

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **LGNZ applauds Local Government Minister's position inside Cabinet**

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*Local Government New Zealand* (LGNZ) says the appointment of a Local Government Minister inside Cabinet is an acknowledgement of the importance of local government.

LGNZ President Lawrence Yule says he looks forward to working with new Local Government Minister Hon Dr Nick Smith in this new parliamentary term.

"Local government plays a vital role in delivering prosperity for all New Zealanders and in recent years LGNZ has worked closely with central government to help build stronger environmental, cultural, social and economic policies.

"There are significant opportunities for local and central government to work together in the new term. Having a Minister inside Cabinet will bring an even sharper focus on those opportunities.

"Local government must stay in the picture if New Zealand is to remain competitive in a global context. That's why we are working across all sectors to help create an environment where our cities are economic catalysts and have the resilience to respond to future economic shocks."

"The earthquakes in Canterbury will have a significant impact on how we think of infrastructure from a national and regional perspective. These are issues we know will involve ongoing and committed dialogue between central and local government, said Mr Yule."

LGNZ will be looking to work with Minister Smith and the Government to identify a broader range of funding tools to support investment, and address the challenges of ongoing maintenance of existing infrastructure such as transport.

Other priority for the local government sector in the new term will be the impacts of climate change on hazards and flood control, Phase Two Resource Management Act reforms and the management of freshwater quality and quantity.

Local government's role in delivering future focused national infrastructure such as energy, transport, ports, is also significant. LGNZ looks forward to working with Minister Gerry Brownlee in the areas of transport and the Canterbury earthquake and Minister Steven Joyce in economic development.

The LGNZ National Council will meet with the Prime Minister and relevant government ministers in March next year at the Central Government Local Government Forum. This forum is the pre-eminent means of engaging with central government.

#### **ENDS**

*For further enquiries contact LGNZ Communications and membership services manager Fiona Mayo on 04 924 1202 or 029 924 1202.*

