

MINUTES

NEW ZEALAND WALKING ACCESS COMMISSION MEETING

Monday 23 March 2009
Turnbull House, Bowen Street, Wellington

Board Members: J Acland (Chair), J Aspinall, M Bayfield, K Booth, P Brown, J Forbes, B Stephenson, B Stuart.

In attendance:

Hunter Donaldson; Bruce Lynch.

1.1 Opening comments

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.50 am and welcomed attendees. A karakia was given by P Brown.

The Chairman noted that his attention had been drawn to the following areas and that at some time the Commission may become involved:

- The proposed National Cycleway; and
- The Queen Charlotte walkway.
Part of the route passes through private property. The Department of Conservation manages the walkway. It is looking at rerouting part of the walkway that passes through private property. This walkway is now on the international circuit.

He understood that the National Cycleway proposal was being investigated by the Ministry of Tourism and that the Queen Charlotte walkway issues were being dealt with by the Department of Conservation.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest Register

No conflicts were reported.

1.3 Confirm Agenda

The tabled Agenda for the meeting was confirmed by the Board.

1.4 Confirm Minutes

Some corrections were advised. With those corrections the Board confirmed the Minutes of the 24 February 2008 meeting as a true and correct record.

Moved (J Forbes/M Bayfield):

The motion was put: carried

1.5 Matters Arising

Communications to stakeholders and the need for a trust account were discussed:

- Website
The website is now being administered by the Commission. Approved Minutes and the 2008/11 Statement of Intent have been added.

Members are to consider, for discussion at the April meeting, what changes should now be made to the site and what further items should be included in the future.

- Contact with major stakeholders
The program for the Access Code includes discussing the draft in June with major stakeholders. This meeting is to be included in planning the June Board meeting. A letter from the Chairman to advise the major stakeholders of the meeting is to be prepared.
- MOU with the Department of Conservation
The draft is still being considered by the Department of Conservation, which is consulting its Conservancies.
- Trust Account
Need to gain an opinion as to whether the Commission should set up a trust account (or a separate arm for charitable purposes) to enable it to be registered under the Charities Act 2005 so that it may more readily be able to receive private or sponsorship funding.

2.1 National Strategy

It was agreed that

1. The Commission needs to take the initiative and arrange leadership and co-ordination of the government agencies and local authorities involved in recreation to fulfil its function of “preparing and administering a national strategy” (S10(1) (a) of the Walking Access Act 2008). This is a facilitation role.
2. The Vision for the Commission (how we interpret our role) is

“The Commission has achieved free, certain and enduring access to land and water”

A possible slogan or letterhead is *“Enhancing access to the outdoors”*
3. The Vision will lead to our Objectives (what we will do to achieve our Vision). These are
 - a. Enhancing legal access (includes signage)
 - b. Access information (includes mapping and education)
 - c. Coordination of access provision
4. There will be Priorities within each Objective; e.g. the top priority within “Enhancing legal access” is to “Enhance walking access”.
5. A paragraph on Culture is required. This should identify the Commission as being facilitative, not legalistic, and as respecting rights (including property rights)

3.1 Mapping – Draft Request for Proposal (RFP)

The draft RFP was distributed. Tony Bevin joined the meeting and spoke to the draft RFP. He explained that the database needs shell capability to hold land information for the Commission’s purposes; that it is helpful to encourage responders to provide other options

(given the overall objectives of the mapping system) and that asking for a consistent approach and cost breakdown makes it easier to compare responses.

He mentioned that while it is too early to make any decision until responses have been considered, the Commission will need to determine whether it will manage the mapping system itself or outsource it; and that managing it internally has the advantage that the Commission will be able to identify its needs more clearly. An administrator will need to be GIS literate, know the data and preferably understand the law relating to land tenure.

It was agreed that the timing needs to be revised. Members are to provide any further amendments to the RFP by 5 pm Friday 27 March.

The Board

- a. **approved** release of the draft RFP after adjustment for any changes proposed by LINZ or by the Board
- b. **agreed** to the process for determining the most suitable supplier
- c. **advised** that B Stephenson, J Aspinall, and J Forbes (if he is required), are available for a selection panel
- d. **noted** that the implementation steps and timing are yet to be addressed
- e. **noted** that budgetary provision has been made for the mapping project.

Moved (J Acland/M Bayfield):

The motion was put: carried

4.1 Financial Report

The financial statements to 28 February 2009 were tabled.

A paper is to be prepared for the April meeting that identifies appropriate expenditure. The discussion should include the mapping project, tenure review, a Stocktake on Walkways, Overseas Investment Act decisions, tenure review and perhaps marginal strips.

The accounts and the financial position of the Commission as at 28 February 2009 were accepted.

4.1.a Correspondence

Officials tabled a record of the correspondence received since the February meeting for the Board's information.

A letter is to be sent from the Chairman to Sheryl Harding to thank her for her contribution to the Commission, especially with the panel meetings.

4.2 Personnel – Crown Pastoral leases

The ultimate aim is to get walking access provided into the mapping system. To achieve this it is proposed to first carry out a stocktake of the proposals and agreements reached. The stocktake will then be checked with the respective Department of Conservation

Conservancies to determine what actions have been taken (memorials on titles) and what plans are in place to complete work in progress.

Moved that the Board (K Booth/B Stuart)

note the need for the Commission to be well briefed on the access issues associated with tenure review of Crown pastoral leases

note that it is proposed to engage Claire Mulcock to undertake a stock take of the access conditions attached to completed reviews and those associated with or under negotiation in respect publicised preliminary proposals.

The motion was put: carried.

4.3 Overseas Investment Act

Moved that the Board (J Acland/P Brown)

agree that a letter be sent from the Chairman to the Ministers of Agriculture and Land Information noting the Commission's interest in the review of the Overseas Investment Act and, in particular, the explicit provision that walking access is one of the benefits to be taken into account when evaluating proposals affecting sensitive land. The Commission would like to be kept informed of any consideration being given to this provision and to have the opportunity to contribute its views.

The motion was put: carried.

4.4 Appointment of a Chief Executive

The proposed advertisement was discussed.

Moved that the Board (J Forbes/M Bayfield)

note that the process for appointment of a Chief Executive is now underway

note that the Board will make the final decision on the appointment at the Board meeting on Monday 25 May following the recommendation of the panel.

The motion was put: carried

4.5 Regional representation

Paper deferred pending the appointment of a Chief Executive.

4.6 Office Accommodation

Moved that the Board (M Bayfield/J Acland)

1. **agreed** that the Commission is a small, relationship-based organisation and that it should therefore be centrally located in Wellington
2. **agreed** that the Commission should aim to be housed independently from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry by 30 June 2009
3. **agreed** the following specifications for office accommodation for the Commission

- a. Location: the office should be in Wellington and be close to or within the Government centre
 - b. Size: the office should provide
 - i. a meeting room suitable for 12 people (or access to a meeting room)
 - ii. a reasonable office for a chief executive
 - iii. accommodation for 5 staff plus space for regional representatives working temporarily in Wellington or project staff. (At about 20m² per person the above requirements indicate that about 160m² of accommodation is required)
 - c. The office space should be secure and preferably be self-contained.
4. **agreed** that official should continue to make arrangements for accommodation that meets the specifications.

The motion was put: carried

Minister's Visit

The Minister of Agriculture, Hon David Carter, joined the meeting at 3.20 pm, and responded to questions. The Minister noted that Board reappointments are being processed. The Minister intends that all of the present members continue in office and that they will be reappointed on staggered terms.

The Minister was thanked for attending the meeting.

5.1 Draft Statement of Intent (SOI) 09/12

A draft SOI for 2009/12 was distributed.

The 2009/12 SOI is due to the Minister by 18 April 2009. The process required to complete the final SOI for 2009/12 by mid May 2009 includes Board approval, and consideration of the draft by both the Audit Office and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as the monitoring Ministry.

The critical step at this time is for the Board to determine and finalise the Service Performance measures on pages 10-12 of the draft.

A copy of the draft SOI for 2009/12 is to be emailed to all members. Members are to advise any changes to the SOI, or that they have no changes, by 5 pm on Friday 27 March.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm

Next meeting 27-28 April, commencing at 10.00 am at Waitakere City Council, Auckland