

21 November 2025

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 28 October 2025, in which you asked several questions regarding the recent appointment of Winton Racecourse Reserve Trustees.

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA).

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. An explanation of the appointment process for confirming the Trustee's for the Winton Racecourse Reserve

An appointment process was undertaken as required by s.3 of the Winton Racecourse Reserve Management Ordinance 1873, and by s.30(2) of the Reserves Act 1977, which required the Department to advertise the appointments in a local newspaper. Nominations were evaluated using a skills matrix consisting of leadership, industry knowledge, specialist expertise, knowledge of the racecourse and community connections. Following consideration of all the nominees, the Minister of Conservation subsequently made a decision on appointments to the Trust.

2. Whether their application was based solely on a personal statement from the individual Trustee applicants

Evaluations were undertaken based on the nomination forms.

3. What conflicts of interest were declared

This aspect of your request is refused in full subject to section 18(a) of the OIA by virtue of having grounds to withhold under section 9(2)(a). For context, although applicants were asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest, the nature of these disclosures must be withheld to protect the privacy of natural persons.

4. What court or legal proceedings or prosecutions were required to be declared including any background criminal history checks

5. Are there individuals who supported the Trustee's nominations (e.g. reference of good standing / character reference)

6. How was the applicants' professional and personal history checked

7. Was an interview process completed

Aspects 4 to 7 of your request are refused in full subject to section 18(g) of the OIA as the information requested is not held. For context, these processes were not undertaken as the Department considers these appointments to be low risk.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the OIA.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on DOC's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Kelley Reeve
Director Governance and Government Services
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai