



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

REPORT OF COUNCIL

The following is a report of the special meeting of Council held on 22 September 2020

KARAKIA

The meeting was opened with a karakia led by Sir Anand Satyanand.

PUBLIC EXCLUSION

Council resolved to exclude the public from the meeting from this point.

The following items were considered following the exclusion of the public from the meeting:

REPORT OF THE CHANCELLOR

Council received a written report from the Chancellor from which it was noted that at its last meeting, in light of growing interest in the 29 May 2020 Protected Disclosure to the Secretary for Education (that had been placed in the public domain through its release by the signatories to TVNZ), Council had agreed to commission Sir Wira Gardiner and the Hon Hekia Parata to undertake a review with the following terms of reference:

1. To review the recent public claims of “structural and systemic racism” at the University of Waikato and the issues that have given rise to these claims, and to provide an assessment of them.
2. To review the University of Waikato’s progress in meeting our Treaty of Waitangi obligations, and in particular the University’s programmes to support Māori students, to attract and retain Māori staff, to integrate mātauranga Māori into its academic programmes and promote Te Ao Māori in the life of the University.
3. To make recommendations for improvements in policy and practice at the University of Waikato in relation to any of the above matters, those recommendations to be consistent with advancing the national and international standing of the University and the resource constraints under which the New Zealand university system currently operates.

REPORT OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Council received and considered a report from the Vice-Chancellor responding to claims made in the 29 May 2020 Protected Disclosure to the Secretary for Education.

TREATY REVIEW REPORT

Council received and considered the Treaty Review Report prepared by Sir Wira Gardiner and the Hon Hekia Parata.

CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS (REPORT OF THE CHANCELLOR)

Council considered a series of recommendations from the Chancellor with respect to the Report of the Vice-Chancellor and the Treaty Review report and resolved:

That the Council:

1. Welcomed the Parata Gardiner report, and thanked the authors for meeting with the many parties and submitters and completing an extremely helpful report in a very short time frame.
2. Noted the finding of the Parata Gardiner report that the specific claims against the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori and the University contained in the 29 May 2020 Protected Disclosure were inaccurate, incorrect or matters of differing opinion.
3. Determined that having been provided with evidence relating to each of the specific claims made in the 29 May 2020 Protected Disclosure, and having made its own independent assessment, that those claims are inaccurate, incorrect or matters of differing opinion. In particular, the Council recorded its view that
 - a. The employment investigation into procurement and spending was fully justified, and that the prompt action by the Vice-Chancellor saved the University from incurring \$300,000 of expenditure that in the view of the University was not authorised.
 - b. The Council of the University of Waikato expected every member of the staff of the University to comply with the University's policies and processes, including those that related to procurement, expenditure and financial delegations, and supported management in ensuring universal compliance.
 - c. The decision of the signatories to the Protected Disclosure to take the matter into the public domain specifically sought to attack the reputation of the VC and the University, and harm has been caused by this decision.
 - d. The Council of the University of Waikato was proud of the many initiatives that had been taken under the leadership of the current Vice-Chancellor to support Māori students and promote te ao Māori across the University.
4. Acknowledged that, reflecting our settlement history, and embodiment of Western university traditions, there was structural, systemic and casual discrimination at the University of Waikato;
5. Agreed that the University's motto "Ko te tangata" must be animated in the everyday life of the University community;
6. Agreed that Te Tiriti o Waitangi The Treaty of Waitangi should provide the future focused framework for the University, including Treaty principles and their specific application in all the policies and practices of the University;
7. Agreed to negotiate a refreshed relationship with Mana Whenua and the Kīngitanga, to partner in the way forward, including a refocused and strengthened role for Te Rōpu Manukura;
8. Agreed that the response and redress to systemic and casual discrimination at the University would be founded in the equal status of mātauranga Māori and Western knowledge, in scholarship and operations, reflecting and giving substance to the bicultural platform of Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato The University of Waikato;
9. Agreed to a facilitated process of reconciliation and restoration of the mana of the University, of the leadership of the University and of the Faculty of Māori and Indigenous Studies, and of Māori at the University, as a matter of urgency;
10. Agreed to an immediate plan of action, that has the following features:
 - a. The establishment of a taskforce with agreed terms of reference to consult more widely.
 - b. The appointment of Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Professor Alister Jones as co-chairs of the taskforce; with further members to be appointed in the near future.
 - c. A fully supported implementation process for the plan that would commence during 2021 utilising resourcing consistent with the financial environment of the University in 2021 and 2022.
 - d. Agreed communication about the plan and its implementation
11. Agreed to give tangible expression to the bicultural history of the establishment of the University, to provide a solid and mutually respectful basis, and pathfinder for the way forward.
12. Expressed its full confidence in the Vice-Chancellor and Management of the University; this confidence was underpinned by both Council's own investigations and the findings of the report.

POROPOROAKI

The meeting was closed with a poroporoaki by Mr Paki Rawiri.

Brandon McGibbon
Secretary to Council