

TWTNoA-PA AGM 2021 – Questions and Responses

Monday 5th July, Tuesday 13th July 2021

The Board celebrate an increased interest in playcentre governance in response to the AGM papers this year (a record 70 pages of questions received prior to the deadline). Many of the questions received were similar, and have been summarised for conciseness. As a voluntary Trustee Board we have strived to answer as many member's questions as possible within our previously published timeframes. Unfortunately it has been impossible to respond to all questions. As the deadline for question submission has now passed, we will not be accepting any further questions. We will endeavour to answer more of the remaining questions received prior to the AGM if time permits. These will be added to the AGM page on the website.

10.10.2. receive the Annual Report

1. *In the Annual Report, it would be helpful to distinguish between the outcomes and statistics relating to centres vs. programmes as they have very different resourcing profiles.*

Thank you for your feedback. We'll pass this on to the Operations team for the next annual report.

2. *If Playcentre Aotearoa is serious about using data and intelligence to better understand and provide for individual centres, it would be helpful to understand and report on the following:*

- a. *Rural / urban centres*
- b. *Large / small centres*
- c. *Group supervision / Paid supervision team*
- d. *The use of equity funding*
- e. *Learning from successful centres*
- f. *How we can best support volunteers in different contexts.*

Thank you for your feedback. We'll pass this on to the Operations team for the next annual report.

10.10.4. consider the strategic direction of Playcentre Aotearoa by confirming key outcomes, goals and priorities:

1. *Why is the strategic plan 10 years long? And not 2-3 years like Centres? 10 years seems quite out of reach for the average family who attends playcentre for 2-3 years. Time frame is too long to fit in the current climate of Playcentre families as average families stay 2-3 years. Lofty goals but with no way to meet these goals, hard to hold people to account. Need to have an Annual Plan - operational goals and targets to link up to strategic.*

As part of the strategic planning process the Trustee Board reviewed previous strategic plans. The Trustees noticed similar themes/objectives were evident across previous plans, some of which have not yet been achieved. Given this realisation, alongside knowledge of the significant work streams already in progress and the need for the organisation to diversify funding to reach these goals the decision was made to develop this strategic plan with a 10-year horizon.

2. *What specific outcomes will be achieved in the strategic plan? How is progress being measured and reported on?*

Our Strategic Plan is a living document referred to regularly, it's the direction we want to head in. It is reported against by operations every year in the Annual Report (please see the Annual report for progress to date). The key outcomes are included in the Strategic Plan graphic on the website, [here](#).

These outcomes were developed to be achieved over the 10 year period of the strategic plan. Progress towards each of these will vary year by year.

3. *Management information? Are the trustees receiving data/KPIs which gives them visibility on how the organisation is performing, trends which are happening across the Country and measures by which to guide the direction in which the organisation is travelling?*

The Trustee Board receives a report from the General Manager/Chief Executive prior to each Trustee Board meeting including information on the organisational performance overall and highlighting progress on key projects. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the coming year will be confirmed with the incoming Chief Executive. As the operational restructure is embedded the Trustee Board is expecting more robust and comprehensive data to be utilised for decision making.

4. *As a cluster, we gave feedback on the strategic plan in 2020. One of our key suggestions was to make the objectives S.M.A.R.T (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound). We note that the strategic plan remains unchanged despite our feedback.*

- a. *Why have no changes been made to the strategic plan since feedback was provided? If insufficient feedback was received, how has the Trustee Board sought to remedy the situation?*

The feedback received was valuable and there are some useful comments for the trustee board to review which may be helpful with future planning. Unfortunately, there were not enough responses to this survey to make it statistically valid therefore, no conclusions can be drawn from the data. We hope that we can gain a higher response rate to the Strategic Survey 2021 which comes out later in the year. Feedback is one input into the wider decision making process.

- b. *How are the current objectives of the strategic plan being measured? What data is being collected and used?*

See Q.3 above.

- c. *What has been done to date to achieve the objectives set out in the strategic plan?*

See Q.3 above and refer to the annual report.

- d. *What planned actions in regards to the strategic plan can we expect in the coming financial year?*

The Annual Plan for the coming year will be confirmed with the incoming Chief Executive.

- e. *How can centres/clusters stay informed about progress in regards to the strategic plan?*

Centres and Rōpū Māori are informed via minutes, the monthly Bulletin, Board Shorts and engaging with regional governance spaces and national governance via whare hui and AGM. As a note clusters are not recognised in the constitution. Clusters are a support mechanisms - by Centres for Centres. Individual centres should be identified as attending such discussions rather than sitting with a "catchment area". Individual centre minutes should also reflect participation as being valid from any particular Centre to make up the collective opinion.

- f. *What benchmarking does the Trustee Board undertake in relation to comparable organisations in New Zealand? If this is not being done currently, could this be helpful?*

Whānau tupu ngātahi is our benchmark, however the closing of sessions/centres is a continuing concern.

5. *How do we ensure long term viability of Playcentre with the current model? How could the current model fit more aligned with the core values of Playcentre philosophy?*

The Strategic Plan (with our philosophy woven through it) outlines the direction we want to head in. Phase 2 is still in the "birthing" period and requires time to make valid comparisons for review of the structure.

6. *What are the outcome and goals for the 2021/2022 year and how will success be measured by the Trustee board? We don't feel like we understand how the strategic plan is going to come to life in a real way for our centre or for Playcentre Aotearoa as a whole.*

Our Strategic Plan is a living document referred to regularly, it's the direction we want to head in. The 2021/22 Annual Plan and KPI's will be confirmed with the incoming Chief Executive. These will be reported against by operations. Phase 2 is in the early stages and requires operations to consider the strategic plan when planning work schedules/action plans.

7. *The strategic plan goals have no actions associated with them – and combined with the long period it makes it hard to hold PA to account for achieving the goals. Does PA have an annual/operational plan which outlines steps that will be taken to progress towards achieving these goals within the coming year? Could member receive some sort of report outlining progress against the strategic plan in the last year? The Annual Report speaks to a full year ago and although it includes the strategic plan and a number of metrics on Playcentre performance, the metrics don't seem to relate to the Strategic Plan.*

See responses to previous questions. Thank you for your feedback. We'll pass this on to the Operations team for the next annual report, and for reporting in 2022.

Whakakaha/Strengthen Support (Strategic Priority 1)

1. *How will you ensure strong, sustainable centres?*

The 2021/22 Annual Plan and KPI's will be confirmed with the incoming CE. We expect Operations to reflect these in their workplans, including reporting progress to the Board. Phase 2 will enable comprehensive planning and reporting to occur.

2. *Why are there no objective measures in the strategic plan?*

We assume "objective measures" refers to measuring progress towards the strategic goals, which will be through KPIs.

3. *What steps will you take to educate and support centre members to become effective governors of PA?*

Over the last two years the Board has been active in supporting centres and members awareness of what Playcentre governance is. Refer to the Governance tab on the website, including the "What is Governance" presentation, [here](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page). This information has been shared regularly at AGM and whare hui with representatives, and in the Bulletin. The Board will continue this mahi and it is the focus of our whare hui.

4. *How will you utilise the skills and connections of your members going forward?*

We welcome suggestions of how the Board might acquire this information from members.

5. *How will you improve communication channels with centres and staff?*

The Board use a variety of channels to communicate, including emails to centres, the website and the Bulletin. The communication pathway is on the website, [here](#).

6. *Do you consider you have been meeting the Community Consultation policy?*

With the resources currently available, yes. We have used the strategic survey, national governance meetings, and supporting regional governance spaces. Centres and Rōpū Māori, supported by the Trustee Board, are the governors of our organisation. Being a governor comes with rights and responsibilities. As a governor your rights include having representation at national meetings and input into the strategic direction of our organisation. Your responsibility is to carry out your governance role, this includes participating in all community consultation.

7. *What steps will be made to address this?*

The Board will continue this mahi and it is the focus of our whare hui.

8. *Will you offer PLD to centres and rōpū Māori to ensure effective governance and participation?*

The Board would love to be in a position to approve and delegate this. The provision of PLD is dependent on availability of funding and capacity. As you know Playcentre is currently in deficit, and increasing demand on our financial resources may result in an increase in levies.

9. *As an AGM is insufficient to allow for centre voices on issues faced, what other strategies and operational support will be offered to increase engagement by centres and rōpū Māori members?*

The "Governance in Playcentre" graphic on the website explains how centre voice is heard and how centres engage in governance, [here](#).

10. *What is the data is being referred to in the strategic plan, and how is it being reported?*

As well as the Annual Report, the Trustee Board receives a report from the General Manager/Chief Executive prior to each Trustee Board meeting including information on the organisational performance overall and highlighting progress on key projects. As the operational restructure is embedded the Trustee Board is expecting more robust and comprehensive data to be utilised for decision making.

11. *Has there been any analysis on the current life cycle of a Playcentre member. Number of children/number of years at Centre/age of children when they join and when they leave/information about reasons why they joined and left Playcentre. Is there any information which supports the current organisational model, in terms of adult education for licencing and engagement/involvement in governance processes, is sustainable given its current membership profile?*

At this time there is no analysis. The organisation is reliant on other services to provide information i.e. RS61 etc. As the operational restructure is embedded the Trustee Board is expecting more robust and comprehensive data to be utilised for decision making.

12. *Has there been any analysis done to establish what our SWOTs are in the current ECE space? Are we still trying to squeeze ourselves out of shape to be an ECE in what is a very crowded space? Are there any conversations happening to reposition ourselves to be a more unique offering? One which recognises our strengths as a community, not just promoting us as another educational provider.*

Yes. These discussions are on-going at board level, and are reflected in the Strategic Plan. Ministry of Education have committed to a funding co-design with Playcentre Aotearoa as identified in the Early Learning Strategic Plan.

13. *How are resources allocated across centres? What is the basic level of service each centre can expect to receive?*

Resource allocation is determined by Operations.

14. *The time required to complete Playcentre training is out of step with the tenure of the majority of participants. How can we make sure the training is fit for purpose and manageable for our volunteers?*

The Board agrees. As the operational restructure is embedded the Trustee Board is expecting further development in this area.

15. *A key element of whakakaha is to have a “culture of telling our stories” and way in which to retain institutional knowledge. Given this key element in the strategic plan, what has happened to the Playcentre Journal? Who is responsible for ensuring the survival of the journal given its value and importance in upholding and promoting the philosophy of Playcentre and the theories that underpin our practice? Will the editing of the Journal be covered by a paid position?*

The publishing of the journal ceased due to the financial implications. The cost of publishing far outweighed the income received from orders.

16. *What is the plan for those centres that have desperately needed support and have not received it via Centre Support Workers, Centre Admins or additional levels of support yet have continued to pay levies?*

The Board are continuing to work with Operations to support struggling centres. As the operational restructure is embedded the Trustee Board is expecting further development in this area.

Whakatipu/Build Community (Strategic Priority 2)

1. *We went from NZQA review ratings of highly confident for educational performance and self-assessment in 2016, to ratings of confident and not yet confident. The review report recommended Playcentre review the effectiveness of the current governance structure with regards to education, and address the situation with urgency. It noted:*

- *reporting lines were unclear and there was a telling void in educational leadership;*
- *insufficient compliance management by the board, including failure to supply documents regarding fit and proper person and conflict of interest;*
- *agreed actions from the NZQA programme monitoring visit in June 2020 had not been implemented in the agreed timeframes;*
- *failure to be transparent when contracting an education assessment specialist. This was said to be a risk to the organisation and its members.*

NZQA External Evaluation and Review Report

(Extracted from the 14th May 2021 EER report for Playcentre Education)

NZQA recommends that Playcentre Education:

Governance:

- Review the effectiveness of the current governance structure for Playcentre Education, including ensuring that Playcentre Education is clearly delineated within the overall Playcentre Aotearoa structure.
- Address with urgency the implementation of its new structure (with sufficient resourcing) including the appointment of adequate educational leadership staffing.
- Add structures such as a compliance calendar and bring-up system, to enable proactive compliance monitoring processes. Updates of the compliance calendar should be periodically reported to the governance body.
- Strengthen the analysis and periodic reporting of educational achievement to the board, regions and teachers/facilitators.

NZQA updated their forms, but unfortunately the Board were not informed of this at the time. These were completed as soon as the Board became aware of the need to update them.

2. *How will you address these problems, and what is the new structure proposed to be?*

Employment of the Pedagogical Lead and Education Lead will achieve part of the recommendations. Regular reporting to the Trustee Board from the Pedagogical Lead and TEC funding Manager will achieve the remaining recommendations.

Ari/Increase Visibility (Strategic Priority 3)

1. *What is the proposal to retain knowledge and long-term connection of experienced members after they no longer have a child at playcentre?*

At this time there is no formal process in place. This loss of knowledge is something that the Trustee Board are aware of, and we feel this could be a great topic for discussion at whare hui.

2. *Why are there no life membership nominations?*

No life membership nominations were received.

3. *What is the process and why is it not distributed?*

The Life membership nomination process can be found in the Constitution, which is on the website [here](#).

4. *Why is the AGM on Zoom and not kanohi ki te kanohi?*

The decision to hold AGM 2021 online via Zoom was made for multiple reasons:

- a. Last year Covid-19 halted all travel, therefore the decision was made to utilise Zoom. As we continue to sit in uncertain times, AGM will be conducted online again this year.
- b. Feedback after the last kanohi ki te kanohi AGM in 2019 was that the financial impact seemed to outweigh the benefits of flying in 50 + members for processing AGM papers. Feedback after the first online AGM in 2020 was that it allowed more members nationwide to attend and experience the AGM process.
- c. Playcentre is currently operating a budget deficit.

Kanorau/Diversify Funding (Strategic Priority 4)

1. *What progress has been made to increase our funding rates, or change our funding model?*

2. *Do the board feel it is in a position to properly advance the funding model in light of limited upper management?*

3. *There is an opportunity cost (rough estimate \$5-10 million for each year we do not get an agreement) of failing to agree a new funding model with government, so is there urgency about this?*

1, 2, 3 - Ministry of Education have committed to a funding co-design with Playcentre Aotearoa as identified in the Early Learning Strategic Plan. The timing of this co-design is determined by MoE.

4. *Have negotiations been made towards a further Ministry payment while the new model is being created and negotiated?*

Discussions are on-going with MoE on a range of topics.

5. *Aside from restructuring, how are we working to ensure Playcentre is financially viable? We note that in most other ECE providers, the expectation is that children will attend a minimum of two days. This is done to ensure a sense of belonging is created and to ensure the centre receives an adequate allocation of ECE funding.*

Looking at our strategic priority of Kanorau / Diversify Funding, financial viability is one of our highest priorities. We continue to work to ensure the best outcomes for all 420 centres.

6. *A key outcome of Kanorau is to use our financial resources to ensure best outcomes for centres. The costs relating to employment and the wages offered to employees are not in line with current market expectations, particularly for centre facing roles. It is these roles, we believe, that are the most vital in ensuring that centres thrive. We strongly advocate for Playcentre Aotearoa to move quickly towards paying these positions the current Living Wage. We note a high number of vacant positions in centre-facing roles that indicates a difficulty to recruit to these vital positions. The current rates of pay are a very poor reflection on the value we collectively place on early childhood education.*

Thank you for your feedback.

7. *a. What progress has been made in discussions with MoE over funding?*

Ministry of Education have committed to a funding co-design with Playcentre Aotearoa as identified in the Early Learning Strategic Plan. The timing of this co-design is determined by MoE.

- b. What other steps are being taken to "future proof" Playcentre financially?*

Looking at our strategic priority of Kanorau / Diversify Funding, financial viability is one of our highest priorities. We continue to work to ensure the best outcomes for all 420 centres.

Strategic Survey

1. *What was the feedback from the Strategic Survey sent out in November 2020?*
2. *Was the strategic survey an effective way to engage members in governance matters or are there alternatives? And what were the results? What areas filled in the surveys?*
3. *When reviewing the strategic plan we have noticed that it hasn't been adjusted from last year, despite the strategic survey that was done last year.*
 - a) What were the results and engagement in the survey*
 - b) What conclusions were drawn from the data collected?*

1, 2, 3 - The feedback received was valuable and there were some useful comments for the trustee board to review which may be helpful with future planning. Unfortunately, there were not enough responses to this survey to make it statistically valid therefore, no conclusions can be drawn from the data. We hope that we can gain a higher response rate to the Strategic Survey 2021 which comes out later in the year.
4. *What specific outcomes and results can members expect to see in the 2021/2022 period?*

Ideally, all centres will have service that is equitable - being treated fairly and equally.

10.10.7. endorse Co-Presidents

1. *Why is there no time frame for how long the Co-Presidents will be acting as GM?*

Recruitment continues. The Chief Executive role is pivotal for operations and the Board endeavours to get the right person, not the first person. Setting the organisation up for success relies on professionalism and the right person.
2. *Why were interim Co-Presidents not co-opted to ensure the organisation has sufficient leadership capabilities?*

Co-option was not considered as attracting the right candidates for the Chief Executive position was not expected to take this long.

10.10.9. endorse up to four (4) Trustees selected by Tāngata Tiriti House

1. *Meeting attendees felt they did not know Gill or Tiso, therefore felt uncomfortable voting. Could we have more information about Gill and Tiso to accompany the AGM documents?*

Constitution clause 8.4 states that Tāngata Tiriti whare will develop rules and policies for the operation of its house. Gill Morgan's 2020 Trustee nomination ([here](#)) was unanimously confirmed by Tāngata Tiriti hui 2020, to be ratified at AGM 2021 on 31/7/2021. The Board is invoking constitution clause 9.8 to co-opt Tiso Ross to ensure consistency and stability is upheld and enable the new Trustee (Gill) to get her feet under the table.

Personal Statement from Tiso Ross:

Kia ora koutou,

I live in Wellington with my partner and two primary school aged children. Before having children I lived in Japan for 10 years and mainly worked in administrative and training roles.

I've been an active member of Playcentre since 2011. I served on the Wellington Playcentre Executive between 2016 – 2018. I continued to volunteer as a person responsible once a week after my youngest went to school up until the end of 2019.

I stood as a Tāngata Tiriti trustee nominee at the 2018 Tāngata Tiriti Hui, was accepted and joined the Trustee Board in November 2018 when my position was ratified at the 2018 Annual General meeting. I stood as a trustee nominee in 2018 as I have always been passionate about Playcentre and supporting children and their families to thrive. When my children started school I wanted to give back to Playcentre for all the support my family and I had received at Centre level. I also knew the journey as a Trustee would involve personal growth and learning – which it has.

Why did I agree to be co-opted for a further 12 months at AGM 2021 when my official Trustee term is due to end?

Michelle Hutton and I were both ratified as new trustees at AGM 2018 under the old constitution. However, with the new constitution finally coming into effect in June 2019 (the legal amalgamation was finalised in the courts) the Board sought legal advice on Trustee terms with the new constitution. The advice was that either Michelle or myself would need to take a shorter term, I supported Michelle to take the longer term and become the incoming Co-president, following Ruth Jones, and volunteered to take the short term. This means my non co-opted Trustee term ends at the 2021 AGM.

At the 2020 Tāngata Tiriti Hui the regional representatives unanimously supported the nomination from Gill Morgan as the incoming Trustee (to take my place after 2021 AGM). However, in March this year Ruth Jones advised she would be ending her term as Co-president early and needed to resign for personal reasons. The Board supported Michelle into the Co-president role early. At this time the Board also asked me if I would consider being co-opted under Clause 9.8 for a further 12 months to provide stability and consistency for the Board. I have been un-preparing to be Co-president and to end my term on 31/7/2021 for more than a year and had already positioned my own personal employment accordingly. Despite this I seriously considered the Board request, especially wanting to support Gill Morgan as a new Trustee and the rest of the Board through a complex and challenging period. I also want to support Tāngata Tiriti through an early Selection Election whare process to ensure another incoming Trustee is ready to replace me at AGM 2022.

General

1. *There are 6 trustees - members wondered why don't we have a board of 10 trustees to share the load?*
Increasing the number of trustees on the board would be a significant process woven into our dedication to partnership (see Constitution, Clause 3.3). Any increase in the number of trustees would have to be agreed by both whare following their own whare processes (see Constitution, clauses 7.5 & 8.4). Any increase in the number of Trustees must also consider the impact on the organisation's finances. Maintaining the current levy is a high priority for the Trustee Board.
2. *Is there a Governance Emergent leadership outline? How does that work?*
Constitution states that each whare will provide their own processes.
Tāngata Tiriti use emergent leadership, more information can be found [here](#).
Te Whare Tikanga Māori have a succession plan, more information can be found [here](#).
3. *Why should members endorse the board for a further term in light of current circumstances?*
We would like to remind Centres that the role of a Playcentre Aotearoa Trustee is essentially a volunteer position – we are not employed but rather receive an honorarium to cover the many weekends and evenings we are away from our whānau. Over the last few years we can testify to the high level of heart, energy and time members of the Board give from their own families and employment. We are proud to be part of a Board that has prioritized strong working relationships in order to work cohesively as a team to support Whānau tupu nga tahi Aotearoa Playcentre Aotearoa to survive and gain a stronger position for the future.
4. *Were there other nominations for trustee members?*
We assume you are referring to Gill Morgan's nomination. If so, no, the candidate was the only nominee and has gone through the whare process (for Tāngata Tiriti whare more information can be found [here](#). The dates in this document refer to the 2021 process).
5. *If members choose not to endorse the board nominees and membership, what are our options, and how will this be dealt with at a zoom AGM?*
Representatives from each region attending the AGM will decide. If agreement is not reached then clause 11.4 of the Constitution will come into effect.
6. *Is any trustee being proposed to be elected for longer than the usual maximum term?*
No.
7. *Has any current trustee exceeded the maximum term of the pre-amalgamation constitution?*
The pre-amalgamation constitution was superceded following the High Court order for amalgamation, enacted on 4th June 2019, and is no longer relevant.
8. *We don't feel like we have enough information on the Co-Presidents or the Trustees on the board, or their successes in the last year to be able to have a voice on their position. Would we be able to be provided with a summary of each Trustee?*
Constitution clauses 7.5 and 8.4 state that each whare will develop rules and policies for the operation of their whare. Tāngata Tiriti use emergent leadership (more information [here](#)), Te Whare Tikanga Māori have a succession plan (more information [here](#)).
Trustee profiles are on the website.
9. *Why are profiles not included for the nominees?*
Nominees have already been through their whare process before progressing to AGM. Trustee profiles are available on the website.

10. Why do we only have 6 trustees when there are 10 spaces available? The Board could be benefitting from expert input to help it meet its responsibilities as per your Risk Governance Checklist.

See Q.1 above. External expert advice is sourced when required.

11. Why are we being asked to override the Constitution by endorsing Tiso Ross even though she has served her maximum term as per the Constitution cl 11?

Tiso Ross is not seeking endorsement. Tiso Ross is being brought onto the Board under clause 9.8 of the Constitution.

12. It seems unusual and unprofessional that Trustees are asking members to expressly act against the Constitution of the organisation.

Statement only. Members are not being asked to act against the constitution.