

## TWTNoA-PA AGM 2021 – Questions and Responses

Monday 5th July, Tuesday 13th July 2021, Wednesday 28th July, Monday 4th October

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 where hui with representatives, and in the Bulletin. The Board will continue this mahi and it is the focus of our where 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.

### **10.10.5 - Governance Policies**

1. *Who will be reviewing the 7x governance policies in August 2021, and how will this be independent from the board and GM?*

Review of Governance policies is part of the duties of the Board. The Board and Centres work under the governance policies. The GM/CE and Operations work under operational policies and ensures there is no contradiction with Governance policies.

2. *When was the board's governance risk checklist last completed, and what were the outcomes?*

The Board consults the checklist regularly and updates as required.

## **Governance Framework - Part A**

- 1. The framework for the governance board makes no mention of upholding/protecting the philosophy of Playcentre. We note it is included in framework B as something to guide the board. Given how vital philosophy is to Playcentre, should it not sit alongside the advancement of whānau tupu ngātahi as one of the board's key focuses?*

The Constitution is the highest document for our organisation. The philosophy is recorded and documented in the first section of the Constitution.

## **Governance Framework - Part B**

- 1. This document specifically mentions that the board will monitor and evaluate student progress and achievement. What is meant by this in a Playcentre context?*

This is specific to the Education programme and is reported against and reflected in the Tertiary Education Completion (TEC) reporting three times a year.

## **3a - Board Meetings**

- 1. We note that the board has an obligation to make their meetings accessible to the public. How is this currently achieved?*
- 2. We note that the board is including more detail in the minutes of their meetings. The lack of context - for example, in the case of the proposal by Great Barrier Island Playcentre - makes it difficult for those not present at the meeting to understand the substance of the discussion. Could we please have guidelines around what information is required to be recorded and the level of detail expected?*

This policy is currently in review.

## **Community Consultation**

- 1. The requirements around consultation seem very limited for what is a grassroots organisation. How can these consultation requirements be reframed to better reflect the expectation for consultation within a Playcentre context (as opposed to a school context)?*

Happy for suggestions/options.

- 2. There is no clear pathway for raising concerns or making suggestions to either the board or to the national/regional team. How can these pathways be improved?*

Please see the Communications pathway on the website.

- 2a. How can we ensure that we centres/clusters have a voice and that their voice is heard by other clusters and centres? How can we bring a suggestion (remit) to the group for consideration?*

Centres and Rōpū Māori have capacity to bring a remit to AGM as stated in the Constitution. We note support for centres in this area is planned for the future. A reminder that clusters are a collection of Centres made by Centres for Centres.

- 3. The Auckland Cluster has proven the value of clusters for strengthening centre participation at a governance level. Given the recent challenges with engagement, would the board reconsider the place of clusters within the organisation? How can the links between clusters/regions and between clusters/regions and the board be strengthened?*

The Board would need to consult on and consider how this would impact nationwide.

4. *What support (i.e. training) is available to centres (and clusters, if appropriate) each year to strengthen engagement in governance? What steps have the Trustee Board taken to ensure centres, clusters and Rōpū Māori to ensure centres fully understand how to be effective governors of PCA, engaging in consultation processes and working collaboratively with the Trustee Board?*

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 (<https://www.playcentre.org.nz/member/governance/>). This information has been shared regularly at AGM and where hui with representatives, and in the Bulletin. The Board will continue this mahi and it is the focus of our where hui.

5. *How is the Trustee Board measuring engagement in governance and responding accordingly?*

The Board measures engagement and representation at national meetings. The Board continues to consider supporting centres to engage in national governance, it is the focus of our where hui.

6. *How does an online AGM as opposed to an in person conference strengthen engagement and understandings of governance? Is the intention to revert back to an in person conference once COVID-19 has abated? If not, what data is there to support a continuation of online AGMs?*

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.

7. *Where is the NZPF handbook? When can we expect to receive a copy (or updated electronic copy) of the handbook? It would be helpful for members, centres, clusters and ropu to have ready access to the information on how to write a remit, and how to actively engage in governance. We have had a gap in these documents being available for at least two years, we feel this is a barrier to active participation in governance.*

The NZPF Handbook became outdated when the organisation amalgamated in June 2019. The contents of the handbook that is still relevant to centres is currently being reviewed, and will be available in a new format in the future.

#### **10.10.6. Consider the Budget and Determine the Levy**

1. *Why has the restructure resulted in an increase, not a decrease in wage costs?*

The primary purpose of the phase 2 restructure was to support the organisation to become more centre focused. It was not designed to be a cost saving initiative. The vast majority of the overall wage increase is in centre facing wages which directly support centres.

2. *Can we have a column in the budget that shows actual spending for 2021? Or a quarterly/half yearly report for AGM or as part of the Bulletins?*

The Board have taken on feedback regarding member requests for interim financial reporting, and commit to ensuring that an interim financial report is available when the 2022/23 budget is circulated for AGM 2022. The Board (with the support of Operations) will endeavour to provide updated financial information for the 2020/21 year in early November, but this will depend on audit progress.

3. *We noticed that Playcentre Aotearoa is still \$750,000 in deficit annually. What is the current plan for getting us back into the black?*

As outlined in the early learning action plan 2019-2029, MoE has committed to co-designing a sustainable funding model for Playcentre. The co-design of a new funding model, exploring other

options to support the strategic objective of Kanorau, and continuing to identify and implement operational efficiencies is the focus for reducing the deficit.

3. *Can the PLD / Education funding be tracked separately from the Sundry funding, as it is important to have visibility over this.*

In the circulated budget, the PLD/Education income is clearly stated, and was included under sundry income for simplicity. PLD and Education income and expenses are tracked separately to meet reporting requirements.

4. *Why is only \$500k allocated for building repairs and maintenance in the budget?*

Playcentre is in the process of completing property condition surveys across our property portfolio, and a plan is being developed to address urgent, non-urgent and routine repairs and maintenance. Until there is full visibility of the likely costs of these repairs and maintenance, the Board is acting prudently to ensure that essential and urgent repairs and maintenance continues to be carried out.

5. *Why is PA not spending cash reserves, or seeking additional funding, as they have advised centres to do, so buildings can be maintained to a safe standard in order to meet its primary objectives?*

Playcentre is in the process of completing property condition surveys across our property portfolio, and a plan is being developed to address urgent, non-urgent and routine repairs and maintenance. Funding for this will likely come from a combination of cash reserves, and other external funding sources, including MoE.

6. *Why is the board not applying for further funding, especially given the Ministry is auditing our centres and finding expensive works are needed to ensure the safety of the tamariki? The application for funding for next year's budget is due September 2021, will Playcentre be applying?*

Playcentre is in the process of completing property condition surveys across our property portfolio, and a plan is being developed to address urgent, non-urgent and routine repairs and maintenance. Playcentre is actively engaging with MoE in this work. Funding for this will likely come from a combination of cash reserves, and other external funding sources, including MoE.

7. *How has the \$3.7 million been spent from the "save Playcentre" drive?*

The \$3.7 million received from government was a one-off cash injection to support Playcentre over the following 3 years. Over \$500,000 has already been approved for repairs and maintenance of centres, with further expenditure in property and other initiatives scheduled in 2021/22.

8. *What is driving up contractor costs (see expenditures)?*

The primary driver of increased costs for Consultancy, Legal, and Computer Expenses is the new IT support contract to ensure the organisation has adequate IT support and protection given our size and complex needs.

9. *What is the long-term plan to operate within the levies, given the restructure is almost complete and costs are still \$2m in deficit?*

As outlined in the early learning action plan 2019-2029, MoE has committed to co-designing a sustainable funding model for Playcentre. The co-design of a new funding model, exploring other options to support the strategic objective of Kanorau, and continuing to identify and implement operational efficiencies is the focus for reducing the deficit.

*10. Do we have reserves or properties to sell?*

Playcentre Aotearoa has cash reserves, currently enough to cover more than 12 months of expenses. Playcentre does own some centre properties. However, disposal of any owned properties which are no longer required for Playcentre purposes includes several considerations, not least of which is that in general, local communities financed Centres to be established, therefore PA needs to consult with affected communities when buildings are no longer required.

*11. When will we run out of money?*

The Board is comfortable with Playcentre's current financial position. Playcentre's cash reserves are currently enough to cover more than 12 months of expenses, and can sustain the current budgeted deficit level for another 5 years at least. Of course Playcentre is not planning to continue to operate a deficit budget. As outlined in the early learning action plan 2019-2029, MoE has committed to co-designing a sustainable funding model for Playcentre. The co-design of a new funding model, exploring other options to support the strategic objective of Kanorau, and continuing to identify and implement operational efficiencies is the focus for reducing the deficit.

*12. Why was there no follow up, as promised by MP Tracey Martin in the "save Playcentre" drive, for the co-designed funding model in Budget 2021?*

Members of the Board and Operations have been engaging with MoE on a range of topics, including property, licensing and funding over the last 12 months. The early learning action plan 2019-2029 does not specify a timeline for the co-design, but Playcentre and MoE have recently agreed to re-engage in this work.

*13. Was a bid submitted for Budget 2021?*

The \$3.7 million donation received in 2020 was to support Playcentre for the following three years. Because of this the Board were not expecting any specific additional funding for Playcentre in the 2021 budget (over and above the hourly rate increase).

*14. Has a budget bid been made or about to be made for the 2022 MOE Budget?*

Playcentre is actively engaging with MoE on a range of issues and exploring options for securing the funding needed.

*15. I've seen 2020 end of year Audit report but doesn't match up to the proposed budget, the lines aren't the same. How is anyone able to value your budget if there isn't 2020 actuals, 2021's year to date or even 6 months worth so basic math assumes twice the amount to compare. I can't find any finance information.*

The budget is presented in a summarised format, as that is what was requested by members in previous years (members found the full budget too complex to interpret). See responses to Q2 above regarding interim financial reporting.

*16. Consistently underestimating income and over estimating expenditure is a nice theory but looks terrible. So next years budget is set to be less than 2020s actual, 2020, where we were closed for over 6 weeks and new people couldn't join. It doesn't make sense, the funding rates have increased. I guess when the budget was set the actual wasn't available but it means that this budget for 2021/22 should be close to actuals of 2020/21. But nobody knows that, no conversations are going on, no information is being released no actuals are available, no clarity is given, no decent explanation is given.*

The 2021/22 budget was based on forecast full-year income and expenditure for 2020/21, with adjustments where required for known increases/decreases. Given the continued uncertainty around the Covid-19 pandemic, the budget is conservative.

*17. Also there's no budget for assets, low cost or otherwise, no budget for the depreciation claims on current/proposed assets. Has everything been bought ever for everyone?*

Significant asset purchases are currently considered on a case by case basis. An asset budget will continue to be developed collaboratively between the Board and Operations.

*18. Have all the operational efficiencies of the amalgamation been realised? Costs have been reduced in terms of personnel and IT infrastructure.*

Operational efficiencies are on an upward journey of continuous improvement. There have been many changes both small and large across operations in the last 12 months which have improved both effectiveness and efficiency, including personnel and IT infrastructure and support. Whilst the IT infrastructure is a work in progress while the provider and the organisation continue to work towards optimum services for organisation productivity. There is always more which can be done and both the Board and Operations are committed to continuing improvements.

*19. Has there been any analysis on the impact on service and morale (both staff and at Centres) that this cost cutting has caused?*

The phase 2 restructure has only recently been fully operationalised. Once these changes have had time to settle and be fine tuned where necessary, an analysis/review will be carried out to identify where further improvements can be made.

*20. Has it just passed back costs to Centres both in terms of increased volunteer hours required to run Centres and services which Centres are now looking to fund out of their own operational budgets?*

One of the drivers of the amalgamation was the increasing member/volunteer workload. Since amalgamation the Board and Operations are continuing to investigate opportunities to reduce the workload on centre members. With the phase 2 restructure now operational, the Board are hopeful that progress in this area will accelerate.

*21. Are the number of Centres decreasing?*

Yes, unfortunately there are approximately five centres who have closed in the last 12 months that the Trustee Board are aware of.

*22. How many Centres have transitioned to Playgroups?*

The Trustee Board do not have this data available to them at this time.

*23. How many have closed?*

Unfortunately there are approximately five centres who have closed in the last 12 months that the Trustee Board are aware of.

*24. What are the opportunities to reopen old Centres or open Centres on new locations?*

In the future Playcentre Aotearoa would like to be able to support the opening of new centres in areas where communities identify a need. However, the organisation is not yet in a position to be able to do this. For now, our priority is to ensure sustainability of our current centres. The Trustee Board have initiated the process to collaborate with Operations to develop a process for opening/re-opening a Playcentre.

*25. How many Centres on temporary licenses/using discretionary days/taking days unfunded?*

The Trustee Board do not have this data available to them at this time.

*26. These numbers indicate a contraction in the organisation. All this has the knock on of a reduction in levies.*

Whilst the closure of any centre is very sad, the small number of centres which have closed in the last 12 months have all been small centres. These closures have resulted in a very small reduction in levies received, however the reduction of expenses has more than compensated for the loss of income because the costs subsidised by Playcentre Aotearoa were greater than the levies received from these centres.

*27. What other sources of income has the organisation investigated?*

As outlined in the early learning action plan 2019-2029, MoE has committed to co-designing a sustainable funding model for Playcentre. The Grants Administrator has been active in identifying opportunities to secure grant funding on a local, regional and national basis. The Principal Advisor has been developing relationships with other like-minded not-for-profit/for-purpose organisations, exploring not only opportunities to increase Playcentre's income directly, but with a view to increasing Playcentre membership in the medium-long term.

*28. Should Centres be worried about their own cash at bank? I noticed at a recent Trustee meeting a Centre transitioning away from the organisation to an independent Playgroup had it's Cash at bank retained by Playcentre Aotearoa. Where is the policy that documents how that is possible? For example, funds held at our Centre bank account have been generated by our Centre community working hard, managing the Centre well and doing fundraising. Playcentre Aotearoa receives it's Levies, why would it also be entitled to cash at bank from the Centres income streams?*

Operational centres have no cause for concern regarding cash held in their own bank accounts. The only instance where Playcentre Aotearoa becomes involved in managing a centre's assets is recess/closure.

Clause 5.5.2 and 5.5.3 of the Constitution state:

“5.5.2. in the event of a Playcentre going into recess, Playcentre Aotearoa shall hold all assets of the Playcentre in trust for an agreed period of up to two (2) years; if during the recess period there is community interest/support in reforming the Playcentre, and the Trustee Board grants approval for reformation, the assets held in trust shall be handed over to the new group;

5.5.3. if after the agreed recess period no group has expressed a desire to reform, the Playcentre will be deemed closed and Playcentre Aotearoa shall retain the assets unless a formal commitment to return some or all assets to its community exists.”

Once the Board are notified of a recess or closure request the Board considers all the information provided and makes a decision on a case by case basis. If the decision is made to close the centre, in general, other Playcentres in the local area are given the first opportunity to access equipment, and any funds remaining after the closure has been completed are held by Playcentre Aotearoa and used to support other local centres.

*29. On a related note, we had difficulty understanding some of the changes between 2020/2021 and 2021/2022. Would it be possible to provide more detail in the comments section of the budget to allow members to better understand how the decisions in the budget have been reached?*

The budget is presented in a summarised format, as that is what was requested by members in previous years (members found the full budget too complex to interpret).

*30. When does the board expect the financial records for the 2020/2021 year to be ready for centres to review?*

The Board (with the support of Operations) will endeavour to provide updated financial information for the 2020/21 year in early November, but this will depend on audit progress.

31. *We note that the travel costs for centre advisors seems low given the increased distance some centre advisors have to travel now they are working for an increasing number of centres across a wider geographical range. What information was this figure based upon?*

Budget 2021/22 was based on actual and forecast expenses for the full-year 2020/21. Travel is a control by each region. Various factors have been considered with the Line Managers having oversight. Better reporting and scheduling will inform future budgets, in regards to travel.

32. *We note that the 2021/2022 budget has an almost \$400,000 increase in levies compared with the current year's budget. What information is this based upon? Is this based on current or expected enrolments?*

Budget 2021/22 was based on actual and forecast income for the full-year 2020/21. This was based on current bulkfunding trends.

33. *We understand that there are a number of former Playcentres currently operating as play groups. There is no mention of play groups in the budget. How much money do play groups cost the organisation annually? What revenue (if any) do play groups pay to Playcentre? Are there any formalised processes for supporting play groups to become relicensed as Playcentres? What is the timeframe in which this process is expected to be completed?*

There are a small number of centres which operate as Playcentre Certificated Playgroups. An important part of Playcentre philosophy is supporting whānau, which includes support for a limited number of these playgroups. Since 2019, if a centre has needed to become a certificated playgroup, they have been required to commit to a plan to return to being fully licensed. Playgroups currently do not contribute levies, but historically many of these have paid levies when they were fully licensed centres. Playgroups do not receive the same level of service as fully licensed Playcentres.

34. *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 centres thrive, and 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.*

As the budget shows, the organisation is still in a significant operational deficit. Therefore at this time it would not be financially prudent to further increase employee wages. There may be an opportunity for this to be addressed in the future as part of the co-design of a new funding model with MoE.

35. *We note that legal advice is essential for ensuring that Playcentre Aotearoa operates within the bounds of the law while at the same time not acting unduly cautiously due to a misunderstanding of risk. Expenditure on legal advice is not itemised on the 2019/2020 Financial Statements and is lumped in with consultancy and computer expenses in the budget save for a \$10,000 contingency for governance. How much has been spent in the 2019/2020 financial year? What has been spent to date in the 2020/2021 financial year? For what issues was legal advice consulted? Would the Trustee Board make this advice (at least in broad terms if confidential) available to members to the extent it relates to centre operations or governance?*

Legal advice is sought for a range of issues, including property, employment and governance. Due to confidentiality we are unable to release a cost breakdown. In the 2020/21 year the only legal advice which has been sought relating to governance was provided pro bono and has already been released to the membership.

36. *How are we supporting centres with low memberships/ qualifications/ licensing to prevent burn out, further loss of memberships, or closures of sessions or days?*

Staff are providing support to keep abreast of the celebrations and challenges of Centres.

Licensing - recent changes to licensing requirements have reduced the pressure on centres, and have allowed more sessions to remain open. Further work is continuing with MoE.

Qualifications - the bulk of the education programme is now offered online. Work is continuing with those centres who have low uptake of education to explore barriers and potential solutions.

Membership - Communications have developed a s PR toolkit and a suite of promotional materials which are available on the website, as well as leading several initiatives to support the promotion of Playcentre this year. Playcentre is also developing relationships with like minded organisations (SPACE NZ, Parents Centre, parent and family related publications etc).

37. *Why is there no funding allocated for Reo Rua sessions, given our stated commitment to partnership and biculturalism?*

In principle the Board supports the concept of Reo Rua/Te Reo sessions. For funding to be formally considered a proposal from centre/s would need to be put forward to Operations, at the regional level first, then onto the national management team with a full report coming to the Trustee Board for consideration. All proposals should include a financial plan of costs associated with running Reo Rua/Te Reo sessions.

38. *Regarding the 2021/2022 Budget - Building Costs allocation of \$500,000: In the commentary it states "Other avenues of funding will be explored (e.g. MoE for MoE-owned buildings)". Could you clarify whether this process of exploring and obtaining other avenues of funding has begun? We are concerned that these processes can take an extremely long time and if external funding is not obtained this places extreme pressure on already struggling individual centres.*

Operations and the Trustee Board are already in discussions with MoE regarding funding for repairs and maintenance to those properties for which property condition surveys have been completed.

#### **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 where 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.

13. *We have had some concerns over the lack of information coming from both Regional Office & the national office of late and even going through the official communication pathways we have been met with silence or get brushed off. Can we come up with a framework for communication and responses? How can we have reciprocal communication to ensure we are acting as a professional early childhood service? A great article was from Playcentre Journal around this (article attached). At the moment we hear a lot of centres saying Playcentre Aotearoa is tone-deaf and not willing to listen. Instead of centres getting frustrated and doing their own thing, how can we turn this around and be pro-active and come up with solutions?*

Please continue to use the communication pathway which is on the website, here. If Centres do not get a response in a reasonable timeframe then the email can be escalated to the line manager of the role originally contacted.

Ideally, all centres will have service that is equitable. The Board are continuing to work with Operations to support centres. As the operational restructure is embedded the Trustee Board is expecting further development in this area.

14. *The Phase 2 restructure has occurred but we are now short of a number of key positions. What is the plan around hiring for these missing positions?*

Filling of vacant positions is continuing.

15. *What happens if we don't have a Centre Advisor for 3 months? 6 months? 12 months? Coming up and communicating this plan would be helpful for us to have confidence in what is going on. Same applies for a CEO.*

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

16. *Kaiwhakahaere Hononga Māori | Māori Relationship Manager role - why hasn't Thomas' resignation in May been announced? How many days after his resignation was his position advertised? Was it advertised widely on Seek/Trademe? Was it sent to a recruiter?*

Thomas' resignation was announced on June 25th. The timing of resignation announcements are agreed with the employee. As per the organisational structure the incoming Chief Executive will bring in the new Kaiwhakahaere Hononga Māori. The only time the Board has a role in employing is the recruitment of the Chief Executive.

17. *Staffing - We as a Cluster have noted a high level of staff turnover particularly in key positions (i.e. the vast majority listed in the National Team in the 2020 Annual report are no longer in these positions) and a slow process for filling vacant positions (i.e. GM).*

a. *Why does the organisation have so many unfilled positions: Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer, Executive Assistant, Human Resources Manager and Property Manager?*

b. *What progress has been made in relation to appointing people into key roles (such as the above)?*

a & b - Please refer to the organisational structure on the website for up to date information (<https://www.playcentre.org.nz/about/organisational-structure/>). Most roles are now filled.

c. *What processes are in place to support existing and past members to transition into key positions within the organisation?*

The principles of equal employment opportunity do not allow for the organisation to favour existing and past Playcentre members. All recruitment must be based on the candidates skills, knowledge and experience in relation to the position description.

18. *What is happening with the General Manager's role?*

Susan Bailey agreed to take on the temporary acting GM role from 5/7/21 while CE recruitment continues. The Chief Executive role is pivotal for the organisation and the Board endeavours to appoint the right person, not the first person. Making an appointment to the Chief Executive position was not anticipated to take this long. We can advise the second CE recruitment has publicly recommenced on 13/7/21 with a closing date for applications of 1/8/21 and anticipated starting timeframe of late September.

19. *What were the issues with the first round of recruitment? Lack of applicants or lack of skills/experience of those which applied.*

The market for executive level roles is currently very tight. Whilst we had several promising applicants in the first CE recruitment round, unfortunately none of them were the right person for Playcentre Aotearoa. We are not able to provide any further information about the first CE recruitment round due to privacy and confidentiality obligations we owe to those applicants.

20. *On what basis does this combining of roles (board co-president and GM) support the Boards policy to "delegate all authority and accountability for the day to day operational organisation of the organisation to the General Manager" and, to "not involve itself in the administrative details of the day to day running of the organisation".*

From the outset, the Co-presidents acting in the GM role was an interim solution, necessitated by the vacancy in the General Manager position. The Delegated Authority Schedule states that in the absence of a General Manager the Co-Presidents will act in their place.

21. *Are the board now in a paid employment situation receiving a salary associated with the GM position?*

While the Co-presidents were in the position of Acting General Manager they did not receive any form of salary or financial incentive, other than their usual honorarium. 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.

22. *How is the board managing the risk of such high staff turnover?*

We hear your concern about the current operational situation. The amalgamation of 31 very separate and different associations and a national office into one entity of Playcentre Aotearoa has been and continues to be a very complex journey. The Board has and will continue to work with the senior management team to develop and embed a positive, professional organisational culture which is aligned with Playcentre philosophy.

23. *How is the board coping with its responsibilities with its Co-Presidents taking on such a large task?*

The board has been able to draw on its collective resources and relationships as well as expert external advice to navigate this temporary and unexpected situation.

24. Are there KPIs for the GM and can centre have input as to what they are?

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are set by the Trustee Board and the Chief Executive. KPI's are based on our Strategic Plan which is a living document. As governors, Centres and Rōpū Māori have the ability to contribute to strategic planning via an annual strategic survey. We hope that we can gain a higher response rate to Strategic Survey 2021 which will come out later in the year. This feedback is one input into the wider decision-making process. Please refer to slide 7 – 'What is the difference between Governance and Operations in Playcentre' of the 'What is Playcentre Governance' slide show on the Governance tab of the website - <https://www.playcentre.org.nz/member/governance/>.

### Engagement between Centres and the Trustee Board

1. *Is there a way to improve engagement between the Trustee board and Centres?*

This is a work in progress, and the Board continue to consider current and alternative practices which will best serve Centres and Rōpū Māori. The Board is open to further suggestions in this area. As per the communications pathway, members are welcome to email the Co-Presidents with any governance concerns at any time.

2. *The biggest flaw is its lack of communication, consultation and clarification. There hasn't been the opportunity for centres to communicate what they actually want and need, with enough time to effectively consult. No CA's do not ask, or regional or national/governance.*

There are several pathways which the Trustee Board used to communicated and consult with members. One of which is the strategic survey which is sent out prior to ngā whare hui each year. Unfortunately, there were not enough responses to this survey in 2020 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 when it is next sent out. In previous years the information from the strategic survey is then used to inform discussions at whare hui, which then inform Board and operational discussions around strategic priorities and plans. As mentioned above, members are welcome to email the Co-Presidents with any governance concerns at any time.

3. *How are the board going to re engage Centres and facilitate governance processes? If engagement is the measure by which to evaluate the success of the current governance process, then the Trustees supporting Centres to engage in the governance process by just sending them emails is not working, well at least not in the USI region. There were 2 people on the USI zoom yesterday, a lady from another Centre in our Cluster and myself. That means that from 81 Centres across 11 Clusters in our region only 2 were represented. Knowledge of the governance process, the confidence to engage in the content and the empowerment to contribute at meetings is next to impossible to achieve by Trustees sending an email (at two times during the year) and zoom meetings. Relationships are the key to making it work. Communications from the Trustees are too formal, it is my observation that most people think it's just too hard and complicated, on top of everything else to get involved. This is a problem the Trustees should be working on. OR even better creating working groups of its members to solve the problem.*

This is a work in progress, and the Board continue to consider current and alternative practices which will best serve Centres and Rōpū Māori. The Board is open to further suggestions in this area. As per the communications pathway, members are welcome to email the Co-Presidents with any governance concerns at any time.

4. *How is communication shared between governance and at a centre level and vice versa? How can this be improved to reduce the “us and them” feeling so we can all work cooperatively?*

This is a work in progress, and the Board continue to consider current and alternative practices which will best serve Centres and Rōpū Māori. The Board is open to further suggestions in this area. As per the communications pathway, members are welcome to email the Co-Presidents with any governance concerns.

5. *In direct reference to the Whakakaha focus, how is the Trustee board planning to provide education about how to engage in governance? Is it respectful to us being volunteers who are already highly contributing Playcentre members, let alone parents of small children? We have two members who want to engage but are find the jump into governance overwhelming due to a gap in guidance and knowledge. This means that our representatives are often longer standing members or lifetime members, and it is hard for newer voices to be active and heard. As the conversations are about the future of Playcentre, we need to have an easier path for current and newer members who may have a newer perspective.*

There is information on how governance works on the ‘Governance’ tab of the Playcentre website, [here](#) (scroll down towards the bottom of the page). There are Facebook groups for the regional governance spaces and regional rōpū Māori which can be used to communicate with others in your region. Ideally, the longstanding and life members of centres should be supporting newer members to emerge using tuakana-teina.

## **Constitution**

1. *Is the constitution fit for purpose?*

Although the TWTNoA-PA constitution was agreed at the AGM in 2016, the new constitution only came into effect on 4th June 2019 (upon completion of the High Court amalgamation process). It is best practice to operate in a process before reviewing it. This was confirmed by the legal advice we received which recommended that we work within the new constitution for a period of two years prior to review. The scheduled review of the constitution will be initiated in due course. Centres, Rōpu, either where, or the Trustee Board, are able to submit a remit (for constitutional change) as identified in Clause 11.6 of the Constitution.

2. *Some Kindergartens in some areas are now accepting children from 2 years old. Can Playcentre change the Constitution to read that children are able to be dropped off from 2 years old.*

The requirement for tamariki under 2.5 years old to be accompanied by a parent or caregiver is a regulatory requirement, as well as a constitutional requirement for Playcentre. The MoE Funding Handbook states in 3-C-3 - Playcentres, Supervision Requirements, "For each session, all Playcentres must: .....ensure that all children under 2 and a half years of age are accompanied by a parent or caregiver."

## **Clusters**

1. *What role could Clusters have in Governance?*

Whilst the Board acknowledges that discussions at cluster meetings are valuable for some members, we also note that clusters are not currently recognised in the constitution and many centres are not actively participating in the cluster model. The Board is aware that our constitutional responsibility is to communicate/engage directly with all Centres and Rōpū Māori.

## **Governance Regions**

1. *To reduce complexity, is this something we would look at aligning?*

The governance regions and regional rōpū Māori were established following the amalgamation. The change in operational regions at the end of 2020 does not impact on the six governance regions. Currently the total number of representatives is split evenly across each of the six regions to ensure equitable representation.

2. *Is “Self-organising” among the regions working or would it be better to formalise this? Our sense is that some centres struggle to engage with the governance side of things and there is very little support from PA for this.*

There is information on how governance works in Playcentre on the website, here ([link to website](#)). There are Facebook groups for the regional governance spaces and regional rōpū Māori which can be used to communicate with others in your region. Ideally, the longstanding and life members of centres should be supporting newer members to emerge using the tuakana-teina model. As per the communications pathway, members are welcome to email the Co-Presidents with any governance concerns.

## **Constitutional Review**

1. *Other than the single email to centres, what steps have the board taken to ensure 80% of centres and 80% of Rōpū Māori engage in the Constitutional Review in 2021?*

Due to unprecedented membership focus, the constitutional review has not progressed as originally intended. 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 member's rights include having representation at national meetings and input into the strategic direction of our organisation. Member's responsibility is to carry out their governance role, this includes participating in all community consultation. Centres and Rōpu, along with the Trustee Board, are able to submit a remit (for constitutional change) as identified in Clause 11.6 of the Constitution.

2. *Why does a review of constitution, no matter how robust or comprehensive the approach, take “a number of years”? With Playcentre members’ tenures shortening in recent times to only a few years, wouldn’t it make more sense to have a working party of board and centre members review and report suggested changes within a single year?*

Thank you for your suggestion. There are several factors which would need to be considered, including, but not limited to, the membership agreeing to this way forward, terms of reference, partnership, equitable representation of membership, a mechanism for deciding who the representatives from each whare will be, etc. The Board note that the development of the current constitution took longer than 12 months.