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31 May 2018

Cathy Olsson
Trustee
Suzanne Elliot Trust

Dear Cathy,

AAC Voice would like to thank the Suzanne Elliot Trust once again for its generous funding. It is my pleasure to report on the progress we have made with this support.

Report to the Suzanne Elliot Trust

After a public recruitment process, AAC Voice contracted Irene Hunter as AAC Voice Coordinator, commencing in January 2018. Irene began work with the brief to enhance our public profile and promote AAC Voice to potential members.

We now have an AAC Voice website at <http://aacvoice.org.au>. Our Facebook page has been further developed as well, so more people know about us. Our mailing list of members and interested individuals has been expanded and we are now better able to communicate regularly with our supporters.

We successfully applied for free access to Google g-suite as a non-profit organisation. G-suite gives us tools for online collaboration, which is potentially very useful for a group that includes many non-verbal people.

AAC Voice has joined The Funding Centre, which provides information regarding funding sources for charitable organisations. We are developing a fund-raising strategy and have applied for grants via Bank West Easy Grants and the Awesome Foundation. We are currently preparing further grant applications. With more funding, we hope to expand our program of events.

The AAC Voice Committee now meets every month. We have reviewed our constitution, updated our finance policy and developed a risk management policy, with a focus on safely managing events.

In March, we hosted a viewing of an AGOSCI webinar (on Minspeak, by Siobhan Daley, an AAC user) at West Ryde Hotel. This was attended by 19 people, who were able to contribute to the



webinar Q&A session and conduct a face-to-face discussion following on from the event. You can read our blog post about this event at <http://aacvoice.org.au/big-screen-viewing-of-agosci-webinar-on-minspeak/>.

We have surveyed our membership to find out what events would be most highly valued. As a result, we are planning an AAC awareness picnic in October and a seminar in November.

The annual picnic held by AAC Voice is an opportunity for AAC users and their families and supporters to network and make new friends. They can learn more about social supports available to them, and discover new communication technologies that can help with communication disabilities. Speech pathology students who volunteer to assist with the picnic also find the occasion a valuable learning opportunity.

The picnic is held in October (AAC Awareness Month) and helps to raise awareness of people with communication disabilities in the community.

This year's picnic will be held in a pavilion at Bobbin Head. AAC Voice organises the picnic to be an entertaining day out, but it also provides helpful information, displays and demonstrations of communication technology. The objective is to advance the social inclusion of people who use AAC. We are planning for 100 attendees at the picnic.

AAC Voice first held an educational seminar in 2017, and we hope to expand on the success of that event this year. The seminar is intended for AAC users, their families and supporters, and will address communication accessibility, communication rights and advocacy, mentoring for AAC users, and AAC technologies. The program is now being developed by the AAC Voice Committee. The distinguishing feature of the AAC Voice seminar is the focus on presentations by AAC users.

Unfortunately, Irene had to resign in May, due to personal circumstances. We were able to contract Louisa Wilson into the position, and a direct handover of responsibilities is happening now.

We are happy with the progress we are making. AAC Voice is a small organisation that has benefitted greatly from the assistance provided by the Suzanne Elliot Trust. If you would like further details of our activities, please contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Fiona Given
President
AAC Voice
31 May 2018