

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
of  
Asperger's Children and Carers Together  
held via Zoom  
on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022, at 7pm.**

**Attendees:** Helen Gilder (Chair), Claire Cruickshank, Margaret Kilner, Deborah Young, Nicola Hough, Danny Antrobus (minutes), Sara Bartlett Brown, Ian Hutchinson

**Apologies:** Nadine Cain

**1. Welcome**

Helen Gilder (Chair) opened the meeting by welcoming members.

**Minutes from the previous AGM (27 January 2021)**

The minutes were accepted unanimously as a true and accurate record.

**2. Presentation of the Annual Report**

ACCT's Manager, Nicola Hough, gave an overview of ACCT's activities and achievements during 2020-21, as well as how we operated during 2021-22. Key points:

- Our offer during the first Covid lockdown: quickly offering online alternatives to in-person clubs. These were not especially well-attended but we had positive feedback from families about our outreach work at this tough time.
- Expanded offer post-lockdown. As we were able to re-open in-person clubs in July 2020 we took the decision to continue offering online Minecraft and Dungeons & Dragons clubs and expand our activities.
- We also delivered a new expanded programme of webinars and training workshops for parent-carers – including a very popular and useful series on EHCPs
- We moved Parents' Meetings from a quarterly in-person session to a fortnightly Zoom session. Feedback tells us this has worked well for members so we have continued to deliver these sessions fortnightly online.
- As went into 2021, the country went into the third lockdown. At this time, we could continue Activate and Teenage Club but had to close football. We ran a multi sports session at St Mary's for a few weeks as a replacement activity.
- Going into 2021-22, we were able to reinstate and add new activities, starting up ACCTing Out, family swimming, family days out, and the panto visit again, as well as beginning to deliver a new Drama club in partnership with Forced Entertainment.
- Staffing: there was a big change in the year when Cherry (Deputy Coordinator) stepped down. She has stayed on as a bank playworker and is able to cover sessions in a Coordinator role which has been incredibly helpful for covering annual leave, etc. We created two new Deputy roles in order to cover the bubble arrangements at in-person clubs, appointing Alison Kerfoot and Sera Cleverly to these roles.
- We did see a higher turnover of staff over the year, partly caused by the pandemic. Coordinating sessional staffing was very difficult, trying to manage periods where staff were off sick or self-isolating as well as the added complication of having to avoid mixing of staff bubbles.
- We organised a 2 day Team Teach staff training completed by 13 staff.

- Nicola ended the presentation by sharing some positive feedback from members about different activities from our newly expanded service offer.

### 3. Presentation of the Annual Accounts

Danny Antrobus, ACCT's Fundraising and Finance Coordinator, summarised the charity's 2020-21 financial accounts.

There was a lot of uncertainty caused by the pandemic, but from a fundraising point of view, there were also opportunities, Government Covid funding eventually filtered out through different funding programmes, and trusts opened up and invested resources in Covid-related grants programmes.

We were fortunate that we didn't lose fundraising capacity (i.e. Danny wasn't off sick during the year) so we could apply for many of the funding programmes that were open.

- Our income for the year 2020-21 was £181,037, which was an increase on the previous year, when it was £154,473. This was via slightly increased local authority funding, a new larger BBC Children in Need grant and grants from Covid-related funding programmes.
- Our expenditure for the year increased slightly on the previous year to £140,590 from £136,302. Although we spent more money on delivering new activities during the year, we saved money on things we would ordinarily want to run but weren't able to due to Covid, such as ACCTing Out and family trips.
- That meant we had a surplus of £40,447 for the year.
- Added to the total funds we'd previously brought forward of £78,619 this gave us a total funds to carry forward into 2021-22 of £119,066, £110k of which was unrestricted funding.

Our main funders during 2020-21 were:

- Sheffield City Council SNIPS contract £52,774
- BBC Children in Need £17,435
- CAF Resilience Fund £10,361
- National Lottery (Covid Fund) £10,000
- Julia and Hans Rausing Trust £9,822

In addition, we were supported by a wide range of trusts and foundations and other grant-makers, and by ACCT members and other supporters who donate monthly or as one-off amounts to ACCT. We are hugely grateful to all the people and organisations who continue to support ACCT's work.

Our main costs during the year were:

- Salaries £109,151
- Rent rates and Room Hire £11,894
- Training £6,153

Then smaller amounts on activity costs, equipment and office-related costs. It's always been the case for ACCT that by far our biggest cost is the staff who deliver our activities and keep our services going.

Looking beyond 2020-21, we're nearly at the end of the financial year 2021-22. We've had another good year financially, with funding from the sources mentioned plus some new ones such as Garfield Weston Foundation (£20,000 per year for 2 years). Expenditure will be higher than 2020-21 (approx £165,000) as we've kept delivering the online groups and been able to start doing in-person groups and things

like ACCTing Out, family trips and swimming again. Income is expected to be higher than this; our forecast is approximately £180,000-185,000.

As a result we'll start 2022-23 in a good position, with a high level of reserves to be invested in the year, as well as some pledged grants already from Garfield Weston Foundation and Sheffield Town Trust.

There is still fundraising to be done next year, but we can feel confident that we'll be able to continue delivery approximately the same activity level as we currently are, as well as looking at how we might fundraise separately for additional work – for example, to engage with families who don't necessarily know about ACCT or who are early in the diagnostic process.

#### **4. Appointment of auditors**

Danny noted that a charity of ACCT's size is required to appoint a suitably qualified person to independently examine our annual accounts.

Danny recommended to members that Terry Scully should be reappointed to independently examine ACCT's 2021-22 accounts. This was approved unanimously.

#### **5. Election of Trustees**

Helen's gave massive thanks on behalf of everybody at ACCT for Philip Stevenson's and Sarah Tame's contribution to the board during their time as trustees, and noted Phil's resignation from the board in December 2020 and Sarah's resignation in November 2021.

Nadine Cain was appointed to the board in July 2021 and is up for election at the AGM. Nadine was elected unanimously

ACCT's constitution states that, at each AGM, the longest-serving one-third of trustees should resign and are eligible to stand for re-election. Helen Gilder was up for re-election this time. As Helen was chairing the meeting, Margaret Kilner took the chair to facilitate Helen's re-election vote. Helen was re-elected unanimously.

#### **6. Any other business**

None

**Close of AGM – 7.40pm**