



Annual Report

2023



Wahanga Tū Kōrero

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Chairperson's report



Wahanga Tū Kōrero, TalkLink Trust – Charting our Future Path

Kei te mihi arohanui ki a koutou katoa.
Ka nui te aroha.
Heartfelt greetings to you all.

I am delighted to share with you our progress over the 2022-23 year. This was our first year with Wayne Ferguson as our Chief Executive, after we welcomed Wayne on 3 October 2022. Together with the Board and Leadership Team, Wayne guided us through the development of our new Strategy which resulted in the publication of our 3-year Strategic Plan. This plan sees us positioning Wahanga Tū Kōrero TalkLink for a future where our clients have much-enhanced choice and control, centred around a fundamental transformation of the way services are provided and funded for them.

We actively embrace the principles of enabling good lives as being mana-enhancing and empowering for our clients. We acknowledge however that we have work to do to reframe our thinking and practice to give effect to this shift to client-directed services. In addition,

we accept that there is a need to scrutinise our approaches to ensure we support the improvement in equity of outcomes for those in greatest need.

While there are challenges, there is huge potential for TalkLink to take a leadership role through innovation, and advocacy and research. We have a great depth of knowledge and are seen as a trusted partner by our clients and by our funders (Whaikaha Ministry of Disabled People, and ACC). I joined Wayne in some of his key stakeholder engagement at the start of the development of the strategy, and it was great to see the coherence of our initial thinking with their expectations and aspirations. When we took back to them our finalised strategy, they were strongly supportive of the direction we are taking.

We began work on two critical areas – reviewing our approach to how we deliver and manage our ACC contract; and future-proofing our financial management. While the ACC work is still ongoing, the finance review has already resulted in some significant changes for our finance function, and the systems and processes we use. We acknowledge both of these projects have been challenging for those most involved, and we thank you all for your ongoing professionalism as this work has been undertaken. On behalf of the Board, I especially want to acknowledge Ankica Middeldorp, our Financial Controller. Ankica has been a stalwart and key contributor to TalkLink for many years. Her dedication, conscientiousness and absolute belief in what TalkLink does and stands for, has been unwavering. We wish her all the very best for the future.

We are now poised to take TalkLink to the next level of its growth and development. Key to that will be ensuring its ongoing sustainability through new and different funding avenues and services. It is an exciting but scary phase

“We actively embrace the principles of enabling good lives as being mana-enhancing and empowering for our clients.”

– within a constantly evolving sector and socio-political environment. While this is uncertain and challenging, it creates huge opportunity for us to advocate with, and on behalf of, those people with communication difficulties – and to become an enabler and supporter of real change for them, directed by them, for them.

In closing, I want to acknowledge my Board colleagues without whom we would not be in such a strong position to face the future – with our strategy signed off, our annual plan and budget approved, and our risk framework in place. All of the Board are volunteers, and give of their time, energy and resources freely. We are blessed with a high calibre Board, including a number who bring lived experience/client knowledge, professional management and leadership skills, together with change management, community and legal experience.

To our TalkLink staff, you are amazing! Your passion for this kaupapa is always evident, and your commitment to your clients is front and centre. Thank you.

To our senior leaders, we appreciate that it has been a period of immense change for you over the past year, as you have adapted to a new leadership approach and to the various reviews that have been underway. We have been impressed with your collective ability to navigate these changes and to maintain professionalism – even where your leadership roles and responsibilities are less defined, particularly our Clinical Leads.

For our TalkLink clients, we greatly value your ongoing commitment to, and support of, TalkLink. We constantly learn from your experiences as users of assistive technology and our services. We thank you for your positive engagement with our teams throughout the year and for your trust and faith in TalkLink.

And finally, to Wayne Ferguson, our Chief Executive. We recently reflected as a Board on your first year in the role and affirmed to you our full confidence and support. You have achieved a lot, especially getting the foundations for the future in place, and we are starting to see the impact of your leadership and highly consultative style on the refocusing of the organisation and the culture. We are very appreciative of the way you have kept the Board informed, and drawn from our collective wisdom in shaping the strategy, your plan and your priorities. We look forward to seeing you build on these foundations to begin delivering on our three-year goals, especially in improving access and equity for our clients, refocusing the organisation on client-directed services, and lifting the profile of TalkLink.

Ngā mihi nui



Denise Cosgrove
TalkLink Chair

CEO Report



Ma te huruhuru ka rere te manu – Adorn the bird with feathers so it may fly.

The whakataukī (proverb) describes the focus of our key activities over the past year. We have made excellent preparation in response to a changing and, at times, uncertain environment and have worked together to position Wahanga Tū Kōrero TalkLink to fly and even soar into the future! It is a great privilege to have joined this organisation. The staff team made a solid start to the year under the expert stewardship of Ann Smail before starting in the role in October 2022. One of my first tasks was to engage with staff across the organisation. I visited each office and met individually with over 95% of the staff team, representing all work-streams. What stood out was the high commitment, skill and passion to provide assistive technology support to the people we serve.

This was noticeable following the severe weather events impacting the North Island in late January and early February 2023. Staff responded immediately, were available to support and willing to travel to impacted regions if needed. The strength of our relationships with

other professionals in the community stood out and good liaison with local emergency services supported a well co-ordinated response to those in need. Despite ongoing limited access to some rural areas, our staff continue to travel to affected areas providing augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) assessment, training and support to individuals, whānau and wider support networks as the communities strive to recover.

I was fortunate to attend four workshops facilitated by Whaikaha as part of their early scoping and consultation work with equipment modification suppliers (EMS). This provided me with an insightful introduction to the early establishment work of the new Ministry of Disabled People, Whaikaha. Now, more than a year on, we are starting to understand the scope and scale of the transformation required within our sector. The current systems and processes have become increasingly complex. However, it is encouraging to note emerging improvements with the increased application of the enabling good lives principles. Streamlining processes and enhancing access to support more efficient work across the sector are vital focus areas that will lead to better outcomes for our clients.

Based on contributions from staff, we started work early in 2023 on developing a new strategic plan. We reviewed and refreshed our purpose and values, clearly articulated our mission, vision, and values, and incorporated cross-cutting principles that apply to all our endeavours at TalkLink. Within the following pages you will see our four strategic goals/pou. They signal a significant shift for our organisation, as we adapt to client directed service delivery, supporting increased choice and control for all to enjoy a good life. The strategic goals are supported by nine objectives and sixteen deliverables that are included in our work plan for the 2023-24 year ahead. I look forward to providing an update on our progress in next years' report.

As outlined in the Chair's report we started two important review projects, firstly a review of our finance function followed by a detailed review of our service delivery for the ACC contract. Our finance review resulted in a transition to a new financial services provider which is nearly completed. This is a significant change for TalkLink, and I extend my grateful thanks to the members of the finance team for their professionalism and support with the handover that is currently in progress. The work on our ACC service delivery is ongoing and the six months ahead provides an opportunity for us to implement some of the key operational recommendations identified in the review. This proactive focus on continuous improvement in our ACC contract delivery will support future tendering options.

As a first step to lifting our profile, over the past 12 months, we increased our reach and visibility on three social media platforms, ensuring we cater for a wider range of client preferences. Through several themed campaigns, we continue to receive constructive feedback for the increased AAC awareness raising and look forward to extending this as we raise our profile to support our advocacy strategic goal with improved mechanisms to amplify our client voice.

An area of critical importance is a focus on our people. This includes both TalkLink staff and the people we serve. Our staff are the heart of the organisation, and we need to increase our investment in developing, supporting, attracting and retaining our people. The staff wellbeing group continues to focus on supporting staff to adapt to a post pandemic working environment. This group also serves to raise our organisational awareness to help meet the requirements of a modernised workforce, maintaining a balance between work and home life while fulfilling the growing operational requirements of the organisation.

This is the first year we have prepared and reported on a Statement of Service Performance and the key summary data shows a snapshot of the impact we have had over the past year. Of note is the ongoing high satisfaction reports, with 95% of people satisfied with the support they received to use the equipment or strategy. We also provided services to 3,725 people, an increase of over 500 when compared to the previous year. An ongoing area of work and concern shared by all, is the increased demand for our services as indicated by the wait list. While we note some small percentage improvements

(reduced from 70 to 68%) for those waiting longer than 6 months, our waiting list continues to grow. On a positive note, we initiated two successful regional wait list pilot projects with encouraging results. We are now working on more scalable and longer-term sustainable solutions to how we deliver services to those most in need.

Retaining a focus on our people, I would like to thank our Ambassadors, Maqymseah Ninces and Geneva Hakaraia-Tino for their ongoing championing, support of and contributions to our work. Their input both internally to our operations and externally with wider stakeholders is invaluable. I also extend my thanks and admiration to the skilled and dedicated staff and the senior leadership team of Glen Dixon, Pariya Behnami and Ankica Middeldorp for their commitment to maintaining high-quality services, focused on meeting the needs of all our people. I also value and acknowledge the ongoing guidance, technical expertise and support from afar provided by Ann Smail.

TalkLink acknowledges the continued support we receive from trusts, foundations, societies and individuals many of whom, while not requesting to be named, are essential to our service. In these difficult financial times, your generous support is appreciated, thank you.

I too, extend my grateful thanks to the TalkLink Board and in particular our Board Chair, Denise Cosgrove for her tireless dedication and input to ensure TalkLink grows and adapts, and for providing me invaluable guidance and supportive challenge as I settled into the role.

Finally, this year we have adopted a new format for our annual report and highlight stories from those engaged with our services to demonstrate our positive impact. I hope you enjoy reading the moving accounts provided by our people.

We are well positioned for the year ahead with a resilience that will be needed as we face uncertain and challenging times. We are ready to fly.

Ngā mihi nui



Wayne Ferguson
CEO

Strategic Plan

Mahere Rautaki

Our Vision

All people with communication impairments can interact and participate to their full potential.



Our Mission

Linking people with assistive technology to enrich their lives and have a voice.

Our Values

- Communication is a fundamental human right
- The Rangatiratanga of Tangata Whenua is recognised
- Clients have choice and control of their lives
- We collaborate and work with dignity and respect
- We strive for excellence, innovation, and solutions



Cross Cutting Principles

- We support our clients to live the lives they choose and exercise choice and control
- We are a committed Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner and are developing our understanding of Te Ao Māori
- We recognise the importance of whānau, care networks and community
- Our people and the environment are valued, respected and protected by us.



Strategic Goals/POU

Facilitators of Service Excellence

This goal enables the enhancement of current services and the development of new services in line with EGL principles. It involves a shift from specialised assessment services to client-led decision making, where clients determine their needs and receive support to achieve their goals.

TalkLink delivers services that empower disabled individuals and their whānau with increased choice, control, and decision-making authority.

By innovating in service provision, TalkLink aims to achieve financial sustainability.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

This goal supports our focus on facilitating access to equitable supports and service provision and allows us to consider the most vulnerable, building an enabling society.

It supports the organisation to deliver on our commitment to being a Te Tiriti partner, demonstrating and living our values.

It supports TalkLink to understand and contribute to addressing issues of inequity and barriers to access at a local, national, and international level.

Advocacy and Research

This goal ensures the voice and needs of our clients are well understood and inform the development of an enabling Aotearoa.

Empowering partnerships and collective actions are central to this goal/pou.

TalkLink will contribute to emerging clinical and technology research to ensure the needs of people with communication impairments are understood and met.

Our People

This goal ensures our TalkLink staff are skilled and supported in their roles in order to serve our communities well.

It supports the development and maintenance of a workforce that enables our clients and their whānau to flourish.

We acknowledge the critical importance of and our unique position as connectors and facilitators between human need, quality of life and the use of emerging and innovative technology.



Tua o te Pae

E te tī, e te tā, nei rā te mihi manahau ki a koutou katoa.

E mihi ana ki a koutou i te awhina katoa i tō tātou kaupapa o Tua o te Pae. Mei kore koutou, kāore mātou e taea te haere tonu ki te moemoea.



Thank you to those who continue to support Tua o te Pae. Without your support, we would not be able to keep striving towards our goal.

It has been a big year for Tua o te Pae which has seen a partnership form between Wahanga Tū Kōrero, and Te Hiku Media, made possible by the involvement of Te Puni Kōkiri (Ministry of Māori Development). Throughout this process, our goal remains the same; to see the development of a Te Reo synthetic voice for high tech AAC as well as the development of AAC in Te Reo in all its forms. The Tua o te Pae team continues to be led by Geneva Hakaraia-Tino and supported by Ann Smaill and Mary Browne (SLTs) with oversight from our Kaiwhakahaere Matua, Wayne Ferguson.

Te Hiku Media, originally an iwi radio station based in Kaitaia, is also a tech developer and key player in Te Reo speech technology and Māori data sovereignty developments in Aotearoa. It is through consultation with Te Puni Kōkiri that the world of AAC and Te Reo Māori centric technology is being brought together.

Tua o te Pae continue to leverage the voices of Māori AAC users to the forefront of our kaupapa. Despite the barriers that exist, AAC in Te Reo continues to grow in visibility in the community as well as in use by general society. Wahanga Tū Kōrero has been involved in the development of core vocabulary boards in the community and will be involved in research exploring core words in Te Reo to better inform this mahi (both low and high tech) going forward.

Give A Little

E rere ana te mihi ki a koutou katoa i tukuna te tautoko ki te kaupapa nei!

Thank you to the many people who supported the Tua o te Pae kaupapa by providing a Give a Little donation. In the end, a total of \$8,392 dollars was raised!

This pūtea will go towards the on-going costs associated with Tua o te Pae that are not covered by other funding.

Partnering with Te Hiku Media

In July 2023, Te Puni Kōkiri approved to fund Phase 1 of the Tua o te Pae project. This phase involves conducting a feasibility study to allow Te Hiku Media to explore technical requirements and capabilities. Work on the Te Reo voice has begun with the Te Hiku Media team finding an appropriate voice talent, working through technical issues, writing scripts for the voice talent, and beginning recording. A steering group and operating structures have also been established to guide Tua o Te Pae and Te Hiku Media. The overarching steering group made up of a small group of people sits separately from the already established whānau and kaupapa rōpū (although includes representatives from both rōpū). During Phase 1, our role as Tua o te Pae is to provide expert advice regarding AAC systems including considerations of barriers and possible solutions. We continue to consult with our kaupapa and whānau rōpū. We also see Wahanga Tū Kōrero as being able to act as a facilitator between Te Hiku Media, AAC users, suppliers and developers.

In addition to seeking voice from the community, Phase 1 has been about forming and strengthening relationships between Tua o te Pae and Te Hiku Media. In particular,



“Everyone felt they were treated with so much respect and empathy.”

Geneva and Peter-Lucas Jones (CEO of Te Hiku Media) have met at a Te Tai Tokerau Te Reo wānanga and members of Te Hiku Media have attended an AAC demo led by TalkLink. At this hui different AAC apps and devices were demonstrated to the team to highlight features and considerations of high tech AAC. Te Hiku Media has been provided with a communication device to further support this exploratory phase.

<https://www.teaonews.co.nz/2023/07/19/a-maori-voice-for-non-speaking-people/>

Making AAC in Te Reo more visible and supporting research into Māori AAC:

Through collaboration we are supporting the creation of various core vocabulary boards to be set up in public spaces in Kāpiti, Whanganui, and Timaru. These are all bilingual boards and join the growing number of vocabulary boards popping up around the motu. This has created much discussion about the many ways a Te Reo

core vocabulary board could look, and in real Kiwi style many people are giving this a go and finding what works, ahead of any substantive research.

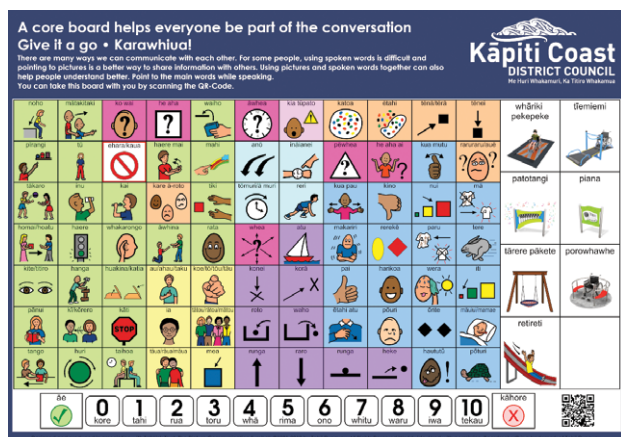
It has been great working with whānau and kaiako (teachers) to adapt the boards to better reflect language use for settings and mita (dialects).

In particular, Kāpiti Coast District Council and Wahanga Tū Kōrero have recently come to the end of a 12-month consultation and collaboration process to deliver seven double sided (Te Reo and English) core vocabulary boards which will be positioned in different community settings across the rohe. Lorna Irene Park which this year won Playground of the Year, is one such setting. This playground is set to become even more inclusive and accessible when bilingual core vocabulary boards are introduced supporting tamariki to use AAC at the playground and raise awareness of AAC in general.

Developing a research base for Te Reo Māori is a current goal. We are in consultation with New Zealand University Speech-Language Therapy programmes regarding this need and there is significant interest. Katrina McGarr (SLT and Clinical Educator, University of Canterbury), plans to support an Honours project with a te ao Māori lens to gather more information about core words in te reo in the summer of 2023/24.

Ngā mihi maioha,

Te tima o Tua o te Pae – Geneva, Mary and Ann



Impact

July 2022 - June 2023

Direct Support

Improved access to timely quality assessments
Improved independence



95%
of people satisfied with the support they received to use the equipment or strategy



93%
of people who continued to use the equipment or strategy after 12 months



3725
people receiving services

1301
on waiting list



68%
on waiting list who have waited more than six months



100%
of people reported that use of the equipment or strategy allowed them to communicate better than before



Community Supports

Increased community knowledge to support participation



572
KiwiChat participants

100%
satisfied with courses



People

July 2022 - June 2023

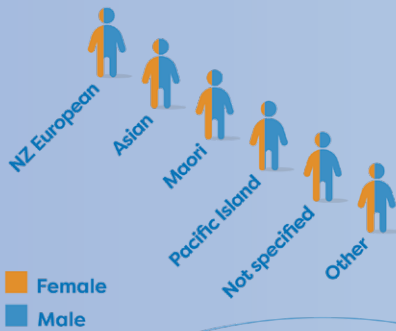
Snapshot

of the 3725 people receiving services

Ethnicity

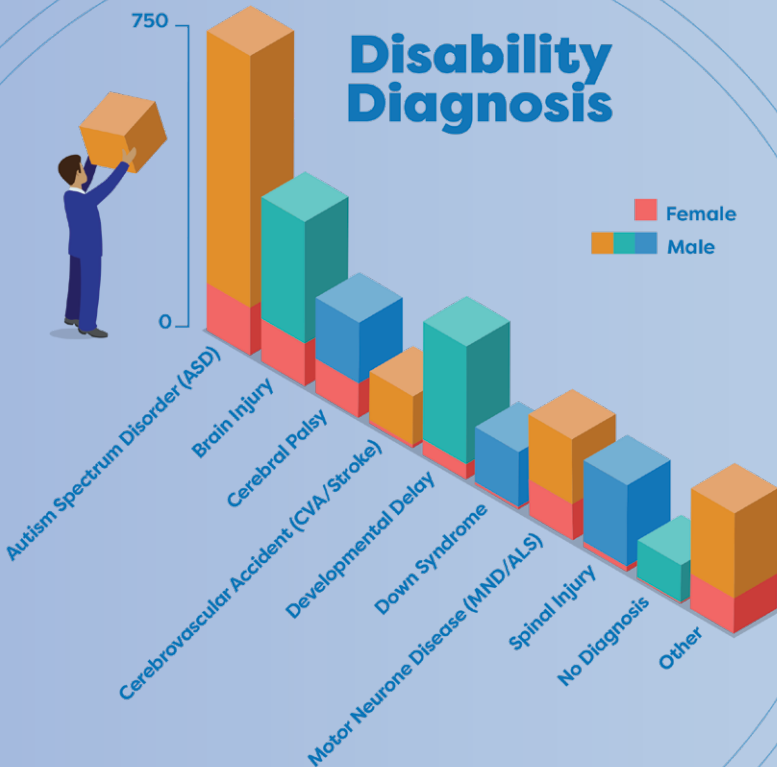


Gender by Ethnicity

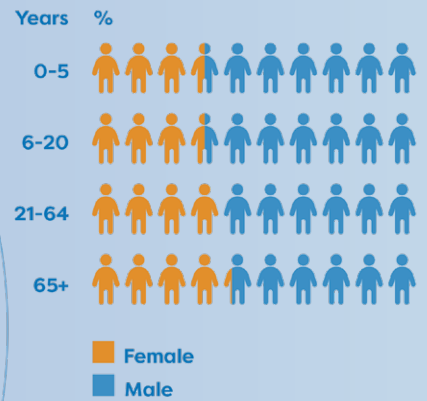


■ NZ European ■ Asian ■ Maori
■ Other ■ Pacific Island ■ Not specified

Disability Diagnosis



Age & Gender



Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa takitini



This whakatauki acknowledges team effort, and the amazing team around Levi, a student at Shotover Primary School near Queenstown, is testament to what can be achieved when everyone is working together to support a student learn and use AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) tools and strategies.

Shotover School opened in 2015 with 88 children on day one, and has rapidly grown since then, nearing 600 students today.

Levi uses a PODD (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display) communication book, which his team has been modelling and supporting Levi with for some time now. It is challenging



due to his vision and motor disabilities, and he needs help to scan through the options in order to make a choice. He now has a high-tech GridPad device with a keyguard (layer of hard plastic, with holes - as pictured) to help him target the cells. It is set up in a similar way to his PODD book, which means that all the mahi modelling on his PODD book is now making it easier for Levi to use the GridPad.

Levi loves being part of the class and we know that peer support is a highly motivating way for students to engage with AAC. Nadine McCulloch, Levi's ORS teacher shared some examples of how this can work:

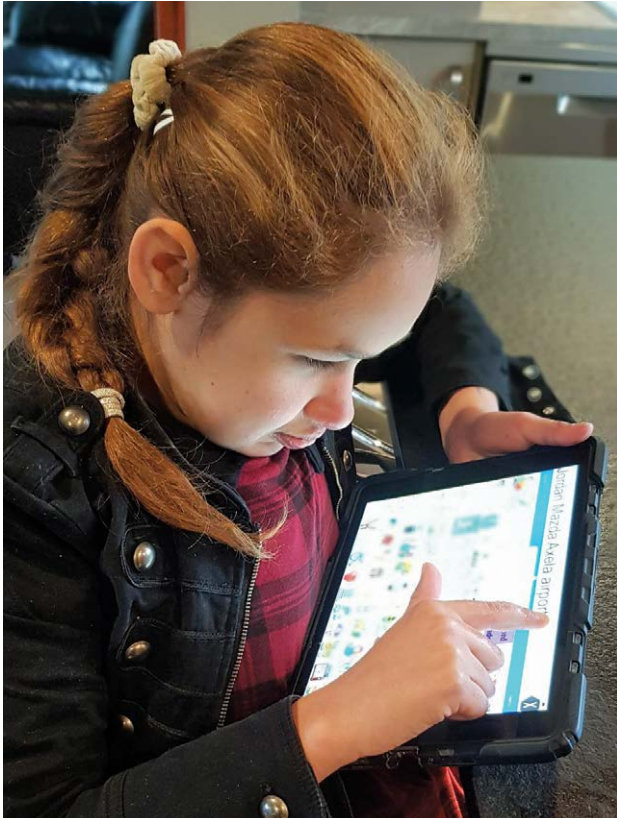
In this photo Levi's teaching team are using his communication device and displaying the PODD communication software on the big screen (top left of the photo) during a shared reading session with the whole habitat (3 classes).

Nadine also shared: "Just want to say how proud I am of Levi and his team again. Today they presented in the Whole School assembly using Levi's Device for a shared story."

His classmates lined up beside Levi and each had a turn at selecting the appropriate phrase on his device during the book reading, with Levi saying the last line and THE END. Great



As a family, using an AAC device was not a natural process when you have speech to fall back on.



Our daughter Grace could be described as a big cog within our family. Although she is very small in stature, the other metaphoric wheels that are connected to her disproportional medical, therapy and care needs spin our family's engine in a different way to others. The early days were overwhelming and there wasn't a solid plan that extended beyond her immediate health needs. Initially, we prioritised physical therapy to try to keep Grace mobile, however after a few years we soon realised that walking more than a few steps was difficult for her (and now she is quite zippy in a powerchair).

But we wanted desperately to unlock the little girl that seemed to understand what we were saying but was unable to respond verbally. It was such a frustrating guessing game without language. Grace was able to master some Makaton and NZ Sign Language but had some issues with her dexterity. She tried miming

what she was trying to say so we became quite good at trying to break it down by process of elimination. We were lucky, and we do not take this determination and ability to communicate on some level for granted, as it is not always achieved. But having good people in Grace's support team through the years has bolstered how we coped as a family.

TalkLink were pivotal to Grace's communication. I attended some of their workshops held in Invercargill and got a better grasp of the learning underpinning augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Grace had speech therapy at her mainstream school, but it was TalkLink's focus on the pathway to communication which provided her starting point and direction. She began using a lunchbox sized device called a Springboard where we recorded words in conjunction with photos. This gave her the ability to share information within her class and participate in activities such as a book 'retell' with the support of a teacher aide. Her classmates gravitated towards the AAC device, and their own recorded voices stating their names alongside their photos helped Grace make social connections, which is difficult when you are different to others.

A few years later we felt that Grace was ready for an option that allowed more independent speech. Ann and Helen from TalkLink showed me the LAMP* programme and we trialed it over the summer holidays. With its icon-packed screen, it was challenging, and I was unsure if Grace was ready for such a steep learning curve. Seeing the raw components of sentences with correspondingly random icons grouped into unintuitive sections was a completely different concept from pre-recorded sound bites. But the LAMP programme allowed Grace as the user to steer the sentences in multiple directions rather than following someone else's input. And that represented a leap of faith towards communication freedom!

In order for this to be successful, we needed to make her AAC device indispensable to Grace. So, we had a button for everyone that she knew on her LAMP programme within categories so we could grow the lists - family, friends, classmates, teachers, medical staff, our workmates, Go-Bus drivers - everyone in Grace's orbit. This scalability was an essential element that we required - plenty of storage for all the words that we take for granted - favourite places, songs, movies, cars, food to supplement and customise the LAMP's vocabulary. Anything that was of interest to her to try to prompt communication opportunities.

Conversational exchanges using the device required some engineering and might only generate a one-word response, but it was a positive change from the previous guessing game that led to communication frustration. She was so excited to be able to tell us who she sat beside at school or who was going to visit on the weekend when we prompted. We were just as excited to have her independently answer a question. Along with her educational support team at her new specialist school, we were committed to putting

Initially we had photos alongside the noun, but we were delighted to see that Grace began to recognise words. Probably a very normal development but we had learnt not to over-reach. The number of words and the structure of Grace's sentences have developed in her own time and wobbly trajectory. Her LAMP sentences are not even close to being grammatically perfect or poetic but they are still just as inspiring to us now as that independent one word response so many years ago.

Her AAC device is the first thing that she picks up in the morning and the last thing that is placed on the charger before going to bed. Grace also uses it in a learning capacity by copy and pasting from her LAMP programme into YouTube to search for something she is interested in, checking information like flight paths or airport arrivals in the same manner, making her own pages in BookCreator with photos she has taken or had emailed to her and adding text.

Our daughter's LAMP programme is the essential tool that she uses for communication. She takes the lead insisting that new words

“Her AAC device is the first thing that she picks up in the morning and the last thing that is placed on the charger before going to bed.”

in the effort believing that Grace's ability to communicate would be a bridge to stronger social connections. It wasn't just up to the school between 9.00am and 3.00pm, her LAMP programme had to be consistently shining at home as well so Grace could see that it was just as important to us.

As a family, using an AAC device was not a natural process when you have speech to fall back on. Hovering over the screen and selecting the appropriate key to model sentence construction felt slow and artificial. It could suffocate spontaneity and extinguish humour with all the steps required to implement a sentence in contrast to the immediacy of just blurting it out. A lot of patience was required to avoid stepping in and completing Grace's sentence for her, time dragged in those moments heavy with our hope and expectation. Any challenges that we had using it were mirrored by Grace's impaired motor and processing skills. With repetition and eventual familiarity with where the words were stored, we all gradually became better users.

are added and in lieu of having the device use inflection when she is trying to emphasise a point, she brandishes it in front of her like she's on a protest march! Grace sparkles with energy when she can communicate with others via her AAC device and as her parents we love seeing her light up with LAMP. And with social media and smart home control capability, Grace's LAMP communication journey will be ongoing and hopefully just as rewarding. Her AAC device is so much more than just an iPad, it contains the key that unlocks her voice.

*LAMP, (Language Acquisition Through Motor Planning), is an AAC app that uses a robust core vocabulary (350 most frequently used words), along with more than 3,000 words that allows for the customisation of personalised vocabulary such as names, favourite foods, and favourite places. LAMP uses multi-meaning pictures called icons, that are combined into short sequences to code vocabulary. These sequences follow patterns, which helps a person predict the way to say a new word, reducing learning demands. There is only one motor pattern per word in LAMP which can speed up communication.

Hine

Hine is a 64-year-old woman who developed dysarthria (difficulty speaking) after 2 strokes, which impacts her ability to communicate with her whānau.



She developed hemianopia, an inability to see part of her visual field, after her second stroke. Hine lives with her husband (TeWhata) and daughter (Marina), who speak a mixture of Māori and English.

Prior to TalkLink input, Hine communicated using her voice but her whānau did not always understand what she said and found her voice quieter than before her strokes. Hine wrote sentences out on a whiteboard when she wasn't understood, but her writing was sometimes difficult to read. Hine was shown a variety of equipment options, including an iPad with communication app and paper-based

communication book. Hine trialled a symbol-based and a text to speech communication app but found it difficult to see the iPad screen. Additionally, she found the technology of an iPad to be a barrier. Hine decided a paper-based communication book was the best type of equipment to support her communication.

The whānau requested to trial a voice amplifier, as they thought the main barrier to her communication was her quiet voice. After trialling the voice amplifier, they realised the movement of her tongue and lips were also impacted which made her speech sound slurred. Hine and her whānau received conflicting information regarding her diagnosis and discussed this with the TalkLink SLT to clarify her strengths and areas of need.

Initially, the whānau thought an iPad would be most useful but realised the advantages of paper-based equipment after trialling an iPad. The trial of the voice amplifier allowed Hine and whānau to better understand what impacted her communication and identify strategies that supported her communication. Hine's whānau heavily personalised her communication book, translating part of the book into Māori and adding a section that explained the features of dysarthria.

This book empowered Hine and her whānau to explain her disability to other whānau members who she saw regularly. Hine used the book with her mokopuna to discuss her whakapapa and life story. Hine and TeWhata donated a koha to TalkLink to express their gratitude.

“I can't even describe the difference TalkLink has made over the years, helping mum communicate and get help and assistance as things changed. We are forever grateful.”

Martin

Martin is a 52yr old male living in Northland. He had a bright and fulfilling work history as a fitter/turner/welder, until he sustained bilateral carpal tunnel injuries associated with complex regional pain syndrome.



Martin lives each day with constant pain in his wrists, hands and fingers, with some muscle spasm in his arms, and this has impacted his ability to work. TalkLink assessed Martin to determine if any adaptive technology may assist his independent use of a computer. He is currently working alongside a Back-to-Work provider to look at alternative employment options based on previous skills.

He would like to get back into the workforce and had previously been assessed by a Return-to-Work Occupational Therapist who provided an ergonomic work-station setup. This included a high/low desk, ergonomic keyboard and mouse (off the shelf), and screen raiser. Unfortunately, given the pain experienced in his hands, this equipment did not aid him to complete tasks at the computer for more than 5 minutes.

Martin had decided that best use of his skills would be to up-skill in the use of CAD to pursue a career change to droughting, which would require use of alternative mouse and text entry methods, as well as aim to remain in lowered levels of pain.

Martin trialled alternative mouse styles including a trackball, joystick, and 2 various

head mouse options. Martin opted for a gyroscopic head mouse, as this gave him the least amount of pain in the neck area and was the most accurate to complete tasks such as opening files and navigating toolbars. The hand-operated mouse, although more familiar, continued to flare-up pain in the wrists, hands and fingers.

The inbuilt computer microphone was an initial method trialled for text entry, however this was unable to accurately transcribe Martin's words and make corrections. He was able to trial Dragon NaturallySpeaking – a speech to text dictation programme to reduce the need for typing. Dragon was able to easily understand Martin's voice, and dictate with a high level of accuracy, deeming this trial successful. Unfortunately, Martin's existing computer did not hold suitable specifications to run Dragon, so this needed to be considered in the funding application.

The funding application was approved, as well as the Back-to-Work provider's application for autoCAD-student. This package was setup for Martin at his home, with training commencing in the use of Dragon. Martin was taught the commands to dictate, correct and edit text, as well as commands to use Dragon as a mouse. The head mouse was harder to use initially due to the increased size of the monitor of the computer provided.

Martin is now on a supported pathway with the necessary equipment to change his career and is advancing well with the use of his assistive technology tools to navigate and use his computer hands-free.

Martin has felt empowered to regain some autonomy and produce work he is proud of. He is looking forward to becoming more efficient in his use of the computer and plans to start contract work as soon as possible.

2022–2023

Financial Statements

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TalkLink Trust Directory

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023



| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Date of Trust Deed | 16 October 1991 |
| Charities Commission Number | CC23025 |
| IRD Number | 57-965-797 |
| GST Registration | Two Monthly Invoice Basis |
| Tax Status | Charity Organisation with Tax Exemption |
| Place of Business | Auckland 13 Coyle Street Sandringham, Auckland 1025 Wellington Level 3, 187 Willis St Wellington 6011 Christchurch Unit 15, 2 Barry Hogan Pl Riccarton, Christchurch 8041 |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Board of Trustees | Cathy COMBER Denise COSGROVE (Chair) John GREEN Tuini Glenda HAKARAIA-TINO James JORDAN Maqymseah NINCES Jonny WILKINSON |
|--------------------------|--|

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Beneficiaries | The Community |
| Auditor | Charity Integrity Audit Ltd 1275A East Coast Road, Kaiaua, 2473 |
| Bankers | ASB Bank |
| Legal Advisor | Margot J Nicholson Barrister & Solicitor Auckland |

Statement of Service Performance

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

MEASURING OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK Wahanga Tū Kōrero TalkLink Trust

VISION:

All people with communication impairments can interact and participate to their full potential

MISSION:

Linking people with assistive technology to enrich their lives and have a voice

LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE:

Equitable, person directed communication assistive technology services in Aotearoa, New Zealand

Immediate Outcomes

Direct Support

Improved access to timely quality assessments

Improved independence

Community Support

Increased community knowledge to support participation

Outcome Indicators

% of people who waited over 6 months before assessment initiated

% of people who continued to use the equipment or strategy after 12 months

% of people who were satisfied with the support they received to use the equipment or strategy

% of CAT support referrals

% satisfied with courses

% of people who reported KiwiChat was useful

Output Indicators

of people receiving services

on waiting list

#/% on waiting list who have waited > 6 months

#/% of people who reported that use the equipment or strategy allowed them to communicate better than before

CAT community therapists trained

of group programmes (KiwiChat) held

of KiwiChat recipients

A range of case studies will support the outcome data

These financial statements must be read in conjunction with the Auditor's Report and the accompanying Notes.

Statement of Service Performance

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

| | 2022 -2023 | 2021 -2022 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| DIRECT SUPPORT: | | |
| Improved access to timely quality assessments | | |
| Improved independence | | |
| Outcome Indicators | | |
| % of people who waited over 6 months before assessment initiated | 24% | 27% |
| % of people who continued to use the equipment or strategy after 12 months | 93% | 88% |
| % of people who were satisfied with the support they received to use the equipment or strategy | 95% | 92% |
| Output Indicators | | |
| # of people receiving services | 3725 | 3209 |
| # on waiting list | 1301 | 994 |
| # on waiting list who have waited > 6 mths | 884 | 696 |
| % on waiting list who have waited > 6 mths | 68% | 70% |
| # of people who reported that use of the equipment or strategy allowed them to communicate better than before | 89 | 112 |
| % of people who reported that use of the equipment or strategy allowed them to communicate better than before | 100% | 97% |
| COMMUNITY SUPPORTS: | | |
| Increased community knowledge to support participation | | |
| Outcome Indicators | | |
| % of CAT support referrals | 18% | 18% |
| % satisfied with courses | 100% | 100% |
| % people who reported KiwiChat was useful | 90% | 100% |
| Output Indicators | | |
| # CAT community therapists trained | 28 | 22 |
| # of group programmes held | 13 | 9 |
| # of KiwiChat participants | 572 | 483 |

Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE REVENUE & EXPENSES

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Revenue from non-exchange transactions | | |
| Capital Grants & Donations | 73,016 | 74,870 |
| Operational Grants & Donations | 490,032 | 328,578 |
| | 563,048 | 403,448 |
| Revenue from exchange transactions | | |
| ACC Income | 1,084,011 | 859,249 |
| Client Equipment Services | 437,652 | 286,789 |
| Interest Received | 12,945 | 1,261 |
| Whaikaha Funding | 2,751,903 | 2,666,388 |
| MSD Wage Subsidy | 0 | 439,791 |
| Other Income | 95,153 | 62,656 |
| Total Exchange Transactions | 4,381,664 | 4,316,134 |
| Total Revenue | 4,944,712 | 4,719,582 |
| Expenses | | |
| Administration | 57,203 | 47,678 |
| Audit Fees | 6,544 | 4,794 |
| Client Equipment Services | 169,521 | 103,121 |
| Communication Costs | 39,411 | 37,477 |
| Depreciation | 75,159 | 93,187 |
| Equipment Repairs & Maintenance | 107,989 | 90,222 |
| Other Expenses | 143,488 | 88,594 |
| Property Costs | 210,075 | 147,156 |
| Salaries and Wages | 3,861,412 | 3,445,078 |
| Staff Development & Training | 64,231 | 40,123 |
| Vehicle and Travel | 274,221 | 160,720 |
| Total Expenses | 5,009,254 | 4,258,150 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) | (64,542) | 461,432 |

STATEMENT OF MOVEMENTS IN EQUITY

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Equity as at start of year | 1,333,531 | 872,098 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for year | (64,542) | 461,432 |
| Equity as at end of year | 1,268,989 | 1,333,530 |

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at June 2023

| | 2023 | 2022 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Total Equity | 1,268,989 | 1,333,530 |
| Represented by | | |
| Current Assets | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 746,042 | 847,571 |
| Accounts Receivable | 816,042 | 776,368 |
| Prepayments | 74,501 | 53,488 |
| Total Current Assets | 1,636,585 | 1,677,427 |
| Less Current Liabilities | | |
| Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses | 98,855 | 56,348 |
| Credit Cards | 17,420 | 13,758 |
| GST Payable | 114,310 | 150,667 |
| Employee Entitlements | 352,803 | 344,108 |
| Total Current Liabilities | 583,388 | 564,881 |
| Working Capital Surplus | 1,053,197 | 1,112,546 |
| Add Non-Current Assets | | |
| Property and Equipment | 215,792 | 220,985 |
| Total Net Assets | 1,268,989 | 1,333,531 |



Chairperson
Denise Cosgrove
Date: 26/10/2023



Chief Executive
Wayne Ferguson
Date: 26/10/2023

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

| CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES | 2023 \$ | 2022 \$ |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| Cash was Provided From | | |
| ACC, Whaikaha and Other Income | 4,329,045 | 3,818,545 |
| Grants & Donations | 563,048 | 403,448 |
| | 4,892,093 | 4,221,993 |
| Cash was Disbursed To | | |
| Payments to Suppliers | 1,122,681 | 754,313 |
| Payments to Employees | 3,782,697 | 2,893,007 |
| GST Paid | 36,357 | 15,023 |
| | 4,941,735 | 3,662,343 |
| Net cash flows from the Operating Activities | (49,642) | 559,650 |
| CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Cash was Received From | | |
| Interest Income | 12,945 | 1,261 |
| Cash was Disbursed to | | |
| Purchase of Fixed Assets | 64,832 | 72,9891 |
| Net cash flows from Investing Activities | (51,887) | (71,728) |
| CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Cash was Disbursed to | | |
| Interest Expense | 0 | 48 |
| Net cash flows from Financing Activities | 0 | (48) |
| Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents | (101,529) | 487,874 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year | 847,131 | 359,257 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year | 745,602 | 847,131 |

These financial statements must be read in conjunction with the Auditor's Report and the accompanying Notes.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

Reporting Entity: TalkLink Trust is a charitable organisation registered under the Charitable Trusts Act 1957, and the Charities Act 2005. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (NZ GAAP). They comply with the Public Benefit Entity NZ International Public Sector Accounting Standards (NZ IPSAS) as authorised by the External Reporting Board under the Financial Reporting Act 2013.

Measurement Base: The accounting principles recognised as appropriate for the measurement and reporting of results and financial position on a historical cost basis have been followed in the preparation of these financial statements.

Particular Accounting Policies: The following particular accounting policies, which materially affect the measurement of financial performance and financial position of the trust, have been applied:

Reduced Disclosure Requirements: TalkLink Trust is eligible to apply tier 2 reduced disclosure requirements given total expenditure is less than \$30 million, and it does not have public accountability. TalkLink Trust has elected to take advantage of the reporting exemptions available within the Tier 2 Reporting Framework.

Accounts Receivable: Accounts Receivable are valued at expected realisable value after making adequate allowance for bad debts.

Property and Equipment: Non-current assets are recorded at cost, or in the case of donated assets, fair value at the date of receipt, less accumulated depreciation. Assets acquired with individual values under \$500 are not

capitalised, they are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. The rates used are shown on the depreciation schedule forming part of the accounts.

No non-current assets are recognised as available for sale.

The trustees assess if any non-current asset is impaired and unable to generate an expected income return for its use. Impaired assets are separately classified, if appropriate, and an impairment value is taken to the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Depreciation: Non-current assets are depreciated over their estimated useful lives on a straight-line basis.

Depreciation of all assets is reported in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. The estimated useful lives for each major class of assets are:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Buildings | 20 Years |
| Building fit-out | 7 - 10 Years |
| Office Equipment and Furniture | 5 - 12 Years |
| Equipment - Computers and Assessment Equipment | 3 - 12 Years |
| Software and Website | 2 - 8 Years |
| Motor Vehicle | 7 Years |

Goods and Service Tax: Goods and Services Tax has been excluded from all applicable components of the Statement of Comprehensive Revenue & Expenses. All items in the Balance Sheet are stated exclusive of GST, with the exception of receivables and payables which include Goods and Services Tax. Goods and Services Tax outstanding at balance date is disclosed in the Statement of Financial Position.

Government Contracts: Contracts with the Ministry of Health are based on a 3-year term with a schedule of monthly payments, and invoice dates. The trust has recognised as income all rights to invoice under the contract schedule of payments.

Grants and Donations Received [NON-EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS]: All grants are recorded as income as received unless there are unfulfilled conditions with a contractual right of return attached to the grant, in which case the amount relating to the unfulfilled conditions is recognised as a liability and released to income as the conditions are fulfilled. Donations are recognised as income on receipt. Donations in kind of goods and services are separately classified and recognised in income and expenses, based on a fair value should those goods and services be purchased at an arm's length. Volunteer time, if applicable, has been acknowledged in the notes to the accounts but not been given a financial value in these statements.

Exchange Transactions: Revenue from the ACC is recognised when the agreed services have been delivered and the amount of revenue can be reliably measured. At this stage, the benefits of the service and products has been delivered to the respective client.

Employee Entitlements: Provision for Holiday Pay reflects annual leave owing to staff at balance date and is measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

The board has assessed employee sick leave entitlements and the occurrence of leave requests above any annual entitlement, for the inclusion of a material obligation. No material obligation is known to the board at the time of adopting these financial statements.

Changes in Accounting Policies: There have been no material changes in accounting policies applied by the entity during the period covered by these financial statements.

2. Reconciliation of Operating Surplus to Operating Cash Flows

| | 2023 \$ | 2022 \$ |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Reported Surplus/ (deficit) | (64,542) | 461,432 |
| Non-cash movements | | |
| Depreciation | 75,159 | 93,187 |
| Loss on Asset Disposal | (5,134) | 21,264 |
| Total Non-Cash Items | 70,025 | 114,451 |
| SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FROM INVESTING & FINANCING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Interest Expense | 0 | 48 |
| Interest Income | (12,945) | 1,261 |
| Total Investing and Financing Activities | (12,945) | (1,213) |
| MOVEMENTS IN WORKING CAPITAL | | |
| Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables | (39,674) | (56,537) |
| Increase/(Decrease) in Payables | (11,201) | (7,058) |
| Increase/(Decrease) in Employee Entitlements | 8,695 | 48,574 |
| Total Movements in Working Capital | (42,180) | (15,021) |
| Net cash flows from operating activities | (49,642) | 559,650 |

3. Fixed Assets

| | 2023 | | | 2022 | |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| | Cost \$ | Accumulated Depreciation \$ | Net Book Value \$ | Cost \$ | Net Book Value \$ |
| Buildings | 2,643 | 2,421 | 222 | 9,022 | 431 |
| Motor Vehicle | 344,527 | 202,802 | 141,725 | 317,790 | 131,717 |
| Furniture & Fitting | 22,047 | 16,929 | 5,118 | 34,319 | 3,879 |
| Office Equipment | 17,316 | 15,649 | 1,667 | 31,421 | 3,665 |
| AT Equipment | 366,914 | 319,995 | 46,919 | 373,573 | 56,004 |
| IT Equipment | 325,801 | 305,660 | 20,141 | 320,712 | 25,289 |
| Intangibles | 8,780 | 8,780 | 0 | 8,780 | 0 |
| Total Fixed Assets | 1,088,028 | 872,236 | 215,792 | 1,095,617 | 220,985 |

4. Board of Trustees

The board of trustees have not received any remuneration during the financial year (last year \$nil).

5. Key Management Personnel

The key management personnel are the Chief Executive, Operations Managers and Financial Controller. The aggregate remuneration was \$495,482 for 3.9 FTE (last year 4 FTE \$411,087)

6. Operating Lease Commitments

| | 2023 \$ | 2022 \$ |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|
| Payable within 12 months | 134,701 | 129,082 |
| Payable beyond 12 months | 16,313 | 177,769 |

The Trust leases 3 premises:

The lease for 13 Coyle St expires 16-09-2024 with 2 rights of renewal. The final expiry is 15-09-2030

The lease for 185 Willis St Wellington expires 13-01-2024

The lease for 2 Barry Hogan Pl Christchurch expires 12-04-2024 with a further 3 rights of renewal. The final expiry is 11-4-2033

7. Contingent Liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities at balance date (last year \$Nil).

8. Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments at balance date (last year \$Nil).

GRANTS & DONATIONS RECEIVED

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

TalkLink Trust would like to thank the many donors and supporters, who while not requesting to be named, are still essential to the service delivered.

| | |
|---|---|
| ANZ Staff Foundation | Otago Community Trust |
| Aotearoa Gaming Trust | Perpetual Guardian - Earnest Davis Hyam & The Ted and Mollie Carr |
| Bay Trust | Perpetual Guardian - Eva & Harold Wilson Charitable Trust |
| Care in the Community Disability Welfare Fund | Perpetual Guardian - Guy Anson Waddel Charitable Trust |
| Community Trust Mid and South Canterbury | Perpetual Guardian - Stewart Family Charitable Trust |
| Dragon Community Trust Ltd | Perpetual Guardian - The Kingdom Foundation |
| Eastern & Central Community Trust | ProCare Charitable Foundation |
| Foundation North | Rata Foundation |
| Four Winds Foundation | Robert Horton Memorial Trust |
| Frimley Foundation | Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust |
| Lion Foundation | The Community Trust of Southland |
| Mainland Foundation | The Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes |
| New Zealand Community Trust | The Trusts Community Foundation |
| NZ Lottery Grants Board | Thomas George Macarthy Trust |

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Trustees of the TalkLink Trust,
for the year ended 30 June 2023

Opinion

We have audited the performance report of the TalkLink Trust which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023 and the statements of comprehensive income, service performance, cashflows, changes in equity for the year ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion the performance statements present fairly, in all material respects, the reported outcomes and outputs, and quantification of the outputs to the extent practicable, in the statement of service performance are suitable, the entity information and financial position of the TalkLink Trust as at 30 June 2023 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year ended, in accordance with Public Benefit Entity International Public Sector Accounting Standards [PBE NZ IPSAS] Reduced Disclosure Regime [RDR] tier 2 framework.

Basis for Opinion

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand) (ISAs (NZ)) and the audit of the entity information and statement of service performance in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (NZ) ISAE (NZ) 3000 (Revised).

Our responsibilities under those standards are further described below in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the TalkLink Trust in accordance with Professional and Ethical Standard 1 (Revised) *Code of Ethics for Assurance Practitioners* issued

by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

Other than in our capacity as auditor of the report, we have no other relationship with, or interests in, the TalkLink Trust.

Restriction on Responsibility

This report is made solely to the Trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 42F of the Charities Act 2005, and their deed of incorporation. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Governance Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The governance is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statements in accordance with PBE NZ IPSAS framework with the RDR and for such internal control as the governance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the performance statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the performance statements, the governance is responsible for assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the governance either intends to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Performance Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statements, as a whole, are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (NZ) and ISAE (NZ) 3000 (Revised) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users, taken on the basis of these performance statements.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the XRB's website at <http://www.xrb.govt.nz/standards-for-assurance-practitioners/auditors-responsibilities/audit-report-8/>



**Charity Integrity Audit Ltd, Chartered Accountants
South Auckland**

Director: Peter Conaglen
26 October 2023



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