

CRITICAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT: NZAP COUNCIL

Kia ora katoa.

We bring warm wishes, and honour you for all the hard mahi that you all do. You give of your time, energy and skills in so many ways, freely and willingly. We would also like to acknowledge Council for undertaking this review and for giving members of our Association, NZAP, an opportunity to explore the workings of Council and report back to you with our findings and ideas.

We would refer you back to the document we presented to you in 2018, in which we explained our understanding of the role and function of Council and the questions posed of Council. While we appreciate that all Council members work really hard and thoughtfully, we were a little disappointed that we had input from only three Council members to our questions. We have also provided, as an Appendix to this report, the results of the questionnaire survey we conducted with members in November 2018. Our analysis of the survey is self-explanatory and to be read in conjunction with this report. While there was a 22.2% response which is considered “good” by NZAP standards, we believe this still means that the majority had no input into this request for members’ views. Can we assume therefore that the majority of members are happy with the work of Council?

The recommendations we have for Council are towards the end of this report.

There is a sense that bicultural relations in NZAP have advanced positively in the last 10 years and it is heartening to see our Association taking seriously our Te Tiriti obligations. We believe Council should continue to enhance its move towards relationship with Maori and move towards more equity.

A Council member raised the issue of equity: whether Council works towards encouraging more Maori members on to Council as ‘ordinary’ members, rather than just Waka Oranga, and if an aim was to have Co-Chairs who were Maori and Pakeha.

There is a general sense among ourselves and other members that, because of extensive volunteer work from its members, the **Council is a very cost effective and fiscally responsible body**. However, this may also account for the lack of members willing to put themselves forward for a position on Council. There would seem to be a change of environment in the psychotherapeutic world with regard to the idea of ‘service’, particularly for younger members. They are both time poor and financially struggling, and feel they cannot do such work with no recompense, as they endeavour to establish their own practices. Our survey indicated that 99% of the respondents were in favour of some form of payment to members of Council.

One of the issues for Council would seem to be the uncertainty about its precise role since the formation of the Psychotherapists Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (PBANZ). There has been, and is, a transitional stage and it is perhaps time to move from this. There is uncertainty among some members as to **whether NZAP is a regulatory body or an Association supporting its members’ wellbeing**, facilitating professional development, providing information, indemnity insurance etc.

We believe it is important to provide clarity around this and the vagueness around the legal and management of Council’s workings. The question was raised about NZAP’s loss of mana with the establishment of PBANZ. It is felt, however, that there is room for both bodies, acknowledging the points of difference. This could leave NZAP to do what it is really good at – relationships.

Succession planning seems noticeably absent and this team feels it is important to address this more proactively. Perhaps more work could be done earlier on, by inviting membership to Council by way of mentoring, providing more information about what the roles on Council are and actively recruiting. Some people responded that they were unaware of what being on Council involved, even when they became a member. “I didn’t know what I didn’t know.”

The **matter of pastoral care featured** often in our discussions, and in the survey. No one is quite sure what this means or who, if anyone, is responsible for this. Yet people talked often of “Council as home” with a sense of belonging, and NZAP as a place to be as a psychotherapist. The issue of who looks after the well-being of Council members was raised by a Council member who felt she had little introduction to the workings of Council when she first joined. She wondered about the group dynamics influencing (unconsciously perhaps) the potency and ability of Council to govern.

Overall, however, there seems to be a high regard both for members of Council and for the work they do. It is felt that Council is cost effective, of value in many ways, is the right size and carries out its duties responsibly. We would commend Council for the initiatives they have taken with regard to the current reviews, and also for the formation of the Professional Development Group, for Professional Development events, for acknowledging senior members and elders and for encouraging branch relationships with students. The publishing of minutes of Council meetings much earlier than previously has also been welcomed. It seems, however, from some members’ comments in the survey, that there is still room for improvement **in more responsive communication to members and a greater focus on informing members of the work undertaken.** With Conferences now to be held biennially this seems even more vital. Good governance requires transparent decision-making in a body with formal power and responsibility, while at the same time ensuring a safe container for confidentiality. Leadership and strategy should be focused on the big picture and the future of the members it represents. However, some members commented that they were not uninformed but more, “happy that someone was doing was doing the work and happy for them to get on with it”.

We were asked to look at the Committees represented on Council and, with a change of focus and aims of Council in a different climate from previously, whether some current Chairs on Council need to still be on Council. Could these be as well represented and heard as sub-committees reporting to Council? Having the Chair of the Ethics and Professional Standards Committee and the Chair of the ACP Committee represented was raised by a number of respondents. It is acknowledged these are important roles and have been carried out extremely well and diligently by all holders of these positions. Perhaps it is not necessary now for them to be on Council but could work outside of it and report to it.

A number of people also raised the issue of NZAP having a Complaints Convenor. This has, in the past, been a very important role and one which has been carried out very ethically and responsibly and we congratulate all those past Convenors. If, however, Council explores its function as an Association rather than a regulatory body, the question is raised whether it is time to let this role go? Does the Association wish to continue with this regulatory function? A Newsletter article said recently that the Complaints Committee “can do nothing” and may result in a respondent going to more than one body to lay a complaint, causing them to have to go through more than one complaint process. If we were to let this go, would the Association be free to concentrate more on The Art of Psychotherapy? One suggestion was that there could be a public symposium that explained psychotherapy and was a kind of Open Day into the workings of the profession, and that Branches might be encouraged to invite their local MPs to a meeting.

We discussed, though briefly, Te Tiriti and Bicultural Committee (TTBAC), bearing in mind there is a separate team set up to review this Committee. The question was raised whether such work

might be more effectively carried out by Branches, as they develop stronger cultural relationships within their areas. However, there seems to be some resistance from members to what they perceive as overloading onto Branches who have neither the time nor energy to take on such work.

It is generally agreed that both professional development and the promotion of psychotherapy are regarded as priorities in this current climate; that a move for psychotherapy to be the treatment of choice with free access is vital both for the public well-being and for the survival of psychotherapy. The recent concern over the state of mental health in our country highlighted not only the need for our voice to be heard, but also the need for us to be actively engaged in the difficulties many of our clients face, thus “Strengthening the place of NZAP in the health area and the wider community”. If these aims and issues are to be pursued, then space on Council is necessary to accommodate such roles.

Along with such a change the Council might **consider whether there was a place for the Editor of the Ata Journal to be on Council**. There is certainly a desire among members for Council to put both professional development and promotion of psychotherapy as a much higher priority in its thinking.

Another suggestion was where NZAP identifies a need, it may be actively able to help. For example, there appears to be a shortage of Maori ACC accredited psychotherapists. NZAP might help rectify this by supporting and engaging with Maori to assist and facilitate the process to accreditation.

PBANZ is still obviously a thorn in some people’s side and we wondered, given that it is a ‘fait accompli’ for now, if there could be a way to resolve some of the issues regarding our relationship with PBANZ? We address this in the recommendations.

As part of this NZAP might move towards a closer working relationship with our colleagues in other Associations and colleges.

We believe the governance structure is sound and generally meets the present needs of the organisation. We have some recommendations for change and a refocus to clarify some significant areas of need that Council might wish to attend to or give more priority to. We acknowledge these are but recommendations and suggestions, but driven by our various interactions with members. If accepted some would necessitate changes in the Constitution. But if Council wishes to be both responsive to membership and a visionary force, we recommend Council give them serious consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That Council continue to **work towards cultural equity and enhancing relationships with Maori**, working with the “rightness that comes with people accepting their obligation to each other” (Moana Jackson).
- That Council clarify its’ role and objectives and decide if the Association wants to be a **regulatory body or an Association** providing a ‘home’ for members.
- That, if NZAP were to relinquish its **complaints process**, it could engage differently to support any of its members experiencing a formal complaint against them.
- That Council consider some kind of **mentoring or apprenticeship** model to encourage members to put themselves forward for Council positions, and in particular that it does this with younger or newer members of NZAP and with Maori members.

- That Council considers the appointment of a **senior member to act as a mentor/advisor to Council members**, and sometimes mediator with members of Council who may be struggling with the role.
- That **pastoral care** (however Council may wish to define it) of ordinary NZAP members is given more attention.
- That Council consider having **job descriptions for Council positions** and these are widely circulated amongst members so they have a better understanding of the workings of Council and encourage Branches to consider doing this for Convenors.
- That Council **consider some form of payment** or honorarium to Council members.
- That Council actively seeks to **promote the profession of psychotherapy**, and to do this by creating a position on Council to work for this. We consider this should be a paid position to enable the role to be filled by someone with a passion and desire to devote time to this.
- That **Council become more active in the public eye** by having a person who gives a political voice to issues concerning the people of Aotearoa. This is currently undertaken by the office of Public Issues, but we suggest this could be a more active role, with a possible name change, and support given by way of an honorarium and increased time to do this.
- That Council continues to **support the Professional Development and Conference Committee**, already established, to address this ongoing work for members.
- That in order not to increase the size of Council, some positions (such as already mentioned) should be looked at in view of their relevancy in the current climate of change. **Such roles could be held outside of Council**, with reporting responsibilities to it.
- That Council consider a **representative from one Branch be present at Council** meetings as an observer, and travel and associated expenses be covered by Council for this. This representative would be rotated between the seven Branches over the period of two years.
- That Council make every effort at the highest level to **maintain an open relationship with PBANZ** and to represent the Association's views.

There is a lot for Council to consider with our report. We have discussed widely for over a year amongst ourselves, with other general members, with committees and via the survey of what members want from the Council as the Association moves forward. Perhaps a hui – a kanohi ki kanohi gathering – before, after or during the next Conference would be a perfect place to put any suggested changes on the floor for open debate.

The Critical Review team for Project NZAP Council asks that this report **not** be discussed in committee at the Council meeting, so that the report will be posted on the Association's website and published in the Newsletter for members to read. We ask, also, that the analysis of the survey, attached to this report, also be published in the next Newsletter.

Again, we thank Council for its willingness to open up the discussion, for focusing on the membership and being willing to have this team closely examine it at work. We wish to honour your hard work and the mana you bring to NZAP.

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Appendix

Results & Analysis of Questionnaire

Question 1

Is Council fulfilling your expectations as a governing body?

Overall there was strong endorsement of Council in that more than half of the 99 who responded (53.54%) agreed and 10.10% strongly agreed. About a quarter (27.27%) neither agreed nor disagreed. There were 9 people out of the 99 who felt Council were not fulfilling expectations.

Question 2

Is Council fulfilling your expectations as your governing body as regards our bicultural and Te Tiriti obligations/responsibilities?

Overall from the 99 people who responded there were 54.55% who agreed that Council is performing and 15.55% who strongly agreed. 23.23% had no opinion and only 7 people disagreed with the question.

Question 3

Is Council fulfilling your expectations as your governing body around NZAP members' pastoral care?

95 responses:

Strongly disagree	3	3%
Disagree	17	18%
Neither agree or disagree	47	49%
Agree	25	26%
Strongly agree	3	3%

Comments:

Many comments were about not being aware that Council provided pastoral care, or not having had any experience of evidence of it. The Chair's visits were seen as pastoral care, as was support from the Ethics Committee and the supervisors group. The majority of respondents were unaware that Council provided pastoral care and thought if they did, it should be more promoted.

Question 4

Is Council fulfilling your expectations as your governing body supporting education and professional development?

98 responses:

Strongly disagree	3	3%
Disagree	11	11%
Neither agree or disagree	11	11%
Agree	64	65%
Strongly agree	9	9%

Comments:

Concern was expressed with the case study pathway, over how education can be provided to provinces in cost effective way. Several comments were made about being happy with two events planned for this year. Comments expressed that they would like Council to focus more on providing education/professional development events, and would like to see NZAP lobby PBANZ about the cost of registration/annual costs so we can spend more on professional development. Suggestions were made that we no longer have positions such as bicultural person or Ethics on Council and fund a paid professional development person. Suggestions were made of more professional development around spirituality. Suggestions made of a database of trainings available with links provided. There

were also negative response to Conference being cut in half. It was noted that Council also needs support of regions/branches in this area and also the possibility of online trainings with group subscriptions.

Question 5

What would make you more willing to stand for Council?

77 responses (some in more than one category)

Too little time	16	20%
Not for me	12	15%
Already done	10	13%
Too old and near retirement	6	8%
TOTAL reasons that don't seem to relate to Council or NZAP	44	57%
Need more mentorship, information, warm invitation	9	12%
Not being in NZAP long enough	5	7%
Payment or status	4	
Council more transparent, engaged, open to input on policy	3	
NZAP more modern, inclusive, flexible, supportive	2	
Don't know	2	

All the below were mentioned once:

Getting experience at national level; if there was an enquiry into PBANZ and effect on NZAP; if NZAP was a more inclusive, flexible supportive organisation; if President was warm leader with a vision; if there was a partnership structure; if roles were simplified and less complex; if NZAP was less psychodynamic in its orientation.

Question 6

Do the present portfolios on Council reflect the current priorities of the membership?

77 responses, 29 responders skipped the question

Yes	24	31%
Not sure	33	43%
No	6	8%

Themes and suggestions from comments:

Three responses suggested winding up TTBC as the work is done elsewhere.

Several responders suggested adding representatives for promotion of psychotherapy and ongoing education.

More communication with members.

Council could be more politically active on poverty and abuse etc.

Other responders had suggestions about adding or changing the Council portfolios:

- Newsletter Editor should be on Council as should website.
- Ethics could go because double jeopardy with Health and Disability and PBANZ processing complaints.
- NZAP could provide support and pastoral care during a complaint.
- ACC, PBANZ liaison, children and adolescents plus 2 student reps on Council to hear youth voices.

Question 7

Could Council be smaller with some portfolios delegated to all Branches or located in one Branch?

There were 74 responses to this question and 32 members skipped answering it. However, we only have analysis for 100 members of the 106 who answered. Some people answered just Yes or No but the majority gave some comments.

- Of the 74 responses, 30% were in favour of the idea of Branch involvement but with some provisos:
 - membership would need to agree;
 - it would give a wider representation;
 - it would involve a smaller number of people, decentralisation and therefore be cheaper;
 - it would mean more member representation ;
 - portfolio holders should not all be in one Branch;
 - better grassroots involvement and empowering of Branches;
 - Branches are already doing some of the work anyway;
 - It would overcome the reluctance of members standing for office.

- 32% of the responses were not in favour of either a smaller Council (it would mean more work for Officers) or of more delegation to Branches. The comments from the “No”s were quite strong.
 - There was a sense that Branch members already do a lot of work and feel burdened by it;
 - it would fragment NZAP with no added value;
 - it would be inconsistent and not up to the current standard;
 - it wouldn't increase members' involvement and could create a lack of cohesion;
 - there is real value in a national voice;
 - Council represents a holding entity and central budget;
 - if Council were smaller it would mean more work for those holding portfolios.
 - Only one person suggested some payment but that may have been covered in Q8.

- 28% of responses were along the lines of Unsure/Don't know and Maybe, with some people feeling they didn't know about the portfolios or any of the work involved or were new members.

- 9% showed some interest in the idea of more Branch involvement and thought it needed more exploration and more information.

Some quotes:

“Very likely. However how would those local bodies then be resourced and guided from the viewpoint of meeting the whole country's needs? It's not just the structure & portfolios and where the expertise lies that may manage those portfolios but also what will be the process. This needs to be defined step-by-step with consideration on decision-making and when/how other stakeholders need to be involved.”

“Yes, and some jobs, like Public Issues, Website, Publications (which does not exist yet) could be off Council. HOWEVER, if it gets smaller, it needs to reinstitute subsidiarity and openness as explicit policies, otherwise it may become just a smaller elite club.”

“There is a key tension here. Portfolios and roles are becoming increasingly centralized, mostly in response to external pressures. Again, PBANZ's impact is crucial here. So, decentralizing (in this compressed response) is difficult, and will be increasingly difficult to undertake effectively. Take the shift from RSGs to TSGs: there has been a complicated loss of responsibility that is reflected in the sharp diminution of regional identification with new members that used to be central to their existence. Again, members by registration have a big influence, since they must be linked in to a branch in quite different ways – not often achieved – in ways that don't compare to the old membership route, where candidates could be fostered in their identification with the branch. So, I don't believe portfolio delegation will be very successful.”

“To me Council is not improved by being smaller. All voices are valid and important and fewer voices would mean fewer opinions being shared.”

“I feel too new to have an opinion about this but I know in the local branch there is a lot of overlapping of relationships (supervisor, supervisees, therapists, clients) which complicates the

dynamics for working on things together. I guess I'm saying I think more national portfolios and perhaps more transparent opportunities to work on portfolios."

"My impression is that branches are already stretched to the limit and find it hard to get anyone to fill committee roles as it is. Many branch committee members spend hours every week undertaking branch business behind the scenes which is all voluntary and many people can become burned out. This is probably the same with Council members. I'm not sure what the alternatives might be except paying people to do jobs."

So ... nothing that clear either way but probably worth Council investigating.

Question 8

Would you support recognition of Council service by paying Council members' subscriptions or in some concrete way?

81 responses

Yes	80	99%
Maybe	1	1%
No	0	0%

Comments:

Complicated.

Again this is tricky – because yes I think it would help, but deciding who on Council gets the money is where we got stuck with this question, when I was on Council. Is it just the President, who has an enormous workload, for instance? But we were looking at honoraria and perhaps paying the sub for the time someone is serving might be a good way to go. **1**

Recognition

Yes, I think that would be okay but would include recognition of branch Convenors too as they also do a big job. **10**

Paying conference fee

Yes, and pay for their attending conference. Although it's usually a very rewarding role sometimes it's also a thankless one, e.g. when balancing complex issues that create disruption. Usually there's long volunteer hours and few realise this unless they've done this type of role themselves. **3**

Filling roles

Yes, absolutely. I imagine this is a big part of why it is difficult to fill some roles. **2**