

Date 2026-09-12  
Time 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM  
Location Zoom  
Note Taker Miranda - CCI Support CEO

## Agenda

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### 1 - Welcome

Fiona Charlton opened the Annual General Meeting of Complex Chronic Illness Support Incorporated at 10.32am, welcomed attendees, confirmed quorum and the usual housekeeping arrangements. Members were advised that the meeting was being recorded to support accurate minute-taking and that attendee names would be included in the official record alongside member or guest status.

She noted that the AGM would be followed by a presentation from Emeritus Professor Warren Tate on complex chronic conditions. Fiona formally opened the meeting with karakia.

### 2 - Moments Silence

The meeting observed a moment of silence in memory of members who had passed away since the previous AGM. Special acknowledgement was given to long-standing board member David Harris, whose planned farewell had instead become an opportunity to honour his life and contribution.

Miranda read the names of those remembered: David Harris, aged 72; Linda Derrick, aged 77; Raewyn Pennell, aged 68; and Jess Hermens, aged 24. The silence set a respectful tone for the later tribute segment.

### 3 - Present

Attendance was recorded for board members, staff, members, and guests. Those specifically identified in the meeting record included **Fiona Charlton, Miranda Whitwell, Bronwyn McCrostie, Therese Jeffs, Peter Gregory, Victoria S, Tracy C, Michelle P, Chris S, Deval P, Annamarie, Lesley H, Bonnie W, Rona D, Irina S, Lesley F, Jacinta S, Geraldine T, Jess P, Hannah K, Joy B, Kaye D, Isabelle F, Hellie H, Alyson K, John K, Sandy K, Amanda L, Bridgette L, Nicky M, Jessica P, Catherine R, Anna S, and Melissa W.**

The meeting record also reflected the distinction between official attendees, members, and guests in line with the opening housekeeping notice.

### 4 - Apologies

Apologies were noted from Elizabeth R, Charlotte P, Agnes R, and Helen D.

## **5 - Minutes of the 2025 AGM**

Fiona moved that the minutes of the 2025 AGM be accepted, and Peter seconded the motion. Members indicated their support by a show of hands, and the motion was carried.

**Decision:** Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting were accepted.

## **6 - Presidents Report**

Fiona presented the President's Report and reflected on a year described as both one of the organisation's most challenging and one of its most inspiring. She thanked members, families, supporters, staff, volunteers, and donors for helping the organisation through a difficult period, with acknowledgement of Trevelyan's, family members of staff and Board, and anonymous donors who pledged funds for the matched giving campaigns. She thanked the community for supporting these fundraising efforts. She also recognised the willingness of some staff to reduce hours temporarily to help stabilise the organisation. Tribute was paid to Beverly for sustained work securing grants and funding opportunities in a difficult environment, and to Miranda Whitwell for values-driven leadership and for maintaining a resilient staff culture. Fiona also stressed the growing prevalence of chronic illness across Aotearoa and the need to expand income sources beyond membership, shop income, and grants, including regular donors, philanthropic partnerships, a patron, and business sponsorship through Wellness Sponsors. The report was received favourably and later accepted without opposition.

Fiona proposed acceptance of report - Catherine seconded - all agreed - Carried

**Decision:** The President's Report was accepted.

## **7 - Financial Report**

Bronwyn McCrostie presented the Treasurer's Report and outlined the organisation's constrained financial position while describing the outlook as stable. Members were advised that because the organisation is a tier three incorporated society and its expenses remain below the relevant threshold, an external reviewer was not required. However, the financial statements had been reviewed by a third-party accountant.

The report was then formally accepted.

Bronwyn proposed acceptance of report - Fiona seconded - all agreed - Carried

**Decision:** The Treasurer's Report was accepted.

## **8 - Election of Board Members**

Board changes were considered as part of the formal election process. Alan Withy's resignation from the board was received and accepted, and Fiona thanked him for his service since 2022.

Therese Jeffs and Peter Gregory had both indicated their willingness to continue.

Bronwyn, having reached the end of a 3-year term, verbally confirmed acceptance of her nomination and that she was not disqualified from serving. Members voted in favour of her return, and the board composition for the coming period was confirmed accordingly. A further board-level follow-up was identified for the first post-AGM meeting.

#### **9 - Subscriptions for 2027 /2028**

Members considered the subscription level for the 2027 to 2028 period. The existing annual subscription of 45 dollars per person (equating to roughly 10% of overall cost per person) together with the half cost charge for an additional family member, was reviewed. A discussion arose between an increase to 50 or 55. Majority were in favour of 50 dollars per annum with an option 5 dollar pay-it-forward contribution.

The members approved an increase to 50 dollars per annum, to take effect from 1 April 2027.

**Decision:** Annual membership subscriptions for 2027 to 2028 were set at 50 dollars per year from 1 April 2027.

**Decision:** Renewal form to reflect an optional donation of 5 or more pay-it-forward contribution.

#### **10 – Financial Auditor/Reviewer**

As a Tier 3 Incorporated Society with expenses under the threshold for requiring an audit or review, the members were advised that there was no need to appoint an auditor for this coming financial year. However, Fiona made it clear that the Treasurer Bronwyn who is an Accountant, the CEO, and herself as President continue to have oversight of daily expenditure, with Board governance oversight bi-monthly. The annual filings will be sighted by an external third-party volunteer accountant, and they were thanked for this service.

#### **11 - Appointment of an honorary Solicitor**

The meeting considered the appointment of an honorary legal counsel for the coming year. Dong Wang had indicated his willingness to continue in the role, and the appointment was formally put to the meeting, moved by Fiona and seconded by Peter.

The motion was carried, confirming continuity in the honorary solicitor role for the next year. Dong was thanked for his continued service.

**Decision:** Dong Wang was reappointed as honorary solicitor for the coming year.

#### **12 - Receipts**

No reports, decisions, or recommendations to the Board were received.

#### **13 - Motions**

No separate notice of motion had been received.

## 14 - Celebration of David Harris' Life

The meeting then turned to a tribute to David Harris, included verbatim below.

I would like to take a few moments now to acknowledge and remember our friend and fellow Board member, **David Harris** who sadly passed away recently.

When we were planning this AGM, we had intended to recognise David as he prepared to step away from the Board. After many years of dedicated service, this was going to be his final AGM and an opportunity for us to thank him for his contribution. Instead, we find ourselves gathering to remember him and celebrate his life.

Many of you knew David through his involvement with our organisation, as a member, a supplier, and a Board member. What stood out most about David was his unwavering commitment to what he cared about. Whether it was our organisation, his work, his industry, or the people close to him, he gave it his full attention and energy.

If you knew David, you knew that a five-minute phone call rarely lasted five minutes. More often than not, it became an hour-long conversation, of mostly David speaking. Many Board meetings ran well beyond their allotted time as David shared stories, insights, and updates from the blueberry and avocado industries, which he spoke about with great enthusiasm and pride. His passion for his work was infectious. He would regale us of the minutia of whatever spitfire plane was his backdrop for the meeting on any particular night, whether we asked for it or not. That was David. His enthusiasm always shone through.

And woven through so many of those conversations was his admiration for Cathy, his wife. He often spoke about her hard work, her long hours travelling between properties, and the dedication she brought to her own work. It was clear to anyone listening just how proud he was of her.

David brought that same passion to our organisation. He never hesitated to ask questions (then go off on a tangent if he was given half a chance) but David would always advocate strongly for what he believed was best. Sometimes he tested our patience (and time), but it was always driven by a genuine desire to see the organisation succeed. His heart was always in the right place. And it was a big heart.

Only recently, David attended an event with a local MP on behalf of the organisation. Armed with the talking points we had prepared, he undoubtedly added a few points of his own and probably talked their ears off. But that was David. In doing so, he sparked genuine interest and had already begun arranging a follow-up meeting. He wasn't there because he had to be. He was there because he believed in this organisation and wanted to see it thrive. He willingly gave his own time to be an ambassador and advocate for our cause.

His passing leaves a significant gap in our community. We will miss his voice, his long-winded stories, his questions, his passion, his love of the minutia, and his friendship.

On behalf of the Board, I extend our deepest condolences to Cathy, his family, and all those who knew and loved him.

Peter and Miranda remembered his support, charisma, and readiness to share both advice and stories from his business life. Miranda spoke warmly about his long association with CCI Support, recalling that he had been a constant presence through both difficult and successful periods of the organisation's history. She described his deep commitment to people living with chronic illness, his practical

contribution through governance, business, and technology experience, and the loyalty and honesty he brought to the board's work.

The tribute closed with expressions of gratitude for his years of service and acknowledgement that his contribution would remain part of the organisation's story.

### **15 - Closure of Meeting**

Fiona formally concluded the 2026 Annual General Meeting at 11.06am. In closing, she thanked attendees, acknowledged Alan Withy as an outgoing board member, and expressed appreciation to the remaining board members, volunteers, and staff for their service during a demanding year. Fiona formally closed the meeting with karakia.

### **16 - Emeritus Professor Warren Tate**

Following the AGM, Emeritus Professor Warren Tate addressed attendees on current research into overlapping complex chronic conditions, including ME/CFS, Long COVID, fibromyalgia, hypermobile EDS, and potentially multiple sclerosis. He described a precision-medicine approach using small, well-characterised cohorts and emphasised the importance of earlier molecular diagnosis, better understanding of post-exertional malaise, and a more integrated research model across related conditions.

Warren outlined progress in identifying genetic and epigenetic links between Long COVID and ME/CFS, the development of possible diagnostic biomarkers, and the continuing challenge of limited mainstream funding despite positive feedback on applications. He also highlighted a significant equity issue in the underrepresentation of Māori patients in current research cohorts and discussed work with Ngati Porou Oranga Health Research Centre in Gisborne to improve Māori participation. He noted the wider system need for better support for conditions affecting more than 300,000 people.

The session concluded with questions and discussion. Warren undertook to provide a PDF copy of his book on request and to continue summer work with a medical student with Māori whakapapa to progress recruitment of a Māori cohort for future research.