

# **MDAS 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

## **Chairperson's Report and Executive Director's Report**

### **Saturday 28 November 2020**

#### **Chairperson's Report - Aunty Debra Chaplin**

Today's AGM is an important milestone on our reform journey.

We are opening MDAS back up to the community, and overhauling our leadership and governance.

In September we brought VACCHO and Jill Gallagher in as Executive Director and she has already made a huge difference.

Between September and November our membership increased from less than 40 to now almost 300.

On behalf of the Board I want to acknowledge the staff who achieved this amazing effort – John Jackson, Jacinta Chaplin, Tamara Handy, Pearl Dunne and Darlene Thomas.

We have a new leadership team.

- Acting CEO Jacki Turfrey
- John Bergin the Acting Executive Director of Corporate Services
- George Fagioli the Acting Executive Director of Family Services
- Raelene Stevens the Acting Executive Director of Health Services

But we know this is just the start. The new Board is going to have a lot of work to do.

On behalf of the Board, I thank the MDAS staff for their hard work this year.

## **Executive Director's Report – Jill Gallagher**

### *The project so far*

I have been Executive Director for 2 months now. When I started, I found some troubling things and we acted quickly to address them.

We have encouraged community to rejoin MDAS. We started with fewer than 40 members and now we have 299.

We have tightened the oversight and management of MDAS resources and assets to make sure community's resources stay in community.

I have also found things that give me hope and make me excited about what MDAS can achieve.

Talented and committed staff delivering good quality services to the community.

Strong, engaged communities ready to support MDAS to change to become the heart of communities again.

There are two quotes in the reception here that capture that community spirit and inspire me.

The first is "Our people have dreams that have guided us and kept us strong for generations".

The other is "We have a vision to keep our young ones strong into the future".

### *The next year will be challenging – we need everyone's help*

I am here to support MDAS for another 4 months. There is a mountain of work to do. My team cannot get it all done, but we will set MDAS on the right path.

As Aunty Debra Chaplin said, whoever gets elected to the Board today will have a substantial job and they are going to need the help of everyone across the Mallee to deliver it.

Some of the priorities are:

**Rebuilding integrity –**

Making MDAS transparent to its communities so it is clear where resources and opportunities are going and why.

Making MDAS a model of ethics and integrity.

**Rebuilding trust –**

Building the strength of MDAS governance structures.

Making sure decisions are informed by communities.

**Putting MDAS at the heart of the Mallee communities -**

Making communities proud of MDAS.

*The work plan for the next 4 months*

To achieve this, my priorities are to work with the Board to:

- Organise a workshop early next year with members from across the Mallee to review the MDAS constitution. To make it strong and based on the best governance practices.
- Recruit a permanent CEO to give staff and communities certainty.
- Reform the MDAS systems for financial and asset management.
- Respond to issues coming from the ongoing IBAC investigation that show the need for system improvements.
- Work with staff to reinforce the highest standards of integrity in MDAS.

*Thanks to everyone*

I want to acknowledge the staff of MDAS who have kept going through all the uncertainty. We see you and appreciate you. We know it has been hard. It will get better.

I want to acknowledge the Board which has worked with me on our reform agenda. And I acknowledge the constructive relationship I have had with the Mallee Community Leadership Group.

Mostly, I want to acknowledge the Mallee communities who have kept strong and insisting on community control of Aboriginal services.