

## **POLICY DISCUSSION MEETING. SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JANARY 2020 at 9.30.**

Chairpersn; Bruce

Minutes; Nityama

Present: Chris, Louise, Kevin, James, Callum, Sattwa, Rob, Harvey, Atmo, Belinda, Roger,

Petra, Bronwen, Dan, RalphV, Denise, Dennis, Sam, PeterO, Mog, Steve.

**Just a note :** As the note taker in this instance I would like the reader to bear in mind that I am not a minute taker and these notes are written down as they are heard, longhand. I do not catch everything that is said and try to just take down the most pertinent part of what is said. I do not make an impression of any political side to a story, that would be far too complex for me to achieve with notepad and pen (there are a few things mentioned here that I might agree on as changes to policy).

**So** there is a lot that is missing from these notes, don't blame me if it seems incomplete, because it just is.

If we want verbatim notes then perhaps we need to record meetings officially for the record.

Kev.

Bruce stated that this was a fact gathering exercise, not a general meeting where voting can take place.

### **Comments from the members.**

**Nityama** - That the group discuss the Complaints Management policy first.

**James** – Review within the policy, continual improvement of policies.

**Atmo** – There are threats of legal action by “other members” (names not specified).

New policies from 2-3 years ago. This is not a corporation and not corporate policies.

**Steve** – The complaints management policy are 5 documents. Review needed.

**Peter O** – Policy needs a review.

**Chris** – Why do we need to go outside to deal with complaints ?

**James** – Complaints policy has external mediation if necessary. It is in the CMP already.

**Atmo** – Corporate law type talk is complex. He has a hard time following the communications in emails.

Called out “The 4 directors” on the board were making all the decisions. A comparison to the Crucifixion ?

The directors have no right to judge people or discipline people. It is an Inquisition, Kangaroo court ?

**Harvey** – Complaints policy is connected to other policies and all need review, cannot

work in isolation.

**Sattwa** – Wanted to know why he didn’t find out who complained against him in respect

to his CoC breach.

**Wayne** – Clarified detail re: CoC breaches.

**Dennis** – Responded that he was one of the members who raised a complaint.

**Bruce** – Feedback required from everyone in writing, please put down in writing what changes.

**Nityama** – Complaints should go directly to outside mediation. No one is impartial.

Want a vote on impartiality of the board.

Is the board superhuman – they have no right to judge, this creates bad feeling.

**Petra** – Issues should all go to external lawyers.

**Wayne** – Response to Nityama. 5 board members required to make a decision not 4.

Atmo and Nityama interjected.

**Wayne** – Responded that it is about respect not harassing people.

**Harvey** – Board is not impartial, a certain member attacks? No indication given as to who.

**Bruce** – Time to move on, to develop a policy that is for the majority of members.

**Steve** – Suggests Membership policy.

**Nityama** – Spoke of constructive, problem solving and inclusive.

**Peter** – Need to reduce the stress and responsibility on the board.

**Atmo** – Requested the history of the CMP from Dave L

**Dave L** – Too procedural, back in the day harsher issues, now too much e-nitpicking. E-mail has created issues with understanding in communications.

**Harvey** – Membership policy has lots of issues. New members should read & initial the CMP

Before joining.

**Dave Van Meg** – *(Not at meeting but via written means)* Membership for new partners should be simpler.

**Nityam** – Lighter process for families.

**Sattwa** – New members coming in are good with a new perspective.

**Bruce** – Diversity is the core of the community.

**Roger** – Need to address specific things.

**Atmo** – Do not like the folio thing, it is problematic “Corporate” thing, it creates a hierarchy,

Need more democracy. Abolish portfolios.

**Denise** – Portfolios were suggested by Nityama and others, to help empower committees.

**Peter** – Idea was to have board members on committees. It was agreed to reduce the

board responsibilities for committee issues and improve communications.

**Atmo** – It is a Hierarchy with the board taking over from committees.

**Roger** – Punctuality is a result of board portfolios, no one was taking responsibility and

work was not getting done.

**Harvey** – Verbal communications is as good.

**Bruce** – Portfolios create focus on one issue and is not a power trip.

**Atmo** – It's like pot smoking.

**Harvey**- At least the board is elected.

**Louise** – Committees to elect team leaders, board members to report. All decisions Come back to the community and are voted upon.

**Peter** – It's a long consultative process, many external factors. Doing a job no one else wanted to do.

**Roger** - Most rules are from fair trading and the cooperative law.

**Sattwa** – Need to enlarge the board to 20 members.

**Louise** – This becomes too big and too cumbersome.

**Petra** – wants to be in committee but not actively.

**Bruce** – There will be more meetings on policy. Need to read and redline the issues so your concerns can be more fully explained to others and yourself.

**Atmo** – Board is Authoritarian, it is utterly wrong.

**Kev** – Example of committee working related to fixing tractors and expenses in a committee. The members do the work (mostly Ralph V, who later drove the now repaired tractor past this meeting)

But communicate what needs to be done to the director.

***Note:** Interjections by Sattwa and Atmo made taking an accurate record of this action difficult.*

**Bruce** – Expansion of the policy committee. Lots of discussion on power and role of The committee.

**Denise** – 27 directors in 8 years. Most cop a bit of crap from some members and resign. It's a Very Difficult job.

**Louise** – Need diversity. No females on the board. Because of the abuse they receive,

Being bailed up at meeting and had to be rescued from threatening situations.

**Nityama** – Everybody to take a turn at the director role. Limit 2 terms, more rotational

Shifts.

**Kev** – Still needs to be voted in by the community.

**Harvey** – Three years rather than two years concurrent

**Wayne** – There are only a few people who complain Vigorously and vociferously. Not the majority of the community.

**Peter** – Regarding the use of “Ruling elite”, recent opinion is poor impression. Renewal of directors is ongoing. Resignations of directors is endemic due to harassment from some

Members. There have been 28 new directors, mentioned the most common directors.

**Nityama** – Would like to be invited to a directors meeting. Unhappy with the way directors

talk about other members is poor dynamics.

**Bruce** – Gathering of ideas has been good. Will put out a public message to extend policy discussion to whole group.

**Petra** – There is a perception of power of the board.

**Meeting closed at 11.30**