**RNZFB Chair’s Report February 2017**

Hello all

Here is Rick Hoskin’s Chair’s report for the months November 2016 through to February 2017.

This report provides some detail of the matters that the Board has been involved with over the last four months. It also contains information about the items discussed at the recent February Board meeting. As always I remind people that if you want a full account of what occurred at the Board meeting, then the draft minutes of that meeting held on 25 February will be available through the telephone information service, on library CD, email on request, or by contacting the Board Secretary on 09 355 6894. Please ask for a copy of these minutes and keep up-to-date with the matters that we are looking at on your behalf.

The headings are:

1. Engagement Road Show Meetings 2017
2. Constitutional Review Committee
3. The work of the Governance, Policy and Audit Committees
4. Pop-up Offices
5. New North Shore Office in Albany
6. Submissions
7. **Engagement Road Show Meetings 2017**

At its February meeting, the Board has discussed the high value of the engagement road show meetings as they continue to provide information and feedback for our annual business planning. This year, the Board will be carrying out at least 12 meetings throughout the country. The questions that will be asked will be based on our strategic initiatives and will help develop our future direction, as well as assist us improve our existing service delivery. In addition, for those who, for whatever reason, are unable to attend a meeting, there will be the opportunity to join in on a conference or skype call to put your points of view forward. Please keep an eye out for the meeting that will be closest to where you live and make every attempt to get along.

At present the questions are not formulated, but our intention is to get these out to you as early as is possible so that you can give them some thought before we meet. Though there will be specialised questions, there is always a general question asking for your thoughts or opinions on any matter you choose to raise.

1. **RNZFB Constitutional Review Committee**

My reports throughout 2016 told you about the review of our constitution. We have now developed a draft of the entire constitution along with an explanatory document. Both these are available for you to read and to provide feedback. If you want to be involved in the discussion that is going on about this work, then you can call our Telephone Information Service and go to menu 3153 to leave a message and to menu 3154 to hear all the feedback to-date. In addition, if you ask to join the abcnzblinddiscuss list you will be able to join in on the discussion around the proposed changes. Though we advertise this work in a wide variety of ways, to-date feedback has come from a very small handful of people. We want to get a much wider perspective than this small number, so please think about it and send us your thoughts. To find out how to be involved either ring the National Contact Centre on 0800 24 33 33 or the Board Secretary on 09 355 6894, or on email jamoore@blindfoundation.org.nz.

1. **Work of the Governance, Policy and Audit Committees**

The Governance Committee has had its inaugural meeting. The Committee has the following areas of responsibility. The frameworks for these pieces of work still need to be set up over the next few months. The Committee will discharge some of these responsibilities at set points throughout the calendar/Board year and others as needed. The responsibilities are:

* Conducting a process to evaluate the Board’s accountability and performance.
* Conducting a process to assess Board capability for co-option to the board if required.
* Conducting a continuous Board Professional Development Programme.
* Maintaining a Board Charter with Code of Conduct.
* Conducting the Chief Executive’s Performance review and development.
* Promoting and conducting a succession plan, for the Board and for the Chief Executive.
* Reviewing the remuneration of the Chief Executive and the Board.
* Fostering and encouraging expertise within the membership for sustainable governance.
* Conducting enquiries into queries related to Full Board or individual Director Performance.
* Conducting evaluation of governance complaints and grievances.

Various Board Directors have been designated to lead pieces of this work.

The Audit Committee received the accounts for the first six months of the financial year, showing that we are in a healthy position and ahead of budget. At every meeting the Audit committee reviews any risks that might affect our organisation to ensure that there are steps in place to offset them should they arise.

The Policy Committee is slowly working through the Governance Policies to make them shorter and more user friendly. This will be an on-going process for many months to come.

**4. Pop-Up Offices**

The Board has approved the plan to provide pop-up offices throughout New Zealand. You might ask what this means. Currently we provide services from a certain number of our offices dotted throughout the country. From now on, in addition to this, we will be organising to set up temporary offices in other smaller locations throughout the country. These offices will be temporary, allowing a few days for clients to receive services and look at equipment, etc. The advantage of the pop-up office is that we can then close shop and move our staff and equipment to another area and then repeat the process for another group of clients in another town. This programme has already been trialled in some smaller towns and has been very successful. So watch this space and for a Blind Foundation office to pop up near you.

**5. New North Shore Offices in Albany**

The Board has approved the Chief Executive to proceed to lease a property in Albany on Auckland’s North shore. Currently about 1,000 of our 12,000 clients live in or around this area and it makes good sense to have services available much nearer to where they are needed. At present it is not known when the door will open, but again watch this space.

**6. Submissions**

The submissions completed in October and December were:

Bicycles on Footpaths Petition

Passenger Transport (regulation changes)

Real Me, Electronic Interactions Reform Bill

Retail Payment Systems Review

If you would like any further information on any of these submissions, then please contact the Board Secretary through the National Contact Centre 0800 24 33 33 or on 09 355 6894 or by email jamoore@blindfoundation.org.nz

That’s all for this time. There will be more at the end of April or beginning of May

**Rick Hoskin**

**Board Chair**