

MINUTES
NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION

BOARD MEETING

5 July 2018

Wellington

Board Members: J Forbes (Chair), P Mudford, P Brown, B Stuart and R McNeill.

In attendance: E Pyle (Chief Executive), P Culling (Corporate Services Manager), R Cullinane (Operations Manager), M Fleck (Senior Analyst), P Tait (Kaumatua), E Morris (minutes)

Opening Comments

The meeting commenced at 11.15am

The Chair welcomed Board members and staff and P Tait opened the meeting with a karakia.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies

Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared

Confirm Agenda

The Board confirmed the agenda for the meeting.

2. Confirm Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held in Wellington on 12 April 2018 were circulated and read.

A minor amendment was made to Item 3, Chief Executive's report. Action point (b) was clarified by adding the word "Select" so that the point now reads "considered and acknowledged the report of the Environment Select Committee following the Commission's Annual Review."

Action: The Board

- a) **confirmed** the minutes of the 12 April 2018 meeting as being a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved R McNeill **Seconded** P Brown **Carried**

Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. Chief Executive's report

The Board discussed the Chief Executive's report for July 2018.

E Pyle reported on: staffing matters, including the resignation of the Chief Executive; the completion of the interim Audit; receipt of the minister's Letter of Expectation; entries received so far for the 2018 Top Outdoor Spot competition; the decision that the Commission will not be able to charge for time spent assessing access relating to Overseas Investment Office applications; progress on the project assessing completeness of the Walking Access Mapping System; progress on the tracks and trails strategies in Taranaki, the South Island and Northland tracks and trails strategy; the memorandum of understanding with Auckland Council; the tracks and trails database; progress on the upgrade to the Commission's information management systems; Official Information Act requests received, and disputes relating to Overseas Investment Office applications.

The Chief Executive reported on progress made toward the introduction of a case management system at the Commission. Preliminary work is almost complete and it is expected that data migration will take place in September with a go-live date of 1 October 2018. The Commission's rationale behind the introduction of a case management system is that it will enable effective monitoring and management of cases and provide easy to access document and e-mail storage. This will significantly improve performance reporting capability.

Action: The Board

- a) **discussed** the Chief Executive's report for July 2018.

Moved B Stuart **Seconded** R McNeill **Carried**

4. Update on central North Island Project - Taranaki

E Pyle presented a paper that updated the Board on what Commission staff have done to meet the commitment in the Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18 to "work with iwi, Department of Conservation, local government and others to explore new access opportunities" in the Central North Island area.

Commission staff are pursuing opportunities to work cohesively with councils, Iwi, Sport Taranaki and local community, tramping and outdoor activities groups to gain wide support for the Taranaki track and trails strategy and development of the round the mountain cycleway and walkway project. Discussions are underway with Sport Taranaki, councils, Sport NZ, Heritage NZ and the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) on the next steps.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that the Taranaki project meets the commitment made in the Commission's Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18.

Moved

R McNeill

Seconded

P Mudford

Carried

5. South Island Tracks and Trails Strategy, Northland Tracks and Trails Strategy – oral item

E Pyle presented a paper that updated the Board on a proposal to prepare a tracks and trails strategy for the South Island and another for Northland

Following a presentation of the *South Island High Country Access Report* to South Island mayors, the Commission was invited to prepare a tracks and trails strategy for the whole South Island.

A working group of mayors, councillors and Chief Executives has been set up to overview the development of the strategy. The Commission is currently preparing a draft bid for the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) to fund resources required for this project. Gaining support from stakeholders such as NZTA and Department of Conservation (DoC) will be an important factor in the bid process. The Board suggested that the Commission should consider the various interests in the area and that the project name should accurately reflect this.

The Commission presented to the Northland Forward Together strategic planning workshop in late June. As a result the Commission is now with working councils and community groups on a Northland tracks and trails strategy. A draft bid to the PGF will seek resources to further this project.

6. Update on Matakana Project and Memorandum of Understanding with Auckland Council

E Pyle presented a paper providing the Board with a situation analysis for access in the Puhoi-Matakana-Warkworth area (including with local iwi) and framework for strategy, as required by the Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18. Board agreement was sought for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Commission and Auckland Council.

The Commission is working closely with the Matakana Coast Trails Trust (MCTT) and Auckland Council to design tracks and trails into new urban form (rather than retrofitting following urban development). The Council's Greenways Plan provides an aspirational framework for this but detailed planning is needed to inform subdivision design. To further this work the Commission has recruited a contractor to develop a detailed plan for track and trails in the Matakana area.

Auckland Council is a key partner in this project and a MoU between the Commission and Auckland Council has been prepared. Key elements of the MoU are: the establishment of a part-time position in Auckland Council, based in Rodney, to focus on the Matakana trails initiative; reporting lines for this position; the establishment of a leadership group, chaired by the Commission and comprising representatives from Auckland Council, DoC, Iwi and MCTT. The Commission will ensure that a copy of the MoU is forwarded to the office of the Auckland Mayor and Council CEO.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the situation analysis for access in the Puhoi-Matakana-Warkworth area, as required by the *Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18*.
- b) **directed** the Commission's CE to sign the attached MoU with Auckland Council.

Moved J Forbes **Seconded** P Brown **Carried**

7. Completeness of WAMS

E Pyle presented a paper outlining the Commission's analysis on the completeness of the Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS).

The Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18 committed the Commission to publishing a report "on accuracy of information in WAMS that identifies priority areas for action".

WAMS is currently around 92% accurate. The majority of missing data is specific types of council-owned land, such as soil conservation and river protection reserves as well as some parks. Input from councils will be required to rectify this and correctly identify land that the public has access to.

In terms of overall public access across New Zealand WAMS is estimated to be around 66% complete. Marginal strips, easements and esplanade strips are the major sources of missing data due to these not being in digitised form. The next stage of the project will involve capturing the remaining data but this will require a major piece of work to digitise these elements. Timeframes, responsible agencies and other considerations are yet to be determined.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that WAMS is around 60-70% complete;
- b) **noted** that undigitised data is the main source of missing data on WAMS;
- c) **noted** that in terms of digitised data WAMS is approximately 92% complete;
- d) **noted** that it is estimated that there are 20,000 titles owned by local government that may have public access;
- e) **noted** the Commission's work on WAMS, as summarised in this paper, fulfil the commitment made in the *Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18*.

Moved R McNeill **Seconded** B Stuart **Carried**

8. Length of access along rivers, lakes and coasts

E Pyle presented a paper outlining progress on the project to develop and test a methodology to measure the length of access along rivers, lakes and coasts. This is a performance measure under the *Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18*.

The Commission, in consultation with a GIS consultancy, have prepared a methodology for measuring the length of access along waterways. However, the missing data on WAMS relating to access along waterways, outlined in item 7 above, is impeding the ability to accurately measure the length of access along rivers, lakes and coasts. The Commission's objective is to achieve a higher level of completeness in WAMS and then to apply the methodology that has been developed.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that it is not currently possible to accurately determine how much access there is along New Zealand's waterways due to WAMS not being complete;
- b) **noted** that Commission staff have developed a methodology for estimating the length of waterway which is available for public access, as required by the *Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18*;
- c) **noted** that this methodology cannot be applied until WAMS is largely complete.

Moved P Mudford

Seconded

P Brown

Carried

9. Update on the Walking Access Act 2008 review

E Pyle presented a paper notifying Board members that their comments were sought on a draft briefing by the Ministry for Primary Industries on the review of the Walking Access Act 2008.

The Board discussed matters that they would like to see included in the Review and advocated that they have input in to the decisions around appointees to the review panel.

A paper will be prepared for the next Board meeting to keep the Board informed about progress on the review

Action: The Board

- a) **will review** the draft briefing for the review of the Walking Access Act 2008 once it is ready and has been distributed via email.
- b) **provide** any additional feedback by Tuesday 10 July 2018.
- c) **noted** that an updated draft briefing will be disseminated to Board members in either late July or early August 2018.

Moved

R McNeill

Seconded

P Mudford

Carried

10. Website and partnerships opportunities

A Wilson-Goldman presented the Board with a paper updating the Board on the status of the new website, and outlined progress on partnership opportunities that the website brings for the Commission.

The Commission's new website is expected to be launched in late July/early August 2018. The Commission is working on partnering with Councils, DoC and other agencies to use an interactive tool embedded in the new website called *Find My Adventure* that allows users to search for outdoor adventures by a range of details filters and a map.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that the Commission's new website offers opportunities for building formal and informal relationships with councils and other organisations to build the profile of the Commission, provide consistency of experience for users and improve the data that the Commission holds;
- b) **noted** that the Communications Manager is leading a piece of work to build and strengthen relationships and partnerships with these organisations, using the Find My Adventure tool as a conversation starter.

Moved J Forbes **Seconded** B Stuart **Carried**

11. Proposal to establish an Auckland Trail Leaders Group

J McCabe presented a paper proposing that the Commission establish an Auckland Trail Leaders Group.

The Commission is scoping an Auckland Trails Leaders Group which will involve co-ordination across active community tracks and trails groups in the Auckland area. The purpose of the group will be to work on solutions to the common issues groups face and to access assistance and advice from the various agencies. The Auckland Regional Field Advisor will run this group with support from the Commission's Policy and Partnerships Advisor. Potentially this initiative could inform the development of similar groups in other parts of the country.

Action: The Board

- a) **agreed** to the Commission supporting the establishment of a trail leaders group for Auckland.

Moved B Stuart **Seconded** R McNeill **Carried**

12. Guidelines for managing unformed legal roads

E Pyle presented the Board with a paper that raises a number of issues associated with the management of unformed legal roads.

In the Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18, the Commission committed to publishing revised guidelines for local government on unformed legal roads.

The Commission has reviewed the guidelines and they were found to be sound. Updates have been made to reflect recent court decisions in this area and revised guidelines have been published.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that Commission staff have published revised guidelines on managing unformed legal roads, as required in the Statement of Performance Expectations 2017-18;
- b) **noted** that Commission staff will continue to promote retaining unformed legal roads as important current and future access.
- c) **noted** that trail strategies are an important way of identifying the importance of unformed legal roads for future trails plans.

Moved P Brown **Seconded** P Mudford **Carried**

13. Annual Report 2017-18

A Wilson-Goldman presented the Board with a paper proposing a shift in format for the production of the Commission's Annual Report 2017-18 from that which has been used in previous years.

Preparation of the annual report is a significant piece of work with resourcing implications for Commission staff. The design of the annual report has been simplified by using exemplar case studies to show the breadth and depth of the work that the Commission has been engaged in. These exemplars will be able to be reused in other formats. This approach will ensure that the report complies with the relevant legislation and guidelines whilst reducing the work load for Commission staff.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission's annual report is a significant undertaking with resourcing implications for the Commission's staff;
- b) **agreed** with the proposed change in format for the narrative part of the annual report, from attempting to list all of the work of the Commission, to instead using exemplar case studies to more easily show the breadth and depth of the Commission's efforts;
- c) **noted** a draft *Annual Report 2017-18* will be presented to the Board for review at the September meeting.

Moved J Forbes **Seconded** P Brown **Carried**

14. Policy Review

P Culling presented a report outlining the review and, where necessary, update of three of the Commission's financial policies and three organisational policies in relation to the Commission's annual audit requirements.

The policies reviewed were:

Financial management policies:

- a) Sensitive expenditure (last updated 2016);
- b) Credit card use (last updated 2013);
- c) Probity (last updated 2014).

Organisational policies:

- a) Fraud (last updated 2014);
- b) Entertainment (last updated 2015);
- c) Gifts/hospitality (last updated 2013).

Action: The Board

- a) **reviewed** and approved, where necessary three of Commission's financial policies and three organisational policies in relation to the Commission's annual audit requirements.

Moved P Mudford **Seconded** J Forbes **Carried**

15. Quarterly Report 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2018

The completed Quarterly Report to March 2018 was given to the Board for information.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the completed Quarterly Report to March 2018.

16. Enhanced Access Fund (EAF) – 2017/18 Round Tranche 2

P Culling presented a paper seeking Board ratification for grants approved from the 2017/18 EAF funding round (Tranche 2).

Five EAF grant applications were received for Tranche 2. An assessment of each application was completed by the relevant Regional Field Advisor. The EAF grants assessment panel recommended full or partial funding for four of the five applications with funding of \$49,771 allocated. Due to timing issues approval was sought from the Board Chair to notify applicants of the outcome of their applications by the published date.

Action: The Board

- a) **ratified** funding for the four applications from Tranche 2, totalling \$49,771 exclusive of GST, as recommended by the EAF grants assessment panel;

- b) **approved** the Chief Executive's action of advising all applicants of the funding decision by 31 May 2018 and inviting the successful applicants to confirm their agreement to any conditions required by the Commission;
- c) **approved** a budget of \$100,000 for EAF grants in the 2018-2019 year.

Moved J Forbes **Seconded** B Stuart **Carried**

17. Significant correspondence noted

Inwards

Letter of Expectations

Outwards

Statement of Intent 2018-2022

Statement of Performance Expectations 2018-2019

18. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will be held on in Dunedin on 24 and 25 September, Dunedin.

The meeting closed at 12.15pm.



J Forbes
Chairperson

