

# NZ Community Boards' Executive Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the New Zealand Community Boards' Executive Committee  
held on Friday 15 August 2008 at Level 6, 114-118 Lambton Quay, Wellington

NC20-07

Present: Yvonne Palmer (Chairperson), Mike Cohen, Chris Stark, Louella Jensen  
Adrienne Staples

In attendance: Dianne McPhail, Mike Reid (part)

## 1. Welcome and introduction

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, especially Adrienne Staples who had been unable to attend the two previous meetings due to staffing issues. She looked forward to establishing a good working relationship with Adrienne. Community boards have an important role to play in local government and it was important that all of local government works collectively to help raise the standard of that input. Adrienne assured members of her support.

## 2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Lawrence Yule, Lyal Cocks and Mike Reid (part). Eugene Bowen agreed to catch up over lunch.

### Resolved:

That the Executive Committee **ACCEPT** the apologies.

*Jensen/Cohen*  
CARRIED

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

## 3.a Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2008 were received.

### Resolved:

That the Executive Committee **CONFIRM** the minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2008.

*Stark/Jensen*  
CARRIED

## 3.b Matters Arising

The following matters arising were considered:

### *i. Training on chairing of meetings*

The Chair would speak to Mike Reid about leadership training, about raising possible funding through Pub Charity. She used as example the fact that people could attend a safer communities conference with Pub Charity assistance as it was classified as training. It was a common misconception that local government was government-funded.

The Chair reported that she and Mike Cohen had met with various agencies on 24 June, one of which was Pub Charity. The organisation is committed to working for the benefit of communities and sees community boards as a good vehicle for delivering this support. She also highlighted a need for some sort of funding requirement for community board

members appointed to external committees, which was a new need. Since Ruth Paul had been appointed to the Standards committee looking at the reviewing the standard on acoustics associated with wind generation, the Chair has been approached by Injury Management New Zealand to be part of the new Injury Management Aotearoa safety in the workplace strategic management committee which meets quarterly in Wellington. There was discussion about the moral implications of using money elicited from gambling to support community-based projects.

The Chair later asked Mike Reid about the feedback from the recent community board training workshops held around the country, and asked about an additional workshop in zone 5, as the Christchurch workshop had been oversubscribed and many people had not been able to attend. Mike Reid would be happy to look at organising additional workshops if there was a need. Mike Cohen said there would be a possibility in Auckland, if it could be arranged this year. He said it had been very useful having the workshop before board members were sworn in as it gave them a good idea of what would be expected of them; almost certainly this process would be used again following the next local election.

The Chair said that feedback she had received indicated that boards would like to revisit the training received at the workshops 12 months later.

Mike Reid also mentioned that with the last Budget the Government has put aside \$700K for elected members' training, to be spent over two years, with \$500K to be spent between now and July 2009. LGNZ is working with the Department on starting with a series of workshops on financial governance, which is really how to read council budgets and balance sheets. This will be open to councillors and community board members, and would ideally be provided between now and Christmas. Workshops would take place over two half days; it was envisaged there would be approximately 12 workshops around the country.

The Chair said that another issue she was struggling with was the current trend of foregoing the chairing process, rather to have an 'open' meeting procedure. She felt it was a long way removed from what she understood to be local government practice, which is to request a mover, seconder and debate before putting the issue to the meeting. Adrienne agreed, saying that while she was open to a certain flexibility, many chairs were unaware that without that formal structure, at a later stage a decision can be called into question and that the legality could be uncertain. An understanding of those aspects need to be included any training outcomes.

Mike Reid said he would be happy to consider a training programme on chairing meetings, and include the role of staff. There had been many instances of staff 'hijacking' meetings, sometimes with the best of intentions, which did not follow formal process. It could also include whether community board chairs could make recommendations on their agenda, and whose agenda is it, really.

**ii. *Development of KPIs for measuring performance***

The Chair agreed to discuss this with Mike Reid.

**iii. *Examples of good or innovative good practice for case bank***

The Chair hasn't had time to do more than discuss this with Peter Dow. This will be the last time that Peter will judge the Best Practice Awards, and he was very keen that *Local Government New Zealand* should take the lead in judging the 2009 Awards, in the interests of continuing the complicated system in the future. The entry form for submitting the 2009 entries clearly states that all entries will be retained at *Local Government New Zealand*, and these will be used for collating examples of good practice. Permission would need to be sought from Eugene Bowen as a formality, if Mike agreed to take on the role of head of the judging panel.

A further use for external funding could be to employ a person to pull together these examples of good practice into a narrative, or possibly a CD, to be used as a training or

motivational resource or simply made available to all community boards. Possibly a history student could pick up the project as part of their university studies. The Executive identified a number of ways in which this resource could be used to promote the value and usefulness of boards within their zones. However, further discussion was necessary to establish the format of such a resource and its distribution, whether in bite-size chunks or as a whole, before funding could be secured, and advice would need to be sought on the best way to proceed. It was noted that DIA had in the past expressed an interest in working with the Executive Committee to identify examples of community board best practice.

In the meantime, the Chair issued a challenge to Executive members to get on each zone agenda a best practice story from around the country.

- iv. The Chair referred to the Complaint lodged by Waiheke Community Board member Nobilangelo Ceramalus to the Regulations Review Committee about Elected Member determinations. While it hadn't proceeded to the select committee, there was much in the submission to be commended.

#### 4.a *Francis Wevers, CEO Charitable Gaming Association*

The Chair welcomed Francis to the meeting and introduced the Executive Committee. She gave a brief background of community boards, including sizes and funding issues, and the fact that they see training as important. She also said *Local Government New Zealand* was an incorporated society, and as such not always eligible for government funding. There were other opportunities that arose from time to time which also required funding, and approaching local trusts was possibly one way of addressing the funding needs.

Francis began by looking at the introduction of not for profit organisations; he explained that the difficult funding is for operations cover - initiatives such as PCs or 'things' can be funded, but if funding could not be secured for the support of these 'things', it often fell over.

The issue facing CGA is what is the best way to maximise, or the most efficient way to manage, the \$240-\$250 million generated through class 4 gambling. He feels the solution lies in CGA members working more closely with the communities in which they operate. There are significant areas - more rural/provincial - where significant funding streams are generated, but where there are insufficient quality projects or organisations to project that money back into the community.

One area that CGA needs to concentrate on is in trying to work with local councils and boards to identify where the real needs are, including: - any groups capable of receiving large sums and spending within transparency requirements they have to work within; - enhance capability in those community groups, to increase projects for those groups to work on. However, this has not been put on the ground as a firm direction as yet.

In the past 6 months CGA has looked at addressing matters differently than in the past year. Francis has noticed a greater willingness among members to work with communities to maximise funds available. He also said that end use trusts that focus on horse racing confound the situation. Horse racing has had an injection of \$24 million as stake money. There are moral issues around money going from one form of gambling to another form of gambling.

Organisations such as the Lions Foundation and Pub Charities are working closely on identifying where community needs are. Francis would like to see organisations represented by CGA to work more closely with local government. Currently there is no requirement for money to be returned to the community in which it was raised - the "rich and fabled tapestry that we look at". Short of centralizing everything, the rich tapestry will prevail. However, centralising may not be the best way to go; it is also not a good idea to transfer funds to another central organisation just as susceptible to political influence. What would be beneficial is for community boards to identify which societies operate gaming machines in their community and actively campaign how much money generated is returned to that community.

Francis said to keep it up and continue to question. He feels 80% should be returned to the community in which it was raised.

The rules around grant making are very explicit - no future commitments, the money must be disposed of within 3 months of being generated. Also no retrospective funding. Applications for funding must be submitted along the normal process and include a solid proposal, well costed out. If a funding application is declined it is worth asking the declining body why, as it may just be that the application was made at the end of the 3 months the money is available, and may be worth submitting for the following cycle.

The Chair said she would like the Executive Committee to keep in touch with Francis, and urged the Executive to consider asking Francis we speak at their zone forums.

#### **4.b *Kirsty Anderson / Charlotte Brown, Local Government New Zealand***

Kirsty was asked to discuss two issues - the points arising from the forward planning session in March relating to best practice, and also to comment on the paper arising from the 2006 Hutt Forum, prepared by Di Keenan, on dealing with the media and how get better value from it.

Kirsty said it was possible to include CB resources on the website. It was also possible to set up a best practice area on the website, and include any case studies that might be available. The challenge was not in making the information accessible, but in getting people to use it and be aware of it, and possibly work through CB chairs to promote the website. The Chair said she had recently become aware of the LG OnLine Committee Advisor listserv, and suggested it might be an idea to use that as a vehicle to distribute best practice material. Particularly in rural areas, board members did not have broadband, and it was often difficult to download information using dial-up. But councils had no such issues and it would be useful to target Committee Advisors and ask them to download, print and distribute information to their community boards.

Regarding the media paper, Kirsty felt the only area that was not adequately covered was how boards would deal with their parent council in or through the media which could potentially be a tricky situation. The Chair said that Di Keenan would be doing further work along those lines at the 2009 community board conference, and was confident that this situation would be covered there.

Further to the case bank of best practice, the Chair mentioned the Executive Committee's earlier discussion and suggested that a university student could pick up the project. Kirsty suggested that the requirements be refined so that a clearer idea is obtained of how such a resource is to be used. If the final package is to be a CD structured into chapters, that would be reasonably cheap. A DVD, particularly a training DVD from which people would take away references, would cost considerably more.

There was discussion about whether the resource should be subject based, rather than 'best practice' based or 'training' based. People were more likely to search for best practice examples of current programmes or topics of interest. Examples should also not be restricted to community board best practice but also include council best practice, and other community best practice.

Kirsty recommended that the Executive Committee discuss and agree on the direction the case bank resource should take, eg guidance education, recognition and capturing things in which people could enter awards, the training aspect and the type of training envisaged. She noted there were two key 'training' outcomes from the planning session, being training at election time, and training for newly elected members and providing the necessary resources.

There was some discussion on the work done by Dr Judy McGregor in preparing people to stand for election well in advance of the election. The Chair suggested advocating to DIA and MPs about providing resources to assist people in their decision to stand for election. Kirsty said that *Local Government New Zealand* would like to see the Electoral Commission take

some sort of lead in providing democracy education which includes both General and Local elections. This could be another area to tap into ahead of time.

The Chair felt that the best practice case bank could be broken up into similar categories as the Best Practice Awards. Chris suggested that maybe attendees at the conference could be asked to bring along with them photos of best practice examples of projects or initiatives in their communities which could be placed on a public notice board for other attendees to look at and discuss. She said it would also be useful for council websites to include an area devoted to community board issues and projects, which could be updated at regular intervals.

Kirsty suggested working through someone like Jason Dawson at Northland Regional Council, who is something of a self appointed leader of website issues. It might pay to ask parent councils to discuss this possibility with Jason, or similar council communication/website advocates, to provide ideas on how to implement this possibility, or to possibly consider an award for the best community board profile.

Mike Reid mentioned the LGOL programme which was used by a handful of councils and which was the software rather than the content, which could possibly be modified for use for CB web pages. There was some discussion about using LGOL as a vehicle for getting information to board chairs, as much of the information sent to Mayors, CEOs and Board Chairs through the council did not reach the board chairs. Another option was to discuss with Bob Vine the possibility of setting up a community board listserv. Listserv recipients must opt in themselves, so would be necessary to contact all board members with the process they would need to follow. This was also a way of discussing issues, although with a large recipient base, it could get quite cumbersome. It was more in the nature of a sophisticated email system.

Kirsty suggested that if there were any examples of best practice that were in a ready format, to send them to Charlotte for including in the website. She suggested keeping them short. It would also be possible to lay them out in a similar format to the *Local Government New Zealand* case sheets, with short conceptual teasers, leading on to case studies and examples. The first step would be to get them on the website, and then to discuss later how best to distribute them further. Charlotte said this was very timely as the *Local Government New Zealand* website has just been reviewed and would be relaunched shortly. There was also to be an e-News bulletin which could feature examples of good practice.

#### **4.c *Di Das, National Coordinator, Computers in Homes***

The Chair welcomed Di and said she was head of a wonderful programme that community boards were in an ideal position to promote. The programme is run by the 20/20 Trust and assists families to use ICT to improve themselves.

Di strives to serve the unserved. She, and others, work with people who are not connected in the visual/ digital/ online world due to geographical, cultural or political reasons.

CiH first worked with the 20/20 Trust on the Books in Homes project to start a reading culture, first providing second hand books, and now securing funding for new books. CiH has been incorporated as a mainstream programme.

The 20/20 Trust comes up with an idea, then applies for pilot funding. When the project is up and running it is handed over to somebody else to manage. CiH was contracted by the Ministry of Education with specific funding to run in low decile schools interested in hosting the programme. Di contacts schools which meet the criteria and secures their interest, then contacts the Ministry of Education and highlights participant schools and requests funding on that basis. The programme is therefore retrospectively funded.

The funding covers refurbished computers; one parent must do 20 hours at school, and then pay \$20 or \$50 before the computer goes to their home. It usually takes about 3 weeks before they find they're enjoying themselves. Often, it gives adults a different reason to 'go to school' and enables them to look at different relationships.

They are provided with 6 months free internet with watchdog, which filters out undesirable sites. Watchdog originally blanked out all interrelational sites, so now they've reactivated sites like Bebo and Facebook; families have a choice, with instruction on how to manage those sites.

The Ministry of Education promotes ICT education in schools. DIA is the central funding holder. The project was originally set up to benefit children, but many parents have benefited too, starting careers, websites promoting products/services, and many have enrolled in studies from home. A budget of \$1200 covers catering at graduations, mouse pads, technical support for 12 months and machine rejuvenation. It supports group of 15 or more.

Di admits computer are not the answer to everything, but form an effective vehicle to attract people's imaginations. She would be most happy to talk to board members and at zone meetings.

#### **4.d *Paul Curry, CEO Families Commission***

The Chair welcomed Paul. The Families Commission are sponsoring the satchels for the 2009 conference. The FC was established in 2004 as an autonomous Crown agency governed by a board of commissioners. It provides a voice for NZ families and whanau, speaking out for all families to promote a better understanding of family issues and needs among government agencies and the wider community.

There is no single definition of 'family'; basically, people who live together and support each other and display the 'broad' view of family 'connectedness' are considered to be a 'family'. Under the Families Commission Act 2003 FC advocates on behalf of families generally, and cannot act on behalf of individual families or cases. FC has spoken to 180 agencies working with families to find ways in which families can be valued.

Paul spoke about the 'putting children first' programme in place for families in the process of breaking up. He also spoke about family violence 'not OK' campaign currently screening on tv, a 3-pronged approach currently showing men's stories and shortly moving on to child poverty. FC also did some work with Age Concern, looking at risk and protective factors for older people and encouraging them to put safeguards in place and thinking ahead, before needing reliance on others.

In addition, FC has entered into agreement with planners from 7 local authorities, looking at how to design communities that are family friendly. The FC website will shortly publish the 'big buddy' and 'DIY fathers' initiatives, mentoring men who can attach to fatherless families. A large concern is the teenage gang issue: 'blaming' and 'pathologising' don't help. There is a move to look at gangs from various angles and using the observations to develop a resource to help parents to deal with these issues. There are some 240 parenting programmes in NZ. FC encourages government agencies to work together collaboratively.

Paul also spoke about the 3 arms that make-up the Commission and its Board of Commissioners.

As with the other 2 speakers, the Chair urged members of the Executive Committee to invite Paul to speak to their boards and at zone forums.

#### **5.a *Local Government New Zealand Key Issues report / Update on meeting between Local Government New Zealand and Remuneration Authority***

Chris asked funding applied for by smaller councils, eg funding under the tourism scheme, which was declined on the basis the council was 'too rich'. She said they took into consideration the whole region, but the smaller areas requiring the funding were too poor to raise the initial 10% required to qualify for the funding.

There was some discussion about amendments under the Police Act, and a likely amendment to permit Police to be eligible to stand for council.

There was some discussion about the preliminary report on the LGC's review of the LGA. Mike Reid said that when the full report was released by the Minister it would be useful to have a discussion on what it actually said about community boards. It could be a topic for the CBEC agenda, and Sue Piper could be invited to discuss it. There was also discussion about code of conduct; it could be worthwhile to discuss this with Sue as well.

Mike Reid also mentioned that *Local Government New Zealand* is putting together a professional development programme for elected members, and would be looking for things to target community boards as well, in addition to the work that Mike Richardson has been doing.

There was also some discussion about the remuneration report by the Hay Group, which looked at a sample of seven mayors. Copies of the report would be made available to Executive members.

As a result of the work undertaken by the Hay Group the Remuneration Authority has agreed to undertake a review of a much larger sample of local authorities. Mike has not yet seen the project scope but it is envisaged that this much broader exercise will review all the positions within a much larger sample of local authorities. The Remuneration Authority wrote to LGNZ in July and we have since indicated our support, but at this stage it is unclear how much input LGNZ will be invited to provide. At this stage this study will not look at the institutional issues of how the remuneration pool is divided between councils and community boards.

## **5.b National Council Portfolio Holder's report**

Adrienne said there wasn't much to add to the Key Issues report, other than that the current National Council was a good one, with everyone committed to getting on with the business of promoting local government. She thought there were some very good brains around the table and felt the sector would be well served over the next three years.

She briefly mentioned the Central Local Government Forum. She had come away feeling it was a little bit scripted, but found the Government to be very supportive. We may not always win what we want, but they are talking to us. The National Council are working very hard to be 'in' with all the parties, as nobody is sure what kind of Government we might get after November.

Adrienne also apologised for the slow start, but now that she had sorted her senior staff issues, she was very pleased to be part of the CBEC and was committed to advocating to the National Council on the Executive Committee's behalf. The Chair said the Executive Committee was pleased to have her as portfolio holder. She said the Executive Committee considered community boards to be part of the local government family, as being a help not a hindrance, and wanted to work together with everyone for the benefit of our communities. She also undertook to work closely with Adrienne on issues that she flagged in her report to the National Council so that she would be able to promote or debate them when necessary, and could establish regular phone catch-ups as required.

## **6. Chairperson's report**

Items discussed by the Chair which have relevance to other headings in the agenda, are recorded elsewhere in these minutes, under their respective agenda category.

Conference 2009:

The Chair reported that a signed copy of the MOU between the Executive Committee and the 2009 conference organising committee had finally been received. A copy will be attached to these minutes.

## 7. Zone reports

### *i. Zone 1*

Mike Cohen tabled the additional submission to the Royal Commission. He highlighted a number of key issues pertaining to local government, particularly those arising from transient populations.

### *ii. Zone 2*

Chris said there was very little to report, except that one of her community boards had pushed for his board to have its own logo, but she didn't think that had been approved. Mike Cohen felt this initiative had merit, as it was not always appropriate to write formal communication on council letterhead, when that communication disagreed with the council stance. The Chair undertook to canvass Committee Secretaries to find out which boards had their own letterhead or branding and the Executive Committee could decide on how to progress the matter.

### *iii. Zone 4*

Z4 was focusing on holding a forum shortly.

## 8. General business

### *a. CBEC meeting 18 March 2009 and conference 2009*

The Chair tabled the latest conference programme and discussed various issues. She advised of accommodation arrangements and sponsorships secured to date, and the number of optional tours being offered. The Executive Committee will meet on Wednesday 18 March. *Local Government New Zealand* will pay for travel, however councils would need to pay for accommodation.

The Chair recommended that members remain at the conference to make use of the additional activities on offer, finishing with a breakfast on Sunday morning. Louella asked that notification be sent to councils sooner rather later about such arrangements, as it required an extra night's accommodation. There would be prizes announced for those who participants who remained on Saturday afternoon. There was also discussion about timing of courses during the dinner and the suitability of food for 'standing' lunches.

Regarding the best practice awards, Mike Cohen said that it would be useful to know precisely what the judges looked for in each category and what lessons were learned from previous entries. This would assist, rather, those boards who had not entered before and did not have the institutional wisdom of previous entrants on how to approach their submissions. The Chair recommended that they look at previous entries to get a clearer idea of what might work. There was no ready formula or particular media favoured by the judges. The Chair said she would talk to Peter Dow about it, but she would prefer it if boards who were considering entering approached previous winners and asked them what they thought they had done that caught the judges' attention.

Chris asked whether projects needed to be complete in order to enter. The Chair said it depended on how it was being entered; if it was the process of initial consultation that was being entered, the conclusion of the project was not necessary.

### *b. Local Government New Zealand conference*

The Chair was disappointed at the lack of mention of community boards by even the President in opening addresses and acknowledgements.

### *d. Appointment of Z3 Representative*

A letter from Tararua District Council was tabled, recommending as replacement for Nigel Ensor, Bob Dresser of the Dannevirke Community Board, to fill the role to continue the work of the zone representative. This is the first time that a board, or even a council, has taken this step.

The Chair asked whether the Executive Committee would be happy to appoint Mr Dresser, or whether they would prefer to go through an election process. The Executive Committee requested that the Chair, in the interests of democracy, looked at getting a more formal recommendation and seconder from the zone, to establish whether there might be somebody else who might also be interested in the position.

**Resolved:**

That the Chair be delegated the task of **COMMUNICATING** with boards in the zone, or possibly through the President or Zone Chair, to obtain formal nomination and/or approval for Mr Dresser to take up the position vacated by Niger Ensor, and to keep the Executive Committee informed.

*Cohen / Jensen*  
CARRIED

***e. 2009 meeting dates***

The Chair asked members to note the dates of the 2009 meetings, and to advise Dianne if any of them did not suit.

**9. Correspondence**

Items of correspondence are noted elsewhere in these minutes.

**10. Other business**

***i. Commonwealth Conference in Bahamas***

Chris asked whether the CBEC could send anyone to the conference, but the Chair advised there was no money available. Chris said she had gone to the conference in Auckland, but found predominantly staff and Ministers but few elected members, considering the focus appeared to be on communities.

***ii. CBEC minutes***

Chris asked whether the minutes, or list of discussion points, could be made available immediately following Executive Committee meetings, so she could email them to her board chairs by way of follow up.

***iii. Mary Richardson's report - distribution***

Louella asked whether it would be distributed to all boards. The Chair replied that the report had been sent to all local authorities with community boards, with the request that they make copies available for their boards. Because the document was lengthy and needed to be copied in colour, it made it too expensive to reproduce at LGNZ.

**11. Next Meeting**

Monday 17 November 2008, commencing 10 am at *Local Government New Zealand*, level 6.

There being no further business the meeting ended at approximately 3.16 pm.

## TABLED PAPERS

1. Presentation material by Di Das  
(on file, but not included with these minutes)
2. Presentation material by Paul Curry  
(on file, but not included with these minutes)
3. Memorandum of Understanding with 2009 Conference Committee, signed
4. Updated 2009 conference programme  
(on file, but not included with these minutes)
5. Oral submission to the Royal Commission in support of earlier written submission
6. Letter from Tararua District Council re Z3 Representative on the CBEC