

September 24, 2018

Eden Park welcomes new trustees to the Trust Board

The Minister for Sport and Recreation has announced new appointments to the Eden Park Trust Board.

On Friday, Grant Robertson confirmed the two new trustees are Victoria Toon and Renata Blair.

The Crown appoints five of the nine Board of trustees. The Board is accountable for the Park's financial and strategic management and the Eden Park Trust Deed requires the Trust Board to ensure that Eden Park is a "successful and financially autonomous community asset."

Victoria Toon is a chartered accountant and owner and director of Auckland insolvency firm Corporate Restructuring Ltd, specialising in the insolvency and restructuring of small to medium-sized enterprises. She also chairs the Auckland Public Practice Special Interest Group of Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand.

Toon is also the first neighbour to be appointed to the Board and says she is excited to be more formally involved in the future of New Zealand's national stadium.

"I am one of numerous residents who love living near Eden Park. We take our grandchildren to events there and feel a vested interest in preserving the extensive history of the Park for everyone's grandchildren. I have really enjoyed being a member of Eden Park's Community Liaison Group for the last 11 years, representing the majority of Eden Park's residents who fully support the management team's initiatives to engage with all Aucklanders," says Toon.

Businessman and member of the Institute of Directors Renata Blair has extensive event management experience through his company Strategic Pathways Ltd. He was involved in the 2011 Rugby World Cup, the America's Cup, Auckland Lantern Festival and The Ultimate Waterman.

Blair is of Ngāti Whātua and Tainui descent and is an elected member of the Ngāti Whātua Orākei Trust and the Independent Māori Statutory Board (IMSB). The IMSB ensures there's a voice for Māori in the governance of Auckland and acts as an advisory to Auckland Council on matters to help improve council responsiveness to Māori.

He says he is delighted to be appointed to the Trust and believes he can add value in a cultural and event management capacity to the stadium, continuing to showcase the multi-use capability of the Park.

"The stadium is globally recognized and carries a lot of mana amongst the sporting world. The mana whenua of Ngāti Whātua Orākei has had, and continues to have, a long association with Eden Park," says Blair.

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Blair was also involved in introducing the four pou sculptures around the Park alongside master carver Arekatera Maihi during the rebuild of the stadium in 2011.

Eden Park Trust Chairman Doug McKay echoes the Minister's comments and says both appointees join the board with strong skillsets to contribute.

"Both Victoria and Renata first have to be solid directors to assist in leading our Park on the best path forward for the future. Each were chosen by Government for their strengths and expertise to support our stadium.

"We also wish to express our appreciation to departing board members Morris Pita and Michelle Boag. It represents the completion of their terms as trustees and we thank them for their dedicated service."

Victoria Toon and Renata Blair have been appointed for three-year terms.

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About Eden Park

Eden Park is New Zealand's national stadium and a globally-iconic arena, located in central Auckland.

Eden Park Trust operates as a statutory not-for-profit body corporate, registered as a charitable trust with the Charities Commission. Its objectives are to promote, operate and develop Eden Park as a high quality multi-purpose stadium for the use and benefit of rugby and cricket as well as other sporting codes and other recreational, musical, and cultural events for the benefit of the public of the Auckland region.

Its rich history and profile is unmatched by any other stadium in the country. From its beginnings as a cricket ground in 1903, Eden Park became the primary venue for major summer and winter sport in Auckland when in 1913, the owner, Auckland Cricket, leased winter use of the ground to Auckland Rugby.

A Deed of Trust establishing Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby as the beneficial owners of Eden Park was signed in 1926 and has since been enshrined in legislation. Most notably remembered for hosting the 1987 and 2011 Rugby World Cup Finals, Eden Park remains the home of both Auckland Cricket and Auckland Rugby as it has been for more than a century.

Each year, more than half a million sports and entertainment fans from around the world visit Eden Park. The stadium successfully hosts sell-out crowds of up to 50,000 on match days and hosts more than 1,000 non-match day functions per year.