



# Memo

#DreamExploreConnect



To: YHA Members  
From: Maureen McCloy, National Secretary  
on behalf of the Membership and Governance Review Team  
Date: 26 October 2018  
Subject: Membership and Governance Review

You may have read in recent editions of YHA News that our group has been tasked by National Board to undertake a membership and governance review.

We wish to propose a governance model that reflects YHA today and into the future; a model that considers the role of membership in YHA's governance processes. We would like to hear your thoughts, so seek your feedback by Friday 9 November 2018.

Please note, this is our first step and once we have your initial feedback we will draft a more formal consultation document for your further review.

## Current governance model

Governance of YHA New Zealand is currently achieved through a National Board, which comprises:

- Six elected members, elected by YHA New Zealand members
- Up to two co-opted members, appointed by the Board.

## What are we proposing?

A governance model that achieves and maintains the balance of skills and experience required for the effective governance of YHA.

### *Key changes being considered*

1. Should YHA have *appointed* rather than the current *co-opted* Board Members?

The term *co-opted* implies a temporary and short period of service, whereas the term *appointed* implies the Board Member is a full member for a full term. It follows that both appointed and elected members would therefore serve for a three-year term. To date, co-option has been used to ensure, as far as possible, a good balance of skills and experience at the Board table.

2. Is there a better Board composition for the YHA of today?

A number of Board composition models are offered for consideration and feedback:

a. *Slight adjust*

- Six elected members
- Two appointed members

- b. *Balanced*
  - Four elected members
  - Four appointed members
- c. *Largely appointed*
  - Two elected members
  - Six appointed members

3. How can we better support Board member recruitment?

Some form of committee or Council has been suggested to support Board succession planning, composition and evaluation. This would help ensure that Board Members are elected and/or appointed on merit and that a thorough and transparent recruitment and selection process is undertaken. The use of such a committee is recommended as best practice and is currently used by YHA Australia and YHA England and Wales.

This committee could be made up of Board members, Honorary Vice-Presidents, YHA members, and/or independent advisers.

This is one suggestion, but there may be others. Do you have any thoughts on Board recruitment?

4. Does a Board Member need to be a long-term YHA member?

We think Board Members should be YHA members at the time of election or appointment and must remain so for Board membership tenure. The question is whether Board Members would need to be a member of YHA for 12 months prior to either being nominated or being elected as is the current requirement. Or should this requirement be extended, reduced or removed?

Would removing this requirement better enable participation by those who are YHA followers or guests rather than members, in particular those in our wider community who have an interest and the skills to support YHA's governance?

5. Do we need a competency framework for the Board?

This would help the Board assess the level of skills and experiences each Board Member has in various skills areas, as well as the overall composition of the Board, especially in relation to diversity of thought. The framework or matrix would help the Board understand its current and future gaps and support the development of a skills based Board.

6. How can members be more involved and engaged?

We are interested in your views about how the general membership can be more involved and engaged in YHA.

We are also interested in your thoughts about how we could expand the role of Honorary Vice-Presidents and past Board Members.

*What we think should stay the same*

1. YHA's commitment to good governance practice.
2. The size of the Board at eight (8) Board Members.
3. Having a Board rotation policy to smooth out the Board vacancies and terms of office.
4. Board Members should be YHA members.

Do you agree that the above or should some of these things change?

### **Why are we reviewing YHA's governance model?**

In recent years the Board has become increasingly mindful of its succession planning as there has generally been lesser interest from YHA members in standing for Board election.

The reasons for this seem two-fold. Firstly, the increasing complexity of YHA as an organisation and the associated requirements for good governance. Secondly, as society continues to change the way people seek to join member-based organisations, YHA membership numbers have continued to decline. This is because our members are generally engaging with YHA in order to stay in our hostels as guests rather than join us for a life-long involvement.

How can YHA better engage with those who seek to participate in YHA's governance? We're interested in hearing your thoughts or suggestions about how to do this better.

### **How you can have your say:**

1. Send an email to [national.secretary@yha.co.nz](mailto:national.secretary@yha.co.nz)
2. Write to the National Secretary, YHA New Zealand, PO Box 436, Christchurch 8140
3. Via the Board's Facebook page
4. At the AGM where the Convenor of our project group will provide an update and lead a discussion on this topic.

While we welcome individual views, YHA Branches or Member Groups may like to provide collective feedback.

### **What happens next**

We will review and consider all your feedback. We will then produce a further consultation document for another round of discussions. Clearly for some of the proposals to go ahead, a Constitution change will be required. If so, then our legal advisers would be asked to prepare the correct wording to achieve our intended aim and this would be included in the 2019 voting process.