

ROLE DESCRIPTION

COMMUNITY BOARD CHAIRPERSON

The role of a community board Chairperson is varied with providing the Community Board with strong leadership. To be an effective community board Chairperson you need to know that it consists of more than just chairing and attending community board meetings. It also involves a high level of commitment with leadership and team playing skills.

The Chairperson needs to lead, co-ordinate and direct business and activities of the community board within its specific terms of reference and delegated authorities, providing guidance and direction.

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 as the community board Chairperson, your fellow colleagues have appointed you to a position of leadership and to be the face of the community board at Council, and in the community along with representing the board to Members of Parliament, regional and environmental councils, government departments and community agencies. In providing effective chairmanship of meetings and adhering to the council's standing orders 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.

1. **Representative Role**

i. 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, central government, government departments and other agencies.
- 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 leader 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 Chairpersons 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.)

ii. Leadership

- To preside over community board meetings and ensure that the business of the meeting is carried out in an orderly manner and enforce standing orders as required.
- To liaise with council officials/management for setting the content of the agenda and priorities.
- To act in accordance with the community board or council's code of conduct.
- To represent the community board on council committees, community organizations and meetings with external partners.
- To chair public meetings seeking the community's input into community issues and council's LTCCP, planning and strategy development processes, policies and bylaws.

- To have the community board agenda provide an opportunity for deputations from individuals, residents' associations, community organisations, and the Police.
- To ensure effective and efficient communications and co-ordination between elected members, staff, and members of the public.
- To be the media spokesperson for the community board promoting the role and decision-making of the board.

iii. Public Face and Consultation

- To represent the community board to central government agencies, Members of Parliament 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.

2. Governance Role

iv. Relationships and Facilitation

- To work in cooperation with the council and other partners. 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 meet with management establishing a good relationship.
- To act as an interface between the council and the community. Chairpersons should listen to the diversity of viewpoints and concerns in their community and elected members, represent and communicate these to the council, and work towards a common understanding.
- To attend formal and informal meetings of the community board and any other bodies the member has been asked to serve on.

v. 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 good decision-making, and represent these to the community and particular groups in a way that promotes the board rather than the individual.
- To scrutinise 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.

vi. Information Gathering

- To manage the agenda with the assigned staff member.
- 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 the Chair and board members, such as emails, submissions, deputations, and financial reports.

vii. Accountability

- To Chair all meetings in accordance to the approved standing orders, with professionalism ensuring that all meetings engage in good decision-making.
- 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 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. Levels of remuneration 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
www.lgnz.co.nz/communityboards