
Annual General Meeting

Home Birth Aotearoa Trust

Sunday, 07.11.2021, Via Zoom

Attendees

Eva Neely, *Chairperson*

Alesha Hobbs, *Secretary, Birth Wisdom in Golden Bay Representative*

Bobbie-Jane Cooke, *Apprentice Trustee, Waikato Home Birth Association Representative*

Vivienne Oliver, *Trustee, Wellington Home Birth Association Representative*

Karen Walker, *Trustee*

Lala Love McCarthy, *Trustee*

Andrina Palmer, *Trustee*

Kirsty Wilkinson, *Apprentice Trustee*

Ali Woodhouse, *Trustee, Canterbury Home Birth Association Representative*

Louise Ogle

Bryony Harrison - *Ōtepoti*

Sharon Lindley

Bronwyn Frost - *Waikato*

Vanessa Werner

Katrina Woodham - *Waikato*

Rose Fisher - *Auckland Home Birth Association (Chair)*

Linda Hodson - *Waiheke island*

Tammi Heap - *Māori homebirth midwife - Manawatu*

Mela Levinsohn - *Homebirth midwife - Raglan - Waikato*

Amanda Camp - *Canterbury*

Rhiannon Leach - *Waikato Home Birth Association*

Karen Donald - *Whenuakite, Coromandel*

Gretchen Anderson - *Doula and mother of 2 - Auckland*

Kristin White - *Childbirth Educator, Birth Trauma practitioner - Christchurch.*

Sophie Moskowitz - *Childbirth Educator student - Auckland.*

Saritta Burney - *Manawatu Homebirth Association*

Minutes

1. Welcome from chairperson Eva Neely, followed by karakia from kaumatua Michael.

2. Brief introduction of trust and trustees.

Attendees also introduce themselves, who they are, where they are from.

3. Confirmation of Attendees, Apologies and Quorum.

Trustees: Karen Walker, Eva Neely, Ali Woodhouse, Vivienne Oliver and Andrina Palmer - Quorum met

Kirsty Wilkinson and Bobbie Cooke (as apprentice trustees)

Alesha Hobbs as secretary.

4. Additions/amendments and approval of the agenda.

Yes. No amendments.

5. Amendments and approval to the minutes of the previous AGM.

Motion: "to approve the minutes of the previous AGM"

Moved: Kirsty Wilkinson

Seconded: Eva Neely

CARRIED: Yes

6. Matters arising from the previous AGM minutes.

None.

7. Board report and Financial report, including annual financial statement from accountant.

Chairperson, Eva Neely, gave the board report.

Secretary and contract Financial Administrator, Alesha Hobbs, shared the financial report.

Motion: “to approve the annual Financial Report”

Moved: Ali Woodhouse

Seconded: Lala McCarthy

CARRIED: Yes

8. Election of officers - chair / treasurer / secretary.

Ali Woodhouse proposed that Eva Neely remain Chair, Alesha Hobbs as secretary and that Vivienne Oliver moves into the role of Treasurer.

[As per Home Birth Aotearoa Trust Deed Office Bearer roles are for a term of 4 years unless the person in the role chooses to resign, dies, becomes bankrupt or found to be mentally disordered - see page 8 of trust hand book].


During this time of nomination of Vivienne Oliver as Treasurer for the trust and the continuation of Eva Neeley and Alesha Hobbs fulfilling their term, Tammi Heap spoke about the current climate of mandates and the effects of this on home birthing whānau and midwives.

Tammi stated that she felt she spoke on behalf of a number of people, raising concerns about a recent publication co-authored by Chairperson Eva Neeley.

The article addressed the topic of home birthing whānau who choose vaccination.

Tammi expressed that she felt this was not appropriate for a Chairperson to be publishing at a time when the home birthing community were suffering under the mandates placed on midwives. Tammi issued a vote of no confidence in the current trust board due to this article and requested that the chairperson stand down.

Rose Fisher, current Chairperson for an Auckland Home Birthing group, iterated her feelings were similar to Tammi's.



Eva spoke to the publication and gave reassurances that the co-authored article was done under her professional and personal hats as a Health Promotion Lecturer at Victoria University and as a vaccinated home birthing Mama.

Alesha, as Secretary to the trust board, explained that the trust had met to discuss its stance on the vaccine/ mandate situation and had opted to remain neutral, as a reflection of the varied views both within the trust and the wider home birth community. Trustees were free to share their personal views on their personal platforms.

As per section 6.2 trustees will elect from among themselves a Chairperson, 6.9 of the trust deed, a trustee may be removed from the trust if no less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the trust believes that this course of action is in the best interests of the trust.

Trustees did not vote in favour of chair person Eva Neeley stepping down from her current term as Chairperson. As per 7.1.3, the issues arising above not being resolved by affecting the removal of the current Chairperson fulfilling their term, this trustee role will remain as status quo.

The trust are regretful that the current health climate has caused a divide in communities throughout New Zealand, and acknowledge the hurt on an already depleted health workforce, in particular our home birth midwifery options throughout.

As government vaccination mandates are outside the trust's scope and work within the community it is not appropriate for the trust to penalise any of its trustees for their personal opinions irregardless of what platform they are shared.

Further, office bearer positions ratified as below, while the chairperson remains status quo for the duration of their term, as per above.

Addendum: The trust have since convened and recognise the deep wound within health and private sectors at present and wish to give reassurances that as a board with contrasting views and beliefs in the current challenges the international health climate is facing that the focus must remain on a coordinated effort to make all home birthing families feel welcome and able to approach the trust for support in their informed decision making when choosing home birth as a safe and valid option.

Treasurer:

Motion: "to approve that Vivienne Oliver is the Treasurer"

Moved: Kirsty Wilkinson

Seconded: Lala McCarthy



CARRIED: Yes

Secretary:

Motion: “to approve that Alesha Hobbs remains Secretary”

Moved: Kirsty Wilkinson

Seconded: Andrida Palmer

CARRIED: Yes

Motion: “to approve that Bobbie Cooke becomes a trustee, having had 1 year as an apprentice trustee”

Moved: Ali Woodhouse

Second: Eva Neely

CARRIED: Yes

Motion: “to approve that Kirsty Wilkinson becomes a trustee, having had 1 year as an apprentice trustee”


Moved: Ali Woodhouse

Second: Andrina Palmer

CARRIED: Yes

9. General Business • Regional Representative sharing • Wider community sharing • Annual/Strategic plan • Annual Budget • Matters arising

Bronwyn Frost has created a facebook group, Midwives need Women need Midwives, as a place to support those struggling under the vaccine mandate.



Rhiannon from Waikato Home Birth Association - Growth, 8 members in committee, pool hire doing well, more interest in TENS machine hire, giving away steady supply of pepi packs and cloth nappy packs, natural birth series has been shelved, looking at scholarships for students.

Rose Fisher from Auckland Home Birth Association - 1 in person meeting prior to lockdown which went really well but unable to meet since due to lockdown. Constant birth pool hire during lockdown. Increase free birth and a large number of people struggling to find midwives.

Amanda from Canterbury Home Birth Association - Changes to committee, grant from HBA to help with HB kete

Marta Willis from Choice Baby Nelson - once a month meeting with guest speaker, birth story sharing, birth pool donated by HBA.

10. Meeting closed