



# FUSION YEAR REPORT

2020

## FUSION 2020 YEAR REPORT

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## **Chairpersons Forward**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome this publication of Fusion's Annual Report for 2020 on behalf of the board of management. This report again illustrates the organisation's professionalism and dynamism in what was a very demanding year. Continuous monitoring regarding our very creative programming continues to be the hallmark of our service

As you are all aware 2020 was a very difficult and challenging year due to the pandemic, however through the sheer determination of the staff we continued to provide our service through these times. We created Safety Bubbles and strict protocols were initiated to ensure that the safety of our staff and Service Users was paramount at all times. During 2020 our Project Worker (Stephanie) left us to further her career elsewhere, we have successfully filled this position and our new Project Worker (Martina) is slotting in very well as an important member of our team.

This report gives a detailed account of the hard work completed in 2020; however, it gives me the opportunity to acknowledge the achievements and developments of the past year. We continue to be blessed with a dedicated and professional staff, a competent and committed Board of Management, supporting funding agencies, and many others, all relating and interacting in a manner, which creates something special and unique.

The report details our services in depth and considers the various initiatives undertaken

***Dave Fleming***  
**Chairperson**

## **Background of Fusion**

The Ballyfermot Drug & Alcohol Task force recognised that a drug rehabilitative project was essential for the Ballyfermot area where there was a high level of drug use. Government identified Community Employment as a support mechanism for people coping with addiction. One thousand rehabilitative places became available nationally; Ballyfermot was allocated 100 of these places.

Fusion was established in 1999 in partnership with the Department of Social Protection (known at the time as FAS), Health Service Executive (known at the time as South Western Area Health Board, SWAHB), the Ballyfermot Drug Task Force and representatives of local community groups. As part of their response to the drug problem the Ballyfermot Task Force set up our two projects, Fusion and Community Prison Link, Following evaluations, it was agreed to merge both projects and expand the work. In 2003, Fusion was established.

Fusion continues to be supported by Ballyfermot Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force (BLDATF), Department of Social Protection (DSP), Health Service Executive (HSE) and Probation Service.

## **Mission Statement**

*To provide an innovative rehabilitation response that will enhance personal Training & Employment plans for people wishing to change their drug using life style.*

*To provide, through our Community Prison Link (CPL,) a link between community and prison based services through the development of treatment and rehabilitation.*

## **AIMS**

FusionCPL, Company Limited by Guarantee is a registered charity with the aim of supporting individuals living in the community or incarcerated in prison who have/ had difficulties with drug & alcohol misuse or who are now stable on methadone or drug free. Fusion supports individuals to address the issues that are preventing them from moving forward and supports them to overcome these obstacles.

On a practical level, we help to identify appropriate training & education programmes that includes Community Employment (CE) placements, third level education and employment. Staff will assist those who may need childcare placements to identify a suitable facility and to apply for funding regarding it. Through an integrated care plan we help identify issues such as treatment, training, personal development, housing or overcoming debt, among many other issues that may arise for individuals.

We support individuals attending the service to manage their recovery and look after their mental, emotional and physical health by offering 1:1 key working, counselling and holistic therapies such as acupuncture, shiatsu, reiki, mindfulness and yoga. Group work takes place throughout the year.

Fusion Community Prison Links (CPL) keyworker provides a link between community and prison based services. Working closely with the Probation / Prison Service they provide 1:1 key working using individual care plans to compile realistic sentence and release plans with the prisoner to ensure they have a sense of purpose post release, somewhere to go and support to manage their addictions. The overall aim of these strategies is to reduce recidivism and address any addiction issues present.

## **Objectives Fusion**

- That Fusion-CPL is easily accessible and individuals have progression options.
- To provide a service based on a care-planning model as per NDRIC protocols.
- To deal with all people holistically and fairly.
- To recruit community projects for training / education placements and to offer continued support to both the projects and the individuals on these placements.
- To increase acceptability of drug users, their needs and to maintain their dignity across all sectors.
- To act as an advocate for greater collaboration across different service providers.
- To promote and encourage access to the service within and outside the Justice system.
- To provide relevant interventions to service users and their families.
- To act as an advocate for increased numbers of treatment and rehabilitation places locally for this client group.

## **Our Values**

- Every person has the right to belong and to be respected.
- Every person has the potential and ability to change and to make a significant contribution to life.
- As people develop, creativity also develops.
- Motivation grows out of interest and participation.
- To ensure service users are properly assessed and to assist them reach their goals through using a shared care plan.
- Identify key issues with service users and ensure appropriate care or referral.
- Profile existing organisations locally that may be of interest to service users.
- Develop awareness strategies, give talks, hold workshops and network with broad range of groups.
- Referrals into other services or re-entry are not met with long waiting lists.
- To establish excellent networks.

## **Goals of Fusion**

- The service is known in the community and the prison system, is accessible and service users progress because of our service.
- Appropriate model of intervention is used successfully with service users
- Service users show positive changes and improvements as per their care plan
- An appropriate and fair service will result in service users satisfaction
- Placements provided are relevant to the needs/interests of the service users
- Greater acceptability of drug users and greater recognition and respect for their rights
- Fusion service users benefit from excellent networks and good collaboration

## **Service User Criteria**

- Aged 18 or over
- Live in the Dublin 10 area, Chapelizod or Palmerstown.
- Be drug free or stabilised in their drug / alcohol use and willing to be assessed by Fusion
- To be willing to engage in counselling / therapy or treatment
- Interested in participating in a rehabilitation programme, which may involve training, education, and employment.
- For those held in detention – Be interested in exploring new options, ideally link in 12 - 24 months before release date.

## Our Team

### *Manager*

Kathy Watts

### *Addiction Team*

**Stephanie Lynch Kane	Senior Project Worker / Auricular Acupuncture Therapist
Stacie Halligan	Community Prison Link Worker (CPL)
**Martina Keegan	Community Project Worker

### *Administration*

Natalie O'Farrell	Administrator / receptionist/ Accounts
Marie Moylan	(CE Support) Receptionist

### *Sessional Staff*

Toni Kavanagh	Counsellor
Lawrence O'Reilly	Counsellor
Barry Kavanagh	Counsellor
Róisín Ní Cheallaigh	Counsellor
Maria Hayden	Reiki Therapist
Peter Glynn	Shiatsu Therapist
Kathleen Curley Clarke	Mindfulness Therapist

### *Board of Management*

Dave Fleming	Director / Chairperson
Lorraine Stewart	Director / Treasurer
Stephen Rourke	Director / Secretary
Kurt Kelly	Director
Evelyn Leonard	Director
Liz O'Donoghue	Director

\*\*Change of Staff – Our Senior Project Worker resigned in June, we successfully recruited Martina Keegan, who took up her role in November. Martina settled in very well and we look forward to working with Martina for many years to come.



## **Referrals to Fusion**

Fusion accepts referrals from all agencies, statutory and voluntary. In addition, participants may self-refer. During 2020, we received 90 referrals in total. Of those referrals, 65 were referred for support within the community and 25 were referred for support within the prison system. Not all of these attended for assessment. Covid-19 made it extremely difficult for service users to engage with our service, especially those in the prison setting.

## **Key Working Support**

Key working comprises of completing an Initial Assessment followed by a Comprehensive Assessment as per the NDRIC guidelines. A Care Plan is agreed with the service user. Fusion has one Project Worker who supports the majority of the participants in the community while the manager has a small caseload. During this year our Project Worker resigned in June, we successfully recruited our new Project Worker in November. In addition, we have one Community Prison Link Worker whose role is to support participants incarcerated in prison and upon their release. Due to Covid-19 and the resignation of our Project Worker, our Prison Link Worker supported both the new Project Worker and the community clients from June to end of year. During this difficult year, key working was quite challenging for both staff and service users. We quickly learned to adapt our key working strategies and delivered this through other avenues such as phone, Zoom and WhatsApp (face-to-face).

Our prison work was affected as access to prisons was extremely limited to ensure the safety of those imprisoned. Although it affected our access, those in prison were kept safe and very few caught the virus. The limited access to the prisons had an overall effect on the number of service users that received a service during this challenging year.

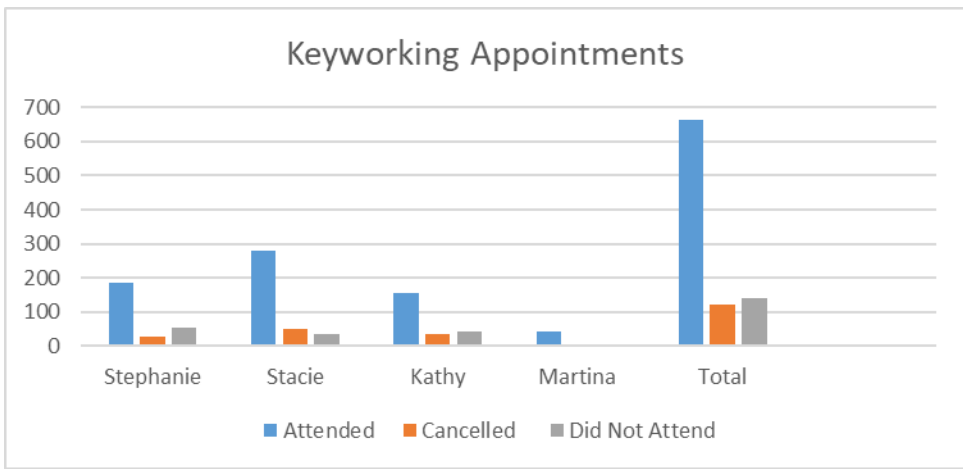
In total Fusion provided a service to one hundred and nineteen individuals (Attended one or more appointments). All individuals received regular 1:1 meetings to offer continued support with their recovery and to assist them to explore their training, education and employment options (all service users in prison received additional written correspondence). Ninety individuals were archived in 2020, archives happen for a variety of reasons, such as completing their training, completing their care plan, employment,

attending further education, moving out of area, or no longer requiring support in relation to their recovery, others may be non-contactable. Please Refer to Appendix 1 attached.

Individuals that register with our project reside in both the community and prison setting. Some individuals are currently accessing Community Employment, basic education, PLC courses, third level college and full time employment. In addition, some individuals access further treatment such as residential detox or community detox.

Individuals receive appointments dependent on their need; some individuals attend weekly, some fortnightly and some monthly. Some individuals may only require telephone contact. Table 1 shows a breakdown of all appointments made during the year. In total 922 Key working appointments were scheduled. 663 key working appointments were attended with 120 cancelled and 139 were non-attended appointments.

**Table 1**



Pre Covid (March) there was 47 prison visits completed by the Community Prison Link Worker, in prisons such as Mountjoy, Wheatfield, the Midlands and Shelton Abbey. From April onwards ten prison visits were completed. In addition we were granted video calls with our clients and had 57 visits through video connections.

There were 10 individuals released from prison. Of those released, eight continued to link in with the Community Prison Link Worker for support including key working, holistic, counselling and / or attending groups.

In addition to the above appointments, there were non-meeting activities, which would include letters sent, texting and phone calls.

### **Gym & Swim Vouchers**

Fusion encourages all service users to attend the Ballyfermot Sports & Leisure Centre to promote healthy lifestyle / self-care. Throughout 2020, the Leisure Centre continued to provide us with the gym & swim vouchers at a reduced rate. Feedback was very positive with individuals stating that attending had a very beneficial impact on their wellbeing. This impact was particularly noted amongst those that were taking part in a detox, indeed some said this process was of paramount support in successfully completing the detox. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 the centre closed for the majority of 2020.

### **Reiki, Shiatsu & Auricular Acupuncture**

Participants are offered the above supports in addition to their key working sessions. Pre Covid (March) we had the following attendance:

Reiki therapy – seven individuals availed of this therapy, there was 19 sessions.

Shiatsu therapy - six individuals availed of this therapy, there was 18 sessions.

Auricular acupuncture – three individuals attended this service. Unfortunately, the above therapies were suspended for the rest of the year.

### **Counselling Service**

We currently contract our counselling services as required. This year one of our counsellors discontinued with our project. We successfully recruited two independent counsellors; we now have three counsellors available for our clients as required. Pre Covid (March) we had 14 individuals attending our service for counselling, there was 34 sessions completed. Following Covid we quickly re designed how we could deliver this service. New policies were introduced and counsellors agreed to remote work from home and deliver counselling remotely through either phone, WhatsApp or zoom. Sessions

quickly recommenced and 24 individuals received counselling with 180 sessions being completed.

### **Mindfulness**

Our Mindfulness therapies are quite popular with service users. Due to the pandemic we looked at delivering this service through Zoom. The tutor completed some videos, which staff then uploaded weekly onto our website and our social media platforms. These proved to be very popular.

### **Yoga**

Clients identified yoga as a therapy they would like to try, this was introduced to a group of four and was well attended with a second group of four being implemented. However due to Covid this therapy had to be suspended.

### **Healthy Eating**

Pre Covid we had five participants take part in the Healthy Eating course, this course took place over three weeks. It was planned to continue offering this to our service users. However, due to Covid we had to re-evaluate what courses we could deliver through Zoom. Please see information below.

### **Women's day Event**

Pre Pandemic we had the opportunity of hosting this exciting day. This gives the women of the community an opportunity to enter our premises and see what supports we offer. In addition, on this day we ensure we have interesting stands with health information for women and holistic therapies on offer on the day. Thanks to additional funding received through the BLDATF we are able to put on a buffet. This day was well attended with over 30 women from the area attending.

### **Zoom Group work undertaken by participants**

All participants were contacted and encouraged to take part in Zoom groups. A discussion took place in relation what type of groups staff felt could be delivered through Zoom, taking into consideration what equipment service users had and what experience they had with online groups.

### ***Holistic Therapy Introduction***

A holistic therapist facilitated one morning introduction on holistic therapies. This was poorly attended with only two participants logging onto Zoom. With hindsight, this group was facilitated extremely early in the pandemic, and participants did not have enough awareness of the Zoom app.

### ***Healthy Eating (Fake Away Take Away)***

As part of the Healthy Eating course, the facilitator designed a new module called Fake Away Take Away. This module looked at how families could make healthy meals rather than using take away food. Participants signed up for four weeks. Each week ingredients and recipe were delivered to their homes. Instructions were delivered through video (Zoom). Participants then cooked the meal and posted the picture onto a group WhatsApp platform. In addition they got the opportunity to share their experience with other participants on the course, which gave them the social contact they were missing through Covid. All participants stayed they would now cook their own take away food more regularly.

We delivered two of the modules (two groups) and in total eleven participants completed the groups.

### ***CV & Interview Preparation***

This course was completed over five weeks through Zoom and comprised of CV and cover letter writing and interview tips. On completion of this course, each participant had a professionally prepared CV and cover letter template and had completed a mock interview. Three individuals completed this course.

## **Community Employment (CE) - Drug & Alcohol Task Force (DATF) placements**

During 2020, Fusion linked in with seven CE projects. In January we had 13 participants placed in rehabilitative (TF) integrated projects. During the year we placed an additional three individuals into Community Employment Integrated projects. In total we referred 10 individuals into designated rehabilitation CE projects.

Four individuals finished on CE during the year: Of that one individual gained employment, one finished earlier than expected, one decided not to seek an additional year due to health reasons, and one finished as their time was completed. However, this client has

skills to enable them seek employment. One client transferred from integrated CE to a rehab project.

Fusion continues to offer funding support to CE projects to encourage and support them to recruit our client group; this fund can be used for training and development or materials/equipment that may be required to assist the project to continue working with our client base. The Fusion manager in conjunction with the CE supervisors identifies and source training and development modules as per their requirement. By having this funding available it may encourage CE projects to employ individuals that access our project.

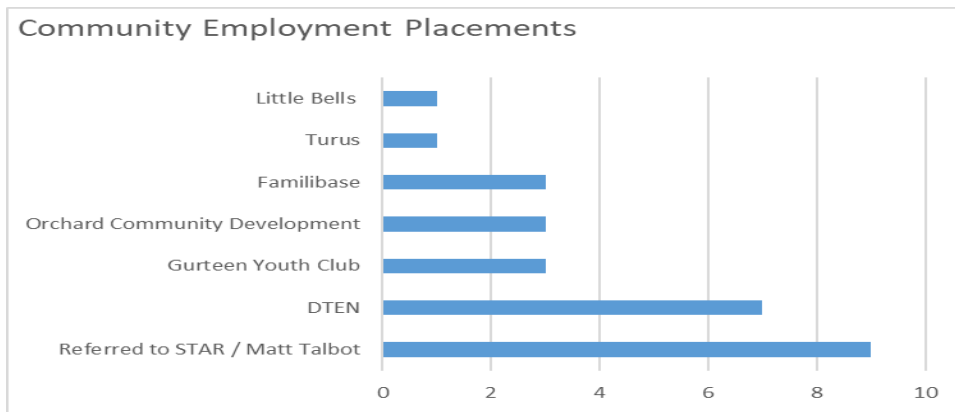
Various training modules and support were discussed with CE supervisors and assistant supervisors to access their suitability to their project needs. One supervisor requested financial support throughout the year to enable them purchase Perspex Covid -19 protection screens

DTEN CE project has an agreement with the DSP to convert seven of their mainstream places into rehabilitative places. While we had identified a community project to second two of these places to. Due to Covid-19 this did not happen. This is now work in progress.

Cherry Orchard Environment Group continue to support Fusion and have agreement with the DSP to convert four of their mainstream places to rehabilitative.

During this period, Fusion continues to link in with Community Employment (CE) projects with a view to placing our client group and to support both the individual and the supervisors during the placement. In order to fill these places, Community Employment projects have to agree to convert their mainstream place in to a DTF place. This current arrangement can make it extremely difficult to gain additional DTF places in the community.

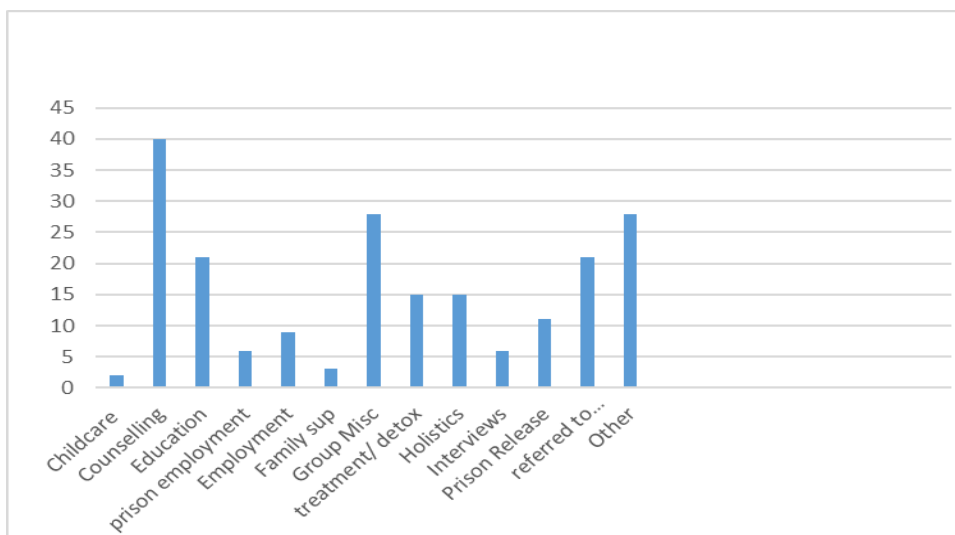
**Table 2: CE projects that individuals were placed on during the year.**



### Service User Progressions

In addition to managing their recovery, attending key working, counselling, holistic therapies, group work and community employment, individuals achieve progressions such as treatment, accessing funding support for childcare (crèche), further education, attending interviews, employment, family support, referrals to further agencies and release from prison. On calculating the progressions, we omitted Community Employment as those progressions are captured above.

**Table 3: Outline of individuals progressions.**



## Reach Out (Pilot) Programme

Due to Covid-19, we were unable to launch this new programme. We intend to launch this in 2021 and seek funding to commence this programme as soon as possible in the prison system.

## Staff Continued Development

To ensure staff continue to adhere to best practice we encourage and supports all staff members to complete additional training. Below is a breakdown of all core staff training completed during 2020:

### Manager Continued Professional Development

Course Title	Course Provider
How to look after our wellbeing during coronavirus	Peninsula
Managing remote workers	Peninsula
Changing employees terms & conditions	Peninsula
Stress control workshop	HSE stresscontrol.org
HR employment Law	Peninsula
– Domestic Violence	Women’s aid
Returning to Business (Covid) employer	Peninsula
CPD Certificate in Remote Working (5 credit, level 6)	TU Dublin
Covid Response Up Skilling Course	First Aid Response
Children’s First Training	Tusla on Line
Passing a WRC Inspection Webinar	Peninsula
Cannabis exploring Mental Health & the changing market	HSE

### Senior Project worker Continued Professional Development

Course Title	Course Provider
Dignity at Work on line training	HSE Land
Hand Hygiene	HSE land
Recovery in Mental Health	HSE land
Hidden Harm	HSE land



**Community Project Worker Continued Professional Development**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Course Provider</b>
Children's First Training	Tusla
Men's Mental Health in these challenging Times	HSE

**Community Prison Link Worker Continued Professional Development**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Course Provider</b>
Hidden Harm: The impact of parental alcohol and other drug use	HSE
Dignity at Work	HSE
Recovery in Mental Health	HSE
Hand Hygiene for HSE Non Clinical Staff	HSE
CPD Certificate in Remote Working (5 credit, level 6)	TU Dublin
Returning to Business (Covid) employee	Peninsula
Covid Response up Skilling Course	First Aid Response
Dublin Safer Families Service	Daughters of Charity
Children's First Training	Tusla
Women's Aid online training	Women's Aid
The Fundamentals of GDPR	HSE Land
Breaking the Chain of infection	HSE Land
Managing Health & Safety in the Health Care Setting	HSE Land
Communicating Effectively through Open Disclosure	HSE Land

**Administrator Continued Professional Development**

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Course Provider</b>
Hidden Harm The impact of parental alcohol and other drug use	HSE
Hand Hygiene	HSE
Recovery in Mental Health	HSE
Dignity at Work	HSE
CPD Certificate in Remote Working (5 credit, level 6)	TU Dublin
Returning to Business (Covid) employee	Peninsula
Covid Response up Skilling Course	First Aid
Children's First Training	Tusla on Line

## Fusion Project Development

- The Covid-19 pandemic interrupted our projected plan, however, it gave us an opportunity to explore new ways of working. Although challenging the results are quite interesting, such as developing new policies around remote working and staff being able to quickly adapt to working from home, while managing living through a pandemic. New ways of contacting service users, such as WhatsApp video call and Zoom. In relation to groups, we have supported clients and offered training to those who may not be familiar with it. In addition, we secured additional funding to purchase equipment and internet credit to enable service users take part in groups during 2021. Our Community Prison Link Worker quickly learned how to adjust to supporting service users through video links, this was quite challenging for all including the service users and the prison system. With Health & Safety at the forefront, although we have a small staff, we were able to keep our doors open throughout the pandemic. We did this by creating staff bubbles and constantly keeping up with the national Covid-19 statistics, which enabled us change our work practices in the office week-to-week.
- Our website and social media sites gave us a fantastic way of reaching out to all service users and the community, it enabled us support them not only with their recovery but how to manage living with Covid-19.
- Ballyfermot agencies continue to work under the National Drug Rehabilitation Implementation Committee (NDRIC) Framework. Both keyworkers and manager continue to attend regular meetings regarding it.
- All new referrals continue to be assessed, mainly through phone calls (When Covid-19 numbers high). While continuing to deliver a high standard of care being very mindful of all procedures and GDPR information. We seek regular feedback / evaluations from service users. For their convenience, we now do this through the Survey Monkey Website. All clients who received support from the service and referrers who referred into our service received a request to complete this survey.
- Our Community Prison Links Worker was booked to go into Wheatfield Place of Detention in March to facilitate a session as part of the pre-release group, unfortunately this was cancelled due to the pandemic. In November we received an invitation from a teacher in Wheatfield School asking if we would be interested in putting together a promotional video of Fusion which can be shown during the pre-release group going forward. This video will hopefully also be included on the in-cell TV channel in the future.

- Interagency work continues to be done on a regular basis with local projects.
- Fusion is committed to future research and development. We participate in the Health Research Board (HRB) by ensuring we submit all relevant statistical information as required. Due to unforeseen difficulties, we did not commence inputting the forms through the Ecass system. We have decided to wait until 2021 to review it.
- Governance – Policies are regularly reviewed and updated throughout the year.
- Fusion was successful in receiving additional funding during 2020; this assisted us to facilitate the Women’s Day event and to purchase equipment for clients.
- Fusion continues to adhere to the Charities Regulator rules and regulations.
- Fusion is GDPR compliant
- All Fusion funding is fully audited by independent auditors.

### Funding

The Ballyfermot Drug & Alcohol Task Force supports Fusion. Funding comes through HSE, DSP and the probation services. In addition, we received once off funding as can be seen in table 4.

**Table 4**

