

## REPORT OF THE SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL (KNOWN AS CROSSREACH BOARD) MAY 2025

### Proposed Deliverance

#### The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Strongly encourage congregations and Presbyteries to practically and prayerfully engage with CrossReach on the new strategy 'Love from CrossReach' and explore areas of closer collaboration and mutual interest so that the missional work of the Church can be furthered as outlined in the CrossReach website (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/churches-and-congregations>) (Section 1.2.2).
3. Recognise the dedication and professionalism of the CrossReach staff group and encourage Presbyteries and other partners across the Church to continue to support recruitment efforts (Section 3.1 and 3.4.2).
4. Endorse the ecumenical and interfaith efforts made to raise awareness of the need for Fair Work in social care, note the need for continued action and instruct the Social Care Council to continue to work with partners to engage on this issue at the highest level of Scottish Government (Section 3.4).
5. Express deep frustration about the worsening position of social care in Scotland and the lack of progress on the longer-term reform needed and instruct the Social Care Council, working with the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, to make resources available which will allow Presbyteries and congregations to raise this issue as a matter of critical concern in the run up to the Scottish Elections in 2026 (Section 3.4.4 – 3.4.7).
6. Celebrate the positive changes which have been reported in the survey of those accessing CrossReach services and endorse the focus on human rights and wellbeing (Section 6.1).

### Report

#### 1. LOVE FROM CROSSREACH

##### 1.1 "We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4 v 19)"

**1.1.1** This simple command sits at the front of the CrossReach strategy 2025-2030. Launched at the end of 2024 after a significant period of reflection and consultation, 'Love from CrossReach' captures our ambition for the future.



Access the strategy via the link:

<https://flipbooks.crossreach.org.uk/Strategy>

**1.1.2** The strategy builds on 155 years of delivering care and support to the people of Scotland, in Christ's name, and as part of the Church of Scotland. It recognises that the way in which social care is designed and delivered is changing around us, and that we need to adapt and change with it. We have taken the opportunity to refresh our core purpose and set out a number of principles which will help the CrossReach Board to steer a steady course for the future, despite the acute challenges faced by CrossReach and the wider social care sector.

**1.1.3** These principles, which are worked up more fully in the service area plans, are based around the issues which matter most to the people we support, our employees and volunteers, our key supporters and commissioners and those who took time to engage with us from within the Church. Strong sustainable services which support and empower those both supported by them and working within them is the key premise, with Christian love being the driving force behind it all.

**1.1.4** The values have been re-written reflecting our Christian ethos, which sets us apart from other social care providers. They have been cross-referenced with The Scottish Social Services Council, the body which oversees the registration of employees within the social care sector.

**1.1.5** Some of the aspirations contained within the strategy are bold, others will allow us simply to build on what has gone before. Together they will allow us to continue to play our part in a missional Church by responding to human need by loving service.

#### 1.2 Change to Remit and Constitution

**1.2.1** In order to integrate the new strategy into existing arrangements The Social Care Council (CrossReach Board) are seeking to simplify the current remit by making the purpose, as contained within 'Love from CrossReach' central to the remit and to delete elements already covered by the existing constitution, to avoid duplication. The Board has also sought approval from the Assembly Trustees to update the constitution in order to reflect the changes agreed at General Assembly 2020. Appendix 1 of this report contains the proposed new remit and constitution.

**1.2.2** The General Assembly is also invited to give prayerful and practical support to CrossReach as we roll out the strategy over the course of 2025 and explore ways in which we can meaningfully collaborate.

## 2. A YEAR OF LOVING SERVICE

### 2.1 Our Impact

**2.1.1** Bringing love to the forefront of the strategy is simply a reflection and strengthening of what we have seen in operation all year in each of the services. When a highly professional and skilled workforce comes alongside people struggling to reach their full potential and together they work in a spirit of partnership, love and acceptance, it makes change possible.

**2.1.2** This year, we have supported over 30,000 people, which represents a growth in the number of beneficiaries from last year, and is in line with the huge demand for services being placed on our sector.

**2.1.3** You can learn more from our impact report here: [www.crossreach.org.uk/impact-report-2025](http://www.crossreach.org.uk/impact-report-2025)

### 2.2 A few of the successes from 2024 are captured below

**2.2.1** The children and young people from Erskine Waterfront Campus (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/erskine-waterfront-campus-0>), our school for up to 30 young people with complex learning needs, over 70% of whom are day pupils, took part in a time of celebration at their annual award ceremony earlier this year. The curriculum covers all 8 areas of the Curriculum for Excellence: sciences, languages, mathematics, expressive arts, social studies, technologies, health and wellbeing and religious and moral education. In total, 53 personal awards, 54 H15/DYAs, 82 NAT2s, 24 NAT3s, 7 NAT4s and 1 NAT5 awards/stand-alone units were handed out.

**2.2.1.1** Staff were delighted when pupil Rory achieved the highest music grade the school has ever had. This was a NAT5 equivalent for performing on one instrument or voice, which is a remarkable achievement.

**2.2.2** Our Children With Disabilities Services, Go2 and Mallard Short-Breaks, support nearly 70 children and young people with complex needs. We provide bespoke support, that helps grow independence, skills and friendships. At Go2 (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/go2>), young people access enriching experiences, including a sensory room, hydrotherapy pool, art room, and large garden. Residential Short Breaks (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/find-service/children-families/disability-and-additional-support-needs/residential-short-breaks>) offers respite care, tailored to each young person's preferences for activities, meals and outcomes.

**2.2.2.1** Ciaran, once highly anxious and requiring one-to-one support, has grown in confidence and is now enjoying group activities. Recognising his passion for building, we created opportunities for hands-on projects, like assembling new desk chairs and other DIY experiences. A parent shared "*I can't take both boys out alone, but Go2 lets them build friendships and thrive. The staff are amazing, taking time to truly understand their personalities and needs*". These stories highlight our impact - empowering young people to grow, gain confidence, and flourish.

**2.2.3** In the spirit of lifelong learning, a number of our Older People Services care homes have purchased an interactive activity touch table, designed for use in educational environments but adaptable to a residential care home setting. The table creates a positive and engaging environment for people living in the service and offers them an opportunity to engage in stimulating activities designed to improve cognitive function. The table facilitates social interaction and can be used for individual use or group activities and games.

**2.2.4** The Dick Stewart Service (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/dick-stewart-service>), a small residential service in Glasgow which has traditionally supported people coming to the end of a long-term prison sentence, was repurposed during the course of 2024 to support the early release of prisoners under the emergency arrangements made in June of that year. The service filled up quickly and the population has remained largely stable over the last 6 months. Demand remains high and vacancies are filled quickly. The service has produced positive outcomes for people in terms of increased wellbeing, moving to settled accommodation, greater independence and notably, no return to prison, which has been one of the challenges of the early release scheme in general.

**2.2.5** The Dornoch Men's Shed, a community resource for the people of Dornoch, opened in the grounds of Oversteps Care Home ([www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/oversteps](http://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/oversteps)) in 2018. The space provides two workshops which are equipped with woodworking machines, tools and benches. A recent extension at the back hosts a kiln and working space. The Men's Shed team have helped provide stimulating activity to some of the residents within Oversteps, whether it is to attend a pottery workshop or simply to share stories over a cup of tea.

**2.2.5.1** Oversteps residents, staff and families have been fundraising over the past 6 years to upgrade the large garden space at the front of the home. 2024 saw some new pathways being laid which has made the garden much more accessible. The Men's Shed team have now offered to build a pergola for the garden. This will provide a central feature for the sensory garden, which is in the planning phase at present. Planting will begin in the spring, and the residents are looking forward to having a colourful, fragrant garden to sit in during the summer months.

**2.2.6** One of the areas we have been strengthening is participation across the organisation so that those using our services feel empowered to have their voices heard on issues which matter to them. This has been well developed in the Learning Disability Services (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/find-service/adults/learning-disabilities>). Each year, we hold a Learning Disability Forum, and the 2024 Forum was a huge success. Organised by a small team of volunteers, the event provides a platform for feedback from all those using CrossReach Adult Learning Disability Services. The theme of this event was "growing together" with the aim of building even better services for those who use them. Presentations, songs, arts and crafts, Zumba and even a silent disco meant there was something for everyone to enjoy. A presentation was also given by the chairperson of the National Involvement Network (NIN), a network of people with additional support needs. The group meet regularly to discuss issues which matter to those with additional support needs, with the aim of allowing them to have more say in what happens within the organisations which support them.

**2.2.6.1** Michael, the Chairperson of NIN, spoke to us after his presentation and said the key message he wanted to get out at the event was to allow those with additional support needs *“to have their voices heard and not have decisions made for them.”*

**2.2.6.2** Organising Committee member Robert said; *“it was brilliant to see the event come to life after putting a lot of work into it”.*

### 3. WORKFORCE

#### 3.1 Employee Awards

**3.1.1** Recognising and celebrating the achievements of our people is important to us. While these celebrations take place every day within services, each year we hold our annual Employee Awards event. As a diverse organisation, this was celebrated with our theme of ‘A garden’s beauty never lies in one flower’. 183 nominations were received for one of our special category awards of Employee of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, New Recruit of the Year and Team of the Year.

**3.1.2** The nominations received illustrate the difference our staff make to the lives of those we support and their peers every day:

“When I nearly gave up, she stopped me and I will always owe her for that.”

“She is a wonderful example of the compassion that CrossReach strive to provide.”

“She is wonderful, but more important as a human being, she simply is fantastic.”

“I was able to feel love for myself for the first time in 58 years.”

**3.1.3** Finalists in each category were invited to our awards event at the Dunblane Hydro on 6 November, where following lunch, winners were announced by our guest speaker Fiona Stewart and presented by the Moderator. 51 employees who had gained a new qualification in the past year were recognised along with 15 staff celebrating their 20 or 30 years service anniversary, and one employee who was recognised for 40 years service – a remarkable achievement.

#### 3.2 Chaplaincy Pilot

**3.2.1.** In 2024, we reported that we were about to embark on a pilot to introduce a model of workforce chaplaincy to support services and provide emotional and spiritual encouragement to employees. We are pleased to report that the pilot has been active in five services: Eskmills, (Learning Disabilities), Cunningham House (Homelessness), Cumnor Hall (Older People Services), Go To and The Mallard (Children With Disabilities) and Morven (Mental Health). A sixth potential chaplain is in the process of training and will be paired with St Margaret’s House (Older People Services). Scottish Workplace Chaplaincy provide and support the volunteer chaplains who offer employees a confidential listening ear, and, if appropriate, advice or referral on to relevant support agencies. The pilot, which sees chaplains operating slightly differently, depending on the setting in which they are based, will be evaluated mid-2025 to determine if this initiative should be rolled out further. There are early indications that where a strong connection has been established, the additional support is much appreciated.

#### 3.3 Employee Wellbeing

**3.3.1.** As our people show love to those we support, it is critically important that we ensure that they are appropriately supported by the organisation. The majority of roles within CrossReach are physically, emotionally and psychologically challenging. Therefore, it is important that we have the right range of wellbeing supports in place.

**3.3.2** During 2024, we promoted a range of wellbeing initiatives. We have changed occupational health provider to ensure that employees are well supported not only while they are absent, but also as they return to the workplace. We have also changed provider for our employee assistance programme so employees can access counselling and legal or health helplines, if or when required. In addition to this, our employee health cash plan allows employees to reclaim some health costs such as dental and optical or with other practitioners e.g. physiotherapists.

**3.3.3** CrossReach also signed up to See Me in Work, a See Me Scotland initiative. The programme helps us to make improvements to our culture, practice and policies and directly tackles mental health stigma and discrimination. A baseline survey will take place in spring 2025 which will inform action plans and areas of priority for this important piece of work.

**3.3.4** Individual services have also been investing in staff wellbeing. One initiative being taken forward in the residential care homes is the development of wellbeing hubs and improvement to staff facilities onsite. This follows on from discussions between Williamwood House (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/williamwood-house>) and the local Health and Social Care Partnership about staff wellbeing, after which the first hub was created. The management team were awarded a local government grant and after speaking with staff, decided how the funds would be best used. The hub is open most days with relaxing music and aromatherapy oils diffusing throughout the day for staff to simply take time out as and when required.

**3.3.4.1** *“Having the management, ancillary staff, care staff, admin staff and cooks all being together in that relaxed environment was so nice...there was such a great vibe. It allowed us all to get to know a bit better ‘the person’ and not just ‘the colleague!’”* Joanna, Activities Co-ordinator at Williamwood House.

#### 3.4 Fair Work

**3.4.1** CrossReach can recognise the value of the workforce in many different ways, some of which are outlined above, but ensuring that their pay, terms and conditions, and support arrangements are the best we can offer is our strongest statement and help with both recruitment and retention.

**3.4.2** We are pleased to report that we have made significant progress in filling vacancies in some areas of work and continue to invest in recruitment and retention initiatives. Over the course of 2024, vacancies fell by 27% with an overall gain of 60 employees and voluntary turnover stabilised at 13.8%. We are grateful to all of the Presbyteries and individual congregations who have shared our vacancies throughout the past year and remain keen to work in partnership on this initiative over the course of 2025.

**3.4.3** Despite the progress made, recruitment of staff remains an area of high risk on our risk register as it impacts on the quality and financial performance of services which are then reliant on agency staff for cover.

**3.4.4** Unfortunately, the full value of the social care workforce is not fully recognised in the contracts under which we operate and there is still much to be done by the Scottish Government which remains well behind its own aspiration for Fair Work as laid out in the recommendations made in the report 'Fair Work in Scotland's Social Care Sector 2019'. The Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) issued a statement to MSPs prior to the Scottish Budget being agreed which outlined the situation for Not-For-Profit (NfP) social care workers and the consequences for social care and those relying on it as a whole:

- NfP support workers are now paid 15% less than equivalent NHS staff
- Number of people in Scotland waiting for a social care assessment: 6,027
- Number of people in Scotland waiting for assessed care to be delivered: 3,281
- Vacancy rate in not-for-profit providers (March 2024): 9%
- NfP providers delivering public services despite a deficit budget (Mar 2024): 83%
- NfP providers discussing contract viability with one+ council(s) (Mar 2024): 61%

**3.4.5** The CrossReach Board have been most grateful for the support received from the Moderator, the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, Justice and Peace Scotland and a number of Ecumenical and Interfaith partners in recognising the importance of this issue to Scottish society and continuing to raise it in meetings with Scottish Government. There is some progress being made, but it is slow and, meanwhile, the pay gap between those working in the Not-for-Profit sector and equivalent grades in the NHS and Public Sector grows. The sector is largely made up of female workers and the gender inequalities have been highlighted.

**3.4.5.1** As stated in the 'Fair Work in Scotland's Social Care Sector 2019' report:

*The lack of status and chronic undervaluing of social care is not unconnected to perceptions of care as 'women's work'. Failure to address the gendered dynamics of the care sector and to challenge its significant voice deficit, low pay and one sided-flexibility contributes significantly to women's poorer quality of work and to Scotland's gender pay gap.*

**3.4.6** With the Government plans for a full scale reform of social care having been withdrawn, and no further communication on how the recommendations of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care (The Feeley Review) are to be implemented, the already critical situation for social care in Scotland feels set to worsen with the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the most vulnerable situations affected.

**3.4.7** We will continue working with partners across the Church on these issues over the course of 2025 and will provide resources to help others understand and raise this issue of concern with MSPs in the run up to the Scottish Elections in 2026.

## **4. STRONG SUSTAINABLE SERVICES**

### **4.1 A journey towards financial sustainability**

**4.1.1** Recruitment and the consequent overspends in staffing costs are one factor which affected the financial performance of CrossReach last year but there are others which are significant. Generally, there is a failure to recognise the true costs of care in many of the contracting arrangements that the sector works under. The CCPS statistics quoted above speak to the stress within the sector as the majority of Not-for-Profit providers turn to reserves to support services operating at a deficit. Many, ultimately, are forced into a position where they may have to hand work back and stop supporting the very people relying on them at their greatest time of need. The situation has worsened over the course of 2024 as Local Authorities, who often commission the services, find themselves in a challenging financial situation where they have had to cut costs in order to balance their own books.

**4.1.2** The latest blow is the National Insurance Contributions (Secondary Class 1 Contributions) Bill which has been identified as a threat to public services and will add an additional £1.2M to our operating costs unless mitigation is offered. We are currently working through a process to find ways to minimise the impact on the 2025 budget.

**4.1.3** There are, however, always areas within our own control that we can improve on. Even before the National Insurance Bill announcement, we had identified a number of areas of improvement for services and central support areas which were continuing to cause concern and are working through a programme of key decision points in 2025. This does not necessarily mean services will close, but we do need to find a sustainable way forward, so reduction in service, longer waiting lists, having to decline some of the most complex clients being referred because of the high level of support needed or restructures are all under consideration. Capping our central costs, controlling bad debt and driving efficiencies in procurement are also areas receiving intense focus. None of that is easy, and so closure of services cannot be ruled out. The stark reality is that we face a most challenging year in our journey towards breakeven.

**4.1.4** We know that many supporters from within the Church of Scotland congregations make generous personal donations as well as contributing to collective efforts, and that is most appreciated.

**4.1.5** We are also grateful to the Guild for selecting CrossReach as one of its charity partners in the 'Let's Build a House' initiative and look forward to meeting and working with Guilds across Scotland, over the next 3 years, to support our Daisy Chain ([www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/daisy-chain-early-years-project](http://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/daisy-chain-early-years-project)) and Perinatal



Counselling Services ([www.crossreach.org.uk/find-service/adults/counselling-for-adults/perinatal-counselling-and-therapy](http://www.crossreach.org.uk/find-service/adults/counselling-for-adults/perinatal-counselling-and-therapy)).

**4.1.6** The CrossReach Board fully recognises that this is a challenging time across every part of the Church and will continue to give consideration to the ways in which we can best support one another. There are already a number of areas where close collaboration is proving of mutual benefit and we would encourage Presbyteries and congregations to explore the many opportunities which exist to partner with CrossReach to raise awareness, raise funds and ultimately to deliver something of the Church of Scotland’s mission to the people of Scotland, together.

**4.1.7** We would also wish to record sincere thanks for the generosity which continues to be shown to the organisation by Presbyteries, congregations, and the national church offices, without which many of the people we support would not be given the service they need and deserve.

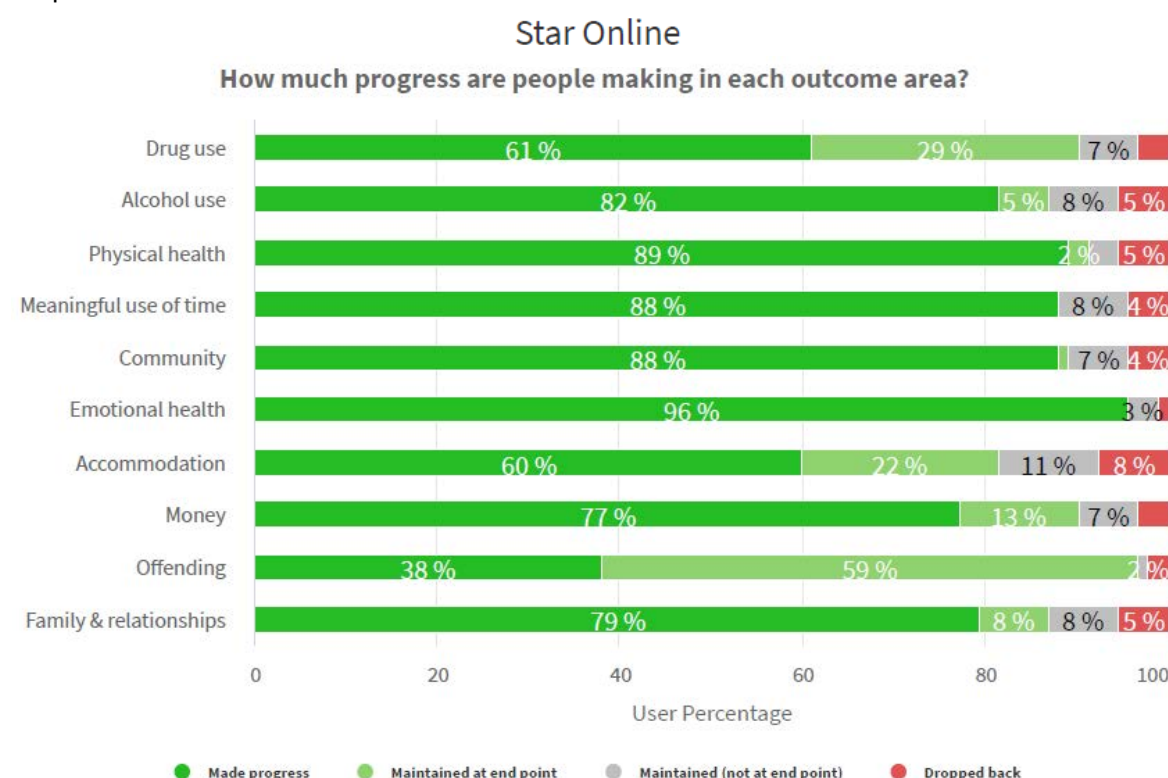
**4.1.8** The 2026 financial target may continue to be a significant challenge for CrossReach at a time when the Church, nationally and locally, is also stretched in terms of its own resources, but we remain determined to bring things to balance as soon as practicably possible with the aim of the end of the year 2026 still firmly in our sights.

## 4.2 Investment in services

**4.2.1** While clear about the challenges, the CrossReach Board recognises the need to concentrate on growth and investment if we are to continue to meet the needs of a society which is ever more reliant on the support which social care can offer. The demographics around the growth of the older population, and the recently released statistics around drugs deaths, homelessness, delayed discharge, suicide, and the rise in the number of people reporting with a mental health concern are ones where we would want to lend our expertise and be fit to respond to opportunities to do more. Some of the areas in which we have been active include:

**4.2.1.1 Substance Use:** The data on deaths related to drug use and alcohol use remains shocking and concerning. In August 2024, it was again reported that drugs deaths had increased on the previous year. While the overall figures tell their own story, CrossReach recognises that each data point represents an individual who potentially did not have access to the support they needed to live life in a different way. CrossReach have supported the Church of Scotland Public Life and Social Justice Programme Group to respond to the Right to Recovery Bill but have also been working to ensure that the services they offer themselves make the difference needed to the people turning to them for help. The information gathered on the outcomes tool used shows the significant progress many people engaged in the recovery services across the country make.

Graph A Outcomes tool



**4.2.1.1.1** Maggie, a former service user, said “Miracles do happen when you get clean and sober and CrossReach have given me a wonderful opportunity. They believed in me and I became part of the team involved in the new development of the new service, thank you CrossReach. My life is full now”.

**4.2.1.1.2** It is this sort of result which has attracted investment from the Scottish Government Drugs Mission Programme and in October 2024, work was completed on Nevis House, which sits in the grounds of Beechwood House (<https://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/beechwood-house>), a CrossReach residential rehabilitation centre. It will double the capacity of the residential rehabilitation centre, offering support to an additional 24 people every year from across the north of Scotland (from Moray to the Western Isles, as well as Orkney and Shetland). The first residents will be admitted from April 2025.

**4.2.1.1.3** Vikki, one of the former residents from Beechwood House said: *"I feel very honoured to have been given the opportunity to help out with the designs of Nevis House right from the start. It has greatly helped my recovery. I now feel I have a sense of purpose again and look forward to the next chapter"*.

**4.2.1.2 Mental Health:** CrossReach Counselling ([www.crossreach.org.uk/find-service/adults/mental-wellbeing/counselling-for-mental-wellbeing](http://www.crossreach.org.uk/find-service/adults/mental-wellbeing/counselling-for-mental-wellbeing)) is vital as one in four people experience a mental health problem at some point in their lifetime. Recent studies show people with a mental illness die up to 20 years younger than their peers, with the largest age demographic of self-harm between 5 and 30. Scotland holds the highest rate of suicide in the UK, particularly in the ages between 25 and 44. 74% of our clients fall within these age brackets. Thanks to the development of online counselling delivered via the NHS Attend Anywhere platform and telephone counselling, both of which complement face to face counselling, our services can now be accessed across Scotland. However, that has led to a growth in demand.

**4.2.1.2.1** A CrossReach impact report published in April 2024 records the following:

**4.2.1.2.1.1** Over the past year, CrossReach Counselling managed over 2,100 referrals and worked with over 1,900 individuals and families, an increase of 20% compared to the previous year. We offered over 17,300 therapeutic sessions, an increase of 16%. Clients were supported with an average of 9 sessions.

**4.2.1.2.1.2** The figures below show the very real impact that counselling is having on our adult clients' everyday lives in four key areas:

Graph B Counselling client outcomes



**4.2.1.2.1.3** There is also a significant change recorded for Children and Young People who measured positively against the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators.

Graph C Children and Young People counselling outcomes



**4.2.1.2.1.4** Quotes from our Children and Young People:

*"I felt I have learned to "Love myself" a little more, and to reason with the problems I have had thrown at me. I have 'HOPE' and am very grateful for the help you offered."*

*"Counselling has made me feel more confident in myself and helped me to control my emotions. It has helped me to find school easier and I also find it easier to talk to people and has made me feel more included. It has encouraged me to reach out more and I feel as if there's always someone to listen".*

**4.2.1.2.1.5** We are grateful for the continued support of the Assembly Trustees for this area of our work, which continues to attract some funding despite Mission and Renewal for our core costs no longer being available.

**4.2.1.3 Our Buildings:** Older People Services have been focussing on improving the environment in our care homes with the use of legacies which have been kindly left to us for that purpose. Most of our 15 care homes have seen improvements to the internal and external environment, resulting in a number of enhancements to daily living for people living, working and visiting services. Clashfarquhar House ([www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/clashfarquhar](http://www.crossreach.org.uk/our-locations/clashfarquhar)) completed its upgrade in the summer of 2024 which involved a complete refurbishment of all flats including new wet rooms and mini kitchen facilities.

**4.2.1.3.1** The improvements across the portfolio have supported a recovery in occupancy from the pandemic, with our care homes and specialist holistic model of care realising an average of around 92-96% occupancy.

**4.2.1.3.2** The feedback has been extremely positive with the refurbished lounges, hairdressing salons, and dining rooms being particularly appreciated. The quality of the environment can have an enormous effect on the health, wellbeing and safety of residents and it is hoped the additional investment made will make a significant difference to the lives of our residents.



**4.2.1.4 Infrastructure:** Investing in infrastructure, which supports direct service provision but is one step removed, can be equally important. Ensuring that our buildings are well maintained and carbon efficient remained a priority in 2024. As we have worked to enhance the comfort and quality of our buildings, it has given us the opportunity to attend to carbon reducing measures. Grant funding has contributed to some of the initial investment necessary and we anticipate that energy costs for many of our buildings will be driven down as a result of the work being done.

**4.2.1.4.1** The CrossReach Board agreed 8 key targets in June 2024 on which work has already started or a way forward, identified.

**4.2.1.4.1.1** Progress made:

- Source 100% of our electricity from renewable sources by 2030 or earlier.
- Insulate our buildings to the maximum appropriate level, where technically feasible, by 2030 or earlier.
- Decarbonise the heating in our buildings, in line with the phased targets for public sector buildings, by 2038 or earlier.
- Transform our road based fleet, removing petrol and diesel cars by 2030.
- End use of single use plastic and send zero waste to landfill by 2028.
- Ensure that our investment decisions, including procurement, are aligned with Scotland's net zero targets and support the move to a circular economy.

**4.2.1.4.1.2** Work still to be started:

- Maximise opportunities to enhance and restore biodiversity on our estate.
- Ensure adaptation to the impacts of climate change alongside our efforts to reduce our emissions as far as we can, as fast as we can.

**4.2.1.4.2** Whilst it has been good to note the progress made, it is clear to us that we will not achieve the strategic vision to achieve net zero by 2030, agreed by the General Assembly 2023. We do believe, however, the targets set to be achievable and realistic based on the size of our estate and the resources available to us. We will report annually on our progress towards these targets and update our interim science-based targets every 2 years to support delivery of our long-term net zero aspirations.

**4.2.1.5 Information Technology:** During the course of 2024, it was agreed to make significant investment in the implementation of Microsoft 365 and SharePoint to enhance operational efficiency, data management, and security. It was also seen as important to aid collaboration among staff through new tools and practices.

**4.2.1.5.1** The project has included updating systems, restructuring staff access to data, ensuring secure data storage, and providing training for staff to use new tools. It emphasises the necessity of Microsoft 365 and SharePoint for productivity, collaboration, and data security.

**4.2.1.5.2** A project for the adoption of Microsoft 365, SharePoint, OneDrive, and Microsoft Teams in three services demonstrated improved workflow efficiency and collaboration. However, it highlighted the need for more extensive staff training due to the steep learning curve.

**4.2.1.5.3** As a result, a number of adaptations were made to the implementation process and the pilot is now being rolled out across the organisation, with the initial feedback being largely positive.

## 5. SCOTTISH CHILD ABUSE INQUIRY (SCAI) AND SCOTTISH COVID INQUIRY

**5.1** In the report to the General Assembly 2024, the CrossReach Board indicated that it was making preparation to give evidence at both the SCAI (Phase 8 Residential Schools) and the Scottish Covid Inquiry. An update was given in the Convener's speech to General Assembly 2024. Since our last report, the Procurator has delivered a final submission on Phase 8 to the SCAI in February 2025, at the close of all evidence having been heard for that phase. We currently await publication of the case study on residential schools and will consider the recommendations in full, once issued.

**5.2** Operation Koper was set up by the Procurator Fiscal in 2020 to investigate all Covid-19 related deaths in care homes. That Inquiry is ongoing. Currently 8 of our care homes remain under scrutiny as a result of this investigation. We are grateful to the legal team at 121 George St for their ongoing support

## 6. PERFORMANCE

**6.1** Results from the annual survey of people who access our services.

**6.1.1** The results from the annual survey of people who access our services yielded the following results:

Graph D Measurements against Health and Social Care Standards

	Total Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Did Not Answer	Total Positive Responses
<b>Dignity and Respect</b> CrossReach staff treat me with respect	448	369 83.9%	53 11.4%	16 3.6%	3 0.7%	2 0.5%	5 1.1%	422 94.2%
<b>Compassion</b> CrossReach staff are kind and caring to me	448	365 82.5%	58 13.0%	15 3.1%	4 0.9%	2 0.5%	4 0.9%	423 94.4%
<b>Be Included</b> I receive the right information at the right time and in a way that I can understand	448	310 71.5%	87 18.5%	34 7.8%	8 1.7%	2 0.5%	7 1.6%	397 88.6%
<b>Responsive Care and Support</b> If I make a complaint or raise a concern it is acted upon	448	278 66.2%	85 19.2%	49 11.9%	8 2.0%	3 0.7%	25 5.6%	363 81.0%
<b>Wellbeing</b> I feel safe and am protected from neglect, abuse or avoidable harm	448	371 83.7%	55 12.3%	14 3.1%	2 0.5%	2 0.5%	4 0.9%	426 95.1%

**6.1.1.1** A number of questions were also asked within each service area, with a focus on human rights.

Graph E Service user survey question on human rights

Adult Care Services

<b>The organisation protects me &amp; makes sure my rights are upheld</b>	86	65 83.9%	15 11.4%	3 3.6%	0 0.7%	2 0.5%	1 0.5%	80 93.0%
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Children and Families Services

<b>The organisation protects me &amp; makes sure my rights are upheld</b>	172	127 73.8%	28 16.3%	12 7.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	5 2.9%	155 90.1%
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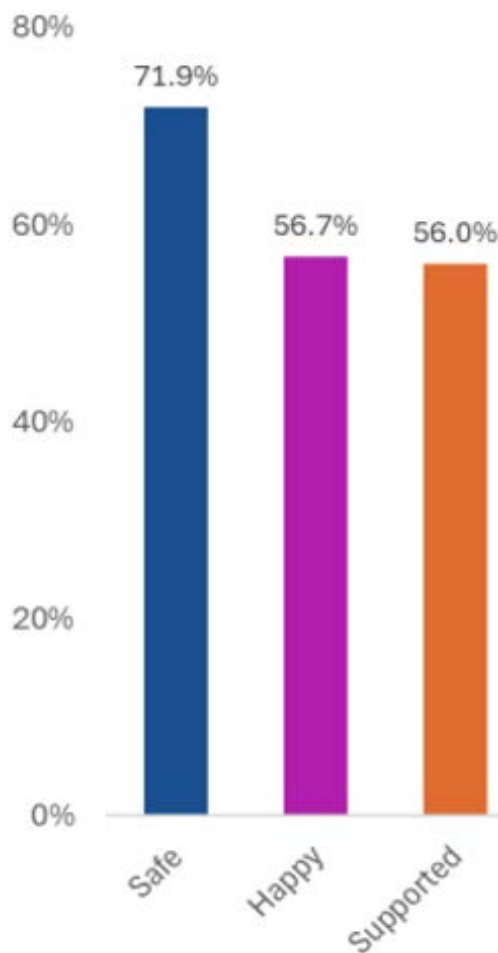
Older People Services

<b>The organisation protects me &amp; makes sure my rights are upheld</b>	186	118 63.4%	57 30.6%	9 4.8%	1 0.5%	0 0.0%	1 0.5%	175 94.1%
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**6.1.1.2** In addition, an exercise was carried out asking people to identify their top three words after receiving CrossReach support. The graph below shows the top three words, aggregated.

Graph F What Three Words?



## 6.2 Quality

**6.2.1** CrossReach has 53 services which are inspected by the Care Inspectorate.

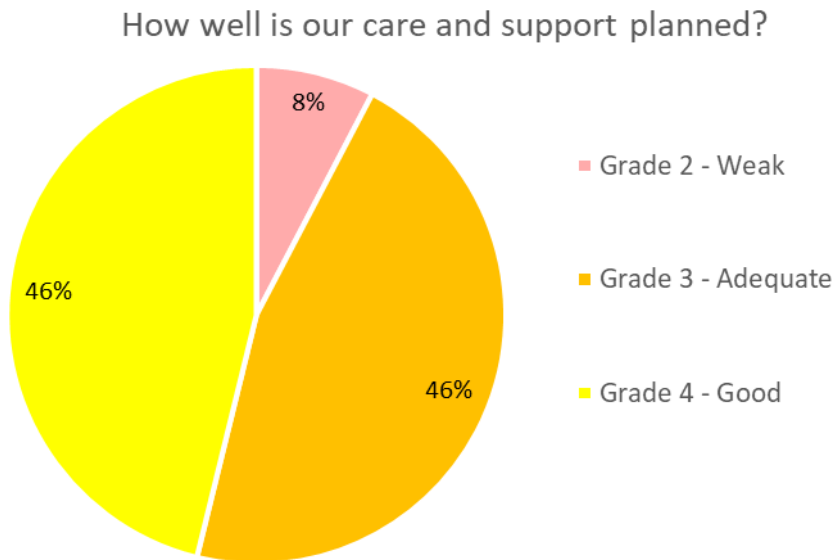
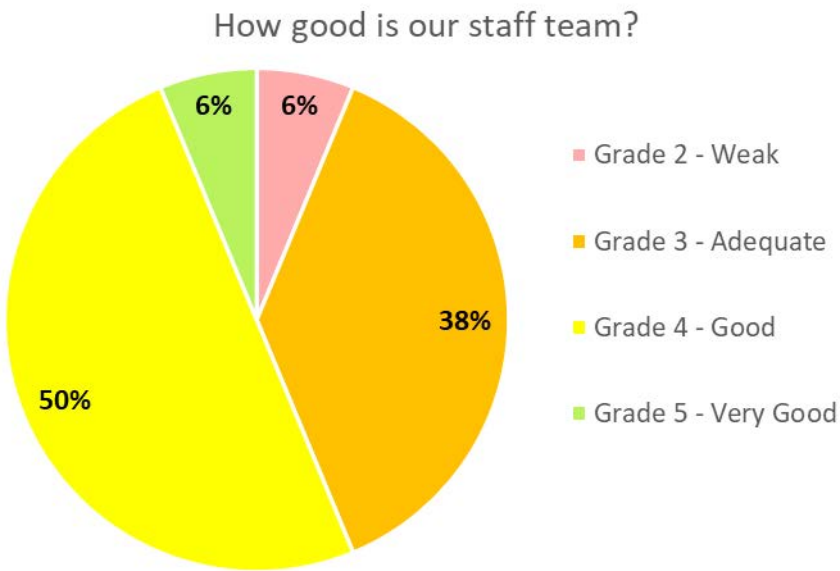
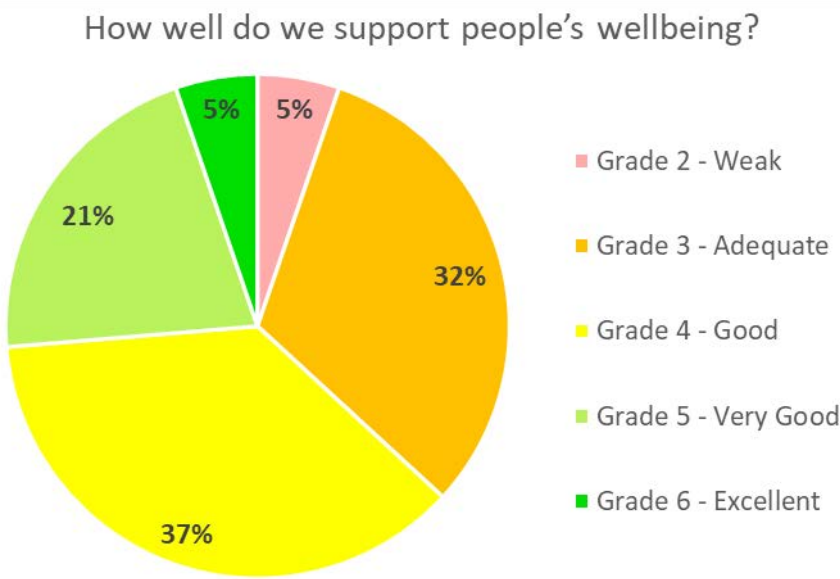
**6.2.2** During 2024, 20 services were inspected. Grades are awarded for each inspection theme ranging from 1 – unsatisfactory to 6 – excellent.

**6.2.2.1** The inspection themes are:

- How well do we support people's wellbeing?
- How good is our leadership?
- How good is our staff team?
- How good is our setting?
- How well is our care and support planned?

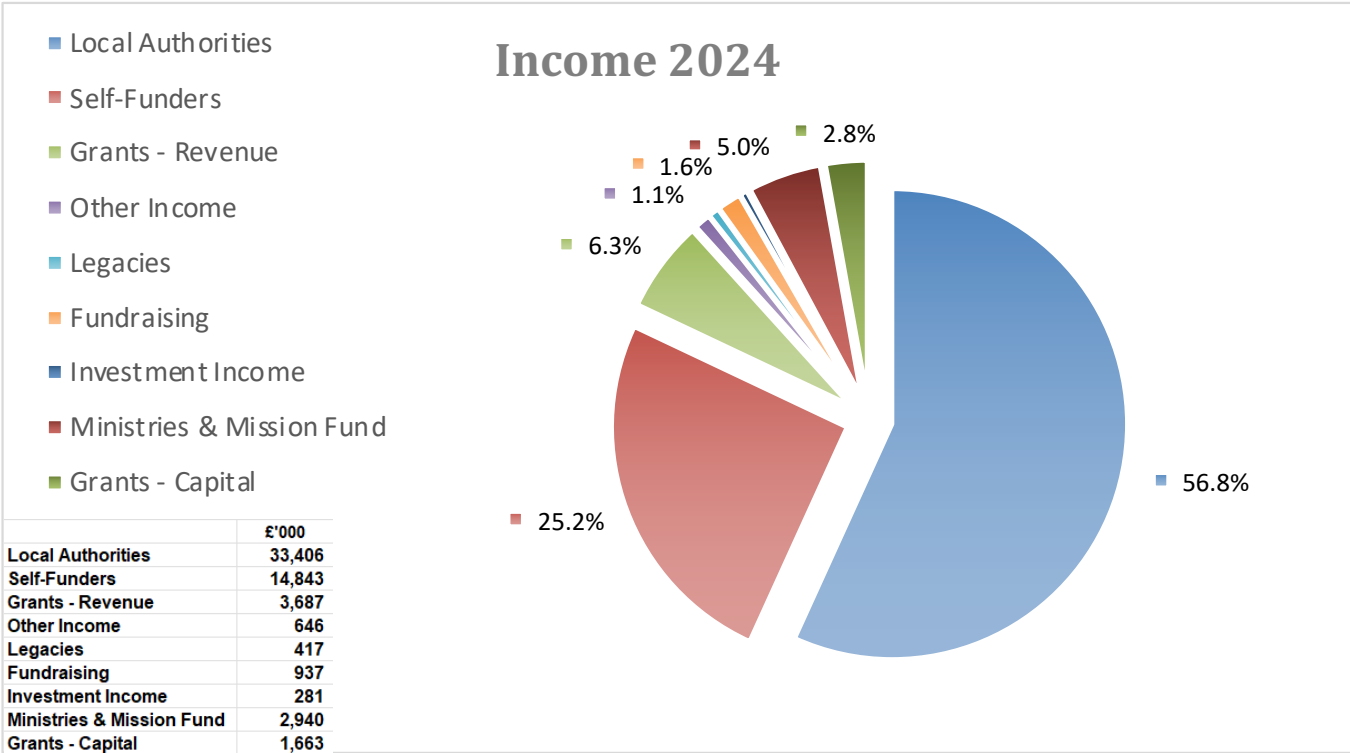
6.2.2.2 Not all inspection themes are assessed in each inspection, but most inspections cover the following three areas. Our results for 2024 are captured below:

Graph G Care Inspectorate Grades

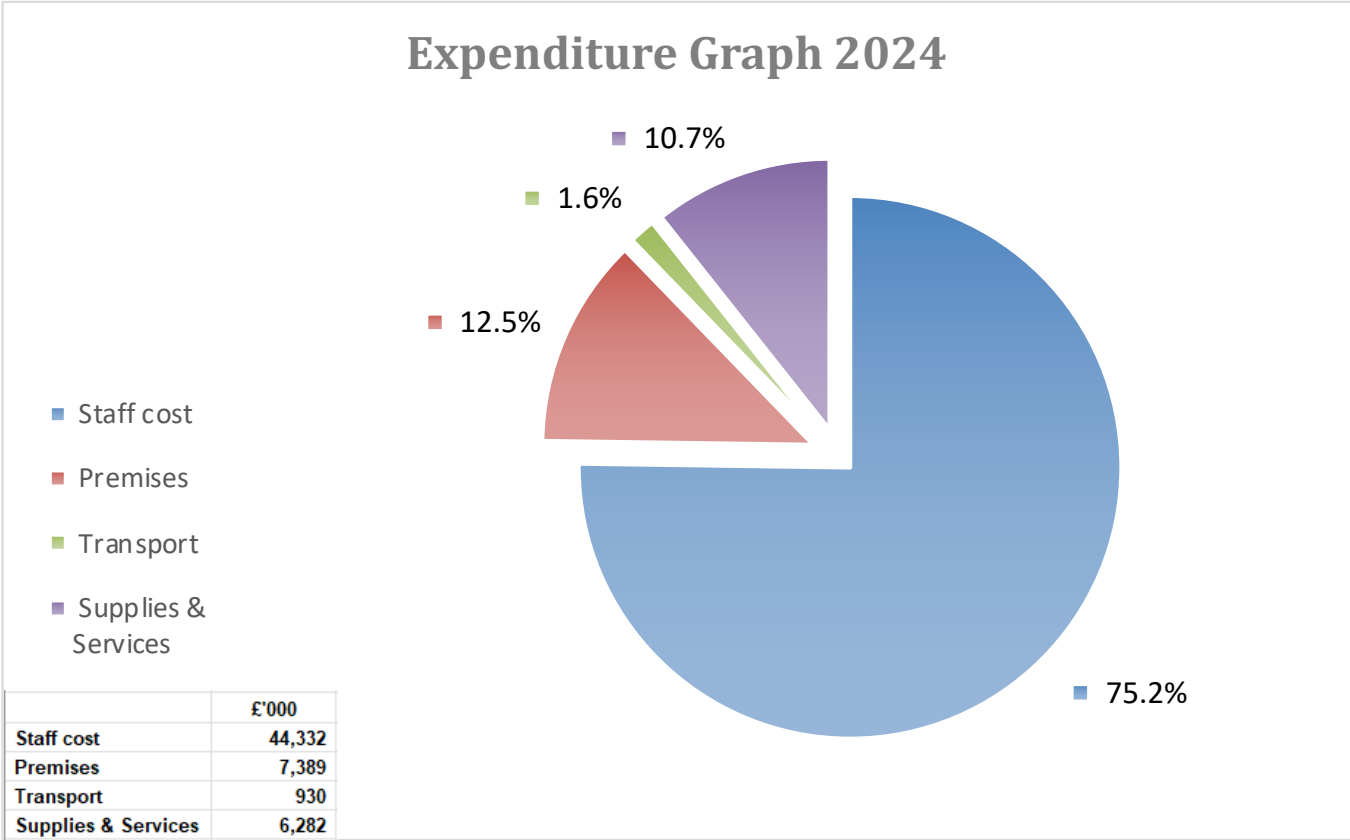


6.3. Finance

Graph H Income and Expenditure



\* Future years grant funding for service delivery programmes (£4.88M) has been excluded from this report.



**6.3.1** Financial pressures continued to challenge CrossReach in 2024, with funding for services not keeping up with the cost of providing those services. Year on year, service delivery costs increased by 10.1%, while income from charitable activities delivered in 2024 only increased by 7.7%. The increased cost of service delivery primarily related to a welcome increase in pay for frontline staff. This was mandated by the Government through linking funding to payment of the Scottish Living Wage, but the related costs were not fully funded. In addition, as previously stated, funding for increases in non-wage costs was specifically omitted.

**6.3.2** There continues to be a heavy reliance on agency staff, but there was a significant improvement in 2024, with overall agency costs falling by 16.6% in the year, despite an increase in rates per hour.

**6.3.3** In spite of the unfunded cost increases, the net effect is that the net outgoings of CrossReach, before property disposals, gains on investments and property impairments, decreased year on year from a deficit of £(3,141)K in 2023 to a deficit of £(2,109)K in 2024.

*In the name of the Social Care Council (known as CrossReach Board)*

MIKE CANTLAY, *Convener*  
DOUGLAS HAMILTON, *Vice-Convener*  
VIV DICKENSON, *Chief Executive Officer*

## Appendix 1 – Amended Social Care Council Constitution

### The Church of Scotland SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL



### CONSTITUTION

#### INTRODUCTION

The Social Care Council is a Council constituted by the authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, directly accountable to the General Assembly and subject to the supervision of the Assembly Trustees in terms of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Assembly Trustees.

#### 1. NAME

**1.1** The name of the Council shall be the CHURCH OF SCOTLAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL (hereinafter referred to as "the Council"). For the purpose of delivery of services in terms of its remit the Council shall operate under the name "CrossReach" and will use the working title of The CrossReach Board. The Council's headquarters shall be at Charis House, 47 Milton Road East, Edinburgh, or at such other location as may from time to time be approved by the Assembly Trustees.

#### 2. MEMBERSHIP

**2.1** The Council shall comprise:

- an Assembly-appointed Convener and one Assembly-appointed Vice-Convener; and
- Eleven Assembly-appointed members, plus the Chief Executive, acting as Secretary as an ex officio and non-voting member.

At least one member should be a Church of Scotland minister.

**2.2** The Convener and Vice-Conveners shall normally serve for four years but all care should be taken to ensure that they do not end a period of service at the same time. All other members shall serve for a term of four years.

#### 3. REMIT AND POWERS

**3.1** The remit of the Council shall be:

- To demonstrate Christ's love in action by offering high quality care and support which will empower people across Scotland to live full and fulfilling lives;
- To provide specialist resources and services to further the mission of the Church expressing its care for communities across Scotland;
- To identify existing and emerging areas of need and to guide CrossReach services and the Church in pioneering new approaches to relevant problems through collaborative partnerships both from within the Church and externally;
- To enable the people CrossReach supports and its employees to raise issues of concern to them and to amplify their voices through appropriate channels within the Church structures and externally;

**3.2** In furtherance of its remit the Council may, subject to the approval of the Assembly Trustees, borrow money and may charge or provide security therefor over any part of the heritable property belonging to the Council.

#### 3.3 The Council

**3.3.1** Members of the Council shall be ultimately responsible for directing the affairs of the Council and for ensuring that it is solvent, well run and delivers the objectives for which it has been established. To this end members shall be responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with the Council's objectives, mission, ethos and values;
- Establishing or approving policies, strategic plans and budgets to achieve these objectives and monitoring performance against them;



- Ensuring that the Council develops and maintains its financial strength;
- Ensuring that the Council, in the performance of its objectives, complies with all relevant legislation, regulations and requirements of appropriate regulatory bodies;
- Establishing and maintaining a clear framework of delegation and internal control;
- Agreeing or ratifying all policies and decisions on any matters which might create significant risk to the Council, financial or otherwise.
- Holding an appropriate register of risks.

**3.3.2** Council members are required collectively and individually to act reasonably at all times in the best interests of the Council. All members are equally responsible in law for the Council's actions and decisions and have equal status as members. Each Council member shall act as an individual and not as a representative of any other group. Council members shall ensure that they remain, at all times, independent and do not come under the influence of any other body or individual.

**3.3.3** The Council shall have power to appoint such Committees and Groups as it may from time to time determine to be appropriate to ensure that the Council's remit is fulfilled.

**3.3.4** The Council can from time to time, and between meetings, delegate decision making to three members: the Convener, Vice Convener and Chair of its Finance Group.

#### **4. MEETINGS**

**4.1** The Council shall normally meet six times in the year. At all meetings of the Council four members shall be a quorum. Meetings may be held either in person, online, or in hybrid form, using electronic means.

**4.2** At each meeting, the Council shall receive reports from individuals, Committees and Groups holding delegated powers on the discharge of these powers since the previous meeting.

#### **5. FINANCE**

**5.1** The Council shall be responsible to the General Assembly for its own banking and financial arrangements and shall submit to the Assembly Trustees' Finance Committee all financial information necessarily required by the Finance Committee to enable it (a) to prepare the Consolidated Accounts of the Unincorporated Entities of the Church of Scotland, and (b) to submit them annually to the General Assembly for approval.

#### **6. STAFFING**

**6.1** The Council, in consultation with the Assembly Trustees, shall appoint a Secretary who shall be known as the Chief Executive and, as a separate employing agency of the Church, shall employ such other staff as are necessary to fulfil its remit.

**6.2** The Council shall be responsible for funding the salaries and related costs of all employees, and shall be responsible for reviewing, from time to time, the terms and conditions under which it appoints and employs staff.

#### **7. ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

**7.1** This revised Constitution, subject to the approval of the 2025 General Assembly, shall take effect from 1 June 2025 (replacing the Constitution in place since 2006).

**7.2** It shall be open to the Council to amend the terms of this Constitution as and when found desirable and necessary, subject always to the approval of the General Assembly.

**2025**

**18**

## Appendix 2 – List of CrossReach Services

### Adult Services

#### **Justice Services**

- Dick Stewart Service (Glasgow)

#### **Homeless People**

- Cale House (Inverness)
- Cunningham House (Edinburgh)
- Kirkhaven Project (Glasgow)

#### **Learning Disabilities**

- Eskmills (Edinburgh)
- The Bungalow (Stonehaven)
- Threshold Edinburgh
- Threshold Glasgow
- Threshold Support Services – Housing and Residential (North and South Lanarkshire)
- Threshold Support Services – Community and Short Breaks (North and South Lanarkshire)

#### **Mental Health**

- Allarton (Glasgow)
- Gaberston House (Alloa)
- Morven Day Services (Kilmarnock)
- Lewis Street (Stornoway)

#### **Substance Use Services**

- Beechwood House (Inverness)
- CrossReach Abstinence Recovery Service (Glasgow)
- Dochas Housing Support (Stornoway)
- Nevis House (Inverness)
- Rankeillor Initiative (Edinburgh)
- Tayside Support Service (Dundee)
- Whiteinch Move on Service (Glasgow)

### Children and Family Services

#### **Looked After Children (7 small residential houses and education campus)**

- Carraig View (Port Glasgow)
- Dumbrock House (Strathblane)
- Fanniescroft Farm (Lennoxton)
- Millmuir Farm (Gargunnoch)
- Mount Pleasant (Dalry)
- Rockwood House (Beith)
- The Old Lodge (Stirlingshire)
- Erskine Waterfront Campus

#### **Children With Disabilities**

- Short Breaks & GO2 (Glasgow)

#### **Community Services / Early Intervention**

- Daisy Chain Early Years Project (Glasgow)
- Perth Prison Visitors Centre
- Polmont Prison Visitor Centre

#### **Counselling, Support & Training**

CrossReach Counselling West and North – includes:

- Bluebell Perinatal Counselling Services (Glasgow)
- COSCA Counselling Training (Glasgow)
- CrossReach Counselling Inverness – Children and Young People (CYP) Counselling and Generic Service
- CrossReach Counselling Moray – Perinatal and Generic Service
- Tom Allan Service (Glasgow)

CrossReach Counselling East – includes:

- Counselling & Recovery (Edinburgh)
- Perinatal East Counselling (Edinburgh)
- Sunflower Garden (Edinburgh)

## **Older People Services**

- Adams House (Elderslie) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home
- Balmedie House (Balmedie)
- Bellfield (Banchory)
- Cameron House (Inverness) – Dementia
- Clashfarquhar House (Stonehaven)
- Cumnor Hall (Ayr) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home
- Heart for Art, Broughty Ferry
- Heart for Art, Carluke
- Heart for Art, Edinburgh (Charteris Centre)
- Heart for Art, Edinburgh (Morningside)
- Heart for Art, Galashiels
- Heart for Art, Garelochhead
- Heart for Art, Glasgow (Broomhill)
- Heart for Art, Musselburgh
- Heart for Art, Perth & Kinross (The Tryst)
- Heart for Art, Strathaven
- Heart for Art, Stonehaven
- Heart for Art, Dunfermline
- Morlich House (Edinburgh)
- Oversteps (Dornoch)
- Queen's Bay Lodge (Edinburgh)
- South Beach House (Ardrossan)
- St Margaret's House (Polmont) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home
- The Elms Care Home (Edinburgh) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home
- The Oasis Garelochhead
- The Walter & Joan Gray Care Home (Shetland)
- Whinnieknowe (Nairn)
- Williamwood House (Glasgow) – Dementia & Heart for Art in the Care Home

Further information on our services can be found on our website [www.crossreach.org.uk](http://www.crossreach.org.uk)