
AUCKLAND CONSERVATION BOARD

Te Runanga Papa Atawhai o Tāmaki Makaurau

DOC-6092217

10 October 2019

John Luke
Email: fyi-request-11301-853fdfde@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Luke

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Auckland Conservation Board, dated 27 September 2019. You requested the following (with wording slightly amended for clarity):

- 1. How many similar events to the Auckland Mayoral Conservation Awards has the Auckland Conservation Board Chair or members attended in the last three years?*
- 2. In the past three years how many engagements has the Auckland Conservation Board had with iwi, mana whenua, community and volunteer groups?*
- 3. Has the Auckland Conservation Board taken any effort to enhance low attendance at the Public Forum part of each Board meeting? What sort of point of connection has the Board made or represented?*
- 4. Has the Auckland Conservation Board taken effort to engage any other ethnic groups beside the iwi? Any community event in the past three years that the Board has attended or any effort the Board has taken to get more attraction from the ethnic community (non-iwi)?*

By way of context for my response the questions you have raised concerning how the Conservation Board engages with the community are ones that the Board has itself considered and discussed at several of its meetings in recent years. The Board has a relatively limited budget, so we are constrained in the amount of proactive engagement we can attempt. Board members also nearly all work full time and have other commitments, so the time available from individual members to support proactive engagement is also limited.

The Board has made efforts to engage more broadly as I have explained below, but to date the limited steps we have taken have not necessarily resulted in increased engagement by the community with the Board.

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The Board does have a Communications Sub-committee, and that Sub-committee will continue to work on how the Board can engage with a wider spectrum of Auckland's large and diverse communities.

As I advised you in my letter dated 1 October 2019, in response to your earlier Official Information Act request, Board members will also often attend events and engage with the community when undertaking their employed, contracted or volunteer roles. While they attend these in other capacities, members may report on such events and engagement at Board meetings.

Note that not all Board members attended the events and engagements identified in my responses below, and in some cases the Board was represented only by one or a few members.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *How many similar events to the Auckland Mayoral Conservation Awards has the Auckland Conservation Board Chair or members attended in the last three years?*

The Auckland Conservation Board Chair and members have attended the following events that are similar to the Auckland Mayoral Conservation Awards during the period October 2016 to October 2019.

All Conservation Boards are seeking increased opportunities to attend or speak at such events to raise their profile and build awareness of what Board's do and how members of the community might connect with Boards.

9 November 2017	Event to mark approval of the Hauturu/Little Barrier Conservation Management Plan hosted by Ngāti Manuhiri.
19 October 2017	Annual Conservation Week function for associates of the Department of Conservation.
17 September 2018	Annual Conservation Week function for associates of the Department of Conservation.
23 January 2019	Event to mark signing of a Conservation Relationship Agreement between the Department of Conservation and Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki.
16 September 2019	Annual Conservation Week function for associates of the Department of Conservation.

2. *In the past three years how many engagements has the Auckland Conservation Board had with iwi, mana whenua, community and volunteer groups?*

The Auckland Conservation Board has had the following engagement with iwi and mana whenua, and community and volunteer groups, during the period October 2016 to October 2019.

Some of this engagement has been in association with the regular meetings of the Board, where the Board has invited representatives of iwi or community groups to speak to the Board or join with it during a field inspection when the Board has combined an inspection visit with a meeting. Engagement as part of such meetings is asterisked in the list below.

October 2016 to August 2017	Various meetings with representatives of Ngāti Manuhiri (concerning the preparation and approval of the Hauturu/Little Barrier Conservation Management Plan)
16 November 2016	Pūkoro Mirando Naturalists' Trust representative*
31 May 2017	Kawau Island Advisory Committee representative*
16 August 2017	Ngāti Manuhiri representatives*
15 November 2017	Ngāti Whatua o Kaipara representative and North-West Wildlink representative*
14 February 2018	Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki representative, Motutapu Restoration Trust representatives, and Rangitoto Island Historic Conservation Trust representative*
16 May 2018	Long Bay Okura Great Park Society representatives and Kiwi for Kiwis representative*
25 June 2018	Ngāti Manuhiri representative spoke to a combined group of the New Zealand Conservation Authority and the Board
8 August 2018	Ngāti Manuhiri representatives*
14 November 2018	Ngāti Paoa representative and Waiheke Resources Trust representative*

3. *Has the Auckland Conservation Board taken any effort to enhance low attendance at the Public Forum part of each Board meeting? What sort of point of connection has the Board made or represented?*

The Auckland Conservation Board has recognised that in recent years there has been low attendance at the public forum part of its regular meetings. This has been discussed at several of its meetings, as part of the wider discussions about how the Board engages with the community I referred to in the context for my response set out above.

A number of presenters in the public forum part of each meeting have been as a result of requests to speak to the Board. Some have been related to a particular issue that those speakers wished to bring to the attention of the Board or on which they wished to seek the Board's views.

The Board has taken some steps to try and encourage greater engagement with the community, including posting information about its meetings on the Board's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/auckconservationboard/>), and on the Neighbourly app. Postings to the latter app are undertaken by Board members who have joined that app and live or work in locations where we plan to hold our meetings.

The Board has also proactively invited representatives of iwi or community groups to speak to the Board as part of its meetings. A number of those iwi and community group representatives identified in my response to Question 2 above spoke to the Board as a result of proactive invitations.

The Board also contributes several times a year to the "Conservation Boards newsletter" which is compiled by the Department of Conservation's central support team for statutory bodies. This is sent to all those who subscribe and provides a channel for communicating about the Board's activities to the wider public. Past newsletters and a link to subscribe to future issues can be viewed at this webpage: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/newsletters/conservation-boards-newsletter/>.

I also note that Board members are expected to engage with their friends, associates and communities in the course of their work and activities between Board meetings, so they can be more fully informed about conservation issues that are important to the community and give added depth to their contributions at Board meetings. This expectation is set out in the "Code of Practise for Conservation Boards" (2015) that is available to view on this webpage as a linked document: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-boards/what-conservation-boards-do/>.

The Code of Practise also encourages Boards to hold their meetings in different parts of their regions to encourage engagement with communities. As I advised in my response to your earlier Official Information Act request, the Board has met in a variety of different locations across our region in the three-year period October 2016 to September 2019.

4. *Has the Auckland Conservation Board taken effort to engage any other ethnic groups beside the iwi? Any community event in the past three years that the Board has attended or any effort the Board has taken to get more attraction from the ethnic community (non-iwi)?*

How the Board might engage with Auckland's diverse ethnic communities has also been discussed at several of our regular meetings. As Auckland is considered to be among the world's most "super diverse" cities, this presents the Board with a real challenge.

In my response to Question 3 above I have identified some of the ways by which the Board has tried to build greater engagement with the various communities of the Auckland region. The issues I discussed above, and the actions taken by the Board to build greater engagement, are also pertinent to this question.

In addition, I also note that the Board has had members appointed to it from different ethnicities, including on the current Board. While those individuals cannot possibly

represent a whole community, and are not expected to, they nevertheless bring their unique cultural context to the Board's discussions and can bring to Board business the perspective of their friends and associates with whom they might engage in between meetings. The list of current Board members along with a short bio for each can be viewed on this webpage: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-boards/auckland/board-members/>.

The Board is currently working with the Department to identify ways by which it might engage with one of Auckland largest ethnic groups, the Chinese community. This work is still in the very early stages of discussion, but the Board is taking a lead from the Department of Conservation which has undertaken some new initiatives over the past year to engage with that particular community.

If you wish to discuss anything in this response with the Conservation Board, please contact me through the Board's Support Officer by emailing jahyoung@doc.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Mayes', written in a cursive style.

Lyn Mayes
Chair
Auckland Conservation Board