

# Terms of Reference (ToR)

## Participatory Review and Evaluation of Family Support Services

### Silver Arch Family Resource Centre (SAFRC)

#### 1. Background

Silver Arch Family Resource Centre (SAFRC) is a community-based organisation in North Tipperary, Ireland. As part of the national Family Resource Centre programme funded by TUSLA – Child and Family Agency – we provide a range of early intervention and prevention services to children, young people, and families. Our services are delivered through a whole-family, whole-community lens and grounded in the principles of community development, empowerment, and child wellbeing.

Silver Arch Family Resource Centre, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2023 and has continued to uphold its primary objective: “To provide community-based support, information, and advocacy services to individuals, families, and groups in North Tipperary, so as to empower and help people, particularly those who are most disadvantaged, to access services.” Silver Arch FRC deliver a diverse range of supports and services, including ‘The Thrift Shop’ Social Enterprise, rural Early Childcare preschools (Templederry & Portroe), the Community Families Home Visiting Programme, Family Support, Parenting Support Programmes, Partnership with Families, Unity Child & Youth Hub, Social Prescribing, child and adolescent therapeutic services, adult counselling, gambling counselling, Health & Wellbeing projects, Older Persons Services, and community development outreach projects. These initiatives serve children, young people, families, older persons, and individuals ranging from 0-100+ years, across North Tipperary and in our outreach locations in Nenagh, Newport, and Borrisokane.

*Our Mission:* To provide accessible services that are responsive to the needs of individuals, families and communities.

*Our Values:* Respect, Trust, Empowerment, Quality

SAFRC is commissioning a **participatory review and evaluation** of its family support services to assess current effectiveness, engage staff and stakeholders in reflective practice, and generate shared learning and recommendations to guide our practice and next **Strategic Plan**.

#### 2. Scope of the Review

The review will cover the following SAFRC Family Support programmes:

- **Community-Based Family Support**
- **Partnership with Families of Children in Care**
- **Parenting Support Programme**
- **Community Families Home Visitor Programme**

- **Unity Youth Hub (Child and Youth Project)**
- **Creative Community Alternatives child & youth therapeutic service**
- **Adult Counselling service**

### 3. Objectives

The review will:

1. **Evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, and impact** of SAFRC's family support services on the wellbeing of children, young people, individuals and families.
2. Use a **participatory action research (PAR)** methodology that actively involves SAFRC Family Support Services staff as key collaborators in the research process.
3. Enable the staff team to **co-design and gather meaningful data** using appropriate tools (e.g., focus groups, interviews, surveys), supported and facilitated by the external consultant.
4. Include **stakeholder and service user perspectives** to ensure findings reflect diverse experiences.
5. **Identify a coherent model of practice** that describes SAFRC's approach to family support.
6. Generate **clear, actionable recommendations** that will directly inform our practice and the development of SAFRC's next Strategic Plan.

### 4. Methodology

The consultant will be required to use a **participatory action research approach**, and work closely with SAFRC's Family Support Services teams throughout the project. The approach should include the following elements:

- **Co-definition of Purpose and Methods:** Facilitate early workshops or meetings with the SAFRC Family Support Services teams to agree on the purpose, key questions, and form of data gathering (e.g., surveys, reflective logs, case studies, focus groups, storytelling).
- **Capacity-Building and Facilitation:** Train and support staff to conduct or co-facilitate elements of the research (e.g., gathering service user feedback, conducting peer interviews) so that the data is reliable, ethical, and high quality.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Ensure that informed consent, safeguarding, and confidentiality are embedded into all aspects of the process, especially when engaging children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- **Mixed-Methods Research:**
  - **Desk review** of internal documentation (e.g., logic models, outcomes reports, activity data, internal reviews, CRM reports).
  - **Quantitative data** analysis of service reach and outcomes where available and using national CSO statistics, Tusla National annual statistics, Pobal SAPMAPS and similar where relevant.
  - **Qualitative data** gathering through co-facilitated interviews, focus groups, and reflective practices involving staff, service users, and external stakeholders.

- **Collaborative Analysis:** Facilitate sense-making and thematic analysis sessions with the Family Support Services teams to validate and refine key findings and contribute to shaping final recommendations.
- **Model Identification:** Support the articulation of a service delivery model that reflects SAFRC's unique approach, values, and methods of working with families.

## 5. Deliverables

The consultant will be expected to deliver the following:

1. **Project Work Plan** (within 2 weeks of contract award): Including agreed methodology, timeline, and facilitation plan for staff engagement.
2. **Staff Workshops:** To co-design research tools, build capacity, and support reflective practice throughout the review.
3. **Interim Report:** Mid-project summary of emerging findings and challenges, presented for discussion and feedback.
4. **Final Evaluation Report:**
  - Executive Summary
  - Methodology
  - Key Findings (thematic and evidence-based)
  - Staff and stakeholder perspectives
  - Model of Family Support Service delivery
  - Strategic recommendations
5. **Presentation of Findings:** A workshop or presentation session for SAFRC staff, Board, and key partners.

All materials must be delivered in accessible formats, including plain English summaries and visuals/infographics where appropriate.

## 6. Timeframe

The review will begin in **[6<sup>th</sup> October, 2025]** and be completed within **10 weeks**. A detailed schedule will be agreed upon during the initiation phase.

## 7. Budget

A maximum budget of **€10,000** (inclusive of VAT and all expenses) is available. Proposals must include a full breakdown of consultancy days, deliverables, and costs.

## 8. Consultant Requirements

The appointed consultant/team must demonstrate:

- Expertise in **participatory action research**, reflective practice, and community-based evaluation.
- Awareness or knowledge of the Tusla Child & Youth Participation and Tusla Parental Participation models.

- A strong understanding of **family support, child and youth services, therapeutic service** and the community & voluntary sector in Ireland.
- Experience in **facilitating capacity-building** and collaborative evaluation processes.
- Excellent communication, facilitation, and writing skills.
- A commitment to **equality, diversity, inclusion, and trauma-informed**, anti-oppressive practice.

## 9. Submission Requirements

Proposals should include:

- A clear understanding of the brief and proposed methodology
- Outline of how participatory methods will be used and supported
- CV(s) of the consultant or team members
- Examples of similar projects or reports completed
- A detailed budget
- Timeframe and availability
- Two references

## 10. Contact and Deadline

Please submit proposals to:

Edel Leahy

**Email:** [info@silverarchfrc.ie](mailto:info@silverarchfrc.ie)

**Phone:** 067 31800

**Deadline for submissions:** 1pm, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

Shortlisted candidates may be invited for a follow-up discussion prior to appointment.