



Louth Volunteer Centre CLG Annual Report 2018



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development

Contents

1. About Us.....	4
1.1 Our Vision.....	4
1.2 Our Mission	4
1.3 Our Values.....	4
1.4 Our Strategic Aims	5
1.5 Our Board.....	5
1.6 Our Team	5
1.7 Our Services	6
1.8 Our Thanks	7
2. Chairperson’s Statement	8
3. Our Activities.....	10
3.1 With Volunteers	10
3.2 With Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIO).....	10
3.3 Promoting Volunteering	12
3.4 Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann	14
4. Our Impact	15
4.1 On Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs)	16
4.2 On Volunteers	17
5. Quality of Service	18
5.1 Quality Standard Award.....	18
5.2 For VIOs.....	18
5.3 For Volunteers.....	19
5.4 For ‘The Fleadh’.....	19
5.5 External Recognition	20
6. Governance	20
6.1 Governance Code.....	21
6.2 Board Self-Assessment.....	21
7. Financial Report	22
7.1 Financial Review.....	22
7.2 Financial Statements.....	24
7.2a Balance Sheet.....	26
7.2b Profit and Loss Account	25

Company Number	404719
Charity Number	17034
Registered Office	Old Motor Tax Office Bolton Street Drogheda Co. Louth
Auditor	Callan Stringer 66 West Street Drogheda Co. Louth
Bankers	Bank of Ireland Laurence Street Drogheda Co. Louth

1. About Us

This report outlines the work and highlights the achievements of Louth Volunteer Centre (LVC) in 2018. We offer support and guidance to individuals and Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) to reach their individual and collective goals while making a significant contribution to their local community and society.



1.1 Our Vision

Our vision is to make volunteering part of the way of life in Louth.

1.2 Our Mission

To help individuals find meaningful opportunities to volunteer and to support not-for-profit organisations to involve volunteers in their work.

1.3 Our Values

Our key values are:

- **Equality.** We believe all people should be valued and respected equally. We are also committed to removing barriers that exclude vulnerable groups from participating fully in society.
- **Sense of Community.** Volunteering is ultimately about people helping others and feeling connected with their community
- **Professionalism.** We work in an environment where honesty and integrity is paramount and where people are encouraged to bring their ideas to life while remaining accountable to ourselves and others.

1.4 Our Strategic Aims

We have four key strategic aims:

- Promote awareness of Louth Volunteer Centre and benefits of volunteering
- Increase access to volunteering
- Increase quality in volunteering
- Ensure Louth Volunteer Centre's effectiveness and sustainability to deliver

1.5 Our Board

Joan Hardy	-	Chair
Julie Devitt	-	Treasurer
Gráinne Berrill	-	Secretary
Amaka Okonkwo	-	Board Staff Liaison (completed term Dec 2018)
Michelle Saurin	-	Interim Board Staff Liaison (resigned Dec 2018)
Jonathan Lynch		
Maeve Yore		

Board sub-committees

Risk	Joan Hardy, Julie Devitt, Jonathan Lynch
Finance	Joan Hardy, Julie Devitt
HR	Amaka Okonkwo, Joan Hardy, Julie Devitt, Michelle Saurin

1.6 Our Team



The Volunteer Centre Team consists of 3 paid staff:

- Gráinne Berrill, Manager
- Kayleigh Mulligan, Volunteer Liaison/Garda Vetting Liaison Support Person
- Karen Donlon, Organisation Support Officer

This staff team is strengthened by the support of a team of volunteers and interns. Across the course of 2018 sixteen volunteers and interns enhanced our service contributing to all aspects of our work including placement, project supports, graphic design and social media. We thank each one of those individuals for enriching Louth Volunteer Centre with their time, energies and experience. We would not have been able to deliver a quality service to the community of County Louth without their support.

Aaron Ryan, Alan Conlon, Brian Coyle, Eileen Stapleton, Ellen Saunders, Fanny Sih Kelle, Gavin Winters, Graham Gorham, James Dillon Graham, Joanne Russell, Lisa Heeney, Martin Boyle, Mary Thornton, Niamh McNally, Robin Barnes, Tracy Rooney

1.7 Our Services

Our Services	
Volunteers	VIOs
The opportunity to meet with a member of staff to discuss volunteering opportunities. Access to a database of volunteering opportunities so that the volunteer can choose the opportunity that best suits them. Information on the how, why and where of volunteering The volunteers rights and obligations and best practice in volunteering. On-going support for the volunteer through regular contact.	We offer a free volunteer placement and referral service. Guidance and support in developing volunteer roles. Guidance and support on policy issues. Guidance and support developing new projects involving volunteers. Training, guidance and support around best practice issues when involving volunteers Garda Vetting Service to organisations who do not have access to their own Liaison Person.

Advocacy & the Promotion of Volunteering

Represent volunteers, volunteer involving organisations and volunteerism on local decision making bodies.

Promotion of the societal and individual benefits of volunteering and volunteerism

Host events and coordinate awareness campaigns that celebrate, publicise and showcase volunteers and volunteerism

1.8 Our Thanks

We would like to thank the **Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)** for their continued support of Louth Volunteer Centre and their backing of volunteering and volunteerism in Ireland. We are excited that in the coming year (2019) they are investing in the development of a National Volunteering Strategy and the potential that might have for the volunteering landscape in Ireland.

We would like to thank the following organisations and individuals whose support and / or time has contributed to our success in 2018:

The Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Droichead Átha Executive Committee
Louth PPN
Louth County Council
Louth County Libraries
Carmichael Centre
Volunteer Ireland
Our colleague Volunteer Centres

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to the following media outlets for their consistent support of our work throughout 2018

Dundalk FM
Drogheda Independent

We would also like to thank the following media outlets for their coverage of our activities in 2018

LMFM
Drogheda Leader
Drogheda Life
Dundalk Democrat
Dundalk Leader
Mid Louth Independent
The Argus

2. Chairperson's Statement



2018 was a successful year for Louth Volunteer Centre as we embarked upon the largest project we have undertaken to date, the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann Volunteer Programme. Taking on this project aligned with a number of our strategic aims, including *increasing access to volunteering* and *increasing quality in volunteer opportunities*. We are particularly pleased with the high numbers of young people that engaged with the Fleadh Volunteer Programme.

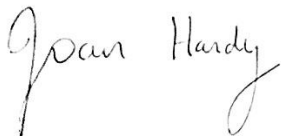
This is due in no small part to the efforts of the Louth Volunteer Centre team in reaching out to second level, PLC and third Level students in the first half of the year. We are very proud of the fact that we managed to maintain the level and quality of our core service delivery alongside our successful Fleadh project and look forward to doing the same in 2019.

Throughout the course of 2018 we invested considerable energy and resources in increasing the provision of training and support to voluntary organisations so as to further our strategic aim of *increasing quality in volunteering*. Through partnering with agencies such as Louth PPN, Volunteer Ireland and The Carmichael Centre we were able to deliver training in GDPR and best practice for volunteer boards. This helped to build skills in voluntary organisations for the recent and upcoming regulatory requirements that have and will impact all volunteer-involving organisations. Louth Volunteer Centre aims to grow our connection with other agencies. We believe these collaborative partnerships boost our strategic goal of *ensuring our effectiveness and sustainability to deliver*, by offering additionality to the core services we already provide to registered organisations on an ongoing basis.

As a board we are delighted that Louth Volunteer Centre had two significant governance achievements in 2018. In June we received the national Quality Standard Award from Volunteer Ireland. The Quality Standards Framework aims to ensure excellence and consistency across the volunteering infrastructure and the award marks the successful achievement of ten quality standards. We also closed out 2018 by finalising our journey towards achievement of the voluntary Governance Code. Louth Volunteer Centre is now registered as compliant. This places us in a very strong position in relation to the future incoming Governance Code for Charities in Ireland. We anticipate that we will be compliant, indeed to 'evidence compliance' level with this new mandatory code in advance of the expected implementation date of 2020. I would like to commend the Louth Volunteer Centre team, the manager and my colleagues on the board on their continued and genuine commitment to best practice in both service delivery and governance.

Lastly, Louth Volunteer Centre continues to operate in a challenging environment in relation to resourcing and funding. We continue to receive core funding that is below the minimum recommended amount for any Volunteer Centre, notwithstanding the fact that Louth is one of the busiest volunteer centres in the country. Our resources are constantly stretched. Indeed with the increased regulatory and legislative challenges facing the community and voluntary sector the demands on Louth Volunteer Centre resources continues to grow. The Department of Rural and Community Development's commitment to and support of Volunteer Centres, in particular the stabilisation of funding over the past couple of years, is both welcome and commendable. We continue to seek out alternative funding streams, however this brings operational challenges for us. For example, in 2018 the value of alternative income dropped from 29% to 20% of total revenues. Flagged at our Annual General Meeting last year this was the result of a strategic decision to focus our energies on delivering the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann volunteer programme, whilst simultaneously protecting our ability to deliver our core services and objectives.

Finally, I'd like to thank the board, staff and volunteers, past and present for their commitment, contribution and continued support to the centre's work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Hardy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

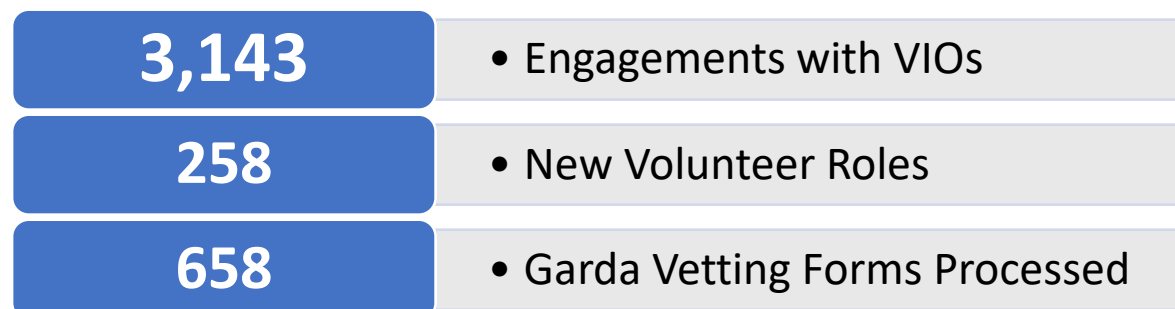
Joan Hardy, Chair, Louth Volunteer Centre

3. Our Activities

3.1 With Volunteers



3.2 With Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIO)





3.3 Promoting Volunteering



Jobseekers

- 24 Outreach Workshops to 250+ Jobseekers
- Delivered presentations in Jobs Clubs, Seetec, and Job Focus
- Hosted stands at DEASP Jobs Week events



People with Disabilities

- Referrals from Employability Louth, National Learning Network, Community Mental Health Team
- Promotion of volunteering as a route to inclusion and employment in St. Ita's Special School



New Communities

- 3 Outreach sessions to residents in direct provision
- 4 x Presentations to LMETB English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) learners



Young People

- 16 Presentations on volunteering in Second Level Schools, 850+ students
- 7 x Third Level & PLC events, 250+ students
- Participated in youth focused events such as Mid Louth Youth Cafe



Older People

- 3 x Pre Retirement Presentations, 150 attendees
- Information giver at Louth Libraries and Alzheimers Society information event
- Participation in Age Friendly and mPower events
- Hosted a stand at Louth Family Carers Week event



44%

Increase in social media followers

22

Articles in local newspapers

16

Features on local radio

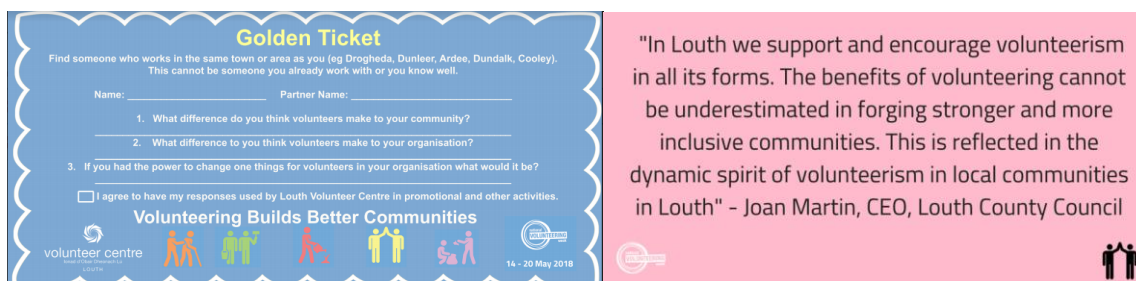
Regular Outreach Activity

- Fortnightly service in Ardee Library
- Monthly service in Dolmen Centre, Omeath

National Volunteering Week

During National Volunteering Week we

- Hosted a Volunteer Leadership Seminar
- Held three open mornings for volunteers and VIOs
- Conducted a social media campaign, including getting #volunteerlouth trending nationally on Twitter
- Secured coverage in local print and radio media
- Encouraged local leaders to showcase the value of volunteering



We were also involved in....

Louth Public Participation Network

- Louth VC Manager member of Louth PPN Secretariat
- Member of Projects Subgroup
- Convenor for Drogheda Municipal District

Louth Local Community Development Committee

- Louth Volunteer Centre has a seat on Louth LCDC
- Member of Rural Development Programme (RDP) Subgroup

Education & Training Networks

- Member of Drogheda & Dundalk Education & Training Networks

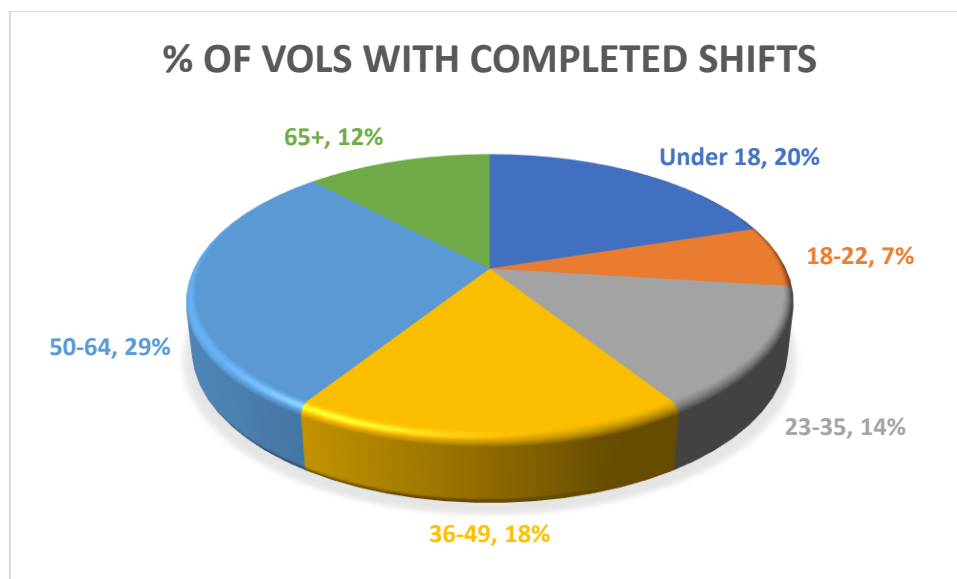
3.4 Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann



“Without the volunteers the Fleadh wouldn’t have been as successful as it was. It makes me feel like I played a good part in the Fleadh, it’s a sense of belonging and shows that teamwork works.”

Janet
Fleadh Volunteer

#IamTheFleadh
www.volunteerlouth.ie



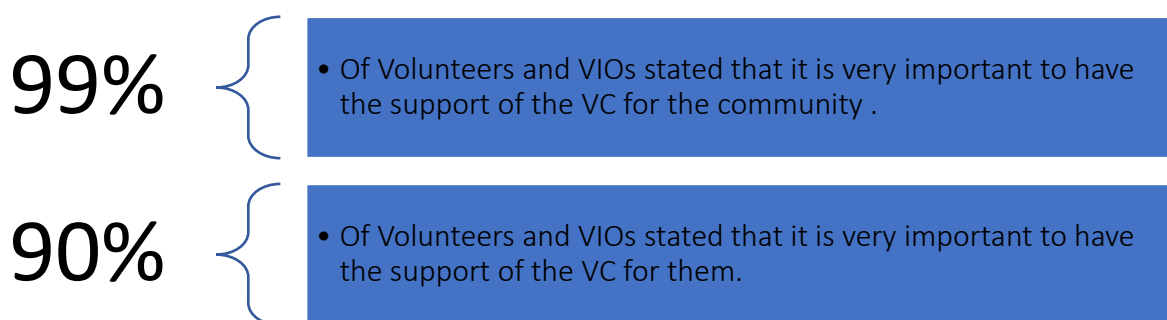
“I was delighted to volunteer especially helping in the area of accessibility. I kept meeting the same people, many of whom travelled a long way. We had interesting chats.”

Anne
Fleadh Volunteer

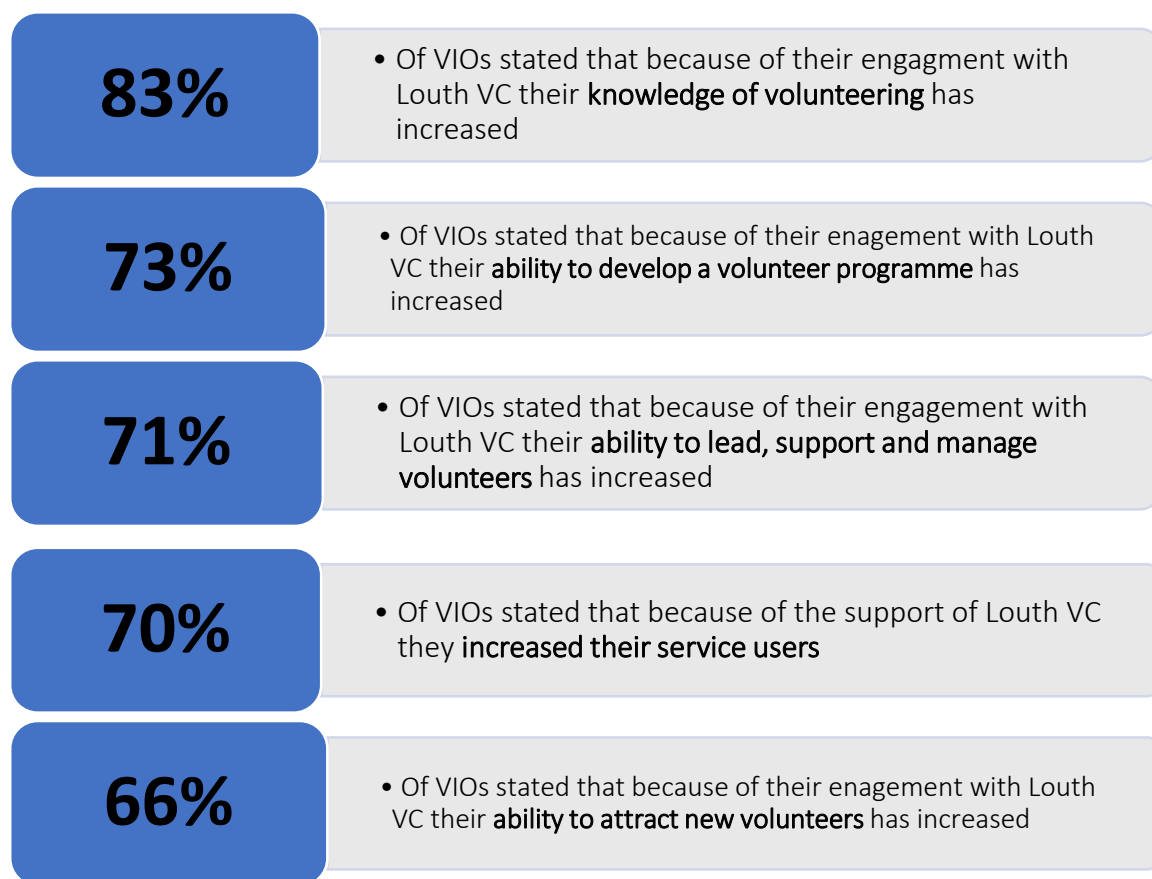
#IAmTheFleadh
www.volunteerlouth.ie

4. Our Impact

According to our volunteers and VIOs our work has a significant impact on them and the community and it is very important that they have the support we offer.



4.1 On Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs)



Source: VIO Survey

Golden Ticket

Find someone who works in the same town or area as you (eg Drogheda, Dunleer, Ardee, Dundalk, Cooley). This cannot be someone you already work with or you know well.

Name: Alan Duff Partner Name: Sandra Butteley

1. What difference do you think volunteers make to your community?
I think Volunteers are vital to the Community - Knowledge + Skills

2. What difference to you think volunteers make to your organisation?
Enhance people's Being Joy to Service users - Share Knowledge + offer different Skills

3. If you had the power to change one thing for volunteers in your organisation what would it be?
It would be great to be able to reward volunteer more

☒ I agree to have my responses used by Louth Volunteer Centre in promotional and other activities.

Volunteering Builds Better Communities

volunteer centre
14-20 May 2018

4.2 On Volunteers

72%

- Reported an increase in their **sense of belonging** to their community as a result of volunteering.

75%

- Reported an increase in their **mental health and wellbeing**.

77%

- Reported an increase in their **self-esteem**.

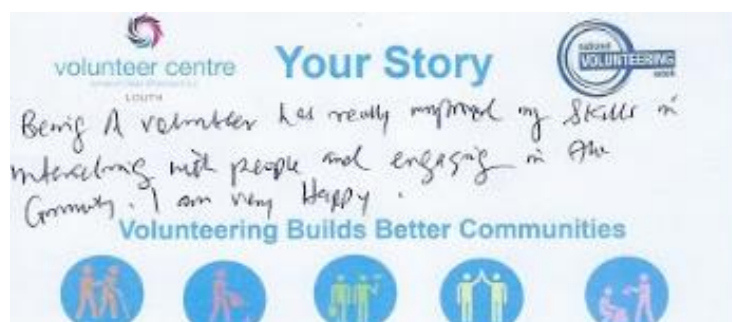
79%

- Reported that their interest in **doing more volunteering** had increased.

81%

- Reported an increase in their **confidence in their own abilities**

Source: Volunteer Survey



5. Quality of Service

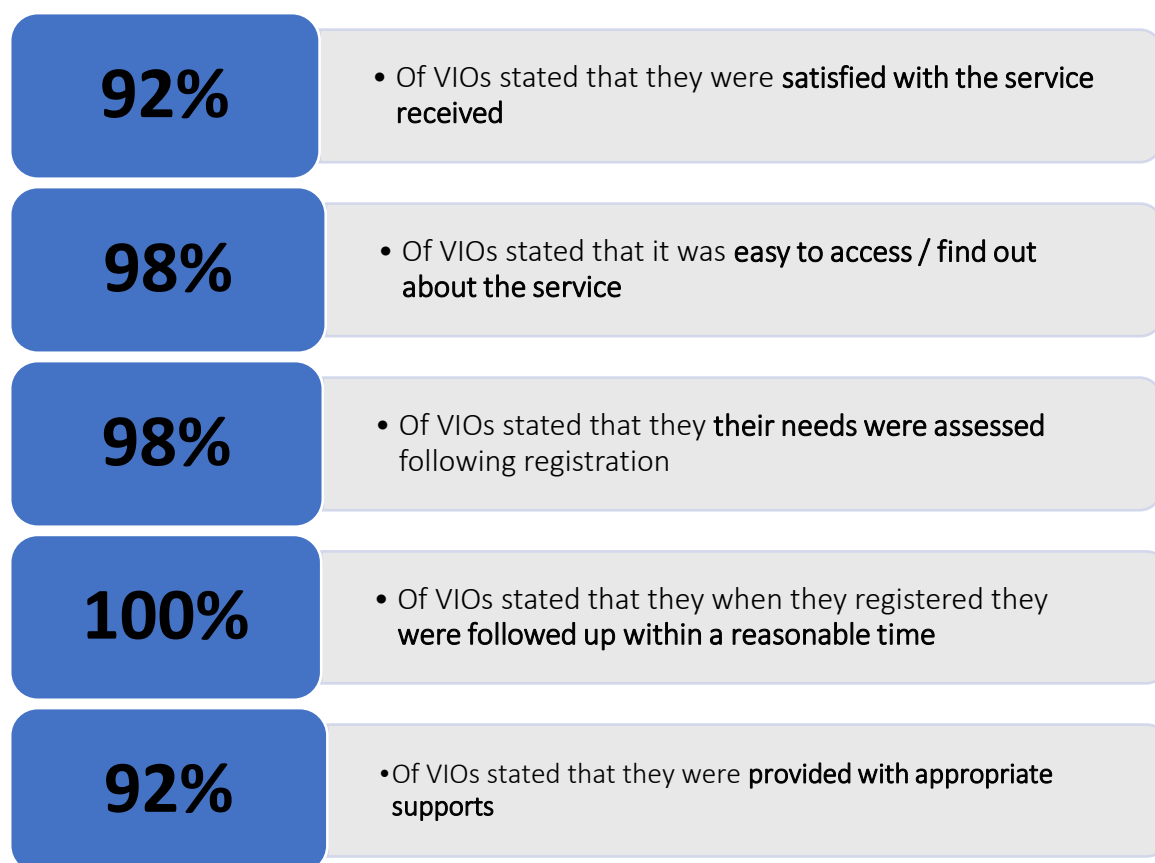
Aligned to our strategic aim of ensuring our effectiveness and sustainability to deliver we continuously monitor and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of our service delivery.

5.1 Quality Standard Award



In June 2018 we were awarded the National Quality Standard Award, marking the successful achievement of ten quality standards included in the Quality Standards Framework developed by Volunteer Ireland. The attainment of this award was the outcome of a rigorous evaluation process and the ongoing commitment by all the Louth Volunteer Centre team to providing a consistently high quality. The achievement of the award is not the end of the journey but rather the current highlight of an ongoing continuous quality improvement process.

5.2 For VIOs



5.3 For Volunteers

93%

- Of volunteers stated that they were **satisfied with the service received**

100%

- Of volunteers stated that they would **recommend the service to others**

93%

- Of volunteers stated that our **services were easy to access**

96%

- Of volunteers agreed that Louth VC staff were **welcoming and professional**

85%

- Of volunteers agreed that Louth VC staff were **knowledgeable about volunteering**

5.4 For 'The Fleadh'



Volunteers gave their experience of helping out at the Fleadh a rating of **4.6/5**



100% of respondents said they would recommend volunteering at the Fleadh to family and friends

4.3/5

- How well volunteers felt LVC's training/induction **prepared them for volunteering at the Fleadh**

4.7/5

- How likely volunteers felt they would be to **volunteer at the Fleadh again**

5.5 External Recognition

		
Louth PPN Community & Voluntary Awards Voluntary Team of the Year Category Winner Fleadh Cheoil Volunteers	Louth Business Awards Community Award Finalist - Louth Volunteer Centre	Drogheda & District Chamber Business Excellence Awards Employee Training and Development Category Winner Louth Volunteer Centre

6. Governance



Louth Volunteer Centre AGM, 11th June 2018

Our strategic aim of ensuring Louth Volunteer Centre's effectiveness and sustainability to deliver is explicitly connected to the practice of good governance which the Charities Regulator defines as involving *'putting in place systems and processes to ensure that your charity achieves its charitable objectives with integrity and is managed in an effective, efficient, accountable and transparent way.'*

6.1 Governance Code



The board and staff of Louth Volunteer Centre have been on the journey to compliance with the Voluntary Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations since 2015. This code is the standard for excellent practice in corporate governance for non-profit organisations. In 2018 we made a strategic decision to continue this journey despite the knowledge that a new mandatory Charities Regulator Governance Code would be forthcoming in the near future, believing that the journey to compliance is a positive in and of itself and reflects our commitment to best practice in all areas of Louth Volunteer Centre. We achieved compliance with the Code in late 2018 and have commenced the process of preparation for the incoming Charities Governance Code.

6.2 Board Self-Assessment

The Louth Volunteer Centre board conduct regular formal and informal assessment and evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of their processes and activity.



The board have identified succession planning and attendance as two areas that need to be addressed in 2019.

Formal Review February 2018

	Role on Board		Leadership of Board		Board Meetings	
Specific Area of Evaluation	Induction Process	Role as Board Member	Providing Leadership	Understanding & Performing Roles and Responsibilities	Board Meetings	Chair in smooth running of meetings
Effectiveness Score	3.4 / 5	4 / 5	3.7 / 5	3.9 / 5	3.7 / 5	3.8 / 5

During this process the board were also given the space to provide ideas to improve the effectiveness in specific areas and in board and governance processes many of which were rolled out in 2018 and will continue to be implemented in 2019.

7. Financial Report

7.1 Financial Review

Overall Results

The results for 2018 show a net operating profit of €11,461. This is moderately better than budgeted for in comparison to the budget submitted to the board in December 2017 and approved in January 2018. Our income was €3.5k above budget due mainly to higher than projected Garda Vetting and service income. Our expenditure was just over €1.5k under budget, due to slight underspend in Travel and Subsistence, Office Supplies and Training budget lines.

Income

Income decreased by 7% (€10k) in 2018, following an increase of 20% in 2017. This has resulted in a decrease in the diversity of our income streams from 28% additional non-core DRCD grant funding in 2017 to 20% in 2018. This was anticipated and flagged both in 2018 budget and at Annual General Meeting held in June 2018. A strategic decision was made to not source additional funding or projects for 2018 but to commit resources to ensuring the quality of our core service was maintained alongside delivering an excellent Fleadh Volunteer Programme.

Expenditure

Overall expenditure increased 5%, after remaining level year on year between 2016 and 2017. In December 2017 Louth Volunteer Centre commissioned an audit of our IT systems in preparation for GDPR and other increased regulatory obligations in 2018. On foot of recommendations received a decision was made to invest resources in updating our IT infrastructure, and this is reflected in a 183% increase in spend under Computer Costs. We recognise that we have an onus to make continued investment in IT and other operational systems in the context of our strategic aim to ensure Louth Volunteer Centre's effectiveness and sustainability to deliver. To that end we secured funding of €3,600 from the Communities Enhancement Programme to invest in remaining IT audit recommendations during 2019. We further recognise that investment in people is essential to Louth Volunteer Centre's commitment to quality and best practice. Budget was therefore allocated in 2018 to training and further funds in 2019, despite no increase in core funding.

Reserves

Louth Volunteer Centre's policy is to maintain reserves at a level which ensures the stability and long-term viability of the organisation, to ensure protection from fluctuations in income, and to allow immediate and efficient response to urgent needs which may arise subject to the centre's objectives.

Outlook

A budget for 2019 was presented to the board in December 2018 and approved in January 2019. Income and expenditure is projected to be broadly in line with 2018. During 2019 we will need to seek new income streams to generate the revenues required to maintain Louth Volunteer Centre's financial stability in 2020. There is a capacity risk associated with this obligation given significant resources and energy will be required to maintain service delivery at the level achieved in 2018.

Our current strategic plan (2015 – 2019) is due for renewal in 2020, budget has been allocated towards the development of the strategy. A decision was also made for Louth Volunteer Centre to apply for LEADER funding to develop a county wide strategy which would map to the National Volunteering Strategy flagged for development in 2019. The timing of the strategy in 2019 was deemed to be appropriate in light of the fact that in year 2 of the Fleadh Cheoil Volunteer Programme researchers will have access to a base of subjects who do not normally engage in volunteering. It is also noted that delivery of such a project during 2019 may place additional strains on the resources of the Louth Volunteer Centre team and that any company appointed to the tender will need to be able to deliver the project in full under Louth Volunteer Centre guidance. Income and expenditure on a County Strategy has not been accounted for in budget projections and success in attaining this funding may require a mid-year review and adjustment to the end of year forecast.

7.2 Financial Statements

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. Full set of audited accounts available on www.volunteerlouth.ie.

7.2b Profit and Loss Account

Financial year ended 31 December 2018		
	2018	2017
	€	€
Turnover		
Dept of Rural and Community Development	114,100	114,100
Garda Vetting	4,518	-
LCC Project(Fleadh)	4,518	-
County Councillor Donations	750	-
Private Donations	750	-
Services (PPN/Volunteer Ireland)	1,121	-
Sundry Income	-	32,685
	<u>137,067</u>	<u>146,785</u>
Gross Profit	<u>137,067</u>	<u>146,785</u>
Overheads		
Administrative expenses		
Wages and salaries	(99,312)	(98,532)
Staff training	(666)	-
Rent payable	(4000)	(4000)
Insurance	(1,008)	(884)
Printing, postage and stationery	(1,405)	(1,301)
PR and marketing	(839)	(771)
Telephone	(2,902)	(2,367)
Computer costs	(4,649)	(1,642)
Travel & subsistence	(2,529)	(2,947)
Volunteer expenses	(553)	(532)
Other project expenses	(5,027)	(4,486)
Audit, accounting and professional fees	(1,691)	(1,230)
Bank charges	(228)	(259)
General expenses	<u>(797)</u>	<u>(501)</u>
	(125,606)	(119,452)
Operating profit	11,461	27,333
(Loss)/profit before taxation	<u><u>11,461</u></u>	<u><u>27,333</u></u>

7.2a Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2018		
	2018	2017
	€	€
Current assets		
Debtors	13,735	20,452
Cash at bank at hand	63,230	44,719
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(7,967)	(7,634)
Net current assets	68,988	57,537
Total assets less liabilities	68,988	57,537
Net Assets	<u>68,988</u>	<u>57,537</u>
Capital and reserves		
Profit and loss accounts	68,988	57,537
	<u>68,988</u>	<u>57,537</u>



volunteer centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Lú

LOUTH

Old Motor Tax Office
Bolton St,
Drogheda
Co Louth

T: 041 9809008
Email: info@volunteerlouth.ie

Ferdia Suite,
Millennium Centre,
Dundalk
Co Louth

T : 042 9392934
Web: www.volunteerlouth.ie