

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

BOARD FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (NI)

REPORT 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Board Membership

One retirement and two appointments.

Review of Organisation

A name change has been proposed to that of “Board of Social Action”. The Board explains this as being progressive and proactive, indicating an improvement in effectiveness, clarity of purpose and raising the Board’s profile.

Accommodation

The Board has now moved to new office accommodation and positive feedback has been received to date from both service users and professionals. The quality and accessibility of the accommodation has been commented on favourably.

Central Church support is welcomed.

Funding

A multiplicity of funders. There is a need to review sources of funding – Parishes/Dioceses and via Service Level Agreements.

Adoption Routes

The Adoption Society has recently changed its name to that of Adoption Routes and it is felt this is a progressive and beneficial move. Areas of activity for the Adoption Agency are outlined.

Fertility Counselling Service (N.I.)

(N.I.) has been added to the name of the Fertility Counselling Service and we hope to reap the benefits of this as well as pursue additional funding via Service Level Agreements.

Financial Assistance to Families/Individuals in Need

Details of expenditure plus benefits;

Sources of funding;

Christmas Toy Appeal.

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

Services to the Deaf, Hearing Impaired and Disabled

Support to the Revd Canon Will Murphy and membership and involvement in the Working Group on Disability.

Child Contact Centre

Involvement in the Central Belfast Child Contact Centre.

Targeting the Diocese of Clogher for a centre.

Problematic Drug and Alcohol Use

Internal sub-committee – new Patron – the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe.

Inter Church Addiction Project – purpose, plus, leaflet on the website.

Church of Ireland Board for Social Responsibility (RI)

A developing link.

Report to General Synod

The membership of the Board for Social Responsibility (N.I.) is made up of laity and clergy from across the Northern dioceses of the Church of Ireland. Some members represent a constituency organization. Other members are co-opted on grounds of their professional expertise, having a specific skill base, or due to personal experience.

The Board aims to provide “*A practical response to the Church’s Ministry to the community by providing a social work service, by raising awareness of social issues and by offering help to clergy and parishes as required in dealing with their community outreach.*”

In addition to Board members who all give their time on a voluntary basis, the organisation employs social work and administrative personnel to carry out its role as a provider of a range of social work services. The Board’s Chief Executive and administrative personnel are involved in both the social work and social concern activities of the Board.

Membership of the Board

The Revd Canon GF Anderson
The Revd Dr JPO Barry
Mr David Brown
Mrs J Bunting
Mrs H Campbell

The Rt Revd AET Harper (**Chairman**)
Mrs H Livingston
Miss J McGaffin (**Vice Chairman**)
The Revd J Pickering (**Resigned Sept 07**)
The Very Revd P Rooke (**Appointed Dec 07**)

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Mr AD Canning | Mr R Stinson (Hon Secretary) |
| Dr J Evans | The Very Revd RC Thompson |
| The Revd MRK Ferry | Capt Colin Taylor |
| Mr G Glenn (Hon Treasurer) | Dr J Turner |
| Mr G Graham | |
| The Revd M Hagan (Appointed Sept 07) | |

In 2007, the Revd J Pickering left the Board following his retirement from Drumcree Parish Church. The Diocese of Armagh appointed two new representatives, The Revd Matthew Hagan and the Very Revd Patrick Rooke.

Staff

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Mr I Slaine | Chief Executive |
| Mrs P Gilbert | Senior Social Work Practitioner |
| Mrs G McCluskey | Senior Social Work Practitioner |
| Mrs L Graham | Senior Social Work Practitioner |
| Mrs M Giff | Social Worker |
| Mrs M Walker | Administrator |
| Mrs B Lowndes | Administrative Assistant |

Mrs B Lowndes, Administrative Assistant, left the employment of the Board in October 2007.

Review of the Organisation

The Board has continued to review its structures, operations and functions in 2007 and into early 2008.

As part of the desire to move the organisation forward, a motion is attached to this report proposing that its name be changed to Board for Social Action. This is deemed to be a more descriptive name for the progressive and proactive nature of an organisation promoting social issues and action within and outside of the Church of Ireland.

The name change is a forerunner to moving the work of the organisation forward through other internal and operational changes. The planned changes will happen over the next year to eighteen months and it is intended, will lead to, amongst other developments:

- A more effective operation;
- Improved clarity of purpose;
- A raised profile within the Church of Ireland;
- A raised profile outside the Church of Ireland.

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

The social work service provisions of the Board in two areas, Adoption and Fertility Counselling, changed their operating names in early 2008. This is detailed in the body of this report in the relevant sections.

Accommodation

In mid-January 2008, the Board moved from Church of Ireland House in Belfast to a new operational base at Ground Floor, 2 Pilot's View, Heron Road, Belfast. This followed an internal re-organisation of office space in Church Of Ireland House, Belfast.

Members of the Board and staff, as well as the service users, see the move as a further positive step in line with the name changes and restructuring and one which will strengthen our work.

The new offices, although out of the city centre and away from Church of Ireland House, which we see as a loss for our agency, have excellent facilities. These include spacious office accommodation, training/meeting rooms, dedicated counselling rooms and free parking for service users.

The Board greatly appreciates the financial support which central Church sources have given towards the accommodation. This has helped ease some of the initial concerns associated with a significant increase in Board expenses associated with a stand alone office base.

Funding

The Board relies on a variety of funders in order to carry out social action/outreach and social work services. Funders include:

- Central Church;
- Dioceses;
- Parishes;
- The Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety;
- Belfast Health & Social Care Trust (for Fertility Counselling);
- A range of other Trusts including Belfast Trust for adoption service provision.

The core grant aid from the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety is of great value to the Board with regard to maintaining its core social work services.

The Board recognises, due in part to additional outlay involved in an office move, that improved fund raising is required. This includes improving the level of support provided by dioceses and parishes. In addition the Board intends to increase the number of Service Level Agreements it has with Health and Social Services Trusts.

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

Adoption Routes

In January 2008, the Church of Ireland Adoption Society was re-branded as Adoption Routes. The name brings to the fore the word 'adoption'. The purpose of the name change is to improve public awareness of the agency and the level of accessibility to our services. The Church of Ireland name, or indeed ethos, is by no means gone. In all our literature and publications we are clear on our link to the Church of Ireland Board for Social Responsibility (N.I.) or, potentially in the future, The Board for Social Action.

For many, there is an assumption that adoption is a statutory service provision only. This is not the case. Voluntary agencies involved in adoption provide high quality and professional based services. They complement and, on occasion, act as an alternative to Statutory Social Services. In addition, voluntary adoption agencies often promote new and innovative services.

Adoption Routes remains active in the following aspects of adoption:

- Recruitment, training and assessment of prospective adopters;
- Placement of children for adoption, with the consent of the birth parents, or at the request of Social Services and the courts;
- Adoption placement support;
- Post adoption services – these include access to birth records for adult adoptees;
- Training for approved adopters (in conjunction with two other voluntary adoption agencies operating in Northern Ireland, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association and Family Care Society);
- Independent adoption counselling;
- Adoption assessments on behalf of Social Services Trusts;
- Potential new service developments including Child Appreciation Days;
- Independent membership of Statutory Adoption Panels.

Fertility Counselling Service (N.I.)

With regard to this service the name change is less obvious. We have added NI to the title. This is a means of showing our Northern Ireland wide credentials, plus, emphasising the agency being the lead provider in Fertility Counselling on a regional basis.

The Service remains an ongoing challenge to our professionally trained counselling personnel. Counselling staff are dealing with people at a point of great emotional need and distress. The counsellors also deal with many ethical and moral issues in their day-to-day work.

In 2007, the Service placed much emphasis on attempting to access additional funding as announced by the Minister of Health, Mr Paul Goggins MP, in September 2006. This 'chase'

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

has proved a somewhat frustrating and fruitless task to date. The Service sees a need to improve the level of funding available through a Service Level Agreement. As with any negotiations the two organisations do not always see eye-to-eye on costs. This process remains ongoing.

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Financial Assistance to Families/Individuals in Need

Although deemed a small part of the Board's work, this service does directly benefit those who receive the financial assistance. It is a way of showing the care of the Church to people in financial hardship.

In the financial year 2007 a total of £4,938.30 was paid out in such disbursements. Of this amount £4,638.30 was paid to families with children.

This service is dependent upon funding from BBC Children in Need, the Church of Ireland Orphan and Children's Society for Counties Antrim and Down, as well as Parish/Diocesan 'free fund' contributions.

A further practical expression of the Board's support to families is the Christmas Toy Appeal. The 2007 appeal was the largest ever with one committee room stacked to the roof with high quality, new toys.

Services to the Deaf, Hearing Impaired and Disabled

The Board provides management support and supervision to the Revd Canon Will Murphy who carries out pastoral duties to the deaf and hearing impaired in the Church of Ireland. This service is funded through investments managed by the Church of Ireland Trustees on behalf of the former Church of Ireland Mission to the Adult Deaf.

Canon Murphy provides pastoral support to a number of individuals affected by deafness. In addition Canon Murphy holds a service in the church situated at Wilton House, College Square North, Belfast.

The Board has opened negotiations inside the Church and with other denominations on improving the level of provision of pastoral care across Northern Ireland and beyond to people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment.

Canon Murphy, along with the Board's Chief Executive and Vice-Chair, Judith McGaffin, is a member of the Working Group on Disability. This Working Group is attempting to raise awareness on disability issues within the Church, influence and educate the Church on disability issues and encourage improvement in levels of accessibility to church buildings.

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

Child Contact Centres

The Board's Chief Executive is on the Management Committee of the Central Belfast Child Contact Centre. In addition, he provides professional social work support and supervision to the Co-ordinator at the Central Belfast Child Contact Centre.

The Board continues to encourage development of Church of Ireland linked Centres and has targeted the Diocese of Clogher in this regard.

Problematic Drug and Alcohol Use

The Board has taken on this matter via an internal sub-committee and through membership of the Inter-Church Addiction Project (ICAP).

The internal committee intends to build on a *Strategy and Plan for Christian Action on Problematic Drug and Alcohol Use 2005-2008*. This sub-committee of the Board has approached the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe to be the patron of the group and he has agreed to do so. It is anticipated the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe will assist in championing the work of the group and in raising awareness on the issues concerned.

ICAP continues to investigate sources of funding for a residential and after-care service for young people affected by problematic drug and alcohol use.

For more information on ICAP please look at the Church of Ireland BSR web site.

Church of Ireland Board for Social Responsibility (RI)

The Southern Board has met with staff and members of this Board. We have shared our expertise, models of practice and how we have developed.

The Board for Social Responsibility (N.I.) has met with and shared experiences and good practice with the Board for Social Responsibility (RI). We look forward to developing a continuing relationship in the coming years.

The common and effective link is Mr George Glenn who is a member of both Boards.

Proposal To General Synod

That the Church of Ireland Board for Social Responsibility (N.I.) be renamed "The Board for Social Action (N.I.)".

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION

CHURCH OF IRELAND ADOPTION SOCIETY

| | 2007 | 2006 |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Unplanned Pregnancy Referrals | 0 | 5 |
| Adoption Enquiries: | 80 | 95 |
| Post Adoption Enquiries: | 60 | 70 |
| Adoption Orders Granted: | - | - |
| Children in Placement and Provided with Social Work Support | 1 | 1 |
| Independent Counselling Referrals | 27 | 11 |
| <u>Fertility Counselling Service:</u> | | |
| | 2007 | 2006 |
| Referrals Received: | 214 | 201 |
| <u>Financial Assistance to Families and Individuals in Need:</u> | | |
| | 2007 | 2006 |
| Family Cases: | 21 | 22 |
| Non-Family Cases: | 2 | 5 |

Board for Social Responsibility (NI) – Report 2008

Appendix II

Financial Section of BSR (NI) Report to General Synod May 2008

**Revenue Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2007
(being an extract from the latest audited accounts)**

| | 2007 | | 2006 | |
|--|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| | £ | % | £ | % |
| INCOME | | | | |
| Donations & Subscriptions | | | | |
| Dioceses | | | | |
| Armagh | 1,325 | | 1,690 | |
| Clogher | 950 | | 2,600 | |
| Connor | 3,310 | | 4,485 | |
| Derry and Raphoe | 2,640 | | 2,310 | |
| Down and Dromore | <u>4,615</u> | | <u>4,220</u> | |
| | 12,840 | | 15,305 | |
| | | | | |
| Church of Ireland Priorities Fund | 6,000 | | - | |
| Dean of Belfast's Christmas Sit Out (Fertility Counselling Work & Adoption Work) | 2,000 | | 2,000 | |
| Other Includes anonymous | 7,806 | | 9,832 | |
| Celebrate Recovery | <u>-</u> | | <u>2,420</u> | |
| | <u>28,646</u> | 13.1% | <u>29,557</u> | 12.9% |
| | | | | |
| For Services Provided | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Social Work in Fertility Counselling and Adoption Work | 80,244 | | 76,129 | |
| Church of Ireland Mission to the Deaf | <u>13,065</u> | | <u>11,355</u> | |
| | 93,309 | 43.2% | 87,484 | 38.0% |
| | | | | |
| Investments and Cash Deposit Funds | 8,002 | 3.7% | 10,802 | 4.7% |
| | | | | |
| Grants From | | | | |
| Department of Health, Social Services And Public Safety: | 70,754 | 32.8% | 83,474 | 36.3% |

