

Operational Guidelines

June 2021



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INTRODUCTION

The Western Region Drugs Task Force (WRDATF) is a co-ordinating body established in May 2003 as one of the key recommendations of the National Drugs Strategy 2001- 2008. Using a partnership approach, it researches, develops and implements a co-ordinated, regionally appropriate response to substance misuse in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.

The impetus for the establishment of the Regional Drug Task Forces was as a result of the formation of 13 Local Drug Task Forces (LDTF) in 1997 with a fourteenth established in Bray in 2000. The setting up of the LDTFs was a pro-active response to the drug problems in areas experiencing the highest levels of drug misuse, particularly heroin.

In July, 2000, The National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD) was established to advise the Government in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of problem drug use in Ireland.

For this reason, the government agreed on the drafting of the National Strategy 2001-2008. The Strategy proposed that Regional Drug Task Forces be set up in each of the 10 Health Board areas to develop appropriate policies to deal with drugs misuse in the regions.

By the end of 2003, RDTFs had been established in these regions throughout the country and this included the Western Region Drugs Task Force.

Significant advancement was made in the aim of reducing substance misuse when at the end of March 2009, the government agreed for the first time to include alcohol in the National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016). Since its inception, the Task Force has identified alcohol as a significant issue in the Western Region. In 2013, the Task Force role was formally expanded to include alcohol in accordance with national policy, thus becoming the Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task Force.

The overall aim of the WRDATF is to significantly reduce the harm caused to individuals and society by substance misuse through a concerted focus on Supply Reduction, Prevention, Treatment, Rehabilitation and Research. Its objectives are to develop an integrated and well managed response to drug and alcohol problems, propose a range of solutions and service interventions based on the goals of the current National Drug Strategy, Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery, 2017-2025 to ensure that all responses are monitored and evaluated according to best practice and value for money principles. The current goals are:

- Promote and protect health & wellbeing.
- Minimise the harm caused by the use and misuse of substances and promote rehabilitation and recovery.
- Address the harms of drug markets and reduce access to drugs for harmful use.
- Support participation of individuals, families and communities.

- Develop sound and comprehensive evidence informed policies and actions.

SECTION ONE: THE TASK FORCE

This section includes:

1.1 Mission Statement

1.2 Role of the WRDATF

1.3 Objectives of the WRDATF

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1.1 Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a mechanism for all stakeholders - people who use drugs and alcohol, families, local communities, service providers, community and voluntary organizations - to work together to address drug and alcohol issues in the Western region.

1.2 Role of the WRDATF

The National Drugs Strategy recognises the key role that Local and Regional Drugs Task Forces continue to play in addressing the drugs problem. It remains important, therefore, that the WRDATF operates effectively at community level with clear objectives and in accordance with appropriate guiding principles as set down by the Local and Regional Drugs Task Force Handbook, 2011.

Guiding principles for the operation of the WRDATF are:

Propriety

The WRDATF will carry out its terms of reference (functions) with integrity and fairness and without self-interest or favouritism.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality must be adhered when specifically required and the integrity of individual representatives and the WRDATF must be respected and observed.

Responsiveness

The WRDATF will be responsive to stakeholders' views and will consult with them in carrying out its functions.

Transparency

The WRDATF will be accountable for the use of public monies provided to it.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

The WRDATF will have regard to the need for effectiveness and efficiency in carrying out its terms of reference (functions).

Partnership

The WRDATF works in a spirit of partnership between the statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

1.3 Objectives of the WRDATF

The overall aim of the Government's drugs policy is to provide an effective, integrated response to the problems posed by substance misuse. The key objectives of that policy are:

- To reduce the numbers of people turning to drugs in the first instance, through comprehensive education and prevention programmes.
- To provide rehabilitation pathways for persons who have/are experiencing substance misuse issues.
- To aim towards providing appropriate treatment and aftercare for those who are dependent on drugs
- To have appropriate mechanisms in place at national and regional level, aimed at reducing the supply of illicit drugs
- To support measures aimed at reducing the harm to those actively using drugs
- To support families and communities affected by drugs.

In contributing to these overall aims and objectives, the Western Region Drugs & Alcohol Task Force was set up to ensure the development of a co-ordinated and integrated response to tackling the drugs problem in the region. Of equal importance, the Task Force provides a mechanism, which enables communities to work closely with state and voluntary agencies in designing and implementing that strategy. (See WRDATF Regional Strategy 2017-2022 for current strategic aims)

1.4 Terms of Reference

The role of the WRDATF is to research, develop, implement and monitor a co-ordinated response to illicit drug use at regional level, based on best evidence of what is effective. This is achieved through a partnership approach involving the statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

The terms of reference of the WRDATF are as follows:

- To ensure the development of a co-ordinated and integrated response to tackling the substance problem in the western region.
- To provide information on drug-related services and resources in the region.
- To identify and address gaps in service provision, having regard to evidence available on the extent and specific location of drug misuse in the region.
- To prepare a development plan to respond to regional drug issues for assessment.
- To develop regionally relevant policy proposals.
- To take a pro-active role in monitoring and evaluation of projects funded by the WRDATF.
- The sharing of information between Task Force representatives with the purpose of reducing substance misuse in the region.
- To develop a strategy specific to the region.
- To advocate on the behalf of agencies for the provision of detox, treatment and rehab services and funding for existing services.

1.5 Composition of the WRDATF

The WRDATF is a team-based response to illicit drug use and represents a partnership between the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. Its composition reflects the need to ensure regionally-based responses that complement existing or planned drug programmes and services. In this context, the part played by the Task Forces in representing these agencies or sectors is pivotal to its success.

The WRDATF is made up of:

- WRDATF Ltd
- Task Force Committee
- Task Force Team

WRDATF Ltd

In 2008 the WRDATF set up a limited company. Its name is Western Region Drugs Task Force Limited and it has charity status. Its function is to oversee the lease of the building; the employment of office staff and any other positions that the Task Force deems necessary.

It comprises a board of directors. The number composition varies depending on expressed interest. The membership must include: Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and Secretary.

As a Limited Company it complies with strict financial control guidelines. All accounts are audited annually and financial documentation forward to the Channel of Funding (HSE). (See Appendix 2 for Financial Guidelines)

Its AGM takes place usually in the 2nd quarter of the year at the Admin/Finance meeting. All directors are requested to attend. Accounts are presented at this meeting.

The Task Force Committee

The role of the Task Force committee is to:

- develop a three-year or five-year strategy, reflecting local needs and circumstances, to support implementation of the national drugs strategy
- Identify priorities and actions through its Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) for the coming year, in line with nationally-agreed priorities. At the beginning of each year, the work plan is brought to the Task Force and after the previous work plan has been reviewed the new one is signed off
- report on its activities and in particular on its effectiveness and efficiency, in accordance with guidelines published by the DPU
- put in place accounting arrangements, based on receipted expenditure, in relation to any public funds disbursed by it and reports annually on its expenditure of public

monies. These arrangements are in accordance with guidelines issued by the DPU for administration and operational budgets

The committee is chaired by an independent chairperson and its ship includes representation from the following sectors/agencies as set out in the National Drugs Strategy:

- Community Sector (6 Representatives)
- Voluntary Sector (6 representatives)
- Public Representatives (4 representatives)
- Department of Education & Skills/ Education Training Board
- Education Training Board
- Garda Síochána
- HSE
- Local Authority
- The Probation Service
- Revenue Commissioners (Customs & Excise Division)
- Department of Social Protection
- Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP)
- Local Community Development Committee
- Service Users
- Communities of Interest
- Family Support

Others who attend include the Task Force Team

As per the Local and Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force Handbook, 2011, the chairperson should serve a maximum of three terms, four in exceptional circumstances. In the case of statutory representatives, however, they can only be assigned to work with the WRDATF for as long as they remain in the appropriate area so the issue of a fixed term does not arise.

It is equally essential that the chairperson and community/voluntary representatives continue to retain the confidence of both the Task Force and the sectors it represents. All should make every effort to ensure that adequate notice is provided in cases where representatives are stepping down from their roles on the Task Force. It is desirable that replacements are put in place as quickly as possible to ensure continuity of representation and a period of overlap are provided for where possible, to allow for induction and a smooth handover.

Task Force Team

WRDATF Staff structure consists of:

- Co-ordinator
- Development Worker

- Office Administrator

Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator is appointed full-time by the HSE who has responsibility for his/her conditions of employment and salaries. The co-ordinator, in conjunction with the WRDATF and its chairperson, plays a pivotal role in assisting the Task Force in developing and implementing its drug strategy. This necessitates him/her taking a pro-active role in driving the work of the Task Force and managing its day-to-day operation, including the provision of project and financial information. He/she is the spokesperson for the WRDATF.

The role of the Co-ordinator is:

- to profile services and resources available in the local area to combat drugs
- to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Task Force's action plans are met through ongoing review, updating, prioritisation and amendment including the initiation of any research required to inform such reviews
- to facilitate multi-sectoral collaboration through increased participation in the Task Force drug service provision within the area
- To support the Task Force in reviewing emerging needs and prioritizing responses and helping to oversee the effectiveness of Task Force funded projects
- to disseminate information on local drugs issues, Task Force plans, services and other responses
- to liaise with key interest groups, service providers, Government Departments and other relevant groups
- to co-ordinate a range of activities of the Task Force
- Where a vacancy arises, the Task Force informs the HSE representative to immediately initiate recruitment procedures to appoint a replacement and to make arrangements for the interim. The HSE works closely with the Task Force in the recruitment process which includes the Task Force Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson on any interview panel.

The appropriate line manager within the Health Services Executive (HSE) is the co-ordinator's line manager, dealing with all normal personnel matters such as annual leave, sick leave, etc.

Support Staff

Support staff in the form of the Project Development Worker and Office Administrator & Finance Worker is provided for through the Task Force Operational Budget via the annual WRDATF budget allocation. However, they are employed by the Health Service Executive.

The Development Worker has a vital role in developing and supporting community-based projects and facilitating inter-agency work.

The key responsibilities of this post are:

- project support
- support of community/voluntary representatives and development of community/voluntary networks
- policy development
- Training calendar development & coordination
- Information Technology development
- development of a service users' forum. The key functions of the Office Administrator include:
 - general office administration,
 - financial monitoring of operational budget expenditure, recording of minutes at meetings
 - Information Technology development

Role of Chairperson and Vice-chairperson

Independent chairperson

The chairperson is a key figure in the organisation and the success of the WRDATF very much depends on the level of experience, commitment and energy s/he can bring to the role. It is a voluntary non-paid role but expenses are covered by the Task Force.

It is important that the chairperson has the ability to bring together organisations and individuals from the different sectors to work as a team. It is also desirable that s/he has a knowledge and experience of social inclusion issues in the region, particularly as they relate to illicit drug use.

He/she must also be able to give an assurance of the necessary time commitment to carry out the job. This will entail attending meetings of the WRDATF and, where appropriate, meetings of its sub-committees; attending national and regional conferences; as well as overseeing the effective implementation of the WRDATF's work programme, in conjunction with the Co-ordinator. He/she also attends the Chairpersons' Network.

The chairperson's independence must clearly be established and evident in the manner in which the business of the Task Force is conducted. It is important therefore, that the Chairperson appointed by the Task Force is not directly connected with any of the projects being funded by the Task Force. It is also important that there is complete transparency in the arrangements put in place by the Task Force for the selection process and appointment of Chairpersons.

Role of independent chairperson

The chairperson's role is twofold: firstly, to lead the Task Force and, secondly, to facilitate its meetings. The WRDATF elects a vice-chairperson who is available to stand in for the chairperson from time to time if required.

Leading the Task Force

The key responsibilities are:

- Taking responsibility for helping everyone involved in the group to work well together towards achieving the Task Force's aims
- Acting as spokesperson and representing the Task Force, as appropriate (See section 5: Media)
- Helping the Task Force to develop policies and priorities and ensuring that it continues to operate to these
- Helping to resolve conflict
- Making emergency decisions between meetings, where necessary, in accordance with procedures agreed by the Task Force.

Facilitating meetings:

This involves:

- Helping representatives to work well together in discussing and deciding issues
- Encouraging all representatives to participate fully and ensuring that they are heard
- Suggesting ways of dealing with conflict and ensuring that it is not ignored
- Ensuring that representatives are aware of their responsibility to make meetings effective.

The Chairperson has the casting vote

If deemed necessary by the chairperson, staff may be asked to leave meeting when certain HR issues are being discussed.

The chairperson can direct that the discussion be recorded depending on subject under discussion. If it is to be recorded, the chairperson will make the decision to have it included in the minutes and appoint a note taker.

Vice-chairperson

The vice-chairperson's role is to chair Task Force meetings in the absence of the chairperson. Election of vice-chairperson should take place every three years following ratification of the chairperson.

The same person may hold the posts of chairperson or vice-chairperson for not more than three consecutive terms and the same person cannot hold a combination of these posts for more than four consecutive terms. In as far as practicable, arrangements should be made so that the term of office of the chairperson and vice- chairperson do not terminate at the same time.

Where the term of chairperson is coming up for renewal, it is recommended that the Task Force gives notice of this, well in advance, to allow the opportunity to reflect on the stewardship of the chairperson and to contribute to a meaningful discussion on the matter if required.

When Chairperson or vice-chairperson is unavailable, the meeting is not postponed or deferred. The Task Force representatives have the authority to nominate a temporary chairperson from those present.

1.6 Role and Nomination of Task Force Representatives

Representatives will serve a two-year term of office. At the end of the term, the Task Force will write to the appropriate Sector and invite them to re-nominate that representative or an alternative from the Sector.

(1) Community Representatives

Role

The community representatives are not members of the Drugs & Alcohol Task Force as individuals, nor are they there to represent the interests of any particular organisation. Rather, they are nominated as persons who can represent the interests of the wider community. Their role, therefore, is to bring the view of the sector to the Task Force and keep their sector informed on the Task Force's work.

There are three key processes involved in carrying out that role:

1. providing information to the local community
2. organising and facilitating discussion and debate in the local community
3. providing feedback to the Task Force

Nomination

There are six places on the committee for community representatives. They are nominated via the four forums of the region. There are two from Mayo, two from Roscommon, and one from Galway city and county.

People who are selected as community representatives should be active within their communities, have some experience of regional drugs issues and have a commitment to dealing with the problem. In order to ensure that those nominated can make an appropriate contribution to the work of the WRDATF, representatives should:

- Be residing in the area that they represent
- Represent an appropriate and adequate geographic area
- Be fully committed to the aims and objectives of the WRDATF
- Be able to give an undertaking of the necessary time commitment to carry out the role

Supports for Community Sector Representatives

Community representatives have an important role in providing information to, and consulting with local communities in relation to drugs issues, as well as re-assuring them

that the Task Force is operating on the basis of genuine partnership. It is recognised that support and networking of community representatives needs to be encouraged.

A crucial part of that role is their coming together to identify issues of common concern, so as to have a joint input and impact on policy development. They are assisted in this role by the Project Development Worker with the process of establishing networks nationally, facilitating training and regular meetings of the Task Force community representatives.

(2) Voluntary Representatives

Role

There are six representatives from the voluntary sector on the TF committee. These representatives are not members of the Drugs & Alcohol Task Force as individuals, nor are they there to represent the interests of any particular organisation. Rather, they are nominated as persons who can represent the interests of the wider voluntary sector. Their role, therefore, is to bring the view of the sector to the Task Force and keep their sector informed on the Task Force's work.

The voluntary representatives make a valuable contribution to the work of the Task Force. The two key areas of voluntary involvement are prevention/awareness and treatment/rehabilitation. The experience gained by voluntary organizations from working directly with clients has enabled them to develop and promote innovative approaches to tackling illicit drug use. This, in turn, allows them to bring a unique perspective to the work of the TF.

In order to represent the views of the local community sector, the representatives need to be able to feed information back to Task Force meetings in an effective way. This involves their active participation not only in full Task Force meetings but also on any sub-committees or working groups of the Task Force.

The National Voluntary Drug Sector (NVDS) has established Voluntary Cluster groups in all ten Regional Drug Task Force areas. These cluster groups comprise representatives from all the voluntary sector agencies providing drug and/or alcohol services in the region or to the region. These cluster groups will be the nominating bodies for voluntary sector representatives on the RDATFs. Each cluster will nominate six persons to the Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Forces who will be representative of the entire sector.

The role of the voluntary representative involves: -

- providing information on the work of the Task Force to the various voluntary organisations in the region to be done in a formalised manner through the voluntary cluster groups;
- organizing discussion and debate on that work among those organizations;

- policy development;
- providing feedback to the DATF

Nomination

The voluntary representatives should belong to voluntary agencies that are either servicing or located in the region/area. They should demonstrate a good knowledge of the local drug problem, as well as a commitment to dealing with it.

Criteria for nomination include:

- Giving priority to groups with a strong track record in drug treatment
- Nominating individuals who have the relevant knowledge and experience of the drugs issue necessary to play a full and productive role on the Task Force
- Nominating representatives who have the active support of the voluntary drug treatment sector
- Recognising the need for representatives to report to the voluntary drug treatment sector as a whole rather than solely to their own voluntary agency

Supports for Voluntary Sector Representatives

The National Voluntary Drug Sector (NVDS) has established a national network of Voluntary Clusters and a national representative body. This organisation provides the means for the sector to network nationally, support the local clusters and represent the interests of the sector on the various national forums whose remit includes substance misuse. All voluntary Task Force representatives need to be part of this network.

(3) Public Representatives

Role

These elected representatives play an important role in the work of the WRDATF. They are democratically elected to represent the views of their constituents in various forums and their active participation at the WRDATF is vital to its success. It also affords them an opportunity to influence the drugs strategy being developed by the Task Force for the area and to gain community support for it.

Elected representatives play an important role in winning support in regional communities for the strategies being pursued by the Task Force. In this regard, it is imperative that they are fully informed of the Task Force's strategies and the reasons underpinning them. Representatives who are nominated to the Task Force are expected to liaise with and encourage other elected representatives in their areas to support the work of the Task Force.

Nomination

There are four elected representatives on the Task Force committee. They are selected via the North Western Regional Assembly to take into account the geographical areas covered by the WRDATF. The Task Force agrees with the public representatives in its area any regional arrangements for their participation in the work of the WRDATF. To this end, the chairperson, assisted by the co-ordinator, takes a pro-active role in contacting regional public representatives to brief them on the work and priorities of the WRDATF. They also agree with them on the role they might play in influencing and supporting that work.

(4) Statutory Representatives

Role

Statutory representatives play a significant role within the TF by supporting Task Force projects to implementation stage and further developing the role of the Task Force. They are expected to carry out their role in a pro-active way. To ensure a strong and active role by the statutory sector, it is important that statutory representatives have proper organisational supports and the necessary back-up arrangements.

Commitment is essential if the various measures in the action plans are to be implemented and the plans themselves further developed. The statutory representatives are expected to:

- bring relevant information from their organisations to the Task Force
- assist in the development of appropriate responses to illicit drug use in the region
- identify and ensure the effective implementation of interim-funded projects and other initiatives including acting as channel of funding for projects that fall within the remit of their organisations
- monitor projects being funded through their organisations and assisting with any issues that arise; there should be no undue delay in setting up projects which are approved funding. This includes the prompt processing of payments by State Agencies to project promoters, while at the same time ensuring the need for financial accountability and proper procedures. Project Promoters need to be aware of each organisation's funding, monitoring and reporting requirements and kept informed of any changes in those requirements.
- should monitor the situation in relation to projects being funded through their own organisations and ensure that any emerging problems are highlighted at an early stage so that appropriate remedial action can be initiated
- update the DTF on any relevant changes in organisation practices
- identify and bring to the attention of their agencies any proposed changes in policies/practices to ensure more effective coordination with other stakeholders
- support project evaluations as required

Nomination

Departments/Agencies, in nominating their representatives, are required to take account of the need to nominate persons who are at a sufficiently senior level, or have access to people in their organisation who are in a position to influence policy. Departments/Agencies are also required to ensure that their representatives' work with the Task Force is seen as part of their core duties and that they have the necessary time available to them to enable them to undertake their role effectively.

(5) Service Users

Role

It is important that the views of service users are represented on the Task Force. They have a unique perspective on the policies/services being developed. The active participation by service users at Task Force or Sub Group level is to be encouraged and facilitated to add to the knowledge base of the Task Force and help to focus on practical actions of direct benefit to those for whom the services are being provided.

To facilitate such participation, it is necessary to develop a service users' forum, building on the work by TF projects and service providers around their own service user participation structures, from which representatives can be nominated to the TF.

It is important that drug users who are receiving treatment are afforded an opportunity to give their perspective on the services being developed by the WRDATF. Giving service users a clear voice can help to negate possible inward-looking efforts and enable the WRDATF to focus on practical actions of direct benefit to those for whom the services are intended.

The representative:

- Must be residing in the area that he/she represents
- Should have the active support of the regional service users' group
- Should agree to report back to the service users' group using appropriate mechanisms
- Agrees to take on the common vision of the Task Force
- Must declare an interest and leave the meeting if employed by a Task Force project and that project is under discussion

Nomination

- The Service User representative is nominated by the regional service users' group. This nomination takes the form of an election and is monitored by two or more representatives of the Task Force.
- People with co-morbid mental health and substance use problems.

(6) Communities of interest

In addition to Local Community Development Committees, the Local and Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force Handbook, 2011, clearly states the importance that communities of interest can play in the work of the TF and their participation should also be facilitated. In the context of drug misuse, those most obviously affected are the drug users themselves, particularly those who are homeless or involved in prostitution. Communities of interest may include:

- Long-term substance users
- Family Support Networks
- Travellers
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) Groups
- New Communities
- Homeless
- Prisoners and ex-offenders
- Sex workers
- Children at risk, including those leaving care
- Third level students

It will be a matter for the Task Force to agree how groups representing communities of interest will participate in the work of the Task Force having regard to the remit of organisations from the voluntary and community sectors already represented and the extent to which the problems involving these client groups impact on the area.

Local Structures

A key function of the WRDATF is to raise awareness of the drugs issue in other local community structures to inform policy making and effective service provision especially those relating to social inclusion and tackling disadvantage. Equally, the work of the Task Force should be fully informed by developments in other structures such as:

- Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme
- Community Development Programme projects;
- RAPID Area Implementation Teams;
- YPFSF Development Groups;
- Local Community Development Committee
- Children's Services Committees;
- Local Homeless Forums;
- Joint Policing Committees;
- Local Policing Forums

The Task Force can co-opt other stakeholder representatives on to the Task Force as new communities of interest become required. This can only be done if the current members consider this appropriate. While it may not be possible to progress this through

representation in all cases, other options include informal contacts and linkages and/or influencing/updating through statutory or other representatives where ship overlaps.
Task Force Staff

Staff members attend meetings but do not have voting rights.

Networking

Networking is an integral part of the process in that it allows the Task Force representatives to share their experiences and come to agreed solutions on common problems.

Networking is facilitated in a number of ways as follows:

Chairpersons' Group

The Chairpersons of the Task Forces hold ad-hoc meetings, as the need arises. Secretarial support and facilitation are available to them for this purpose. The DAG also meets the Chairpersons' group, periodically.

Co-ordinators' Group

Task Force co-ordinators have formed a network group which meets regularly to discuss matters of common interest. DAG meets regularly with this group.

State Agency groups

All statutory representatives hold regular group meetings to ensure that individual concerns are addressed and that progress is monitored centrally. Statutory representatives are also expected to meet in plenary session as required to ensure that a uniform drugs policy is reflected throughout all agencies and that there is an awareness of developments.

The Chairperson and co-ordinator are called to meetings with the Department either together or separately.

SECTION TWO: TASK FORCE MEETINGS

This section includes:

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- 2.2 Ground Rules for meetings:
- 2.3 Frequency of Meetings
- 2.4 Attendance at Task Force meetings
- 2.5 Substitution at meetings
- 2.6 Calling/cancelling meetings
- 2.7 Meeting Quorum
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- 2.9 Induction, Training and Support for new Task Force representatives
- 2.10 Expenses/Subsistence
- 2.11 Conflict of Interest
- 2.12 Removal of TF Committee Representative

2.1 Being a representative of the Task Force

Being a representative of the Task Force carries certain responsibilities. Each representative is required to:

- Adhere to the Mission/Ethos of the WRDATF
- Read any correspondence in advance and take an active part in meetings
- Whenever possible, get involved in working groups, if asked
- With prior knowledge and approval of the Task Force, to actively promote the work of the organisation in any appropriate forum and opportunity
- Follow up on decisions/actions taken at meetings in consultation with the secretary/chairperson/co-ordinator
- Inform the office administrator if unable to attend meetings
- Disclose any conflict of interest if such a conflict exists or arises
- Engage constructively with discussions and decision-making and comply at all times with the directions of the chairperson

2.2 Ground Rules for meetings:

- Meetings will start promptly
- The Agenda and its time allotment will be strictly adhered to by the Chairperson
- If the Chairperson is delayed, the meeting will be conducted by the Vice- Chairperson
- Honour time limits where possible
- Advise Chairperson and the group if you must leave the meeting early to handle an emergency, as this will facilitate the movement of agenda items if applicable
- Mobile phones are to be switched off or placed on silent for the full duration of the meeting
- Each individual should participate by sharing his/her own relevant opinions and experiences, and by listening to and considering the opinions of others

Confidentiality & Sharing of Information

- In the interests of trust and mutual respect, where any member states that the information which he/she is about to disclose must be treated confidentially, this

information must be treated by each member as confidential, and not disclosed to any person outside of those in attendance at the meeting.

- The guidelines regarding confidentiality and information are based on the following principles:
 - (a) The Task Force is a collaborative entity in which we are all partners and we have a shared commitment to achieving our objectives, and each member is entitled to participate in an environment of trust and mutual respect.
 - (b) A number of members of the Task Force participate in a representative capacity as representatives or nominees of networks, organisations or communities within the region. It is recognised that the authority to bring information from the nominating group to the Task Force and vice-versa is an essential requirement for such members to participate effectively.
 - (c) In the interests of its own credibility and effectiveness, the Task Force must retain public confidence (for example, by publishing details of membership, minutes of meetings, etc), while also retaining the capacity to consider certain matters in private, if this is appropriate.

In accordance with these principles, the following guidelines apply to all members:

1. Fulfilment of the Task Force's mandate requires that information is given to members at meetings and occasionally between meetings. It is acknowledged that many of the TF members (for example, those who represent networks, organisations or communities) may be required to share this information with colleagues in the network/organisation/community, in order to fulfil their representative role effectively.
2. If it is considered necessary that information of a sensitive or confidential nature be given to members, the fact that the information is sensitive or confidential should be disclosed to members in advance of it being given, following which (1) all members are required to refrain from sharing any of this information with anyone outside of the Task Force Committee, and (2) the sensitive or confidential information will not be included in the minutes of the meeting or in any other record of the meeting.

2.3 Frequency of Meetings

WRDATF holds its meetings on a set schedule. It meets 8 or 9 times per year and dates for these meetings are circulated in early January of each year.

The time of meetings is organised to allow for maximum community and voluntary participation. Representatives are expected to be on time and to stay until the end of the meeting. Venues are agreed at the beginning of the year in line with the regional location of representatives.

2.4 Attendance at Task Force meetings

Guidelines governing attendance

During their term of representation, each representative is asked to attend meetings of the Task Force and any sub-groups. The following guidelines should be adopted in this regard:

To facilitate representatives, WRDATF meetings are arranged for the calendar year at the beginning of each year. Meeting times and venues are flexible to facilitate community and voluntary participation.

Absence from three meetings in a row without prior apologies may be assumed as the representative's resignation. This is only considered where no mitigating circumstances are provided for their continued absence such as illness. In such a case the nominating organisation will then be asked to nominate an alternative representative.

A reminder of the meeting date and agenda is sent out to all representatives of the Task Force via e-mail at least one week prior to the Task Force meeting. This is followed up by a text reminder at least 3 days before the meeting. Councillors receive a telephone reminder at least 3 days before the event. Representatives are asked to inform the Task Force Administrator if they are unable to attend. Apologies are read out at the beginning of each Task Force meeting and recorded in the minutes.

2.5 Substitution at meetings

In normal circumstances this is not desirable in the interests of continuity and team building. In exceptional cases, however, and with the prior agreement of the chairperson, substitution will be possible. Each representative is entitled to nominate one substitute who can attend two meeting on their behalf within a twelve-month period.

The following procedure must be adopted in such circumstances:

- Notify the chairperson/co-ordinator in advance
- Ensure that the substitute is fully briefed and can contribute fully in the absence of the representative
- This substitute should be the same person on a yearly roll-over basis

In the event that a representative does not attend three meetings within a twelve-month period he/she will be asked to resign from the Task Force.

The Co-ordinator will present the attendance information to the full Task Force who will sanction the removal of the individual from the WRDATF. The Co-ordinator will then give one month's notice in writing to the person who is being asked to resign. The letter will be

signed by the WRDATF Co-ordinator and the Chairperson. The representative being asked to resign will be given the right to appeal the decision.

2.6 Calling/cancelling meetings

Meeting dates are circulated at the beginning of each year but if there are any changes to these dates, representatives will be given as much advanced notice as possible. All correspondence regarding meeting dates, etc., takes place via e-mail. This is followed up with a text where appropriate.

When the Chairperson is not present, the Vice-chairperson will conduct the meeting. In the absence of the vice-chairperson, and if there is a quorum, the Task Force representatives have the authority to nominate a temporary chairperson from those present.

At least seven days' notice (or as much notice as possible) of cancellation of meeting is requested.

2.7 Meeting Quorum

For a meeting to begin, a quorum should be present (a quorum for the Task Force is $\frac{1}{3}$ of the current ship plus 1, e.g., $\frac{22}{3} = 7.33' + 1 \Rightarrow 8.33' \Rightarrow 8$).

The meeting should start within 15 minutes of the notified starting time. If a quorum is not present by this time the meeting is cancelled. Quorum does not include staff members.

2.8 Minutes/ Meeting Structure

Meetings follow an agenda that is set by the Chairperson and Co-ordinator with additions to the agenda if forwarded through community agenda items. Any representative wishing to add an item to the agenda contacts the Chairperson/ Co-ordinator at least 3 days in advance of the meeting.

Minutes show the agenda item, states decisions on what took place and the outcomes. Following each agenda item, the chairperson states the purpose of the minutes and actions to be recorded.

The Chairperson takes account of the urgency and importance of issues and determines the order of the items.

The agenda consists of:

- Minutes (taken as read) and matters arising that will not be dealt with in the main body of the meeting. Minutes approved and seconded.
- Adoption of minutes.

- Correspondence to the Chairperson and Co-ordinator from the previous month.
- Reports/Issues from sub-groups. Reports from sub-groups are sent to administrator before meeting and circulated to all representatives.
- Other issues requested for inclusion
- AOB: Include points of information only
- Confirm date and venue for next meeting

The Chairperson encourages participation and ensures that everyone gets a chance to contribute. Where a number of people want to speak then the Chairperson endeavours to give each person this opportunity.

Correspondence for Review:

Task Force correspondence is read out at each Task Force meeting. All action responses are noted in the minutes and by the Chairperson/Co-ordinator.

Minutes Taking:

The minutes of each Task Force meeting are taken by the WRDATF Office Administrator. The structure of the minutes includes a brief summary of the discussion had and the decision made and/or action to be taken. Decisions will be recorded as decisions of the Task Force and individual positions will be noted, if requested.

Circulation of Minutes of meetings:

The contents of the Task Force minutes are draft minutes until adopted or approved.

They are not for circulation until signed off by the Task Force at the next meeting.

Draft minutes are circulated after each TF meeting by email. These minutes are signed off on the day of the following Task Force meeting.

Clarifications/changes to the minutes are discussed at the beginning of each meeting and any changes recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

Voting:

Meetings of the Task Force are largely on the basis of finding consensus on issues. Generally, where a vote on an issue is required, it is taken by consensus with a show of hands. Where consensus cannot be reached a vote is taken. In the event of a split decision, the chairperson has the casting vote.

2.9 Induction, Training and Support for new Task Force representatives

New representatives are given a formal induction by the Co-ordinator/ Project Development Worker that includes:

- WRDATF Induction Pack (see Appendix 1)
- Presentation on the background of, and information on, the Task Force
- Copies of WRDATF Publications
- The Local and Regional Drugs Task Force Handbook,2011
- The Operational Guidelines
- Opportunity for Q&A

Induction meetings are offered twice a year and all new/recent representatives are invited to attend.

2.10 Expenses/Subsistence

The Local and Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force Handbook,2011, states that in general, most representatives come to Task Force meetings as part of their work and all expenses incurred by them are their personal responsibility.

Community representatives are entitled to claim expenses for travel to Task Force meetings and sub-groups. From time to time, they may attend a national meeting and this too can be claimed for, though there are limits to this.

Public Representatives are entitled to claim expenses for attendance at Task Force meetings to a limit of €1,125 per year as set by previous Task Force Handbook.

Voluntary Representatives attend the Task Force as part of their work and therefore their expenses are dealt with by their organisation. In exceptional circumstances where an organisation is not in a position to cover expenses the representative may claim from the Task Force.

Payment of subsistence rates do not apply and refreshments will be provided for representatives attending Task Force Meetings.

Expenses for attendance at sub-group meetings are not paid to non-Task Force representatives.

2.11 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest may arise in any situation where the personal or other interests of a representative of the Task Force or one of its sub-committees might affect his/her deliberations or decisions as a representative. In such a scenario, they should declare their interest and therefore absent themselves when the Task Force/sub-committee is

deliberating or deciding on matters in which they (other than in their capacity as a representative of the committee) or person(s) connected with them have an interest.

Task Force Representative as project promoters

A number of Task Force representatives are involved in the management of projects being funded through the WRDATF. Some voluntary representatives work with agencies that receive funding - additional to their core funding - to deliver specific interventions on behalf of the WRDATF. It is important that these representatives continue to have an input to WRDATF work, particularly in the context of tapping into their knowledge and expertise. However, there is equally a need for the representatives to differentiate between their roles as TF representative and project promoters so as to prevent a possible conflict of interest arising.

It is therefore necessary to have appropriate procedures in place to ensure that representatives from organisations that apply for funding are not involved in the process of determining which projects are recommended for funding. Care needs to be taken that equivalence of consideration is given by the Task Force to funding applications from services that don't have representation at the Task Force.

Representatives with a Prejudicial Interest:

- Must disclose any conflict of interest if such a conflict exists or arises
- Should not get involved in the setting of criteria for the award of grants/tenders etc
- Should not be on the Grants (or other) Committee if they are significant or habitual recipients or likely to be
- Should not receive papers relating to their application in advance of the meeting
- Should be absent for the discussion and decision
- Should not use their position to try and improperly influence the decision in their absence
- Should not comment inside or outside meeting

2.12 Removal of TF Committee Representative

Three Strike Rule

If a representative is nominated and does not attend three consecutive meetings without contact or explanation the representative is contacted. If this is not satisfactory, then his/her organisation is contacted.

Removing a Committee Representative

If there is major disruption to a meeting, the meeting will be stopped. If the behaviour of a representative constantly disrupts a meeting the chairperson will make informal contact with that person, outlining his/her behaviour, in the hope of resolution. If this behaviour continues, the chairperson will write to the representative.

If this does not produce a satisfactory outcome then the chairperson writes to the representative's organisation and mediation is set up.

If this is not desirable, the WRDATF can request DAG Liaison's assistance to either take a direct role in resolving the situation, or to involve external mediation.

Where this is not possible, a special meeting should be held, of which all WRDATF representatives are notified, where a representative can be voted out on a two-thirds vote.

SECTION THREE: SUB-GROUPS

This section includes:

3.1 The Role of Sub-Groups

3.2 Admin/Finance Sub-Group: Terms of Reference

3.3 Prevention & Education Sub-Group: Terms of Reference

3.4 Treatment and Rehab Sub-Group: Terms of Reference

3.1 The Role of Sub-Groups

In line with the Local and Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force Handbook, 2011, WRDATF sub-groups are based around the current themes of the WRDATF Strategy 2017-2020. These committees are made up of representatives of the Task Force plus additional representatives drawn from relevant bodies and individuals as agreed by the Task Force. They are not decision-making bodies unless specifically mandated by the Task Force to be so. Each sub-group is chaired by a Task Force representative (excluding the Co-ordinator) who facilitates the group and reports back to the Task Force.

The sub-groups in the Western Region consist of:

- Admin/Finance
- Prevention/Education (Including Supply Reduction)
- Treatment and Rehabilitation

The sub-groups deal with specific issues and they can recommend actions to the Task Force. A written report from their monthly meeting is given at every Task Force meeting. If they require a decision, they present a specific written report to the Task Force meeting. The reports, which provide a detailed brief and the recommendation for decision, are discussed and decided upon at the Task Force meeting. Sub-group reports are sent to the Co-ordinator at least one week prior to Task Force meeting in order to facilitate circulation to Task Force representatives. To assist this process, sub-groups meet at least ten days prior to Task Force meeting.

The Task Force supports the development and enhances the work of the sub-group. It also conducts an independently, facilitated annual review and planning session to this end.

The sub-group is chaired by a representative of the WRDATF Committee. In the absence of the elected Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson then the meeting is cancelled or deferred.

Representation on the sub-groups will at a minimum stand at 4 persons and will as far as possibly consist of the following:

- Representatives of the WRDATF whose skills would benefit the sub-group.
- Additional persons who are not representatives of the WRDATF but have knowledge and expertise in the area of prevention and education, treatment and rehabilitation can be co-opted on to the Prevention and Education, and or the Treatment and Rehabilitation subgroup in an advisory capacity following consensus of the sub-group representatives.
- The Co-ordinator and other Task Force representatives will be in attendance at the meetings.

Meetings

Sub-groups meet approximately 8 times a year. Dates are set out at the beginning of the year and the schedule is issued to all representatives. Meetings follow the same guidelines on agendas and minutes as the Task Force.

Attendance

Sub-group representatives must communicate availability for meetings. If there is no quorum then the meeting is cancelled. If three meetings in a row are cancelled because of no quorum, then an explanation must be sought. Representation of sub- group must be revisited and new representatives taken on, if necessary.

Absence from three consecutive meetings without apology will result in a written request being sent by the Chairperson to that representative asking them to clarify their position with regard to the sub-groups. If the issue is not resolved the WRDATF will be informed by the Chairperson.

3.2 Admin/Finance Sub-Group: Terms of Reference

1.0 Purpose:

The purpose of the Finance and Administration Sub-Group of the Western Region Drugs Task Force is:

- To oversee the implementation of actions identified in the WRDATF's first strategic plan, Shared Solutions.
- To ensure that funding for bids is distributed and monitored in a structured and fair way.
- To monitor the quarterly reporting from the CLWs and ESWs.
- It is responsible for the distribution of the Small Grants.
- To approve site visits where necessary.

2.0 Duration of Sub-Group:

The sub-group has no timeline duration and will operate as deemed necessary by the WRDATF committee.

3.0 Frequency of Meetings:

The sub-group meets 4 times a year as laid out in the schedule at the beginning of the year

4.0 Venue for Sub-Group meetings:

Meetings will be held in a central location, convenient for sub-group's from Galway, Mayo & Roscommon.

Guidelines

It was decided that any grant under € 5000.00 can be approved by the Admin/Finance sub-group without going to the Task Force. Community-based grants and once-off funding applied for between € 5000.00 and € 15,000.00 can be decided on by the Admin/Finance sub-group and emailed out to the larger Task Force with a maximum of a 2 week turn around required. A two-third majority is required before a project can pass. All applications over € 15,000.00 can be approved by the Admin/Finance sub-group but it must be brought to the Task Force meeting for approval.

Any organisation that receives under € 5000.00 may receive a random site visit. Any organisation that receives between € 5000.00 and € 15,000.00 will receive a mandatory site visit. Any organisation that receives € 15,000, or more, will be subject to an audit.

If people don't comply with these terms and conditions, they will be disqualified from further WRDATF grants.

3.3 Prevention & Education Sub-Group: Terms of Reference

1.0 Purpose

The functions of the Prevention & Education Sub-Group (PESG) of the Western Region Drugs & Alcohol Task Force are:

- To oversee the implementation of actions relating to prevention and education identified in the WRDATF Strategic Plan 2017-2020.
- To identify existing and emerging gaps in prevention, education & research in the region and to recommend appropriate responses to those gaps.

2.0 Duration of Sub-Group

The PESG and the T&RSG have no current timeline attached to either duration.

3.0 Frequency of meetings

The PESG and the T&RSG meets quarterly) Calendar dates for meetings are set out in advance.

4.0 Venue for meetings

Meetings will be held in the WRDATF offices if possible.

5.0 Sub-Group Members

Each may nominate a substitute to attend a maximum of two meetings per year. One week's notice is required when a substitute is to attend on behalf of a member.

6.0 Quorum

The quorum will be four representatives of the PESG, plus the Chairperson or person acting on behalf of the Chairperson. Representatives are required to notify the Task Force office with as much notice as possible to state their attendance or non- attendance.

7.0 Attendance

Any members of the sub-groups who does not attend 3 meetings annually, his/her membership of this group (PESG) will automatically cease unless a plausible excuse for non-attendance is given.

Each of the sub-group can nominate a substitute to attend on his/her behalf a maximum of 2 meetings annually. All Sub-group members should give advance notice of a substitute attending on their behalf.

8.0 Project deliverables

- Identify service gaps in relation to prevention and education.
- Feedback from existing Prevention Education Services within the region.
- To promote best practice in Prevention and Education.

9.0 Reporting procedures

The PESG will report directly into the WRDATF to ensure that issues of concern are raised and acted on. A rapporteur to be nominated by the sub-group

3.4 Treatment and Rehab Sub-Group: Terms of Reference

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Treatment/Rehab Sub-group of the Western Region Drugs Task Force is:

- To oversee the implementation of actions relating to treatment and rehabilitation identified in the WRDATF Strategic Plan 2017-2022, Regional Strategy
- To advocate for the filling of existing and emerging gaps in services relating to treatment and rehabilitation
- To take an advisory and monitoring role in relation to treatment and rehabilitation matters in the region through the WRDATF
- To lobby at regional and national level for Treatment/Rehab Services for the west of Ireland via the WRDATF
- Advance the Regional Strategy

2.0 Duration of Sub-Group

The TRSG has no timeline duration and will operate as deemed necessary by the WRDATF committee.

3.0 Frequency of meetings

The TRSG will meet 4 times a year. Calendar dates will be set for the year in advance.

4.0 Venue for meetings

Meetings will be held as far as possible in WRDATF offices.

5.0 Chairperson will be nominated by the sub-group and will rotate on a yearly basis.

7.0 Quorum

The quorum will be four members of the TRSG, plus the Chairperson or person acting on behalf of the Chairperson. Members are required to notify the Task Force office a minimum of a week in advance to state their attendance or non attendance.

8.0 Attendance

Any of the sub-group who does not attend 3 consecutive meetings will be asked to leave unless a plausible excuse is given for non-attendance. Each of the sub-group can nominate a substitute to attend, on their behalf, a maximum of 2 meetings annually. All sub-groups should give advance notice of a substitute attending on their behalf.

9.0 Reporting procedures

The TRSG will report directly into the WRDATF to ensure that issues of concern are raised and acted on. A rapporteur is to be nominated by the sub-group

Note: There must be membership in order to fulfil sub-group functions.

SECTION 4: MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF TASK FORCE PROJECTS

This Section consists of:

4.1 Funding for WRDATF Funded Projects

4.2 Details of WRDATF Funded Projects

The Western Region Drugs & Alcohol Task Force funds a number of projects in the Western Region. They are as a result of the first strategy Shared Solutions and have been in operation since 2006/2007.

4.1 Funding for WRDATF Funded Projects

Funding for projects is approved by the DPU (formerly the OMD) on an annual basis. The first tranche of funding or initial funding is approved on a 'pro rata' basis, based on the annual allocation approved for each project. It remains the intention of the DPU that, unless specific difficulties emerge in relation to a particular project, it should continue to receive funding until it is evaluated formally and a decision is made on its continuation/mainstreaming. Interim funding is approved by the DPU on an annual basis.

If the Task Force wishes to reallocate funding between projects/actions, a proposal must be submitted to the DPU outlining the new project and the need for it, and why the funding is no longer required for what was originally approved. This proposal must be fully developed, discussed and approved at Task Force level, with full agreement of all parties, prior to submission to the DPU.

Conditions under which funding is allocated

Funding is allocated to support only those proposals specifically identified in the Task Force Strategy, and named as those 'recommended' by the DPU, and approved for funding.

Funding is provided on the basis of supporting the projects initially for a period of one year. Projects which require funding to continue beyond one year are reviewed by the Task Force prior to the end of that period in light of an evaluation of their effectiveness and impact on the drug problem in their area and taking account of whether funding should more appropriately be made available from a different source (through the TF examination of the RDTF1 form). Continuation of funding via the DPU will be subject to a Government decision in relation to the process.

Where a project is being funded on a one-year basis, as opposed to a once-off grant, the profile of expenditure for the year (appended to the RDTF1 Form) is completed. In such cases, funding is made available to the project promoter in advance installments based on the profiles, which may be revised by the Funding Agency in consultation with the Task Force, in light of the examination of the detailed proposals and costings.

The project promoter must complete the RDTF1 form and forward it to the Task Force, as well as furnishing any other information requested by the Task Force or the Funding Agency relevant to the proposal being funded.

The project promoter must satisfy the Drugs Task Force that appropriate management and personnel arrangements are in place to ensure that the proposal for which funding has been allocated can be successfully completed.

Salaries are agreed with the Task Force in accordance with the appropriate regulations and requirements of the channel of funding for that project. The project promoter must comply with the tax and accounting requirements of the State Agency through which the funding is being channelled.

Where the project promoter proposes to recruit staff in order to implement a proposal, it is expected that such posts will be filled through open competition. Where a project promoter proposes to depart from this practice, due to exceptional circumstances, the prior consent of the DPU should be sought. Normal public sector tendering arrangements are applied as appropriate.

Reallocation of Funding:

The Task Force cannot reallocate any funding that is not spent within the current year without seeking formal approval from the DPU.

Administration fees by hosting agencies:

The Task Force is based on a partnership approach; hosting fees outside of actual administration costs for the administration of projects is not anticipated. In exceptional circumstances where such situations arise, such costs should be kept to a minimum in order to prioritise frontline services.

Role of the Funding Agency/Channel of Funding

The role of the Funding Agency is to:

Ensure that the conditions under which funding has been approved are complied with;

Enter into an agreement/contract with the project promoter in respect of the funding which is being allocated;

Ensure that the projects are commenced on a viable basis within a set period of the date of allocation, with any funding of the projects not commenced within the period being deemed to be de-committed.

There must be a provision allowing for the recovery of any funding previously disbursed to de-committed projects.

Reports are submitted to the Task Force Co-ordinator by the Project Promoter on a quarterly basis, or more regularly where appropriate.

These reports record progress in relation to the project, as well as setting out the position in relation to expenditure and the drawdown of funding.

If it becomes apparent that problems are developing with a particular project, the statutory representative on the Task Force within whose remit the project falls should, in association

with the Co-ordinator, enquire into the difficulties and report back to the Task Force and State Agency.

The Task Force as a whole must agree a position where continuing difficulties persist. Where appropriate, DPU should be consulted.

Where there is any evidence or suggestion of financial impropriety, the State Agency should be informed immediately.

Service Level Agreements

Agreements are in place between the Project Promoter, the Channel of Funding and the Task Force. Once a year the agreement is sent out to all Project Promoters and a tri-party signature is received.

Reporting Requirements

Funded Workers and their Project Promoters are required to complete the following reports each year:

- Annual Work Plan
- Quarterly Reports
- RDTF 1 Form (stipulating objectives and achievements)
- Annual Report
- Any other forms as requested by the DPU

Copies of this information are kept in the WRDATF office in the event of an audit.

In brief, Project Promoters employ workers in line with their organisation's ethos, policies and procedures. They deal with all employment issues; they provide all reporting required by TF; they participate in steering committees. They may or may not have a seat on TF. They are required to absent themselves from any discussion around funding/ project relating to their own post. All projects meet with TF co-ordinator on an annual basis/or as required/ case by case basis.

4.2 Details of WRDATF Funded Projects

The following are a list of WRDATF projects/current resources:

- Community Liaison Workers x 3
 - Galway City and West Galway
 - East Galway and South Roscommon
 - Mayo and North Roscommon

- Drug Education Support Workers x 2
Roscommon/Mayo
Galway City and County
- Substance Misuse Counsellor for Homeless Persons
- Family Support Worker Mayo
- Drug & Alcohol Family Support Training Coordinator (HSE employee)

Description of the Projects:

Three Community Liaison Workers (CLW) (Co Galway, Mayo & Roscommon): the role of the Community Liaison Worker is to assist the community develop its individual responses to substance misuse; forge inter-agency collaborations and joint initiatives to tackle the local problems; help drive initiatives and co-ordinate developments in line with the NDS and regional policies; identify the local impact of substance misuse and local service needs; help groups prioritise needs; and finally assist in drug & alcohol policy development at a local level.

Two Drug & Alcohol Education Support Workers: the role of the Education Support Workers is to support the implementation of the drug & alcohol training resource manual, Putting the Pieces Together (PTPT), both regionally and nationally. The Drug & Alcohol Education Support Workers have also forged inter-agency collaboration with An Garda Síochána, SPHE, and the HSE Addiction Service to develop a drugs & alcohol parenting information event and parenting programme that is currently being rolled out throughout the counties of Galway, Mayo & Roscommon. The Education Support Workers also develop and deliver local drug & alcohol programmes that respond to the needs of a group or community.

The Mayo Drug and Alcohol Family Support Worker provides an opportunity to receive individualized support focusing on a family members own needs, goals, interests and strengths as well as exploring the impact substance misuse has on your life.

Addiction Counsellor for People who are Homeless: the role of the Addiction Counsellor for people who are homeless is to provide a drop-in counselling service within the Day Centre; offer one-to-one counselling; refer clients to appropriate services; act as a client advocate; and raise awareness of the current substance misuse issues within the homeless population.

The role of the Family Support Coordinator is to coordinate, support and develop all aspects of the Family Support Service throughout the Western Region (Galway, Mayo, & Roscommon).

SECTION FIVE: FUNDING AND FINANCES

This section includes:

5.1 Grants/Bursary

5.2 Financial Guidelines

5.3 Advertising/Publications

5.4 Signage Arrangements for Capital Projects

5.5 Media Protocols

5.6 Public Meetings

5.1 Grants/Bursary

To date the WRDATF has advertised and approved grants to voluntary and community organisations/groups on an annual basis. Terms and Conditions for these grants have been developed and are reviewed on a regular basis. The grants are advertised throughout the region and via Active Link and the funded workers.

The following grants have been available via the WRDATF and the level of funding each year is dependent on funding available.

- Rehab Assistance Bursary
- Education Bursary
- Innovation Bursary
- Family Support Bursary

Terms and conditions and guidelines for approval of grants have been developed and are all reviewed regularly.

Grants up to a maximum of €5,000 are reviewed and approved by the Admin/Finance sub-group and signed off by the Task Force. From time-to-time additional funds/monies are made available by the Department of Health and these are granted to successful parties by the Admin/Finance sub-group.

5.2 Financial Guidelines

Summary:

The WRDATF is a Limited Company and as a result complies with strict financial control guidelines. All accounts are audited annually and financial documentation forward to the Channel of Funding (HSE).

Financial Reporting Requirements

Setting of budgets:

The WRDATF is informed by the DPU (formerly OMD) of its annual budget: Two bi-annual payments are made directly to the WRDATF bank account through the Channel of Funding (HSE).

The WRDATF budget is broken down into the following categories:

- Administration
- Travel and subsistence

- Other incidental expenses
- Office expenses
- Development Costs
- Training
- IT Development
- Other Supports

Expenditure Reports

Currently the WRDATF provides financial expenditure returns to the OMD on a quarterly basis. The reports include a breakdown of expenditure for that period against the approved budget categories. Expenditure returns are signed by the Co-ordinator and the WRDATF Chairperson. Income and expenditure are reviewed by the Admin/Finance Sub-group, comparing actual spend to budget.

6 monthly expenditure forms are forward to the Channel of funding (HSE) The form are accompanied by

- A copy of the payments' journal
- A bank reconciliation
- A copy bank statement that shows the balance at the period end date

5.3 Advertising/Publications

As per the Local and Regional Drugs Task Force Handbook, the Projects funded under any initiative in the National Drug Strategy must acknowledge the Department of Health as a source of funding through the use of their logo.

This applies to both printed material and signage, as appropriate.

This provision must be included in all notifications of approval of funding to and from Channels of Funding/Project Promoters/Development Groups, etc:

- For the standard requirements with regard to the NDP, see www.ndp.ie.
- WRDATF should acknowledge the role of the Department of Health in advertising / publications as, in Irish and/or English versions of the wording to be included is as follows –

“Maoinithe ag an Roinn Sláinte tríd an Tascfhorsa Reigiúnacha Iarthar Drugaí.”

AND / OR

“Funded by the Department of Health through the WRDATF.”

5.4 Signage Arrangements for Capital Projects

For Capital Projects that have received funding under the Premises Initiative, arrangements are in place by the Department of Health for the recognition of Department funding by way of public signs.

5.5 Media Protocols

If any Task Force is contacted directly by a member of the media to comment on the views of the Task Force, the concerned party should be referred to the Task Force Chairperson or Co-ordinator.

- The Chairperson, as an independent representative of the WRDATF, should deal with any contentious issues that may arise in this regard.
- The Chairperson or Co-ordinator should consult with the relevant Task Force representatives in relation to such media queries.
- Sub-groups do not have the right to speak to the media or the general public on behalf of the Task Force.

Where a worker is working on a specific piece of work/initiative s/he can engage with the media regarding this piece of work but cannot represent the views of the Task Force. This role lies solely with the Chairperson or Co-ordinator of the WRDATF.

5.6 Public Meetings

Protocol for calling public meetings

Individual Task Force representatives have no role in convening public meetings. The Task Force can call meetings as is deemed appropriate to its work within the guidelines of the Strategic Plan.

If there is a request for a representative of the Task Force to go to a public meeting, the Task Force can choose someone to go in a listening/note-taking capacity. That person has no role to represent the Task Force unless approved at a Task Force meeting. If he/she does represent the Task Force he/she must give formal feedback by using the Reporting Template which has been drawn up for these purposes. (Appendix 5)

From time to time the Task Force, in conjunction with the public and community representatives, informs the community on their drug strategy (through public meetings, literature, etc.), in order to create greater public awareness of the strategy and obtain/respond to feedback.

SECTION 6: APPENDICES

This section includes:

- 6.1 Induction Pack
- 6.2 Financial Guidelines
- 6.3 Guidelines for small grants
- 6.4 Guidelines for family support grants

6.1 Induction Pack

Folder containing the following items	✓
WRDATF one page ad/info	
WRDATF Team Contact Details	
Agenda for Induction Meeting	
Glossary of Abbreviations	
Induction Presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background/history • Role of Task Forces • Task Force Membership • Task Force Team • Regional Structure • WRDATF Funded Posts • National Structures • National Handbook • National Drugs Strategy • Regional Drugs Strategy • Current WRDATF Regional Initiatives • Being a member of the Task Force (Roles & Responsibility) • Q&A 	
National Structure Diagram	
Expenses Claim Form	
Travel Memo	
Copy of the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NDS 2009 - 2016 • Regional Strategic plan "The Way Forward" • WRDATF Research reports 	

Notes:

- There is a separate induction pack for Community Representatives that looks at the above but specifically at the role of the community representative. This includes sample feedback forms to the forum they represent.
- Induction meeting generally take between and 1 and 1 and a half hours and are held in the Task Force offices or prior to a Task Force meeting.

6.2 Financial Guidelines

1. Financial Control Procedures
2. Financial Reporting Requirements
3. Other Requirements

Summary:

The WRDATF is a Limited Company and as a result complies with strict financial control guidelines. All accounts are audited annually and financial documentation forward to the Channel of Funding (HSE).

1. Financial Control Procedures

Bank Accounts

- Separate bank accounts are maintained by (Western Region Drugs Task Force Ltd.) with Bank of Ireland, Mervue Industrial Park, Mervue, Galway, for the purpose of Administrative and Development costs for the WRDATF.

The WRDATF transitioned to banking on line. There are no cheques written since 2017.

- Online banking is done together with the Coordinator and Financial Administrator.
- A code is sent to the Coordinators phone approving any payment made by the Financial Administrator.
- The Financial Administrator and the Coordinator meet (via zoom) every 2 weeks to review invoices for paying and also to review income received.
- The Task Force has a debit card for small transactions. This card is kept with the Coordinator at all times.
- If payments over 10k are made then the Task Force committee needs to approve same.

Accounting Books and Records

- The WRDATF Administrator is responsible for maintaining basic books and records in relation to this funding, including:
 - A copy of the funding contracts
 - Approved budget details as per funding allocation
 - Any financial procedures document issued by funders
 - Signed insurance indemnity forms WRDATF s who claim Travel & Subsistence

- All minutes of Admin/finance Sub-group and WRDATF where financial decisions are made are held in the central administration office of the WRDATF.
- A file containing supporting documentation for each cheque payment made filed in cheque number order, for ease of reference.

The following records are kept on file for review by the Admin/Finance Sub-group, WRDATF Co-ordinator, Company Directors, Company s and Auditors when carrying out an audit

- Original bank statements (at least monthly)
- Monthly bank statements kept on file
- Monthly Bank reconciliation's
- Project files relating to the approval of funding
- Minutes of the meetings approving the expenditure

The Office Administrator reports to the WRDATF re the finances after quarterly Admin Finance meeting.

2. Financial Reporting Requirements

Setting of budgets:

The WRDATF is informed by the DPU of its annual budget: Two bi-annual payments are made directly to the WRDATF bank account through the Channel of Funding (HSE).

The WRDATF budget is broken down into the following categories:

- Administration
- Travel and subsistence
- Other incidental expenses
- Office expenses
- Development Costs
- Training
- IT Development
- Other categories include;
- Family Support
- Bursaries
- Digital Technologies
- Ballinrobe FRC
- ARD FRC

Expenditure Reports

Currently the WRDATF provide financial expenditure returns to the DPU on a quarterly basis. The reports include a breakdown of expenditure for that period against the approved budget categories. Expenditure returns are signed by the Co-ordinator and the WRDATF Chairperson.

Other requirements

Audit trail

The Co-ordinator (via the Admin Finance Worker) is responsible for ensuring a complete audit trail exists whereby: Each invoice/personal receipt for payment can be reviewed

All records are maintained on computer using Excel

All monies received are lodged on day of receipt or the earliest possible opportunity using a pre-printed lodgement book.

- The details from the lodgement book are then entered into Excel
- The Financial Administrator (FA) keeps all files on excel and then transfers them onto SAGE accounts.
- The FA sends the audit files to the Auditor in January each year.
- An AGM takes place in March to sign off the Audited Accounts.
- The FA keeps separate budgets for different large expenditures. A budget is kept for the operational income and expend, bursaries income and expend and Planet Youth income and expend.
- The Administrator properly maintains the payments & receipts records, the and bank reconciliation's
- An external party can follow figures included in the expenditure returns through the payments book and bank statements to the original supporting documentation.

Audit Review

WRDATF Ltd accounts are audited annually by an external accountant & auditor. (DFS Accountants & Auditors). Copy of audited accounts is to be submitted to Chanel of Funding and OMD

Financial Reporting to WRDATF

The WRDATF receives a financial update at each Task Force meeting. Detailed expenditure is given annually and/or when required (RDTF 1 Expenditure forms only created for W13 and W14).

All expenditure forms are to be prepared by the Administrator/Co-ordinator and signed as approved by a WRDATF Chairperson. These expenditure forms are submitted to the Channel of Funding and DPU

Admin/Finance Sub-groups:

- -Micheal Durcan-Coordinator
- Joe O Neill-Chairperson
- Linda Sice- SICAP Coordinator
- Noel Cronin Foroige
- Joe McDonagh-Sexual Health West Manager.

Financial Training

Financial Training will be provided to the Administrator in order to fulfil WRDATF financial obligations. This training will cover requirements in relation to this funding and also cover best practice. Ongoing support is available from WRDATF on request.

6.3 Guidelines for small grants

Small grants have been replaced by bursary grants. See application process below;

- Individuals residing in Galway, Mayo or Roscommon who are in recovery from drug/alcohol use and who wish to pursue activities to support their recovery.
- Applications are open for a range of activities that will help support an individual's recovery
- Funding is available for applications up to €5000 depending on bursary fund and are paid directly to service providers, as a contribution towards the cost of fee. Applicants must contribute 20% of the overall fee.
- A sub-committee of the Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task Force will review all applications and award funding.
- Applicants must be resident in Galway, Mayo or Roscommon.
- Applicants will only be accepted from those who are in recovery or moving towards recovery from drugs/alcohol and who wish to support their recovery. Application form must demonstrate how the bursary will support recovery for the individual/organisation applying.
- Official application form must be used to apply for funding.
- Application for fees that have already been paid will not be considered.
- Only one application per applicant per annum will be accepted. ♣ Proof of address and must be submitted with application form.
- Relevant applications may be means tested.
- Applications will be reviewed by the committee 4 times in 2021

6.4 Guidelines for family support grants

Eligibility

The Drug & Alcohol Family Support Grant is replaced by the Family Support Bursary;

- The bursary application from a family member must be approved initially by the FSW.
- The application is then signed off by the bursary committee if deemed suitable.
- A yearly allocation of €3,000 is set aside per Family Support Worker. This is the yearly allocation per worker. Once this is spent the bursary is no longer available until the next calendar year.
- Grants will be awarded to individuals.
- Costs for sessional facilitators will be considered but must be drug & alcohol related.
- Applicants must demonstrate that the proposal is Drug & Alcohol Specific.

Produced by:

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