

Charity registration number 1145377

Company registration number 07804583 (England and Wales)

**WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED**  
**ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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<b>Trustees</b>	Sarah Dempsey Molly Rushworth Netalie Shloim Ann Walker Jacqueline Whittle (Chair)	(Appointed 15 July 2024)  (Appointed 22 May 2023)
<b>Secretary</b>	Tessa Denham	
<b>Senior management</b>	Tessa Denham Andrea Campbell Freya Hirst Mags Shevlin Nina Butterworth Gemma Ridge Anwaar Mahmood Donna Cremin	Chief Executive Clinical Lead Operations Manager Services Manager Service Manager Service Manager Finance Manager Support Services Manager
<b>Charity number</b>	1145377	
<b>Company number</b>	07804583	
<b>Registered office</b>	43 Park Square North Leeds West Yorkshire England LS1 2NP	
<b>Independent examiner</b>	BK Plus Limited 52 St Johns Lane Halifax West Yorkshire England HX1 2BW	
<b>Bankers</b>	National Westminster Bank plc Westgate Branch 31 Westgate Leeds LS1 2RF	

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# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

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# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's [governing document], the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

#### **Objectives and activities**

Our objectives are to:

- Provide advice and guidance, counselling and psychotherapeutic services including self-help support for women and girls of all ages (and their families where necessary), living in Yorkshire and Humberside, who are suffering from psychological/mental health problems
- Advance the education of the public and of psychotherapists and mental health workers in particular, in the causes, effects, treatment and reduction of psychological/mental health problems in women and girls.

We operate mainly in the Leeds area, and particularly in areas suffering from economic deprivation working with women and girls experiencing multiple disadvantages.

Ultimately, our aims are to support marginalised and vulnerable women recover from the impacts of negative life experiences and improve their life chances by: reducing their levels of psychological distress/mental health problems; improving their levels of self-esteem and confidence; increasing their resilience; empowering them with skills for dealing with problems or tackling difficult situations, relationships and, for some, mothering.

Helping women achieve these goals takes time, and we do it by providing access to trauma specialised long-term i.e. up to two years, psychotherapeutic services that are woman centred and increasingly intersectional specific: that is, services that take account of both gender and wider power structures in society, and the potential impact of severe and/or long-term adversity on development, capacity to form and sustain healthy relationships and resilience. Crucially, we provide a service that tolerates disrupted engagement, which is essential where issues of trust are critical, and where women are carers for children and or elders. We adapt to the needs of individuals too, by using texts and phone calls to secure therapeutic work, when necessary, by delivering therapy at the beneficiaries' preferred pace, and by providing practitioners from the same or different cultural identity, and with the same mother tongue.

Where appropriate specialised services for our beneficiary target group aren't generally available, we aim to develop and pilot them. These include outreach services to reach particularly marginalised and isolated women and extending our age range to include 16- and 17-year-olds (supported by funding from BBC Children in Need and the Pilgrim Trust). Supported by Comic Relief we continued to reach women aged 50+ at risk of violence and a core grant from the Ministry of Justice helped us increase capacity to work with survivors/victims of sexual harassment, abuse and violence as adults and or in childhood.

# **WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED**

## **TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)**

***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024***

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We continue to see how important the Service is. With the stark disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women and girls (including increases in gender-based violence) and particularly on those from diverse communities, services which recognise these intersectional impacts and offer specialised holistic support are essential.

Not surprisingly, in the face of growing demand and rising operational costs, and despite the commitment and generosity of partners, our funding limits those we can help. For example, our general counselling and therapy service can only work with around 85 women at any time. Demand for our services continues to rise, as rapidly as the previous year and the waiting list for our open access service was closed for more than three quarters of the year. A Leeds statutory service offering support to those with Moderate needs is currently holding a waiting list of over 3000 people. The harsh reality is that within our current budgets we can only help a few of the many women who need and seek support.

As part of our efforts to deliver the best possible service, we review our objectives and activities annually with ex-service users, staff and at Board level. These reviews look at the benefits we provide to women, and also where we might achieve more. We refer to, and comply with, guidance from the Charity Commission on public benefit in these reviews, and whenever we plan future work.

This year we continued to host the Visible project ([www.visibleproject.org.uk](http://www.visibleproject.org.uk)) funded by Leeds NHS Clinical Commissioning Group. Visible accelerates citywide system changes in organisational services' responses to those with histories of sexual abuse / violence in childhood.

### *Public benefit*

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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### **Structure, Governance and Management**

WCTS has operated continuously since 1982, initially as an Industrial and Provident Society with charitable objectives, and then as a charitable company limited by guarantee from 2011. WCTS is governed by articles of association.

The Board usually comprises between eight and twelve trustees, recruiting by open advertising, personal recommendation and direct approach, depending on the required expertise or skills. One third of trustees retires each Annual General Meeting and are welcome to stand for re-election. Officers in post during the year were the Chair and deputy, Treasurer and deputy. The CEO acts as the Company Secretary.

Potential trustees attend an initial introductory meeting with the Chair and two Board meetings as a guest. New trustees receive an induction pack, which includes Charity Commission guidance 'The Essential Trustee' and are invited to attend an induction session with the Chair and Chief Executive. This session covers areas like legal responsibility; the Articles; services; and finances. Board responsibilities are reviewed annually. An experienced Board member mentors and works with each new Board member for up to a year, while a system of formal annual Board appraisals is undertaken biannually.

The Board met eight times in the year and receives regular reports from the Chief Executive, covering financial performance and other key performance indicators such as clinical service / therapy outcomes, complaints, and staff wellbeing.

A scheme of delegation (reviewed annually) is also in place, and day-to-day responsibility for the provision of services rests with the Chief Executive, supported by the Clinical Lead. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring WCTS delivers the services specified, and that key performance indicators are met. The Clinical Lead has responsibility for the framework of clinical services. The two management teams meet fortnightly and comprise the Chief Executive, Clinical Lead and Operations Manager, and the Operations Manager, Services Managers and the Services Support Manager.

We regularly review our employee remuneration and reward packages to make sure we always attract and retain the best possible staff for our work.

WCTS is guided by local, regional and national policy and strategy, and informed by input and feedback from service users.

Agenda Alliance in their *DISMANTLING DISADVANTAGE* Levelling up public services for women with multiple unmet needs report identify five ways in which services and systems can be redesigned to better meet the needs of women with multiple unmet needs. [www.agendaalliance.org/our-work/projects-and-campaigns/transforming-services-for-womens-futures](http://www.agendaalliance.org/our-work/projects-and-campaigns/transforming-services-for-womens-futures). Prioritising prevention and early intervention; Gender, trauma and culturally responsive support; Services working together; Co-production and addressing power dynamics; and Long-term and sustainable funding and commissioning. We plan to use these five areas as guiding principles.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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A dual crisis - Centre for Mental Health - [www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/publications/a-dual-crisis](http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/publications/a-dual-crisis) - July publication explores the fact that living in poverty has a devastating impact on children's mental health. Money and mental health are inextricably linked; not having enough money leads to parental stress and guilt, which has a knock-on impact on children over the course of their lives. And with rates of poverty twice as high among Asian and Black families than white families, some children are 'overexposed' to the dual risks of poverty and poor mental health. We want to reach even more of Leeds' citizens living in poverty.

As we know Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) are events or circumstances occurring in childhood that have been shown to increase the risk of trauma, poor mental health and in turn poor education, health and social outcomes. Modelling undertaken in Leeds based on Children's Commissioner estimates concluded 33,580 (19.8%) children and young people are estimated to live in households with any of the toxic trio of ACE's: domestic violence, poor parental mental health, and parental substance abuse and 1,994 (1.2%) children and young people are estimated to live in households with all three. We want to continue to increase our provision for teenage girls.

City Vision: For **Leeds to be a trauma informed city** that works to prevent the conditions that lead to trauma and responds compassionately and swiftly whenever trauma, or risk of trauma is present. (On a page) We are part of a city-wide conversation developing a Leeds strategy and action plan, design and nurture a trauma informed network and movement and work in partnership with West Yorkshire colleagues to ensure work to prevent and respond to ACE's and trauma is delivered in partnership.

We have been working with in the NHS's Talking Therapies (formerly Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) initiative since 2019. The NHS has ambitious plans for psychological therapies and 'Taken together The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health and The NHS Long Term Plan commit the NHS to further expand the NHS Talking Therapies, for anxiety and depression programme so that 1.9 million people per year will be able to access services by the end of 2023/4.' We are exploring how we might become more involved in this work and how it meets out beneficiary group needs.

A new NHS initiative 'Psychological therapies for people with severe mental health problems' (also referred to as severe mental illness) is a key part of the new integrated offer for adults and older adults, as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan. Severe Mental Health problems include psychosis, bipolar disorder, 'personality disorder' and eating disorders. All areas of the country are seeking to increase availability of these therapies as part of a wider transformation of adult and older adult community mental health services and we are exploring how we can be part of this offer for our particular client group as a Step 3-4 Service.

### Achievements and performance

- Summary
- Women who use the Service – profile and demographics
- Women's Outcomes – CORE Outcome Measures, qualitative evaluation, beneficiary feedback
- What the Service offers

### Summary:

***Fantastic Service. Very lucky to received the outreach support and therapy. Highly Recommend.***

***I found talking to a professional about my past traumas very helpful. I can say that I believe I am a different person due to having therapy - in a good way***

***Sitting in the floor in a relaxed environment and being allowed to work through stuff visually has had a huge impact on my progress. We have worked through everything! Thank you!!***

***I was rock bottom when I first rang my GP. Counselling helped me to make sense of where I was and my power which I since used and felt amazing about.***

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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This year was a successful one for the charity reaching significant numbers of women and girls in the context of the second year of recovering from the impacts of the pandemic.

We worked with 446 women and young women in the year: a 20% reduction from previous year – due to the loss of significant Ministry of Justice funding. Of these, 93% presented with clinical mental health problems: three quarters in the Moderate, Moderately Severe and Severe groupings. Over 80% of mental health problems / concerns have lasted over 12 months, recurring or continuous. These levels of psychological distress are profoundly debilitating affecting all areas of life. We continue to see significant proportion of women with experience of sexual violence – over half as an adult or child with two in five clients experiencing both. A quarter of the women we work with are from Black, Asian, minoritised communities – a slight decrease from the previous year. We will be looking at this further in the coming year.

The length of support women engaged with returned to pre pandemic levels and excellent mental health outcomes were maintained. Two thirds (64%) showing clinical and/or reliable improvement i.e. significant recovery. Improvements across Psychological Domains average two (of four) clinical levels which is excellent particularly for this beneficiary group. Risk (of suicide or harm to self) reduced from clinical levels (5) to non-clinical levels (2).

Feedback from women on the impacts of counselling is also excellent. With 100% of beneficiaries feeling they understand themselves better, 91% agreeing they tackle difficult situations better and 68% saying their relationships have improved and they cope better with their feelings.

***Therapy has helped me to gain a better relationship with my son and I understand his complex needs better. His behaviour is still very challenging, but I have gained skills to deal with my own anxieties around this to help me better manage this.***

During the year we offered the open access service plus expanded out specialised services for pregnant women and new mothers; for 16–25-year-olds; and for those affected by Covid. A new service offering counselling supporting NHS Talking Therapies Step 3 work in the city was established. We continued with our return post pandemic to offering therapy from key venues in 'deprived' Leeds, alongside our city centre premises. Whilst, as a deeply relational services, we operate in the main face to face we do offer limited remote sessions to support accessibility.

#### **The women we help: profile and demographics:**

Almost all of women and girls we support have mental health problems in the 'clinical population'. Before therapy, the average clinical score of the women we help is stable at 19 (2023: 21, 2022: 20, 2021: 19, 2020: 21) equating to Moderately Severe / Moderate mental health problems. Over 50% of women have needs normally only addressed in secondary services, but the women who use our Service can find it hard to access, engage with or improve within more mainstream services because of their complex needs and particularly as a consequence of gender-based violence experiences, and / or are excluded from them by limited accessibility.

The women we help have an increasing average of six problems/concerns at assessment with over 80% lasting for at least 12 months, and recurring or continuous. Most commonly: anxiety / stress and depression (100%), self-esteem (81%), interpersonal problems (76%), trauma/abuse (93%). Of these problems almost all (81%) of each is in the Moderately Severe band.

Worryingly, all these problems appear to be far more prevalent than in the 2011 Primary Care national database, and levels of trauma/abuse at assessment remain over three times higher than the national average. 35% of beneficiaries are at risk of suicide and 31% are at risk of self-harm; 5% are at risk of harming others.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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Monitoring of beneficiaries accessing the service show excellent reach into target beneficiary populations:

- 27% of beneficiaries are from postcode areas LS7, LS9, LS10, LS14 and LS15 ranked in the lowest 3% of wards in England in the multiple deprivation index (26% 2019-20; 28% 2018-19); a further 20% (33% 2019-20; 26% 2018-19) come from LS8, LS11 and LS12, ranked within the lowest 10% and also having the highest rates of suicide within the city. Overall, more than half of beneficiaries live in Leeds' most deprived areas.
- 87% of women and girls living in the most affluent areas of Leeds are White; compared to 64% in the most deprived.
- 24% of beneficiaries are from BME communities (25% 2021-22, 31% 2021-22; 32% 2020-21; 35% 2019-20) (Leeds BME population 21% Census 2011).
- Approximately 27% of women living the most (20%) deprived areas of Leeds are of Asian heritage compared with 13% in Leeds overall; 23% are Black compared with 7% overall.
- 21% of beneficiaries who define their status consider themselves to have a disability (21% 2022-23, 23% 2021-22; 27% 2020-21; 31% 2019-20).
- 12% of those who disclose their sexuality define as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (11% 2022-23, 16% 2021-22).
- The age range of women accessing the service is relatively stable with 17% aged 16-25 (20% 2021-22; 27% 2020-21, 25% 2019-20) and 20% over 45 years old (24% 2021-22; 28% 2020-21, 31% 2019-20). The number of older women accessing the service continues to slightly increase – we worked with two women aged between 75 – 85 years old.
- We are (proportionally) reaching more Leeds young women living in the most deprived areas than older women. This reflects the national and local 'left shift' strategy of recent years to engage with mental health problems at an earlier point.
- Of those who name a religious affiliation 21% are Muslim.

How women describe their goals at the start of counselling include:

***Wants to explore why she's scared of authority figures – especially men. Learn to ask for help. Be less guarded with husband, improve their relationship. Improve self-worth.***

***To be able to manage stress. To process memories of Dad's death.***

***Tackle fundamental things about life such as people around me being self-centred - no room or me in relationships. Explore what I'm doing with my life.***

***To not feel trapped in a box all the time.***

***To feel my body again.***

***To process my grief.***

***Building trusting relationships. Develop self-confidence, self-worth and self-esteem. Develop healthier coping strategies. Process traumas.***

***To stop the flashbacks and feeling the physical pain of the abuse.***

***To process the grief about my grandad and future grief of grandma (only months to live).***

***To work out why I feel so angry and stop the anger slipping out when I don't expect or want it to. To learn new coping strategies rather than relying on self-harm or overdosing.***

***To be less anxious and afraid in public.***

***Explore my thoughts about self-harm and learn how to manage them better.***

***Understand my feelings of anxiety, identify my triggers and learn to cope with them. Understand my feelings of depression, identify my triggers and learn to cope with them.***

***To stop self-harming To not feel sad all the time. To have more motivation to do things.***

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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*To understand why I feel as I do.*

*To be less reliant on my boyfriend. I wish to clarify in my head what happened to me.*

*I'd like to look at the different masks I wear with different people and understand why I do this. I'd like to understand more about who I am underneath the masks. I'd like to be more comfortable with feeling my emotions instead of bottling them all up. To address my inner critic and have more self-compassion.*

*Being able to socialise as a couple again and on my own develop myself as a person again.*

*Quieten my inner voice and make it kinder. Be able to look in the mirror and like what I see.*

*Be okay with my body.*

*I need to have a closure for myself. I am studying criminology, and I don't want to call what happened to me; rape.*

*I need to process my whole childhood abuse because I believe it is affecting my entire present life. I am struggling everyday with my mental health and pretending to be happy, and functioning is no longer an option. I am tired of feeling vulnerable.*

*Have better judgement.*

*To be myself - come off medication, strength, confidence - not cry all the time. To learn how to manage my thoughts - empty my head a bit. To learn to trust - be out in the world more.*

*To sleep better. To accept what has happened and overthink less. Reduce fear.*

*Being able to speak to my brother about our childhood trauma.*

*To overcome my rape and miscarriage.*

*Process trauma around birth of child - try make sense of this.*

*Processing grief around the death of a friend by suicide. Processing impact of rape experience/past relationships on my current relationship security/sense of self/confidence.*

*The client wants to be able to take her son out more.*

*The client wants to be able to catch a bus herself.*

### **Women's Outcomes:**

We use two main tools to monitor beneficiary outcomes. The first is a clinical measure called Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (CORE): a rigorous system used throughout the NHS. The second is an equally useful feedback form completed at the end of therapy. Our CORE data is independently evaluated by CORE IMS at least bi-annually, while the client feedback is analysed annually.

While the average CORE score on entering our service was 18 (Moderately Severe – Moderate borderline), the average CORE score of women ending counselling during the year was 12 (Mild). This is an average improvement across two severity levels, clearly showing the full extent of our work's positive impact. Risk levels improved from average in the clinical population (5) to non-clinical populations (2).

Evaluation shows 63% of women and girls demonstrate clinical and/or reliable improvement i.e. significant recovery. This compares to 55% for similar services nationally, which means that we're typically achieving measurably excellent results for the women we work with.

*Great service and has changed my life. Given me tools to work with. I can see light at the end of the tunnel some days.*

*I couldn't have asked for a better person to have helped me work through my issues. She gave me the safe space and time I needed.*

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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Changes in psychological Domains are:

- . Commonly Experienced Problems:
  - 26 (Severe) reducing to 16 (Moderate)
  - 88% experiencing improvements
- . Wellbeing issues:
  - 26 (Severe) reducing to 17 (Moderate)
  - 79% experiencing improvements
- . Life/Social Functioning:
  - 18 (Moderate) /40 reducing to 13 (Mild)
  - 79% of clients experiencing improvements
- . Risk: 5 (clinical population) reducing to 2 (non-clinical population)
  - 53% experiencing improvements

Crucially, and equally positively, this recovery is also sustained. In 2012, we won an award from the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy for conducting research which revealed that 60% of participating beneficiaries were still experiencing reliable and significant change four years after their therapy. The longevity of these recoveries isn't just excellent for the individual service user herself: it also reduces their need for future interventions, which in turn frees up our services for other women.

Women attended for an average of 14 sessions over six months – reduced from 21, due to the new NHS Talking Therapies Step 3 waiting list support work with a maximum of 16 sessions offered. 80% of all sessions were attended –excellent for the client group with their range of wider responsibilities and dependencies.

Analysis of Beneficiary **feedback** forms in March 2024 shows that 100% agreed or strongly agreed with the statements 'I felt understood by my counsellor' and 97% 'I felt able to work with my counsellor'. Within 'Helpfulness of counselling' 100% of beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I feel I understand myself better' and 'I cope better with my feelings'. 91% that they tackle difficult situations better; 88% that they had made changes in how they dealt with their problems, and 68% said their relationships have improved.

Feedback around convenience and accessibility remained strong: 97% of beneficiaries found the venue convenient and accessible; 94% felt that they were offered an appointment within a reasonable length of time; 98% that they were offered appointments at convenient times; and 91% found the written information helpful.

**Some of the feedback** from beneficiaries in 2023-24:

***My self-confidence has grown, and the ripple effect has changed my life.***

***Thank you. I am more grateful than I could even express.***

***I've learnt more about who I am as a person and what values I have and what I value in others.***

***I'm grateful for the fast response.***

***Recognising the link between the grief of losing my mum and the feeling of needing more support on becoming a mum myself.***

***The space has equipped me with a home inside I have felt so safe and supported.***

***Having someone to talk to that does not judge and pushes me to explore alternative ways of thinking.***

***I think it's fantastic that this service is available and am very grateful I've had access to it as the difficulties of accessing G.P appointments put me off accessing help through an alternative route.***

***Never felt cut off or a burden***

# **WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED**

## **TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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*It has helped me to challenge unhelpful/difficult thought patterns.*

*Being challenged about my own behaviours to help realise I have been enabling.*

*I now know that what I feel matters.*

*A real improvement in my relationship with my parents, recognising unhelpful patterns and working towards better friendships etc.*

*Really happy with the professional and warm service from admin staff*

*It's been an amazing service and a very good experience that has helped me to open up more than I ever have done. I trusted the therapist.*

*I have always felt comfortable and able to speak freely with my therapist.*

*I did not think you could help me as much as you did. Thank you.*

*Despite being short term therapy, it has helped me a lot. Helped me understand myself. I'm glad I have done it. Being able to talk about difficult experiences and traumatic experiences in a safe environment and being able to trust my counsellor.*

*Everyone has been very friendly and welcoming. It's been good to go at my own pace without feeling under pressure.*

*A weight has lifted.*

*I understand that I locked myself away as a child to protect myself from judgment and abuse and created a level of perfectionism as a way of staying invisible. I've realised that my entire life has been a masked projection in order to stay hidden and therefore avoid judgement and therefore rejection.*

*I felt held and heard by the therapist. She supported me through a very difficult and challenging time and I am very thankful for this. I have learnt many new skills to support myself and my wellbeing. I have tapped back into my own resilience and strengths with the help of the therapist*

We held two annual ex-beneficiary feedback events this year: one in person and one online. We are keen to hear about women's whole experience, the good and not so good. We find that there are many benefits to this piece of work, but the main ones are that in asking for their views we are making ourselves easier to reach and that, then, we become enriched by both receiving and acting on their feedback. This links back to one of our main values, that of empowerment, by seeking feedback we hope that both the clients and the service become empowered through this relational work.

Women told us:

*I phoned up to refer myself and the person answering the phone was friendly and it was easy to refer myself.*

*I had a very quick response.*

*Due to the cost of living crisis it had been good to have the city centre venue to get to and they were fairly easy to get to.*

*Accessible premises, easy to get to.*

*Reception staff are very polite and good at what they do. They always called me back when I left a message on your answerphone. I can't fault your reception staff.*

*I liked being in your reception area where I could have a cup of water, use the loo, and then decompress before my session. This was important to me.*

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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*Within 2 weeks I had a caseworker and then she worked with me for 6 months and then went into therapy. The caseworker was very supportive whilst I was waiting for therapy, she really helped me with my mental health as well as helping me to feel empowered in my employment situation.*

*When I had to call and cancel my appointment, due to being ill, it was so easy, they were kind and considerate towards me.*

*I joined a wellbeing group so did not have an assessment. However, it was wonderful to be met at your front door by my worker, I was quite nervous about coming in to your service but the worker really helped me to feel more settled.*

*The assessment was very accurate and it helped me to look forward to being in therapy as I felt I would be able to work on the things I really needed to.*

*Having an 'in-person' assessment was a good thing as it helped me to recognise that the right support was available to me.*

*I was very happy to discover how good art therapy is. It was a complete surprise.*

*I loved being in the small group, I felt so welcomed. At times it was difficult to contain my emotions but I did not say so to my worker.*

*When my group worker was away ill I felt that there was really good contact with me about what was happening. Someone called me regularly and kept me up to date.*

*It was fantastic that she sent me text message reminders about our sessions. This really helped me.*

*My caseworker was very warm towards me; she is an inspiring person, knowledgeable. Not once did she make me feel like I knew nothing! The way she was with me was really good – she didn't demean me at any time which was a refreshing experience.*

*She was sensitive towards me, I never once felt judged which has helped me to be stronger in all of my relationships – I am worth something.*

*Therapy can be a tricky experience, it is not all rainbows and butterflies, I have learned this and understand it more now. In a funny way it helped me to be different with the people in my life.*

*Art therapy is really good for working with trauma, I did some amazing work, it was very clever.*

*Since my art therapy I have actually enrolled myself on other art courses which is something I thought was impossible for me.*

*Eventually it was really useful to have a safe space with my therapist. She is a down-to-earth person, really validating and kind. I off-loaded such a lot as I was getting through my first couple of months of motherhood.*

*You've got it nailed!*

We continued to work with around 14 external clinical supervisors during the year. These experienced women offer additional thinking and warmth to our work. Helping us to 'see' the women we work with more clearly particularly through the strong dynamic women into the work as a result of multiple traumatic experiences.

Two ex-service users served on the Board of Trustees during the year offering a unique perspective from their experiences.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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### What the Service offers:

***I think that being a women-only service is a part of WCTS' success, it is its strength.***

#### ***Such care and attention.***

WCTS offers uniquely safe, confidential and culturally sensitive spaces where women can speak openly and fully about their experiences, feelings and thoughts. Crucially, we're providing something women and girls usually can't access in any other area of their lives. In a society where we are understanding more about the prevalence, insidiousness and impacts of for example racism, misogyny and multi-generational poverty, this is vital to mental health.

***It was good that the sessions were close by, (to where I lived), and it was a revelation to be understood.***

***The women on the reception desk were very kind and welcoming to me, even when I was distressed and had to ring up one day.***

The nature of working long term with trauma and the energies (powerful emotions, confused and confusing thoughts, strong often negative mind sets and self-beliefs, etc) can best be seen and 'held' in person. As the profession learns about the impacts of remote work in non-pandemic context, we believe it is safer for our client groups and staff to work face to face.

Our support enables women to express and resolve painful experiences, which in turn changes their often-complex attitude towards themselves and others. This vital opportunity reduces psychological distress and mental health problems, and it also increases women's resilience to everyday ups and downs as well as more challenging life events.

Our services are 'trauma specialised', which means they take account of the potential impact of severe and/or long-term adversity on development, resilience, and the capacity to form relationships. They also address the frequent mislabelling of people with histories of trauma as 'uncooperative, hard to engage, non-compliant or treatment resistant, needy or aggressive'.

***I felt a bit blurry at the time, I felt that I didn't deserve to have a service but the assessment meeting helped me to change that belief. I felt validated almost immediately.***

***I had no worries of being judged, I felt that she (the Counsellor) was on my side.***

Essential casework support around wider health and social needs enables access to and engagement with counselling enabling women to use the specialised therapy we offer to maximum benefit – it means they get 'added value' from their contact with us which has become even more important with the disproportionate severe impacts of cost of living on women.

Working holistically with women facing on average six identified long-term problems mean working with significant complexity. Whilst counselling works primarily with ways of thinking, feeling and behaving as 'processes' there is always 'content' to the work i.e. the social, health and interpersonal needs women are living with resulting from their experiences and histories. Working at one level on the 'what gets in the way (internally or externally)' in relation to this issue that is causing you difficulty in your life' counselling is always focused on supporting women live more of the lives they want / desire and so is intrinsically practical. Aiming to support women towards the 'new skills, confidence, independence, security and/or agency'. Identifying goals at the beginning of work together and checking in with these regularly 'Are we talking about the things that matter most to you?' focuses the work on the changes that are most important to each individual woman.

Our approach is all about responsiveness to individual need and flexibility in understanding individual circumstances. Within a clear psychotherapeutic framework, guided by the BACP's Ethical Framework for Counselling Professions, our focus is on the relationship between beneficiary and therapist, or on relationships with other group members. It's in the context of these safe, understanding and thoughtfully challenging relationships that real and lasting change takes place.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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WCTS employs a wide range of highly skilled counsellors/psychotherapists, offering counselling in four community languages and from different therapeutic modalities, including psychodynamic, humanistic, analytic, gestalt, person centred, and the creative arts therapies. Every modality acknowledges just how important establishing a sense of safety and trust is before the relationship between client and therapist can foster exploration, learning and change. Caseworkers sit alongside Counsellors to ensure the Service is as accessible as possible. Our receptionists play a vital role in making the service welcoming and accessible to distressed vulnerable women.

***My confidence has grown with my trust in myself and empowerment to build boundaries and try to think more about my wellbeing than others' all the time."***

***Feel less overwhelmed having been able to talk. Life is still hard but I have more skills and strategies to cope with it.***

Understandably, women continue to highlight the importance of confidentiality in their feedback: their need to trust someone enough to speak openly, and the profound impact of feeling supported and understood. They talk about feeling welcomed and accepted at WCTS: about their relief at having someone they can regularly express their often troubled or troubling thoughts and feelings with.

Importantly, providing a longer-term therapeutic relationship helps therapy progress at a pace that women with complex trauma histories can manage. It's significant that many women only gradually feel stable and trusting enough to begin talking in intimate detail about formative life events, and that's one of the key benefits of long-term therapy like ours. They identify and explore the ongoing impact of these experiences and, over time, this enables them to make both small and huge changes in their understandings of themselves and their behaviours. In turn, this helps them begin to make choices that contribute to improving their lives and those of their children, families and communities.

Our service is unique in Leeds for its special mix of accessibility and long-term support. It's free, delivered in venues women can reach easily and feel safe in, and personalised to their unique needs, even with some travel, interpreter and child care support where necessary. It's also long term, with counselling or psychotherapy lasting up to two years and delivered by fully qualified, accredited and experienced female staff. Both individual and group psychotherapy is offered, and some women complete a period of focused individual work before moving into group work to deepen their explorations of relationship with others. We offer 8-week psychoeducational courses too, designed to help women reflect upon their current difficulties, develop skills and strategies for managing their emotional wellbeing, and build their resilience to life's ups and downs.

***I found art therapy, making art and looking at the art work, has really helped me to understand how I feel.***

We offer an open access service for women in the beneficiary group, both from our city centre premises and venues across Leeds. During the year this was also offered remotely. It's funded by Leeds City Council Adults and Health, the Bromley Trust, Leathersellers Company Charitable Fund and Garfield Weston Foundation. A core grant from Ministry of Justice ended during the year. It supported the charity and enabled us to continue a sexual violence specialism offering much needed support to women dealing with the impacts of harassment, abuse and violence in childhood and or as adults.

All women accessing this service are unable to access other services to meet their needs. They're not able to pay for counselling, they need a female therapist, and they're only able to feel safe enough to speak of their experiences – often years or decades of neglect, sexual or domestic abuse and/or violence – in a women's service. WCTS is a service that recognises their strengths, is compassionate about their challenges, and that supports them in their desire and efforts to make changes: together we celebrate them and their achievements, large and small.

We've successfully helped women deal with the consequences of fractured families, domestic abuse, children with challenging behaviours, traumatic labours and births, bereavement, and overcoming the negative impacts of aspects of their own childhoods, including multigenerational poverty.

Our perinatal work continues to see very positive results within the NHS Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service (LMWS) and capacity was increased during the year. A partnership of seven local organisations which supports a joined up experience for service users. We also delivered Step 3 Talking Therapies work to help bring down the waiting list which had climbed to over 4000 during the pandemic. This new element of our work is producing excellent outcomes with women attending the service.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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*I feel more attuned to my baby.*

*The therapy has helped me to be more confident with thought processing. Learning and trusting own decisions more. Problem solving with diagrams was helpful and working creatively and especially with playdoh helped me to concentrate in the session. Think I learnt more about my own thinking style and how to work with it. Just a huge THANK YOU!*

*I've been coming here for a while now and each session has been saturated with support, information, empathy and all with the utmost dedication and professionalism. I can't comprehend how a service this fantastic and thorough is through a charity as many of us can't afford therapy. I'll be forever grateful.*

*Biggest thing is feeling understood and recognised. This was a new feeling Thank you :)*

We also continued working with 16- and 17-year-olds, funded by BBC Children in Need within the 16–25-year-old specialism provided by the Service. We offer an elastic engagement for young women recognising that shorter contracts of six to twelve sessions with the opportunity to return several times supports engagement and a long-term nurturing connection with the service.

### **Wider work**

We are delighted to continue hosting the Visible project funded by the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board committing further funding into 2025. Visible is a pioneering city-wide initiative to improve services with, and for, adult survivors of child sexual abuse. Visible carries out this work in close partnership with Leeds Involving People, and there's more information at Visible - improving wellbeing outcomes with adult survivors of sexual abuse.

We play a part in the strengthened and co-ordinated approach to mental health service provision for the women of Leeds through our involvement in key city-wide forums like Forum Central (the Leeds voluntary sector mental health forum), the NHS Perinatal Mental Health Group and the Leeds Strategic Mental Health Partnership. Our CEO acts as Third Sector Advocate on sexual violence services to the West Yorkshire Mayor's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Advisory Board and is Deputy Chair of the Leeds Psychology Board.

### **Financial review**

WTCS works hard to maintain and further diversify its funding base, operating a diverse range of funding streams.

Careful financial management means we're increasingly able to respond flexibly in relation to emerging needs and opportunities – vital in such a complex and volatile operating environment. The Statement of Financial Activities shows net expenditure for the year of £49,052 (2023: £43,191 net income) with reserves totalling £226,194 at 31 March 2024 (2023: £275,246).

### **Principal funding sources**

Incoming resources for the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 were £972,344 (2023: £955,596).

The largest single funding stream is a contract with Leeds Community Healthcare (for LMWS) of £215,033 of income.

Other contributions are from NHS CCG's which total; £392,518 (2023: £210,382) and from charitable trusts and foundations; £357,422 (2023: £415,434). Donations amounted to £4,457 (2023: £521) and fees £2,914 (2023: £10,669).

*Thank you seems too small a word.*

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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### *Reserves policy*

The trustees continued to monitor progress against the reserves policy (i.e. that free reserves held by the charity should equate to 25-50% of agreed budgeted expenditure for the subsequent financial year). Whilst reserves have been steadily built towards meeting this policy over recent years in 2023-24 the gap between the end of the significant MOJ funding and the replacement funding plus the promises move utilising designated Building Fund has resulted in a fall in reserves. Budgeted expenditure for 2024/25 is £1,217,296 (2022/23: £877,883).

The reserves target is £304,324 to £608,648

The reserves are needed to meet the working needs of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding, to maintain provision for redundancy and legal costs or other untoward events. At present the free reserves and designated funds amount to £226,194 (2023: £275,246) falling short of the lower limit of target. The Board is continuing to look at ways to build the reserves and has also considered contingency plans in the event of a significant reduction in finances in the short term.

### **Plans for future periods**

Our new Strategy is likely to see us aiming to broaden and deepen our remit around holistic support recognising interdependences of mental health, emotional health, physical health, social issues, aspirations, spirituality and religion. Our Goals and Priorities include:

#### **Reaching women and girls who need support the most**

- Increasing those who access support
- Prioritising prevention and early intervention
- Raising awareness and publish self-help mental health resources

#### **Building more holistic support by working with others**

- Addressing wider health and social impacts on women mental health
- Increasing our innovative outreach community partnerships
- Building lived experience leadership with service users and others

#### **Growing stronger and more sustainable**

- Expanding and diversifying our funding base
- Securing and retaining the best people for our work; ensuring their wellbeing
- Piloting services for unmet needs; influencing commissioning

We continue to explore what it means to be a women's service – open to all who identify as such – in a society where the traditional binary categories of gender are expanding to reflect more of the reality of individual lives. We will continue to explore how to sustain a service that offers perceived safety for females who have experienced gender-based violence and expand this safety to more people who have experienced violence and discrimination around issues of sex and gender in the regions we work in.

As society opens more to the idea of counselling and therapy as a common support for good mental health and helpful for us all we'll carry on focussing on developing support for those who are excluded from services too and continue to work in the Leeds Women and Girls Alliance, focussing on maximising the impact of city-wide priorities, strategies and policies, as well as responding to new opportunities.

***It has helped me reduce the amount of checking I do of the door, and the gas cooker.***

***I now know how I can help my son build confidence and not develop anxiety. I feel good about talking about being a mum and how important that is to me and my son.***

***I feel heard and understood. I have really appreciated responses to my questions and long-standing issues. I'm just so very grateful. I have waited and asked for therapy for over 20 years.***

### **Structure, governance and management**

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# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Jules Blackwell	(Resigned 15 July 2024)
Andrea Bucknor	(Resigned 1 August 2024)
Sarah Dempsey	
Georgina Houston	(Resigned 15 January 2024)
Cecily Rowe	(Resigned 18 September 2023)
Molly Rushworth	
Netalie Shloim	(Appointed 15 July 2024)
Christine Simms	(Resigned 15 January 2024)
Shahina Swain	(Resigned 31 December 2023)
Ann Walker	
Jacqueline Whittle (Chair)	(Appointed 22 May 2023)

### **Risk Management**

The trustees have reviewed the major risks to the charity and the risk register is updated annually. Appropriate risk mitigation strategies are in place, and areas such as health & safety, safeguarding and finance are standing items on Board agendas. Included in its current policies, WCTS has a serious incident policy, a beneficiary confidentiality policy, and child and adult safeguarding policies.

The trustees consider the Chief Executive, the Clinical Lead, the Operations and Services Managers and the Finance Manager as key management personnel, in charge of directing and controlling the charity, and running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis.

The pay of the charity's key management staff is reviewed annually and may be increased in accordance with national indicators like inflation or average earnings where financially possible and prudent. Remuneration is also benchmarked periodically with charities of a similar size and activity to ensure that it's fair and in line with that generally paid for similar roles.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Jacqueline Whittle (Chair)  
**Trustee**

23 October 2024

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

### TO THE TRUSTEES OF WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

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I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Women's Counselling and Therapy Service Limited (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

#### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- 4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

#### **BK Plus Limited**

52 St Johns Lane  
Halifax  
West Yorkshire  
HX1 2BW  
England

Dated: 24 October 2024

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	3	100,989	180,050	281,039	122,847	356,597	479,444
Charitable activities	4	423,558	263,941	687,499	405,024	68,000	473,024
Investments	5	3,806	-	3,806	3,128	-	3,128
<b>Total income</b>		<u>528,353</u>	<u>443,991</u>	<u>972,344</u>	<u>530,999</u>	<u>424,597</u>	<u>955,596</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Charitable activities	6	560,611	460,785	1,021,396	488,013	424,392	912,405
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>560,611</u>	<u>460,785</u>	<u>1,021,396</u>	<u>488,013</u>	<u>424,392</u>	<u>912,405</u>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<u>(32,258)</u>	<u>(16,794)</u>	<u>(49,052)</u>	<u>42,986</u>	<u>205</u>	<u>43,191</u>
Transfers between funds		(5,875)	5,875	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	8	<u>(38,133)</u>	<u>(10,919)</u>	<u>(49,052)</u>	<u>42,986</u>	<u>205</u>	<u>43,191</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		264,327	10,919	275,246	221,341	10,714	232,055
<b>Fund balances at 31 March 2024</b>		<u>226,194</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>226,194</u>	<u>264,327</u>	<u>10,919</u>	<u>275,246</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

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	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	12	25,400		30,292	
Cash at bank and in hand		301,208		380,000	
		<u>326,608</u>		<u>410,292</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	(100,414)		(135,046)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			226,194		275,246
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>			226,194		275,246
			<u>                    </u>		<u>                    </u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>					
Restricted income funds	16	-		10,919	
Unrestricted funds		226,194		264,327	
		<u>226,194</u>		<u>275,246</u>	
		<u>                    </u>		<u>                    </u>	

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 23 October 2024

Jacqueline Whittle (Chair)  
**Trustee**

Company registration number 07804583 (England and Wales)

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	21		(82,598)		11,580
<b>Investing activities</b>					
Investment income received		3,806		3,128	
<b>Net cash generated from investing activities</b>			3,806		3,128
<b>Net cash used in financing activities</b>			-		-
<b>Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>			(78,792)		14,708
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			380,000		365,292
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>			301,208		380,000

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# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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### **1 Accounting policies**

#### **Charity information**

Women's Counselling and Therapy Service Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 43 Park Square North, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS1 2NP, England.

#### **1.1 Accounting convention**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's [governing document], the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, [modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value]. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

#### **1.2 Going concern**

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

#### **1.3 Charitable funds**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

#### **1.4 Income**

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

#### 1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

#### 1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures and fittings	15% straight line
Computers	33% straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

#### 1.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

#### 1.8 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

#### **Basic financial assets**

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

#### **Basic financial liabilities**

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

#### **Derecognition of financial liabilities**

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

### 1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

### 1.10 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

### 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

### 3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Donations and gifts	4,457	-	4,457	521	-	521
Grants received	96,532	180,050	276,582	122,326	356,597	478,923
	<u>100,989</u>	<u>180,050</u>	<u>281,039</u>	<u>122,847</u>	<u>356,597</u>	<u>479,444</u>

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### 3 Income from donations and legacies

(Continued)

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Grants receivable for core activities</b>						
Henry Smith Charity	-	38,800	38,800	-	66,700	66,700
Ministry of Justice	-	76,187	76,187	-	228,561	228,561
BBC Children in Need	-	32,164	32,164	-	17,563	17,563
Leeds Womens Aid	19,532	32,899	52,431	-	43,773	43,773
Government grants	-	-	-	122,326	-	122,326
Lloyds Bank Foundation	25,000	-	25,000	-	-	-
Leathersellers	25,000	-	25,000	-	-	-
The Bromley Trust	20,000	-	20,000	-	-	-
Other	7,000	-	7,000	-	-	-
	<u>96,532</u>	<u>180,050</u>	<u>276,582</u>	<u>122,326</u>	<u>356,597</u>	<u>478,923</u>

### 4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
Other income	2,474	440	2,914	10,669	-	10,669
Performance related grants	421,084	263,501	684,585	394,355	68,000	462,355
	<u>423,558</u>	<u>263,941</u>	<u>687,499</u>	<u>405,024</u>	<u>68,000</u>	<u>473,024</u>

#### Performance related grants analysis

	Charitable activities 2024 £	Charitable activities 2023 £
Leeds City Council / Leeds Community Healthcare	324,411	128,910
NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group	292,174	265,445
Visible	68,000	68,000
Other	-	-
	<u>684,585</u>	<u>462,355</u>

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### 5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Interest receivable	3,806	3,128

### 6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Charitable activities 2024 £	Charitable activities 2023 £
<b>Direct costs</b>		
Staff costs	775,591	615,105
Recruitment and DBS checks	7,828	1,660
Therapy, supervision and freelance workers	21,050	18,601
Partner costs	-	26,954
Staff and volunteer training	26,365	12,232
Premises costs	101,678	34,465
Direct client costs	30,799	21,209
Postage and stationery	5,044	1,015
Consultancy fees	-	9,198
Service user involvement	-	229
Travel and subsistence costs	7,257	-
Trustee expenses	200	-
	<u>975,812</u>	<u>740,668</u>
<b>Share of support and governance costs (see note 7)</b>		
Support	45,584	171,737
	<u>1,021,396</u>	<u>912,405</u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	560,611	488,013
Restricted funds	460,785	424,392
	<u>1,021,396</u>	<u>912,405</u>

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### 7 Support costs allocated to activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Governance costs	45,584	171,737
<b>Analysed between:</b>		
Charitable activities	45,584	171,737

### 8 Net movement in funds

	2024 £	2023 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the independent examination of the charity's financial statements	4,800	4,800

### 9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

### 10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Charity Manager	1	1
Therapy Managers and Staff	22	21
Charity and Therapy administration	3	3
Total	26	25

### Employment costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	690,213	606,112
Social security costs	58,655	53,799
Other pension costs	26,723	22,012
	775,591	681,923

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### 10 Employees (Continued)

#### Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Aggregate compensation	267,435	208,095

### 11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

### 12 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade debtors	896	-
Prepayments and accrued income	24,504	30,292
	<u>25,400</u>	<u>30,292</u>

### 13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Other taxation and social security		14,274	11,457
Deferred income	14	44,891	77,791
Other creditors		-	771
Accruals and deferred income		41,249	45,027
		<u>100,414</u>	<u>135,046</u>

### 14 Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Other deferred income	44,891	77,791

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	44,891	77,791

Movements in the year:

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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<b>14 Deferred income</b>	<b>(Continued)</b>	
Deferred income at 1 April 2023	77,791	-
Released from previous periods	(32,900)	-
Resources deferred in the year	-	77,791
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Deferred income at 31 March 2024	44,891	77,791
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

<b>15 Retirement benefit schemes</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Defined contribution schemes</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	26,723	22,012
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

#### 16 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
BBC Children in Need	2,431	32,164	(40,470)	5,875	-
Henry Smith Charity	8,690	-	(8,690)	-	-
Ministry of Justice	-	76,187	(76,187)	-	-
Visible	(796)	68,440	(67,644)	-	-
Leeds Women's Aid	594	13,367	(13,961)	-	-
Henry Smith 4	-	38,800	(38,800)	-	-
LMWS PNMH 2	-	93,008	(93,008)	-	-
LMWS WL Support 8-16 sessions	-	122,025	(122,025)	-	-
	<u>10,919</u>	<u>443,991</u>	<u>(460,785)</u>	<u>5,875</u>	<u>-</u>

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

### 16 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Previous year:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
BBC Children in Need	-	17,563	(15,132)	-	2,431
Henry Smith Charity	10,714	66,700	(68,724)	-	8,690
Ministry of Justice	-	228,561	(228,561)	-	-
Visible	-	68,000	(68,796)	-	(796)
Leeds Women's Aid	-	43,773	(43,179)	-	594
	<u>10,714</u>	<u>424,597</u>	<u>(424,392)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,919</u>

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

#### 17 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Maternity Leave Fund	21,242	-	-	-	21,242
Future Service Development Fund	29,242	-	-	-	29,242
Contingency Fund	56,299	-	-	-	56,299
40th Anniversary Research Fund	23,636	-	-	(23,636)	-
Building Fund	43,674	-	(47,441)	3,767	-
General funds	90,234	528,353	(513,170)	13,994	119,411
	<u>264,327</u>	<u>528,353</u>	<u>(560,611)</u>	<u>(5,875)</u>	<u>226,194</u>
<b>Previous year:</b>	<b>At 1 April 2022 £</b>	<b>Incoming resources £</b>	<b>Resources expended £</b>	<b>Transfers £</b>	<b>At 31 March 2023 £</b>
Maternity Leave Fund	21,242	-	-	-	21,242
Future Service Development Fund	29,242	-	-	-	29,242
Contingency Fund	56,299	-	-	-	56,299
40th Anniversary Research Fund	23,636	-	-	-	23,636
Building Fund	43,674	-	-	-	43,674
General funds	47,248	530,999	(488,013)	-	90,234
	<u>221,341</u>	<u>530,999</u>	<u>(488,013)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>264,327</u>

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### 18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
<b>At 31 March 2024:</b>			
Current assets/(liabilities)	226,194	-	226,194
	<u>226,194</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>226,194</u>
	<u>226,194</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>226,194</u>
	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
<b>At 31 March 2023:</b>			
Current assets/(liabilities)	264,327	10,919	275,246
	<u>264,327</u>	<u>10,919</u>	<u>275,246</u>
	<u>264,327</u>	<u>10,919</u>	<u>275,246</u>

### 19 Operating lease commitments

#### Lessee

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Within one year	32,975	-
Between two and five years	131,791	-
In over five years	160,500	-
	<u>325,266</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>325,266</u>	<u>-</u>

### 20 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).

# WOMEN'S COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICE LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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<b>21 Cash generated from operations</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
(Deficit)/surplus for the year	(49,052)	43,191
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(3,806)	(3,128)
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	4,892	(10,585)
(Decrease) in creditors	(1,732)	(95,689)
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income	(32,900)	77,791
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations</b>	<b>(82,598)</b>	<b>11,580</b>
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

## 22 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.