

MINUTES
NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING
22 November 2017
Auckland

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

In attendance: E Pyle (chief executive), R Cullinane (operations manager), P Culling (corporate services manager), A Wilson-Goldman (communications manager).

Opening Comments

The meeting commenced at 2pm

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

1. Apologies

There were no apologies

Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

Confirm Agenda

The Board confirmed the agenda for the meeting.

2. Confirm Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held in Wellington on 5 October 2017 were circulated and read.

Action: The Board

- a) **confirmed** the minutes of the 5 October 2017 meeting as being a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved R McNeill **Seconded** B Stuart **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 November 2017.

E Pyle reported that the Commission had received a clean audit report for its 2016-2017 financial year.

The chief executive's report covered a range of issues including an update on the projects the Commission is currently working on - South Island High Country, Auckland peri-urban (Puhoi-Warkworth-Matakana), Ruahines, Upper North Island, Central North Island and the Marlborough/Kaikoura road re-build.

E Pyle reported on the 2018 top outdoor spot competition, Aspinall scholarships, the Commission's relationship with the Overseas Investment Office, Whitecliffs walkway, Rodney Access Network Strategy, WAMS data, DOC short walks, Coronet Peak easements, and the methodology being developed to measure the length of New Zealand waterways and coastal areas with access.

Action: The Board

- a) **discussed** the chief executive's report for November 2017.

Moved P Brown **Seconded** B Stuart **Carried**

4. Rodney Trails project update

E Pyle presented a paper that updated the Board on the Rodney Trails project, outlining the Rodney Greenways plan and two possible options for employing a project manager. Option 1, with the Commission as the employer and option 2, with Auckland Council as the employer. The Board discussed the employment options and the need to find the right person with the right skills for the role.

The Board recognised the need for the project manager to be embedded in Auckland Council processes but believed that the Commission should be the project manager's employer.

E Pyle advised the Board that there was still some discussion and clarity required on the Project's outcomes and the specifics of the role definition of the project manager.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the next steps in setting up the project.
- b) **noted** that management is considering two options for employing a project manager.
- c) **expressed** its view that the project manager be an employee of the Commission.
- d) **noted** that management is meeting with the Auckland Council to discuss the project further.

5. Review of the Walking Access Act – second paper

E Pyle presented the Board with the second paper in a series of papers designed to build a shared view among staff and the Board of the Commission's past, current and future role. The focus of the second paper is on the future direction of the Commission.

The paper detailed; designing tracks and trails across New Zealand, community trail initiatives, and other central government initiatives.

The merits of an expert agency being proposed by the paper to manage access, trails and associated infrastructure was discussed. The Board considered the possible wider leadership role of the Commission that the paper was proposing and questioned whether the current Walking Access Act provided the necessary tools and mechanisms for the Commission.

Action: The Board

- a) **discussed** the second paper on the review of the Walking Access Act.

Moved R McNeill **Seconded** P Mudford **Carried**

6. Regional tracks and trails planning

E Pyle presented a paper that proposed how the Commission could assist in enhancing New Zealand's tracks and trails planning at a regional level.

The Board were informed that there are trail groups, territorial authorities and iwi that are planning significant trail initiatives at a regional level and that the Commission could provide assistance and expertise to grow capability in this area. In particular, the paper proposed contracting a specialist design group at Lincoln University to lead a project to design a process for tracks and trails in the Taranaki region as a national pilot.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** that landscape level tracks and trails planning is important for the Commission's project work.
- b) **noted** that New Zealand's expertise in landscape-tracks and trails planning is limited and needs developing to meet the increasing demand for tracks and trails.
- c) **agreed** that the Commission has a role in supporting the development of landscape-level tracks and trails expertise as part of its national leadership role.
- d) **noted** that Lincoln University has the relevant skill sets and some experience in landscape level tracks and planning design.
- e) **agreed** to pilot a project in Taranaki costing up to \$20,000.
- f) **noted** that DOC has committed \$3000 to this proposal.
- g) **noted** that the Taranaki pilot will be a partnership between the Commission, Sport Taranaki, DOC and that management will propose the partnership will involve the 4 councils and iwi.
- h) **directed** management to approach the New Plymouth District Council, South Taranaki District Council, Stratford District Council, Taranaki Regional Council, Fonterra and the JR McKenzie Trust for co-funding contributions in relation to this programme.

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

7. National trail leaders group

E Pyle presented a paper that proposed establishing a national trail leaders group.

The Board discussed the potential membership of a national trail leaders group and the role that such a group might take in order to better connect individual trail groups around the country.

Action: The Board

- a) **agreed** to the establishment of a trail leaders group.
- b) **noted** that management will prepare terms of reference for the group for the Board's consideration.
- c) **noted** that an allowance for a national trail leaders group will be made in the budget for 2018/19 and out years.

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

8. South Island High Country update

A Wilson-Goldman gave the Board an update of the South Island High Country access project. The update identified five of the most common issues that arose out of the project; infrastructure, information, numbers, connections and behaviours.

Action: The Board

- a) **discussed** the presentation and the issues it outlined.

Moved R McNeil **Seconded** B Stuart **Carried**

9. Digital presence update

A Wilson-Goldman presented an update to the Board on work being undertaken by staff to progress a new digital presence for the Commission.

The proposed new web presence would amalgamate the four current websites the Commission has and add additional features such as an enhanced track listing, and new information for landholders and trail builders.

Proposals from six qualified providers IT web service providers were received and assessed by the Commission against pre-determined criteria. Somar Design Studios is the preferred supplier.

The overall budget for the web project, including contingency is \$123,050 with funding mainly from prior years surpluses of \$97,550 and \$25,500 from estimated savings from current year communication related budgets.

The Board were informed that if a contract were signed and work began before Christmas 2017 that a new Commission website would be ready for public launch in the second quarter 2018.

Action: The Board

- a) **directed** management to agree to terms with the preferred provider to develop the Commission's new web presence.
- b) **directed** management to inform the Board only if there were major variances between the project estimate and final actual costs

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

10. Data on accessing the outdoors

E Pyle advised the Board of a project about to begin that would investigate the availability of data on people accessing the New Zealand outdoors.

The Commission has contracted a suitably qualified consultant who will communicate with agencies that collect data on the use of the outdoors and report back to the Commission.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the Commission is starting a project on data management practices for accessing the outdoors.
- b) **noted** that the Commission will be contacting a range of agencies that are involved in the outdoors to understand the data they are collecting and data management practices.

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

11. Success factors and areas of focus

E Pyle presented a paper that outlined the outcomes the Commission was trying to achieve and the process needed to reach that goal.

The Board discussed the paper and made some recommendations including; a reduction in some of the explanatory language in the strategic focus areas, inclusion of new access gained, and the need for a data driven approach.

Action: The Board

- a) **Discussed** the success factors and areas of focus for the Commission.

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

12. Briefing to the Incoming Minister

A Wilson-Goldman presented the Board with a draft Briefing to the Incoming Minister with responsibility for the Walking Access Commission.

The paper set out the Commission's structure, work programme, key legislation, accountability documents, key relationships and funding. It also outlined the current challenges and opportunities being faced by the Commission.

The Board requested that information on the Overseas Investment Office (OIO) and an explanation of WAMS be included in the paper.

Action: The Board

- a) **discussed** the draft Briefing to the Incoming Minister
- b) **agreed** to the Commission sending the Briefing to the Ministry for Primary Industries for them to distribute to Minister Whaitiri subject to changes from the meeting.

Moved R McNeill **Seconded** P Mudford **Carried**

13. Walking Access Strategy

A Wilson-Goldman presented the Board with an updated version of the Commission's Walking Access Strategy. The previous strategy had been signed off by the Board but had then been updated with a new design and layout.

The Board made some minor grammatical changes and requested some clarification of the use of Te Reo Māori in the strategy together with some adjustments to the design.

Action: The Board

- a) **approved** the designed Walking Access Strategy 2017-2022.

Moved P Mudford **Seconded** R McNeill **Carried**

14. Outdoor Access Champions

A Wilson-Goldman advised the Board that four nominations had been received for the Commission's 2017-2018 Outdoor Access Awards.

The awards recognise individuals or organisations who have made significant and lasting contributions to public access to the outdoors in New Zealand

After a review of the applications the Board decided that all of the received nominees should be granted Outdoor Access Champion awards.

Action: The Board

- a) **agreed** that each of the four nominees received for the Outdoor Access Champions Awards be granted an award.

Moved P Mudford **Seconded** B Stuart **Carried**

15. Enhanced Access Fund (EAF) – 2017 Round Tranche 1

E Pyle presented a paper to the Board requesting approval of grants from the 2017 EAF funding round tranche 1.

The Commission has an approved budget of \$100,000 for 2017 EAF grants.

Applications to the fund are in two tranches, one in September 2017 and the other in March 2018.

In total eight EAF applications were received by the Commission's EAF evaluation panel for the first tranche. The panel recommended to the Board that seven applications receive funding and that one application be declined.

Action: The Board

1. **approved** funding for seven applications from Tranche 1, totalling \$60,681 exclusive of GST, as recommended by the EAF grants assessment panel.
2. **agreed** that the Chief Executive advises all applicants of the Board's decision, and invites the successful applicants to confirm their agreement to any conditions set by the Board.
3. **directed** the Chief Executive to consider appropriate timing of the release of decisions and participation by interested Board members and regional field advisors in local announcements.

Moved R McNeill **Seconded** Peter Brown **Carried**

16. Overseas Investment Office (OIO) – cost recovery

E Pyle presented a paper seeking Board approval for the Commission to pursue cost recovery with the OIO.

The Commission spends a significant amount of its annual resource's on OIO related cases and involvement in these cases has been increasing. An analysis of data related to OIO work by the Commission calculated that OIO case management will continue to consume an estimated 25% of the Commission's core funding. Taking into account overhead allocations this equates to between \$300,000 to \$500,000.

Options for OIO cost recovery include an hourly rate and disbursements or a range of set fees depending on the size and complexity of each OIO case.

Action: The Board

- a) **agreed** that management pursue cost recovery for OIO cases.

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

17. Consolidating the Commission's investments

P Culling presented a paper that proposed a consolidation of the Commission's investments.

The paper noted that the Commission's General Fund term investments and Enhanced Access Fund (EAF) term investments are currently being managed and accounted for

separately. At 13 November 2017 the Commission had four investments in the EAF and six general fund investments.

The Board were informed that the EAF is being used to fund core activities and that it would be more efficient to administer and account for the overall investment portfolio of term investments by reducing the number of individual investments and combining the EAF and general fund investments.

Action: The Board

- a) **agreed** to the consolidation of the Enhanced Access Fund and General Fund term investments.

Moved P Brown **Seconded** B Stuart **Carried**

18. **Ernst and Young (EY) Darden Master Class on entrepreneurship**

E Pyle presented a paper reporting on his attendance at the EY Darden Master Class Programme on the 25-27 September 2017.

The focus of the Darden Programme was on entrepreneurship with themes of; creating, leading and transforming organisations. A principal idea that the programme taught was that of an organisations ability to “pivot” from its current operations to pursue new niches or opportunities. A number of pivot opportunities at the Commission were noted in the paper.

Action: The Board

- b) **noted** the report by the Chief executive on the EY Darden course.

Moved P Mudford **Seconded** R McNeill **Carried**

19. **Quarterly Report 1 July 2017 to September 2017**

The completed Quarterly Report to September 2017 was given to the Board for information.

Action: The Board

- a) **noted** the completed Quarterly Report to September 2017.

20. **Significant correspondence**

Inwards

There was no significance correspondence.

21. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board will be held in February 2018. Details to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 2.30pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Forbes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

J Forbes
Chairperson

