

MINUTES
NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING
25 November 2020
Wellington/via Zoom

Members: D Cameron (Chair), H Allison, P Coburn, P Henare, H Mexted, C Wade-Brown, R Tipene, L Chase

In attendance: R Cullinane (Chief Executive), A Wilson-Goldman (Strategic Communications and Partnerships Manager), K Douglas (National Operations Manager, M Weatherall (Executive Director – Te Araroa), S Cruickshank (GIS/IT Manager), J Yang (minutes) and B Johnson (observer)

Opening Comments

The meeting commenced at 11am.

P Henare opened the meeting with a karakia. P Henare spoke of P Tait's contributions to the Commission, his qualities and character and stories from his past. P Tait, the Commission's kaumatua, passed away in October.

The Chair welcomed Board members, staff and observer.

B Johnson spoke to the board and gave an overview of his relationship to and history with the Commission.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from P Culling.

Conflicts of Interest

C Wade-Brown is also member of the Te Araroa Trust Board.

Confirm Agenda

The Board confirmed the agenda for the meeting.

2. Confirm Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held in Wellington and via Zoom on 23 September 2020 were circulated and read.

Action: The Board

- a) **confirmed** the minutes of the 23 September 2020 meeting as being a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved H Mexted

Seconded P Henare

Carried

Matters arising from the minutes

No matters were arising from the minutes.

3. Chief Executive's report

The board discussed the chief executive's report for November 2020.

R Cullinane gave a strategic summary of the year to November and reported on the 2019/2020 Annual Report and audit; Audit and Risk Committee matters; operations; Enhanced Access Grant applications; the Māori partnerships strategy; Te Araroa; the Act Review; insurance; regional leadership and strategies; partnerships and policy; IT; health and safety; recent notable meetings; and potential upcoming collaborative projects.

Act Review

R Cullinane will be meeting with MPI next week. It is unlikely that any legislative changes following from the Act review will take place before 2022. The board discussed the current lack of certainty for the future strategic direction of the Commission. This has partly been due to uncertainty around the act review and future policy settings, and partly due to a lack of confirmed future funding streams.

Audit and Risk Committee

On 24 November 2020, members of the Audit and Risk Committee met with the Audit director and independent Audit Chair to discuss a verbal report of the audit findings. However, the formal Audit and Risk Committee meeting was unable to take place and has been be rescheduled for early December.

Operations

Good progress has been made with the Commission's Guideline for the Management of Unformed Legal Roads. The operations team is in contact with Local Government NZ around how best to introduce this to councils.

Regional leadership and strategies

The Connecting Franklin-North Waikato project funding bid to the Waikato River Authority was unsuccessful. The Commission is looking into other funding possibilities. In the Taranaki region, the Commission has stepped back and is no longer actively involved. The project is now led by the Taranaki Trails Trust. It was also noted that more spatial planning and regional planning is occurring at the local government level.

Meetings

R Cullinane hosted a meeting with stakeholders to develop thoughts on Landcare Research's "Being Manuhiri" programme. The board discussed how to weave some ideas into outdoor access policy. There were many connections to ideas discussed at the Te Urewera conference earlier in the year.

Action: The Board

- a) **discussed** the chief executive's report for November 2020.

Moved H Mexted

Seconded H Allison

Carried

4. **Health and safety report**

P Culling presented the health and safety report as of November 2020.

This is a regular report, covering any accidents, near misses, on-going issues/any actions taken, initiatives, and any other relevant matters.

There were no accidents and no near misses since the last report.

Action: The Board

a) **noted** the Commission's November 2020 Health and Safety report.

Moved P Henare

Seconded P Coburn

Carried

Part A

5. **Statement of Intent delay**

A Wilson-Goldman presented a paper seeking the board's agreement to request a one-year extension from the Commission's responsible minister for a refreshed Statement of Intent (SOI).

We expect to have a much clearer idea of policy direction by 2022, as the act review policy development should be underway by then. The delay would allow us to take this into account, when drafting the medium-long term planning in the new SOI. The new SOI would come into effect on 1 July 2022.

The board noted the Commission's shift from being reactive to access enquiries and issues, to focusing more on proactive planning, such as with regional projects.

Action: The Board

a) **agreed** that management write to Minister Whaitiri, through MPI requesting a one-year extension on the requirement to produce an SOI.

Moved H Mexted

Seconded H Allison

Carried

6. **2021 timetable**

R Cullinane presented the Commission's 2021 planning and reporting timetable, for the board's feedback.

The board considered a change from 5 to 4 board meetings a year. This would align better with quarterly reporting. The board agreed to testing this out in 2021. It was

emphasised that board meetings in the regions are important and should continue when the COVID-19 travel risks are low.

The board discussed the next board meeting in February 2021. It agreed this would be held regionally, and in conjunction with a longer strategic planning workshop to discuss the Commission's future direction and reflect on the changing environment and need.

The board noted that the terms of 5 of the current board members are due to finish on the 5 August 2021. A suggestion was made that the proposed August meeting be moved to July, prior to the finishing. A July meeting could also overlap with the RFA workshop in July, to allow for a joint RFA and board session.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** the change to 4 board meetings for 2021.
- b) **discussed** the draft planning and reporting timetable for 2021.

Moved P Henare **Seconded** R Tipene **Carried**

7. Māori Partnership Strategy

R Cullinane presented the final draft version of the Commission's Māori Partnership Strategy to the board for approval.

The board discussed the three workplans in the strategy and how they would be implemented. The Commission is eager to implement the strategy and is in the process of engaging a consultant to advise on the implementation plan. This will have measurable goals and have specific timeframes for delivery.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** the revised Māori Partnership Strategy.
- b) **agreed** to the components of the initial Māori Partnership Strategy implementation plan, with a revised and more detailed implementation plan to be circulated to the board when it is complete.

Moved L Chase **Seconded** P Henare **Carried**

Part B

8. Annual Report 2019-2020

A Wilson-Goldman presented the final draft of the Commission's Annual Report for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

The board noted that a mihi for the Commission's late kaumatua P Tait would be added to the report.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission's Annual Report for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

Moved H Mexted **Seconded** P Henare **Carried**

9. Report to the Board on the Audit

R Cullinane presented an oral report of the findings from Audit New Zealand's recent audit.

The Audit and Risk Committee and the Audit Director met on 24 November. Notes from this meeting from the Audit Chair were circulated to the board.

The Audit and Risk Committee will receive the final version of the report to the board when it becomes available.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** Audit New Zealand's oral report to the Audit and Risk Committee on the audit of the Commission for the year ended 30 June 2020.
- b) **discussed** any issues or areas of concern.

Moved H Mexted **Seconded** H Allison **Carried**

10. Audit and Risk Committee meeting

The Audit and Risk Committee meeting scheduled for after the Committee's meeting with the Audit Director on 24 November did not take place. This meeting will be rescheduled for before the end of the year, to be held via Zoom.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that the Audit and Risk Committee meeting scheduled for 24 November 2020 did not take place. The meeting will be rescheduled for before the end of 2020.

Moved R Tipene **Seconded** P Coburn **Carried**

11. Operations Report

K Douglas provided the Board with an operational update and presented the operations case-statistics report for the 1st Quarter (1 July to 30 September 2020).

K Douglas reported on the appointment of a new regional field advisor for Tāhuna me Te Taurapa o Te Waka (Queenstown Lakes and Southland); the back-capture of Public Access Easements through Crown Forest Land with Land Information NZ; a review of the status of land returned to iwi through treaty settlements; the review and update of Unformed Legal Road guidelines; and updates with the Overseas Investment Office.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the operations report and quarterly case-statistics report for the period 1 July to 30 September 2020.

Moved H Allison **Seconded** P Coburn **Carried**

12. Te Araroa Trail update

M Weatherall presented the board with an update on activities relating to the Commission's relationship with Te Araroa Trust.

The memorandum of understanding between the Commission and Te Araroa Trust is for 2 years and will be reviewed at the end of this period. A joint meeting will be organised next year to discuss long-term strategy.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission's Te Araroa report for November 2020.

Moved P Henare **Seconded** L Chase **Carried**

13. Q1 Quarterly Report

A Wilson-Goldman presented the Commission's Q1 quarterly report for 2020-2021 as submitted to the Ministry of Primary Industries.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission's Q1 Quarterly Report, as submitted to the Ministry of Primary Industries.

Moved P Henare **Seconded** P Coburn **Carried**

14. Rebrand Project update

A Wilson-Goldman updated the board on the project to develop a new identity, values and brand for the Commission.

Proposals were received from all four of the design agencies that were approached. Following assessment, a preferred provider was selected and invited to an in-person meeting. An agreement was reached with Gusto Design, who will work with two other organisations on this project. Write Ltd will assist with discovery and workshops, and Tūtira Mai NZ will provide cultural advice and oversight.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the update on the project to define a new identity, values and brand for the Commission.

Moved R Tipene

Seconded

H Mexted

Carried

15. Insurance

R Cullinane presented insurance renewal and cover for the period 14 October 2020 to 14 October 2021.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission's renewal and level of insurance cover and associated premiums.
- b) **noted** that the Commission's insurance broker Marsh has arranged insurance liability coverage for 2020/2021 against cyber risk.
- c) **noted** that the insurance renewal has been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Moved H Mexted

Seconded

R Tipene

Carried

16. Form and function post act-Review

R Cullinane presented a paper discussing the potential form and functions of the Commission if the recommendations of the 2019 Report on the Review of the Walking Access Report are funded and implemented. This also includes the Māori Partnership Strategy and implementation.

The board noted that many of the recommendations pivoted around relationships with other groups. The board agreed that this should be more carefully discussed at the upcoming strategic planning workshop in February and the following board meeting.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the report and deferred further discussion of the report to the next meeting in February.

Moved H Allison

Seconded P Henare

Carried

17. Significant correspondence

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Auditor-General's updated guidelines on managing conflicts of interest for the public sector.
- b) **noted** late correspondence from Southland District Council regarding EAG 14-20.

Part C

18. Other Business

The board was updated on the recent change of minister. Our new minister is Hon Meka Whaitiri. The briefing to the minister will be updated and a copy of the briefing will be sent to the board. A meeting will be set up between the minister, board chair and chief executive. As previously, an invitation will be extended to the minister to attend a board meeting and meet the board.

19. Closing comments

The chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

P Henare closed the meeting with a karakia.

20. Next meeting

The next board meeting will be held in February 2021. The location and dates to will be confirmed as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 2.35 pm.

D Cameron

Chairperson