

Independent People with Disabilities Ltd.
Westmeath ● Longford ● Roscommon

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New Website: <http://www.independentpwd.ie>

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Company Registration Number:

C524496

Charitable Status Number:

20251

Business Advice:

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Auditors,
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Current Company Board of Directors

- **Mr. Mark Ahern.**
- **Mr. Michael Mulvey.**
- **Ms. Carol Harrington.**
- **Mrs. Mary Meares.**
- **Mr. Larry Quain.**
- **Mr. Noel Mulvihill.**
- **Mr. Dermot Hope.**
- **Mr. Seán Kane.**
- **Mr. Joe Faherty.**
- **Ms. Emma Mc Manus.**
- **Mrs. Gene Mulvihill.**
- **Mr. Padraic Mac Craith.**

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Dear Member,

It is that time of year again when we the Board of Directors must inform you as members about our activities in the year just gone by.

Independent People with Disabilities held a total of four meetings in 2019 including our Annual General Meeting which was held in the Athlone Springs Hotel, Monksland, Athlone, Co. Westmeath on Thursday 29th August, 2019.

Since our last A.G.M. one of the members of our board retired, Mr. John Duignan retired and we the board wish him well in the future.

We continue to be very involved in the county campaigning for disability issues to be addressed in Mullingar and in Athlone and bringing these issues to the elected representatives in both the Mullingar-Kinnegad and Athlone-Moate Municipal districts.

We continue to make representations to the public bodies on behalf of our members relating to housing issues and Social Welfare payments for our members who require assistance, but with the advent of computer technology many people opt for doing their own research initially and many succeed but a few fail in obtaining answers first time around and get disheartened and this where we come in. We write to the relevant departments in government and we won't stop until we get the positive result that our members require.

The office is running smoothly, we have a steady flow of people coming in looking for their entitlements to be re-instated; people also come in looking for information on different disabilities.

Activities for 2019

Early in 2019 Independent People with Disabilities were invited to two events to promote the work of Independent People with Disabilities.

Tuesday 12th February, 2019

We had been invited to the Hudson Bay Hotel to an Exhibition of the Exoskeleton Bionic Suit by Accuscience Rehabilitation plus a talk by Gerry McCabe about his experience of using it. Michael Mulvey and Dermot Hope attended this on behalf of Independent People with Disabilities. The talk was very informative and there were a few organization representatives at it as well as one or two of our local politicians. The price of one of these bionic suits is €120,000.00 and after the conference there was some discussions about a possibility of Fundraising for it in the county and our politicians also showed interest in maybe helping with the funding in that we might be able to access leader funding to purchase it.

Wednesday 27th March, 2019

We were invited to the Tullamore Court Hotel to a half day information seminar which was organized by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. Noel Mulvihill, Joe Faherty and Dermot Hope attended this half day information event on behalf of Independent People with Disabilities. This was the first of its kind in County Offaly and proved to be very successful as there was a constant flow of people looking for information on different aspects of disability. We met a few people who we were able to help in relation to where to approach relating to housing issues and Social Welfare matters and they were very grateful for our advice.

Annual General Meeting 2019

On Thursday 29th August, 2019 Independent People with Disabilities held their A.G.M. in the Athlone Springs Hotel, Monksland, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. Councilor Frankie Keena (Mayor of Athlone) was in attendance and he opened our meeting and offered his support to us whenever we needed it.

Mark Ahern gave the Chairperson's Address. He spoke briefly about the various committees which Independent People with Disabilities are currently involved with through participation by our Vice-chairperson Mr. Michael Mulvey and our appreciation goes out to him for all his work completed to date.

He spoke about the new widened footpaths in Mullingar and the use by public premises using them to promote their business and making it more difficult for people with mobility issues to get around. He had made representations to Westmeath County Council about this and awaits a response.

This year with the resignation of Mr. John Duignan the organization had a vacancy on the Board and Mrs. Carmel Donovan was retired by the rules of the organization. We were very happy that Mr. Padraic Mac Craith and Mrs. Gene Mulvihill were happy to fill the two vacancies on the Board.

Disabilities Showcase Day 2019 & European Day for Disability 2019

On Monday 2nd December Westmeath Community Development in conjunction with Independent People with Disabilities held its Annual Services and Information day in the Mullingar Park Hotel. The theme of this years event was Mental Health for everyone.

The event was an outstanding success with testimonials from members of the public and service providers through the evaluations citing the event as excellent and very good.

44 different service providers attended the event and over 250 people came along to the Mullingar Park Hotel enquiring about various disabilities and their entitlements.

Westmeath Community Development would sincerely like to thank the speakers such as Paddy Hill, Cathaoirleach of Westmeath County Council, Mark Ahern Chairperson of Independent People with Disabilities, Finola Colgan Regional Manager of Mental Health Ireland for Westmeath-Longford, Minister Kevin Boxer Moran, Dermot Leavy Chairman of Westmeath Community Development.

In addition, we would like to thank Olive Kennedy who gave us an exercise demonstration which will be very useful to help us all with wellness.

The event was funded by Westmeath Community Development through the Social Inclusion Community Activation Program, Independent People with Disabilities and Westmeath County Council through the community action grant scheme.

Representation

The organization continues to have local representation in the various committees such as:

- ✓ Westmeath Public Partnership Network
- ✓ Westmeath Local Community Development Committee,
- ✓ Disability Subgroup of Westmeath Community Development Ltd
- ✓ Westmeath Youth Forum

- ✓ Westmeath Older Peoples Forum
- ✓ Westmeath Joint Policing Committee

This gives the organization significant influence in the community.

At National level we are represented on the board of Iarnród Éireann and also at meetings with the Department of Social Protection in Dublin.

It is important that people with disabilities are represented at these meetings and that our voices are heard both locally and Nationally.

Collections 2019

Independent People with Disabilities wishes to take this opportunity to thank all the businesses who supported us in our fundraising efforts in 2019 and also the people who gave so generously of their time to help us with Churchgate Collections and Flag Days at the various locations in Athlone, Moate and Mullingar.

We would also like to thank: -

- ✓ Westmeath County Council,
- ✓ Disability Subgroup of Westmeath Community Development Ltd.,
- ✓ Health Service Executive, Dublin Mid-Leinster,
- ✓ Courts Poorbox,
- ✓ Bonavox Hearing Specialists,
- ✓ Accuscience Rehabilitation,
- ✓ Mullingar Credit Union,
- ✓ Our landlady
- ✓ Brendan J. Kelly
- And
- ✓ The Tesco Community Fund

for their continued support to our organisation.

In Conclusion

Michael Mulvey (Company Secretary) would like to thank all of his fellow Directors on the Board for their continued support in fundraising activities which Independent People with Disabilities was involved in throughout the year and he looks forward to working with all of them into the future.

Ends.