

MINUTES
NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING
20-21 July 2021
Wellington

The meeting commenced at 11.05 am on 20 July 2021.

Board members:

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

Also in attendance:

NZWAC staff: R Cullinane (Chief Executive), P Culling (Deputy CE), S Day (Strategic Communications Manager), S Cruickshank (GIS/IT Manager) and J Yang (Corporate Services Advisor, minutes).

Opening comments

P Henare opened the meeting with a karakia.

The chair welcomed board members and staff in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from R Tipene (board member) and L Edwardson (Acting Operations Manager).

Conflicts of Interest

C Wade-Brown is also a member of 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 on 4 May 2021 were circulated and read.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **confirmed** the minutes of the 4 May meeting as being a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved H Allison

Seconded P Coburn

Carried

Matters arising from the minutes

The board noted that a strategic workshop was held earlier in the day on 4 May 2021, and decisions from this meeting have been recorded in the minutes. This workshop, attended by board members and senior management, went significantly overtime which delayed the start of the board meeting to 12.40pm (the meeting was scheduled to run from 10.30am-12pm). H Mexted and C Wade-Brown attended the workshop but had to leave early due to scheduling conflicts, as the meeting was significantly delayed. Their comments and motions were circulated during the meeting, via email. The minutes have been updated to reflect this.

Part A – stakeholder meetings

3. Presentations from stakeholders

Additional attendees:

Other NZWAC staff: B Prakash, P Evans, D Torres, J Hitchman, M Weatherall, K Phillips and O Murray.

Te Araroa Trust board members: R Taonui, L Thomson and T Butler

Other attendees: J Henare, J Roth and K Godfrey for 3.1-2, and G Forrest for 3.3.

Summary

3.1. Te Arawhiti

J Henare (Manager of Public Sector Capability and Engagement) from Te Arawhiti gave an overview of the history of the department and Te Arawhiti role in helping government agencies build public sector capability going forward.

3.2. Te Puni Kōkiri

J Roth (Operations Director) and K Godfrey (Principal Advisor) from Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) gave a presentation on TPK's strategic vision and priorities. The board discussed some areas of overlap and potential collaboration.

3.3. Federated Farmers

G Forrest gave an overview of the development and change in the relationship between the commission and Federated Farmers which is now working well, and a summary of some of the issues facing farmers in the future that relate to the commission's work.

4. Meeting with MPI

Additional attendees:

Other NZWAC staff: B Prakash, P Evans, D Torres, J Hitchman, M Weatherall, and O Murray.

Te Araroa Trust board members: R Taonui, L Thomson and T Butler

MPI staff: A McConnell (Deputy Director-General, Compliance and Governance), C Robinson (Director, Strategy Governance and Performance)

Summary

There was discussion around the working relationship between the commission and MPI and expectations going forward. There was also discussion about some of the expected changes to the budget process, although formal guidance has yet to be released by Treasury.

5. Meeting with Te Araroa trust board

Additional attendees:

Other NZWAC staff: M Weatherall (Executive Director – Te Araroa),

Te Araroa Trust board members: D McGregor (TAT board chair, via Zoom), R Taonui, L Thomson and T Butler

Summary

R Cullinane and M Weatherall gave a presentation on the background to and summary of the partnership over the last 12 months, highlighting the value it has brought to both groups.

Te Araroa Trust board raised the issue of funding for maintaining and upgrading tracks as its most urgent concern. The boards discussed possible strategies for better communicating the importance of the trail, and the benefits and opportunities it can bring, to raise the trail's profile and increase funding possibilities.

A regular 6-monthly meeting between the boards was suggested. This could be done by videoconferencing and/or in person as appropriate.

A celebration for the 10-year anniversary of the official opening of Te Araroa will be held on Friday 3 December.

Closing

P Henare gave a karakia to end the session and thanked all attendees for their time.

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5.25 pm on 20 July 2021.

The meeting reconvened at 11.10am on 21 July 2021.

Board members:

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

Also in attendance:

NZWAC staff: R Cullinane (Chief Executive), P Culling (Deputy CE), M Weatherall (Executive Director – Te Araroa), S Day (Strategic Communications Manager), S Cruickshank (GIS/IT Manager) and J Yang (Corporate Services Advisor, minutes).

Part A – stakeholder meetings continued

6. Presentations from commission staff

Additional attendees:

Other NZWAC staff: D Torres and J Hitchman for Item 6.1, and K Phillips, O Murray and B Prakash for Item 6.2

Summary

6.1. GIS and Pocket Maps

S Cruickshank gave a presentation and overview of the GIS systems in the commission.

D Torres (GIS analyst) gave a demonstration of the newly developed Pocket Maps app.

6.2. Strategic narratives and priorities

Communications and engagement

S Day gave a presentation that summarised the commission's communications strategy and an overview of the development of the engagement strategy.

The board emphasised that it is important that the commission raise its profile with important politicians and decision makers. This is important for the commission's future budget bid.

Māori partnership strategy

This presentation was cancelled due to time constraints. P Culling handed out the presentation slides to the board for information.

Legislative change progress

This presentation was also cancelled due to time constraints. R Cullinane handed out the presentation slides to the board for information.

The meeting recessed from 1.30pm to 2.30pm.

Part B – Standing items

6. Chief executive's report

The Board discussed the chief executive's report for July 2021.

R Cullinane gave a strategic summary of the year to July and reported on staffing; strategy development; Te Araroa partnership; the Carbon Neutral Government Programme; the identity, values and brand update; audit and risk; regional projects in Tairāwhiti, Franklin-North Waikato and Pūhoi to Mangawhai; health and safety; and IT and geospatial updates.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the chief executive's report for July 2021.

Moved C Wade-Brown **Seconded** P Henare **Carried**

7. Health and safety report

P Culling presented the health and safety report as of July 2021.

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

The commission introduced a new policy that prohibits employees and contractors from flying in Robinson helicopters due to the number of accidents and fatalities associated with them.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the commission's July 2021 Health and Safety report.

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

Part C – Items for decision

8. Accepting Controlling Authority responsibilities: Te Ahu Pātiki

R Cullinane presented a paper on seeking the board's approval to accept controlling authority role for walkway easements on Te Ahu Pātiki.

This role would be subject to a memorandum of understanding with the ownership entity that addresses maintenance, management and liabilities of the trails.

The board requested confirmation that the appropriate iwi leaders had been consulted and supported the proposal.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **approved** the commission assuming the controlling authority role for walkway easements on Te Ahu Pātiki, subject to agreement of a memorandum of understanding and confirmation that the appropriate iwi leaders have been consulted and support the proposal.

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

9. Revoking and surrendering of part of Whitecliffs Tracks Walkway

R Cullinane presented a paper seeking the board’s approval to revoke part of a redundant section of the White Cliffs (Parininihi) Track walkway.

The redundant section is due to the walkway being realigned in 2005. The new realigned section was gazetted, however the redundant section was not revoked or surrendered at the time.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **approved** the revocation of the part of the White Cliffs (Parininihi) Track Walkway.

Moved P Coburn **Seconded** D Cameron **Carried**

10. Māori Partnership Strategy implementation plan

P Culling presented the draft Māori Partnership Strategy implementation plan and timeline.

The board commended the work on the plan and the level of detail included.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **reviewed** the draft Māori Partnership Strategy implementation plan and timeline.
- b. **approved** the draft Māori Partnership Strategy implementation plan and timeline.
- c. **approved** the change to using Te Arawhiti’s Māori Crown relations capability framework to guide identification of competencies in relation to staff and RFA roles, instead of the Tātai Pou competency matrix.
- d. **requested** quarterly updates on progress.
- e. **noted** its appreciation for the ongoing mahi that is being done.

Moved H Mexted **Seconded** D Cameron **Carried**

Part D – Items for noting

11. 2021-2025 Statement of Intent and 2021-2022 Statement of Performance Expectations

R Cullinane presented the commission's Statement of Intent (2021-2025) and Statement of Performance Expectations (2021-2022). These have been finalised, published, and distributed to Minister Whaitiri.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the that the Statement of Intent (2021-2025) and Statement of Performance Expectations (2021-2022) have been finalised, published, and distributed to Minister Whaitiri.

Moved H Mexted **Seconded** C Wade-Brown **Carried**

12. Q4 quarterly report

R Cullinane presented the commission's Q4 quarterly report for 2020-2021 as submitted to the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI).

The board requested an update on the Somar UX Research, for the next board meeting.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the Commission's Q4 Quarterly Report, as submitted to MPI.

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

13. Strategic priorities

R Cullinane presented the reports the strategic priorities and work programme for the next 12 months.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the strategic narrative and priorities for Budget 2022.
- b. **requested** that the strategic overview be refined, with further discussion to be continued via email, and a draft overview be brought back to the board at its next meeting.

Moved D Cameron **Seconded** C Wade-Brown **Carried**

14. Communications and partnerships update

S Day presented updated the board on the strategic work it directed the commission to do on communications and engagement.

The commission has developed a new communications strategy that outlines its goals, target audiences and media focus, a stakeholder engagement strategy, and a strategy on engaging with influential decision makers.

The board recommended a list of stakeholders for management to prioritise and approach for meetings with the board over the next two or more board meetings.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the communications strategy, the stakeholder engagement strategy and the strategy on engaging with influential decision makers.
- b. **noted** the list of stakeholders suggested by the board, for management to approach for meetings with the board over the next two board meetings.

Moved P Henare **Seconded** C Wade-Brown **Carried**

15. Legislative amendments

R Cullinane presented a report on key legislative amendments that are required to implement relevant recommendations made in the *Report on the Findings of the Review of the Walking Access Act 2008*.

Some of these amendments will be discussed at an Iwi Leaders Forum next week – see item 17.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** that the timeline for policy development and legislative review is subject to the allocation of resources by MPI and the Government's legislative timetable.

Moved C Wade-Brown **Seconded** P Henare **Carried**

16. Financial Strategy and Planning for Budget Bid

P Culling presented an update the board on the rationale behind the upcoming budget bid relating to Crown funding for financial year 2022/23 and beyond.

The board discussed the four budget scenarios and agreed that it was better to be ambitious with the bid. Since the Act review was published, the need for outdoor access has both grown and changed, in large part due to the impact of COVID-19 and also the introduction of the wellbeing budget. The board was highly supportive of a bid for scenario 4 funding, which includes extra funding to implement all the recommendations from the Act review that do not require legislative changes.

The board also noted that the commission is still waiting on advice from Treasury and MPI on how the budget bid process will run this year.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the four budget bid scenarios.
- b. **noted** the planning that is underway.
- c. **discussed** areas of governance concern.
- d. **noted** the changed context since the review, largely due to COVID-19 and the wellbeing budget.
- e. **recommended** that management move forward with scenario four if possible.

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

17. Identity, values and brand update

S Day presented an update on the identity, values and brand project that aims to develop a new name for the commission.

A revised plan for engaging with Māori leaders on legislative change with support from Tutira Mai was decided on earlier in the year. As part of this the commission has been invited to make a presentation at the Iwi Leaders Forum in Whanganui next week. The presentation will also include discussion around potential legislative changes to the *Walking Access Act*.

The letter and presentation will be circulated to the board.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the delay in the brand and identity project.
- b. **noted** the revised plan for engaging with Māori leaders on legislative change with support from Tutira Mai.

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

18. Operations update

R Cullinane presented the operational update and case statistics report for Quarter 4 (1 April to 30 June 2021).

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the operations report and quarterly case statistics report for the period 1 April to 30 June 2021.

Moved P Henare **Seconded** H Allison **Carried**

19. Te Araroa update

M Weatherall gave an update on developments managing Te Araroa.

Comments from D McGregor and T Butler (Te Araroa Trust board chair and member) on the meeting between the boards were passed on. Both appreciated the opportunity to meet in person and thought the discussion between boards was very positive.

The board noted that funding issues around maintenance and upgrades to the trail remain Te Araroa Trust board's biggest concern.

Resolved: The Board

- a. **noted** the Te Araroa report for July 2021.

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

Part E

20. Other Business

The board discussed options for the next board meeting, which will not be until November. There is a possibility of a short interim zoom meeting if required.

It was noted that the board-only discussion that was scheduled prior to the meeting went 2 hours overtime. This put a considerable pressure on the board meeting schedule. It may be useful for the board to have a board-only meeting via zoom, after the board papers have been circulated but prior to the board meeting, to discuss any significant issues prior to the board meeting.

21. Closing comments

The chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

P Henare closed the meeting with a karakia.

22. Next meeting

The next board meeting will be held on 17 November, in Wellington.

The meeting finished at 3.50pm on 21 July 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Cameron', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

D Cameron

Board chair