

June 2007

ROLE DESCRIPTION
FOR
COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS

The role of a community board member is varied. To be an effective community board member you need to know that it consists of more than just attending community board meetings. It also involves a high level of commitment. In order to effectively represent your community you will need to attend many other meetings and events in your local community. Your community board will only be as good as you and your colleagues make it.

By electing you to a community board, your fellow citizens have appointed you to a position of leadership in your community. They will treat you with respect and will expect you in return to represent their opinions faithfully and with integrity. They will also expect you to actively work for the benefit and enhancement of the community as a whole.

Representative Role

Advocacy

- To promote residents' issues and initiatives to the community board and the council.
- To be an advocate for local issues and initiatives on behalf of residents, to the city or district council, or to central government.
- To monitor the range and level of council services provided within the community board's jurisdiction, and to advocate changes as necessary.
- To be proactive and to anticipate strategies and policies that may have a future impact on the local community.
- To respond to resident and community issues and submissions, and to act as leaders in the community where problems may arise and where issues or initiatives need to be promoted.
- To engage in community development activities in conjunction with council officers. (Board members frequently assist with the initiation and facilitation of community development initiatives and may liaise with council officers who are responsible for taking action and reporting back.)

Public Face and Consultation

- To represent the community to central government agencies and wider community forums.
- To liaise with, and to communicate with, community groups regarding local issues and initiatives, and the processes, services and decisions of the community board and the council.
- To clarify and promote the role of the community board in the ward and wider communities.

Governance Role

Relationships and Facilitation

- To work in cooperation with the council. Community boards are part of the local authority and must work within the framework of the powers and functions set out in statute and delegated by the council.
- To act as an interface between the council and the community. Board members should listen to the diversity of viewpoints and concerns in their community, represent and communicate these to the council, and work towards a common understanding.
- To attend meetings of the community board and any other bodies the member has been asked to serve on.

Decision Making

- To contribute to the development of community board policies, to set and monitor key performance indicators.
- To ensure the integrity of the community board and its decisions, and represent these to the community and particular groups in a way that promotes the board rather than the individual.
- To scrutinize council policies and services within the community board area and, to advise the council on ways of enhancing effectiveness.
- To ensure that decisions are made on the basis of sound information and rationale, and that they reflect the interests of the communities represented by the Board.
- To ensure that the structures and systems used by the board (i.e. agenda) support and encourage effective democratic decision-making.

Information Gathering

- To actively seek good quality information and keep well informed of community priorities, broader issues and local initiatives.
- To attend specifically to information directed to board members, such as emails, submissions, deputations, and financial reports.

Accountability

- To sit on hearing panels and engage in decision-making processes with no bias, acting at all times with integrity and professionalism.
- To act in accordance with democratic accountability to all residents within the area.
- To act in accordance with the community board or council's code of conduct.
- To prepare for and attend all community board meetings

For many people membership of a community board is their first step in a journey that may eventually lead to a role as a councillor, mayor or even a member of parliament.

Members receive remuneration which is set by the Remuneration Authority. Remuneration levels will vary from council to council so contact your local authority for more detailed information. Further information can be found on the community boards' web page at www.lgnz.co.nz .