

Chairperson's Annual Report for 2014

The last year has seen FYHP growing both in terms of service provision and in becoming financially more sustainable. The recent notification of the success of the recontracting application to Pobal, through the submission of the Business Plan for 2015-2017, has provided a sound basis for progression in the coming years.

Expansion of the Board: CD and Presentation

The Board has become re-energised through the recruitment of new membership over the last year. A new members Open Day was held on the 9th April 2014 with accompanying presentation outlining the aims and objectives, history, service provision, target groups and finances of FYHP. All of the membership were presented with the Introductory CD containing a relevant information pack. The recruitment drive has resulted in four additional Board members and one additional Sub-Committee member.

Renewal of Subcommittees: Chair and Remit

The new and expanded membership has allowed the renewal and revitalisation of a series of Sub-committees each with a remit and Chair. The subcommittees are working well.

- Finance: Mark Bradley
- Staffing: Sheilann Monaghan
- Education and Training: Noel McCullagh and
- Communications, Marketing and Income Generation: Tracy McGibben

Pobal Audit Response

FYHP provided a detailed response to the January 2014 Pobal Audit concerns regarding

- the 2011 and 2012 financial deficits and the measures taken to address the losses
- Outsourcing of the Payroll
- The need to Strengthening Financial Process and Governance
- Some sub-committees not having comprehensive terms of reference and a lack of minutes

The response detailed the measures being undertaken including reduced staff salaries, improved service provision, refined financial procedures and improved governance.

Pobal Recontracting: Application and Presentation to Board

The FYHP Board made a recontracting application under the Community Service Programme to Pobal in May 2014. The submitted Business Plan 2015 to 2017 set out the Organisational Structure of FYHP (Board and Staff details), Vision and Key Objectives, Target Groups, Intended Outputs and Targets, Needs Analysis, Income and Expenditure and projected Cash Flow, Reserves Policy and Risk Analysis. The Business Plan was accepted by Pobal in December 2014.

Financial Sustainability

The financial sustainability of FYHP has improved significantly through reduced salary outgoings, seven day opening and increased client throughput and traded income. The staff of the Horse Project are to be commended for the level and quality of service provided in difficult financial circumstances. While the level of funding from grants remains good, most of the grants are for specified projects or services e.g. the window and door replacement programme.

FYHP has adopted a Reserves Target of €70,000 and at the start of 2015 has a reserve of €20,000.

Outcomes of FYHP Objectives for 2014

The Horse Project continues to successfully engage with our Target Groups of disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, young Travellers and local schools and youth groups. The numbers attending the Horse Project for the 2014 year exceeded previous records with over 8,000 lessons given. Over one third of lessons provided are delivered to our target groups. BHS Equine Training continues to be delivered to Traveller Stable Hands and Solus/FAS trainees. As part of the Business Plan 2015 – 2017, it will now be an objective of the Horse Project to increase the level of accredited training (AIRE and FYHP levels) to all of the target groups.

Governance

There are two aspects in the sphere of governance that have emerged in 2014 that are relevant to FYHP; these are the appointment of the Charity Regulatory Authority in October 2014 and the increasing use of the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland as a benchmark for good practice.

The Board committed to sign up to the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland in April 2014 and training on the Code and its adoption has commenced. As an organisation with a CHY number from the Revenue Commissioners and included in the Register of Charities with a registered charity number, FYHP is now required to provide a detailed profile and organisational information to the Charity Regulatory Authority.

It is anticipated that the work required to comply with the Charity Regulatory Act and with signing up to the Code of Good Practice will become a major focus for the Horse Project in the year 2015. The creation of the website fyhp.ie for the project in 2014 will enhance the transparency capabilities of FYHP and it can be used as a platform in terms of governance as well as a means of communication and marketing.

Stable and Arena: Renovation and Renewal

An extensive window and door renovation and replacement programme funded under the Sports Capital Programme and by South Dublin County Council is underway at a cost of approx. €34,000. The new FYHP logo has been used on the replacement signs on the FYHP stable premises and the new logo reflects well on the vibrancy of the Horse Project. It is intended that the recently formulated FYHP Renovation / Jobs List, with costed works itemised, will be utilised in 2015 as a means of attracting funding locally.

Conclusion

Following what can be described as a successful year for the Fettercairn Youth Horse Project, I would like to thank all of the staff for the enthusiasm and hard work over this year. I would also like to thank all of the Board members and the members of the four subcommittees for the dedication and commitment to the Horse Project.

Dara Larkin
Chairperson