

# Remits to Soil & Health's 2018 AGM

## Remits re Soil & Health membership and access to information

Three remits, proposed by Monique Olivier, and seconded by Nicholas Holmes.

### Remit 1

That the Rules be amended to add the following sub-clause 6.1.6 to General Meetings:

#### 6. General Meetings

6.1 There shall be held in each year not later than the 1st of August an Annual General Meeting of the Association to transact such business as may be appropriate including:

6.1.1 Receive the Annual Report by the Chair of the National Council.

6.1.2 Receive the Audited Annual Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet.

6.1.3 Receive such other reports as may have been required or requested.

6.1.4 Elect National Council members.

6.1.5 Receive, discuss and vote on remits.

#### **6.1.6 Determine the annual subscription for membership of the Association**

### Remit 2

That the membership revokes the National Council's decision on the new membership structure and fee increase and:

- a. Upholds and retains clause 3.7 that entitles members to a free copy of the magazine.
- b. Decides on the appropriate membership subscription fee for the coming year.

### Remit 3

That the AGM instruct the National Council to add a password-protected members-only page to the Association's website that shall contain all records including but not limited to:

- The Rules of the Association
- Long-term Strategic Plan
- Annual Plan
- Minutes of AGMs and National Council meetings
- Annual Financial Reports

### **Rationale for the above 3 remits**

In the May/June issue of Organic NZ a number of letters were published from members questioning the change of membership fees and structure. The reply from the chair of the National Council justified the near 100% increase as necessary to cover expenses but did not address other concerns such as the legality of these decisions under the current Rules of the Association.

The current Membership rules say:

#### **3. Membership**

3.7 All Honorary Life and financial Single or Joint members shall be entitled to receive free of charge one copy of each issue of the Association's journal and such other benefits and publications as the National Council may from time to time resolve. For the purposes of this section joint members shall be deemed as one single member.

3.12 Member's subscription shall run 12 months from the date of issue of the first copy of the Association's magazine to such member.

The current Governance rules say:

#### **9. Governance**

9.1 There shall be a National Council of the Association which subject to these rules and any policy directions of any General Meeting shall govern the affairs and business of the Association. The National Council shall consist of seven elected council members.

This implies the National Council did not have the authority to change the membership structure as outlined in 3.7. A change of the rules would be required first.

There is no guidance in the Rules as to when and how the membership fee should be set. Common practice in incorporated societies is this is decided by the members at the AGM.

Questions were also asked about transparency in decision-making and a request put for a secure members only page on the website where minutes of all meetings, including those of the National Council, can be accessed.