate in all aspects of community life. West Limerick Independent Living is a company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital.

*Under our Customer Service Standards, each and every West Limerick Independent Living service user can expect courtesy and respect, fairness, clarity, accessibility, timeliness and responsiveness.*

### REGISTERED WITH

Authority	Identifier
Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA)	20037192
Companies Registration Office (CRO)	271412
Revenue (Charities Unit) (CHY)	12592

West Limerick Independent Living supports people with disabilities by way of:

- Providing facilitated Personal Assistant services
- Provide Home Support services
- Providing a fully accessible transport service
- Raising awareness on disability issues
- Providing information on personal support services

---

## ORGANISATIONAL BOARD

<b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>	
<b>Mr. Ben Lenihan, Director &amp; Chairman</b>	IT Department at University of Limerick and is a person with a disability
<b>Mr. John Creedon, Director</b>	Report Technician with Pallas Foods IT Dept. A member of the Irish Wheelchair Association and the Disabled Driver Association. PA Service User
<b>Mr. John Killowry, Director</b>	PA Service User, studied at NUI Galway and worked in Wyeth Nutrition.
<b>Mr. Donal Cooper, Director</b>	Vast experience in the community and disability sector and former board member of People with Disabilities Ireland.

### HSE Service Level Agreement

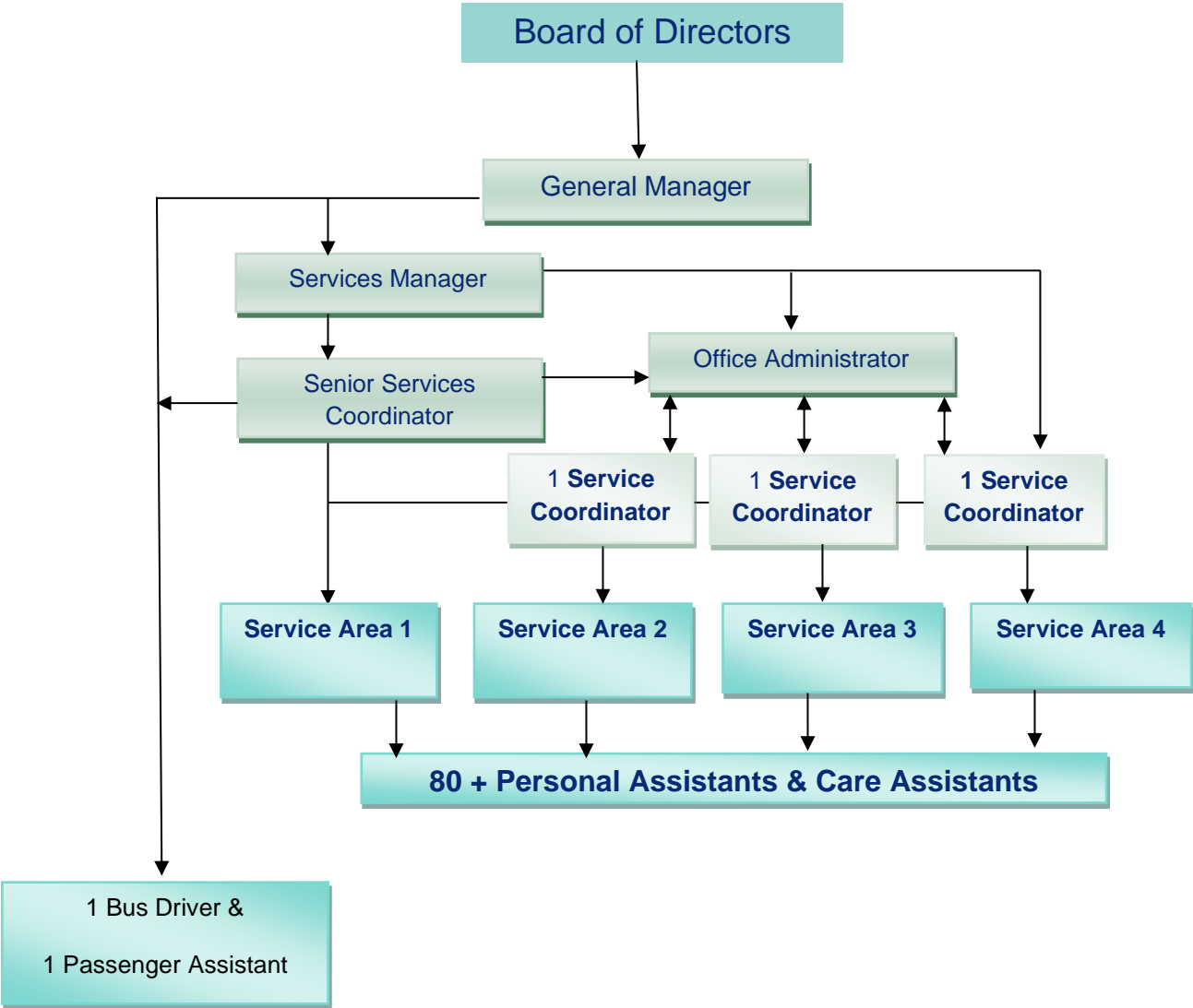
West Limerick Independent Living like many other organisations/agencies that are funded under Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act to deliver a Personal Assistant service (domiciliary care service) which is similar or ancillary to those of the HSE.

Section 39 bodies related to agencies / groups undertaking services which are similar or ancillary to those of the HSE and to whom the HSE is providing grant aid to do so. However, the HSE would not be legally or statutorily obligated to provide such services.

Section 39 of the 2004 Health Act titled, 'Assistance for certain bodies' directs that:

All organisations are required to sign a service level agreement which is a contract between the HSE and agency to deliver a service that complies with all relevant standards and legislation.

# ORGANISATIONAL CHART





## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

West Limerick Independent Living seeks to forge meaningful and just social contracts between our service users and those who work within the organisation, in a manner that contributes to the common good and helps to create a more equitable society. As one of the largest providers of Personal Support Services in Limerick City and County, the primary objective of West Limerick Independent Living is to provide support to people with disabilities in our community. These services include the Personal Assistant service, a key provision of the Independent Living movement. Ultimately, the organisation seeks to promote self-empowerment to overcome the disadvantage imposed by physical impairments.

At the time of writing, we remain in the midst of a pandemic the likes of which most generations will never see. It poses a whole host of challenges to almost every aspect of life, especially for organisations such as ours, where close physical contact with people is a core requirement of the service we provide. This is made much more significant by the fact that many service users would be extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and for them, contracting the virus may be life-threatening. For that reason, we continue to take every precaution we can to protect our service users and staff from this virus. On behalf of the board, I would like to thank all staff and service users for their diligence and understanding as we navigate our way through this crisis and now that the vaccine rollout is underway, we can look ahead to a time when COVID-19 is under control without the need for current restrictions.

On a positive note, the renovation to our premises on Sheehan's Road was completed in 2020. The overall project went exceptionally well and huge credit must go to everyone within the organisation in terms of their energy and ideas, as well as to the contractors and other professionals who brought the project to realisation.

---

The building has been modernised to a very high standard, and we look forward to availing of the new facilities in full as soon as the pandemic is behind us.

On behalf of the board, I would like to acknowledge the efforts made by everyone involved to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of those we serve. I would like to acknowledge the unrelenting commitment of the Board Members; their willingness to devote their time, their dedication and their absolute determination to uphold values like equality and fairness mean that it is a pleasure to work with such an organisation. I would also like to thank all the staff whose enthusiasm and work ethic ensure that we continue to provide quality support to clients. I would like to give my personal thanks to all our service coordinators for once again providing excellent service to our clients. I wish all the best to all our service users and staff, management and members of the board going forward in 2021.

Thank you,

Ben Lenihan

Ben Lenihan

Chairman

West Limerick Independent Living

---

## Managers Foreword



*Mr. Gerard O'Connor*

2020 has been quite a year, bringing all kinds of challenges for us here at West Limerick Independent Living and especially difficult for many of our valued service users and their personal assistants.

For us, the main challenge has been delivering personal support services in the safest way possible to cater for the essential support requirements of our service users in a way that minimises the stress for all involved. Additionally, we have worked hard to inform and upskill our staff on COVID-19 and on the ever-changing pandemic guidelines and requirements.

It has been our privilege to help our service users through these challenging times and I am very proud of our staff for their additional effort, in often very trying conditions, many continued working in an environment where they were worried about their vulnerability to a higher risk of infection and worried about spreading the virus to their families.

As always with this West Limerick Independent Living annual report we hope to provide a comprehensive account on our company's activities throughout the preceding year. We intended to give our service users and their families, our staff and our funding agencies and other interested people an overview of the work of the company in 2020, information about the company's activities as well as providing full details of our financial position.

In recent years new challenges have developed, great changes have come about in regulation and governance of services, the issue of over-regulation, the extra administrative and financial burden it places on organizations like West Limerick Independent Living, greater balance is required between the need to account for money invested and the need to ensure that best outcomes are being achieved from that investment. There is a sense among many organisations that there is an over-emphasis on regulation and accountability, to the detriment of actual outcomes for individuals.

---

2020 was a difficult year, a year in which we delivered a total of 56,624 personal support service hours to 135 people with disabilities over a wide range of locations across the Mid-West. Comparing to 2019 where a total of 74,991 personal support service hours were delivered to 135 people. This is a significant reduction in hours delivered and is mainly due to service users cancelling their services to reduce the number of people they were in contact with, family members who were home working or studying provided support to these service users. Apart from COVID-19, one of the main challenges is recruiting and retaining staff due to increased demand for staff by service providers across the care sector.

Financially in 2020, West Limerick Independent Living operating turnover was €1,486,254 which is down from the 2019 figure of €1,807,947. This reduction ties in with the reduction in services due to COVID-19. I wish to acknowledge the work of the excellent front-line staff, the Board, Management and all Staff and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them most sincerely for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

Thank you,



Gerard O'Connor

Manager West Limerick Independent Living



---

## TRANSPORT SERVICES

Accessible transport allows more and more people with disabilities to continue living in their own homes and communities, this creates savings in other areas such as health and social services.

Like many passenger transport services in 2020, West Limerick Independent Living transport service was hugely impacted by COVID-19. During the first lockdown our passenger transport service was fully suspended up to the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and when the service resumed, it was limited to two passengers to observe social distancing and ultimately attempting to keep our passengers safe from COVID-19. This resulted in less than 1,000 single passenger journeys, delivered to people with mobility impairments in County Limerick.



Like previous years, many of the passengers who use the service go to Enable Ireland day services on a daily basis, the remainder attends Headway and HSE Training Center and other once off passenger trips. The day to day funded of this service is met by the Health Service Executive – West under their transport and socialization support program and West Limerick Independent Living.

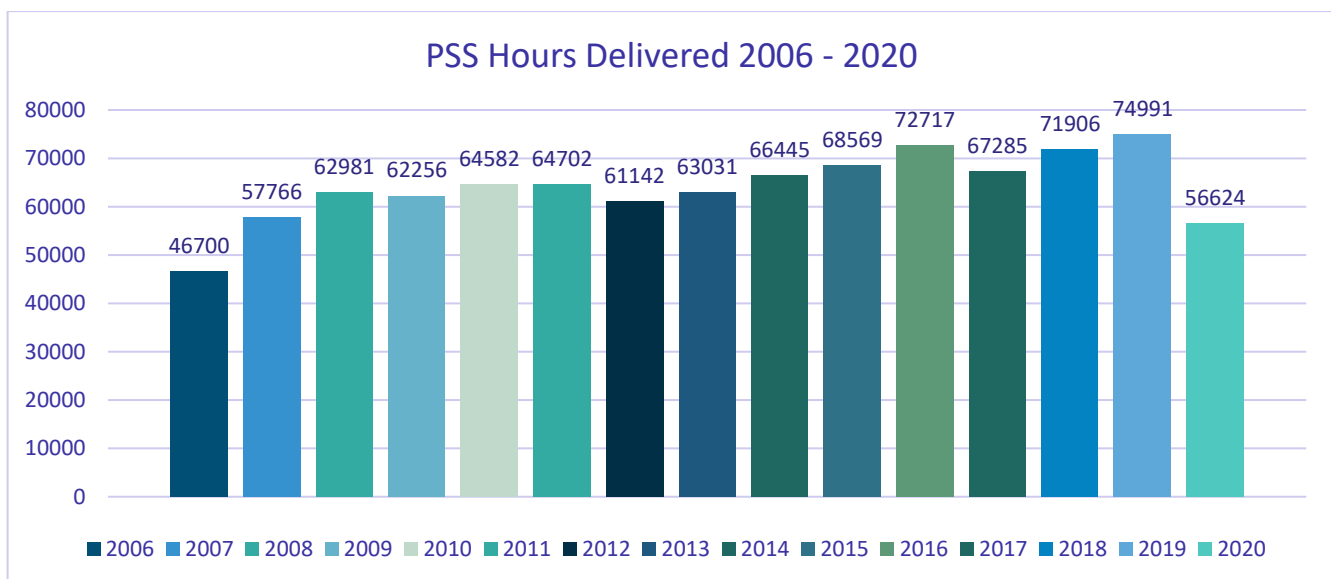
## PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (PSS)

West Limerick Independent Living delivered Personal Support Services to 135 people with disabilities during 2020. Planning and delivery of Personal Support Services was developed and implemented in partnership with the HSE. Unfortunately, like our passenger transport service, our personal support services were hugely impacted by COVID-19. During the first lockdown many of our clients fully cancelled their service with many more clients receiving a reduced service to minimize their contact with people due to COVID-19.

In total West Limerick Independent Living delivered 56,624 hours Personal Support Services to people with disabilities during 2020.

Table of PSS Hours delivered in 2020

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Limerick													
PA	3979	3105	2707	1743	1614	2094	3161	2508	2611	3181	2611	2573	31887
HS	780	685	572	364	339	352	453	480	508	681	554	547	6315
	4759	3790	3279	2107	1953	2446	3614	2988	3119	3862	3165	3120	38202
East Limerick													
PA	1422	1137	1135	1067	864	917	1211	1015	1149	1444	1177	1147	13685
HS	874	733	546	130	100	133	310	337	338	483	393	360	4737
	2296	1870	1681	1197	964	1050	1521	1352	1487	1927	1570	1507	18422
													56624



---

## Staff Levels in 2020

Year ending 2020, overall West Limerick Independent Living had 105 employees on the company payroll, this figure include management, this figure also includes 15 employees who left the company and 14 employees that joined in 2020. High staff turnover continues to be a pressure point, PA recruitment is proving very challenging, we have been advertising on an on-going basis with mixed results.

Attracting quality staff, is a major concern for West Limerick Independent Living, how do we resolve this problem that undoubtedly exist. Attracting quality workers and, just as important, holding on to them is top on our list of priorities. Personal Support Services are a personnel-intensive business, and agencies cannot begin to function without front-line staff, our greatest single asset.

### FETAC (QQI) Level 5

- 38 Personal Assistants have full QQI Level 5 Care Skills or higher award.
- 22 Personal Assistants have several QQI Level 5 modules completed.
- 23 Personal Assistants have no QQI Level 5 Care Skills completed.

### Training Costs

	Numbers	Trainer	Venue Hire	Staff Wages
Manual Handling (6 classes)	40	€2,450.00	€130.00	€2,525.00
Governance Code	1	€130.00	€0.00	€0.00
HSELand.ie (Infection Control)	All Staff	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00
Designated Liaison Training	1	€0.00	€0.00	€0.00

## Office Renovation

The renovation work at West Limerick Independent Living offices was complete within timeframe in 2020 and is now reopened. Clients and staff can enjoy the results of a considerable renovation project that was largely completed while the building was closed during the COVID-19 crisis.



The project came in within budget, there was several additional options added that were not included in the budget which included:

- Air to Air Ventilation and heating system
- External Plastering
- Carpark barrier
- Signage
- Automatic Entrance Door

---

## Annual Health and Safety Report

This report provides information on the performance of West Limerick Independent Living against its safety objectives. This is set in a context of the organisations safety statement, range of activities with corresponding risks, and arrangements put in place to control these.

On an annual basis, WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING evaluates the extent to, which the Safety Statement, Policies and Procedures were effective during the previous twelve months. This report will show the level of resources committed to Safety, Health and Welfare, any special preventative measures taken and data on occupational injuries and ill-health in the workplace and include details such as:

Safety Statement reviews

Risk Assessment reviews

Health & Safety Training completed

Numbers of recorded incidents

New safety arrangements put in place during the year

### **Safety Statement & Risk Assessment Review**

The Safety Statement and Risk Assessment was reviewed in 2020 and there was several updates made to the Risk Assessment by management.

### **Assigned Safety Responsibilities:**

First Aiders: Ms. Laura Denihan & Trish Kavanagh

Fire Wardens: Ms. Laura Denihan

Health and Safety Coordinator: Ms. Margaret O'Brien

Safety Representative: Ms. Margaret O'Brien, Ms. Trish Kavanagh and Ms. Laura Denihan

### **West Limerick Independent Living and Safety Policy**

West Limerick Independent Living will continue to review annually and communicate Health and Safety policy that provides a clear statement of commitment to provide a safe and healthy place of work.

---

The Policy contains commitment to ensure that:

West Limerick Independent Living complies with current safety legislation, hazardous activities are identified, risk assessed and controls implemented, suitable training, information and instruction is provided, there are arrangements for consultation between staff, and management on health and safety issues, resources are made available for safety.

West Limerick Independent Living has a range of activities and a correspondingly range of risks to be managed. The range of risks can be summarised as follows but is not exhaustive:

- Activities involving manual handling and lifting.

- Activities where people work alone.

- Frequent and prolonged use of workstation equipment.

- Areas where there is potential for people to slip, trip or fall.

West Limerick Independent Living manages these risks through the implementation of general arrangements for safety that include:

- Arrangements for reporting incidents, near miss incidents and dangerous occurrences.

- Fire risk assessment and fire safety precautions.

- Safety training and instruction.

- Workstation assessment and provision of eyesight screening.

- Communication and consultation on safety matters (Safety and Health Committee).

### **Health & Safety Training**

Staff undertook training in good manual handling technique and risk assessment to reduce or eliminate manual handling associated injuries. Manual Handling training was provided to staff members who required instruction, by Optima Training an offsite Manual Handling company's when required, the training is refreshed on at least a three



---

yearly basis or more frequently, if identified through the review of accident and illness records.

In 2020 Health & Safety Training was organised for company employees over six training days, a total of 40 employees completed the training. The cost of the training was as follows:

Training Course	Staff Numbers	Cost
Manual Handling Training	<b>40 people</b>	Costs for wages of attendees €2,450.00
		Venue Costs €130.00

People attending these courses were reminded and encouraged to report injury from manual handling activities so that the full extent and potential of manual handling injury is known. This information is used by the organisation to consider the effectiveness of their manual handling risk assessments and control measures and whether more can be done to further reduce the risk from manual handling activities.

### **Review of Hazards/risk assessment and risk control procedures**

In 2020 an office risk assessment was completed by Service Coordinator's, and no issues were identified. All work locations where staff including lone workers work were risk assessed on an annual basis and more frequently if a health and safety issue was raised by an employee or client.

### **Number of Recorded Incidents**

The Health and Safety Authority, the organisations Management and the West Limerick Independent Living insurers require the immediate reporting of accidents, dangerous occurrences, and property damage incidents. All employees are obliged to immediately report all such events to their Services Coordinators.

In addition, staff are required to complete an accident report or dangerous occurrence report form. These forms are available from West Limerick Independent Living website or office and must be submitted within 24 hours of an accident/ incident.

---

Services Coordinators must also conduct and submit an investigation report for each incident and identify the corrective measures required \ learn from the incident so as to prevent recurrence. The Health and Safety Coordinator reviews all Accidents \ Dangerous Occurrence forms submitted, reviews the importance of the actions arising, collates statistics and monitors trends.

### **Incident reports 2020 & Actions Taken**

PA	Service User	Date	Incident	Action Taken
No incidents				

### **New Safety arrangements put in place during 2020**

West Limerick Independent Living Safety Statement was reviewed in 2020 with no changes to document. The Safety Statement, in accordance with Section 20, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, outlines the policy of WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING in relation to the management of health and safety.

West Limerick Independent Living Risk Assessment completes regular health and safety inspections in all areas. All Service Coordinators complete at least one inspection annually in their relevant areas in accordance with the Risk Assessment checklist and they ensure all necessary corrective actions are implemented.

### **Fire Safety Arrangements**

The renovated premises were inspected by Apex who fitted the necessary fire extinguishers and provided training to the West Limerick Independent Living fire officer Laura Denihan.



---

## Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee Annual Report 2020

### **Annual report to the HSE**

West Limerick Independent Living has established a complaints procedure by agreement with the HSE and acknowledges that it must provide the HSE with a general report on the complaints where those complaints are made in relation to matters which fall under the scope of the Health Act 2004 i.e., complaints relating to activities or services which are funded by the HSE in whole or in part. The report will specify all relevant complaints received by the service provider during the previous year indicating:

- The total number of relevant complaints received
- The nature of the complaints
- The number of complaints resolved by informal means
- The outcome of any investigations into the complaints

As well as providing an annual report it is envisaged that the Health Service Executive will collect statistics / details of complaints on a half yearly basis. It is also requested that where a serious complaint is made that the Local Health Manager will be made aware of same.

### **Background**

The Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee is a sub-committee of the West Limerick Independent Living Board, and as such provides a regular report to the Board on the main issues raised and discussed at its meetings. Good practice states that the West Limerick Independent Living Board should review the performance of its committees annually to determine if they have been effective, and whether further development work is required.

This Annual Report summarizes the activities of the West Limerick Independent Living's Quality, Safety and Ethics Committee (the Committee) for the financial year 2020 setting out how it has met its Terms of Reference and key priorities.

The purpose of the Committee is laid down in its Terms of Reference. In summary it is responsible for providing the Board of West Limerick Independent Living with assurance

on all aspects of quality including delivery, governance, risk management and workforce, and the regulatory standards of quality and safety.

### Compliments received from clients

12 Compliments received during 2020 came directly from clients who wished to express that their Personal Assistants deliver quality support and are integral to their lives.

### Membership and Attendance Record

During 2020, the Committee met nine times with attendance recorded in the table below.

Date	Manager	Service Manager	Coordinators	Office Administrator	Representative of WLIL Board	Personal Assistant
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2020	√	X	Trish K, Laura Denihan, Lisa Dillon	X	X	X
6 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	√	X	Trish K, L Denihan, L Dillon, E Carroll	X	X	X
1 <sup>st</sup> May 2020	√	√	Trish K, L Denihan, E Carroll	X	X	X
15 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	√	√	Trish K, E Carroll	√	X	X
20 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	√	√	E Carroll, Laura Denihan	√	X	X
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep 2020	√	√	Trish K, E Carroll, Laura Denihan	√	X	X
28 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2020	√	√	Trish K, Mgt O C, E Carroll	√	X	X
11 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2020	√	√	Trish K, Mgt O'C, Laura Denihan, E Carroll	√	X	X
9 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2020	√	√	Trish K, Mgt O C, E Carroll	√	X	X

Key: √ = In attendance X = Absent √\* = Deputy in attendance

### Significant issues brought to the attention to the Board

No significant issues were brought to the board in 2019. 3 complaints were received, and the issues were minor in nature and addressed by service coordinator.