GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY BOARDS >

// He aratohu mō te kāwana i ngā poari hapori

The New Zealand Community Boards Executive Committee (CBEC)
// September 2025

Ko Tātou
LGNZ.

Preface
// He kupu whakapuaki >

Given increasing pressures on our communities, the need for local, place-based democratic organisations, like community boards, is greater than ever before.

We need to strengthen the mechanisms of local democracy that enable local voices to be heard and debate and differences to be resolved. As community-based democratic institutions, community boards are one of the few ways small communities and neighbourhoods can make decisions about their collective interests.

To help community boards deliver great outcomes for their communities, the Community Boards Executive Committee (CBEC) has updated the Community Boards' Guide. In getting this Guide ready for publication, I would like to acknowledge the support of the 2022-25 executive committee;

// John Stewart – Zone 1

// Jessie McVeagh – Zone 1

// Carolyn Hamill – Zone 2

// Sarah Lucas (Chair) – Zone 3

// Jackie Elliot - Zone 4

// Ross Munro – Zone 5

// Regan Horrell – Zone 6

// Jock Martin – Te Maruata

// Kaz Yung – Young Elected Members

Sarah Lucas
Chair
Community Boards Executive Committee

CBEC
Community Boards Executive Committee

"

Building trust in our civic institutions starts at the flax roots, by enabling people to participate in the decisions that affect their immediate lives.

Active citizenship starts in the neighbourhood through the practice of inclusive local democracy, and we need neighbourhood governing bodies, such as community boards and other community (not-for-profit) organisations, to enable this

(The Future for Community Boards 2021).

Contents

// Ngā ihirangi >

The Community Boards' Executive Committee (CBEC)

// Te Komiti Whakahaere o ngā Poari Hapori (CBEC) >

Our history

In 1997, eight years after the introduction of community boards, the first national Community Boards Conference was held in Christchurch. The conference resolved to establish a working party to look into the establishment of a National Association of Community Boards. The working party met with the then President of Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ), Kerry Marshall, to look at options.

Following the second Community Boards Conference, which was hosted by Taupo District Council in 1999, the working party was formalised into the New Zealand Community Board Conference Liaison Team and tasked with organising future conferences and promoting the national interests of community boards.

On 4 August 2001, the liaison team formally resolved that it be re-named the New Zealand Community Boards' Executive Committee (CBEC). In the same year, a draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) was agreed with LGNZ, which included the decision to give a member of LGNZ's National Council a community board portfolio as well as provide a level of analyst and administrative support within set budgetary constraints.

CBEC's role

Today CBEC is an advisory committee of LGNZ's National Council. In addition to advising the National Council on matters involving community boards, CBEC's role is to:

// conserve, protect, promote and advance the role and interests of community boards in local government

// advocate, when necessary, for community boards with their territorial authority and central government

// encourage the establishment of community boards to ensure grassroots participatory democracy and community involvement

// build the capacity and enhance the effectiveness of community boards and their members by identifying and promoting issues of national significance and sharing experiences

// promote and facilitate good working relationships between territorial authorities and community boards for the benefit of their communities.

Membership

The members of CBEC are elected immediately after the triennial local authority elections, with one member elected by each of LGNZ's regional zones. Any community board member (elected or appointed) may stand for CBEC. To stand, and vote, for the committee, community boards must be in councils that are members of LGNZ. At their first meeting following the triennial election, boards will be asked to nominate a member to stand for the zone representative.

The CBEC chair is elected by members of the committee at their first meeting. The term of office is three years with the committee normally meeting four times a year, at least two of which are in-person meetings at the LGNZ office with other meetings held online.

The President of LGNZ and the National Council community board portfolio holder, if appointed, are ex officio members of CBEC.

Activities

Since its establishment, CBEC's activities have fallen into six broad categories:

/01. ***Advocacy:*** This can involve meetings with the Minister of Local Government, senior staff at the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) and correspondence on topical issues, such as community board remuneration and the establishment of new community boards.

/02. ***Conference:*** CBEC organises a conference for community board members in the middle year of the triennium. In 2024 the conference was held as a stand-alone stream within the annual LGNZ conference. Conferences have a strong training focus and promote good practice through the Community Board Best Practice Awards.

/03. ***Awards:*** Since 2003, CBEC has sponsored the Community Board Best Practice Awards to celebrate excellence in the implementation of projects in local government. The awards aim to:

// recognise significant contributions made by community boards to the process of achieving excellence in local government

// build a toolbox as a base for improving the effectiveness and functioning of community boards

// foster the exchange of best practice and innovative ideas.

They have been designed to promote to community boards examples of good practice.

/04. ***Training:*** CBEC has worked closely with LGNZ's Ākona team on the development of training programmes for community board members and actively assist board members to attend training. Occasionally, zone meetings are held to update community board members and provide training. Workshops are also held for community board chairs.

/05. ***Communication:*** CBEC seeks to ensure that all community boards have sufficient information about their roles and current issues to enable them to fulfil their objectives and meet community needs. Electronic newsletters are published and are distributed to members quarterly.

/06. ***Building good relationships:*** CBEC is available to mediate between boards and their councils should relationships break down, or where advice is sought to review the role and functions of boards.

// CBEC stall at the LGNZ conference. To increase the understanding of councillors and mayors about community boards and the relationship Guide, CBEC has a stall at the annual LGNZ conference.

Community boards - what are they?

// Ngā poari hapori – he aha ēnei? >

Status and establishment

Community boards are "unincorporated" bodies that are neither local authorities nor committees of a local authority *(s. 51 Local Government Act 2002 (LGA))*.

Community boards are similar to local boards (which exist in Auckland) to the extent that both types of boards are sub-district unincorporated bodies that are not committees of the local authority. However, local boards are different in many important respects, such as the joint governance approach that underpins the Auckland model of local government. While different, there are features and characteristics of local boards that could be helpful to community boards, such as the annual funding agreement between local boards and the governing body.

The LGA sets out the role and powers of community boards, including things they may not do, e.g. acquire, hold or dispose of property; appoint, remove or suspend staff (s. 53 LGA). It also provides the statutory framework within which boards must operate, including rules and processes which govern how they work.

Community boards may be established in any continuous area of a territorial authority district (they cannot be established in regions). They may be established: by an Order in Council giving effect to a local government reorganisation; as the result of a proposal by electors in the area concerned *(Schedule 6 LGA);* or through a representation review process undertaken by the territorial authority. They can only be disestablished by a reorganisation Order in Council or as the result of a territorial authority representation review. See **Appendix One** for details relating to these processes.

For the 2025 local authority elections, there will be approximately 110 community boards, established in 40 territorial authorities across New Zealand, covering both urban and rural areas.

Within a city or district, community boards may cover the whole area or only part of the area. In some cities and districts, only communities with particular distinct characteristics, such as physical isolation, have community boards, while in others, community boards represent all residents and property owners.

For the 2025 elections, 11 territorial authorities will have full city/district coverage by community boards:

// Far North District Council

// Thames-Coromandel District Council

// Whakatane District Council

// Ruapehu District Council

// South Taranaki District Council

// Kāpiti Coast District Council

// South Wairarapa District Council

// Waimakariri District Council

// Christchurch City Council

// Central Otago District Council

// Southland District Council.

Community boards must consist of no fewer than four and no more than 12 members. At least four members must be elected, and boards may also include members appointed by the territorial authority as long as their number is less than half the total number of members *(s. 19F Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA))*.

Territorial authorities will determine, through their representative reviews, whether there will be appointed members on community boards. Councils may only appoint councillors to a community board and, if there are wards, councillors who represent the ward in which the community is located.

At elections, candidates may stand for both a community board and the council, but if elected to both are deemed to have vacated the community board position and to have been elected to the council only *(s. 88A LEA)*.

Council staff can stand for, and be elected, to a community board. They may also stand for election to a council, but, in this case, if elected, must resign from their position with that council if they intend to take up the position of councillor.

A little history

Community boards were first established by the Local Government Commission (LGC) during the nationwide reorganisation of local government in 1989. This saw 159 community boards created.

The LGC's reasons for establishing community boards included:

// To ensure that communities of interest, especially those in the recently merged councils, would continue to be represented.

// To provide a way through which councils representing large populations and areas would be able to shift decision-making closer to their communities.[1]

Community boards were not the first 'sub-municipal' body in New Zealand. Prior to the 1989 reforms, there were 136 community councils.

The LGA 2002 sets a minimum level of responsibilities for community boards emphasising advocacy and representation. Some councils, however, see boards as a helpful mechanism for devolving certain functions so that they would be undertaken in close proximity to local communities

In the first few years following their establishment some councils regarded the boards as an unnecessary level of democracy and expense and sought to abolish them. By 1997, the President of LGNZ, Kerry Marshall, was able to say in his speech to the first Community Board Conference, held in Christchurch that:

"It is clear that community boards do make a difference. They keep the local in local government. They help councils deal with diversity in their communities. They provide both sources and lines of communication. And they provide for citizen involvement in the making of local policy."

Until the enactment of the LGA2002, community boards were able to vote to disband themselves. In this period, at least one council appointed enough of councillors to their boards to ensure that they could outvote the elected community board members. It was no surprise when such boards decided to vote themselves out of existence.

Following the removal of that method for disbanding boards, the only process for removing a board was through a representation review, and appeal to the Local Government Commission (LGC). Since 2002, and the disestablishment of community boards in Auckland, the number of boards has remained roughly the same, at approximately 110 boards located in 40 district and city council, with representation reviews establishing boards in boards in some areas and dis-establishing them in others.

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[1] Some commentators, however, saw it as a way of buying the co-operation of small councils about to be consolidated into larger bodies.

Context

Community boards are an example of what the academic literature describes as "sub-municipal bodies", bodies primarily designed to bring government close to citizens.

The British philosopher John Stuart Mill noted in his famous work "Considerations on Representative Government" that:

> *"The very object of having local representation is in order that those who have an interest in common, which they do not share with the general body of their countrymen, may manage that joint interest by themselves."*

Bringing government closer to the people not only ensures better representation but also promotes a stronger civic culture. The journalist and writer, Walter Lippmann, argued that growing centralisation has generated problems that can only be relieved through a return to older forms of social organisation. He called these forms of social organisation "communitarian institutions" and saw them as essential for communities to have a future, particularly with growing older populations (now growing much faster than in Lippmann's day). In his view, local mediating institutions were needed to strengthen the fabric of our communities; institutions that would facilitate and build on people's willingness to volunteer and help their neighbours.

If these objectives are to be met, we need to build trust within our communities by having avenues for people to interact and take part in civic life – in other words, by bringing government closer to the people. Community boards are one way for achieving this.

In the New Zealand context, community boards are a mechanism for bringing council decision-making processes closer to citizens and communities, in many cases by delegating decision-making authority on local or neighbourhood services. In this way decisions are more likely to respond to local needs and preferences and achieve allocative efficiency. As local government units become larger, community boards become even more important to ensure representation for the diverse communities that exist within large cities and districts.

Sub-municipal governance is common in many countries and there is increasing interest in the concept of 'community governance'. England, for example, has an extensive network of sub-municipal entities which have been encouraged by recent governments. These are the approximately 20,000 local or parish councils. Their functions fall into three broad categories:

// representing the local community (to the principal authority and to others)

// delivering services to meet local needs

// working to improve the quality of life in the parish or neighbourhood.

The services these local/parish councils are able to provide are defined by their local impact, and they include allotments, bus shelters, car parks, community centres, community safety schemes, community transport schemes, crime reduction measures, cycle paths, festivals and celebrations, leisure facilities, litter bins, local illumination, local youth projects, parks and open spaces, planning, public lavatories, street cleaning, street lighting, tourism activities and traffic calming (McKinlay, 2013).

Community boards in New Zealand, and local councils and parish councils in England, are just two examples of a major trend occurring throughout the world to bring decision-making on public services closer to the communities and citizens who use or benefit from those services.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

Much of the Athenian political system was about that process of learning to be a citizen. Below the level of the city institutions themselves, there was a whole series of local government committees and talking shops, where the Athenians practised the art of politics.

The use of random selection for political office had an important role to play too.

(Mary Beard, The Times Literary Supplement, 29 June 2016)

Community boards – what do they do? What can they do?

// Ngā poari hapori – he aha ā rātou mahi? He aha ngā mahi ka taea e rātou? >

The role of a community board (s. 52 LGA) is to:

a) *represent, and act as an advocate for, the interests of its community*

b) *consider and report on all matters referred to it by the territorial authority, or any matter of interest or concern to the community board*

c) *maintain an overview of services provided by the territorial authority within the community*

d) *prepare an annual submission to the territorial authority for expenditure within the community*

e) *communicate with community organisations and special interest groups within the community*

f) *undertake any other responsibilities that are delegated to it by the territorial authority.*

It is important to understand the overriding nature of this statutory role of community boards. Except for section 52(f), relating to the delegations of responsibilities, the role exists independent of the views a council may have regarding particular activities community boards should undertake in its area.

Aside from possible delegations transferred from the council, the statutory role of community boards involves representing and advocating on behalf of its community and providing advice to, and communicating with, the council about local issues. All three components of the role (representation and advocacy, advice and communication, decision-making) are discussed below.

THE WELSH EXPERIENCE

The existence of community and town councils enhances the local government system as a whole and provides a number of benefits to the communities that they serve. These include:

// local responsiveness,

// the dedicated representation of local interests,

// the ability to mobilise community activity, and

// the capacity to provide additionally to the services and facilities operated by county and borough councils.

Compared with other forms of grassroots organisation, including community associations and residents' groups, community and town councils have a number of advantages that follow from their statutory foundation. These include:

// accountability to local people through elections,

// stability and continuity,

// tax-raising powers and

// the capacity to act as a catalyst for promoting participation in public service

(Report to the Welsh Assembly).

Representation and advocacy

The role "to represent, and act as an advocate for, the interests of the community" (s. 52(a) LGA) was added in 2002. This recognised the important role community boards play, and were playing, as advocates and champions for their communities, and to remove any doubt that this is a legitimate activity for boards.

The representation and advocacy role, driven by the promotion of community well-being, can be seen to operate at two levels. Firstly, it operates in a broad place-making sense by the promotion of community well-being for the distinct local community represented by the community board. Secondly, it operates in relation to specific issues, like responses to council policies, plans and bylaws, as well as in relation to council processes and procedures, such as the way in which council decisions are made and the allocation and distribution of resources.

Community boards have several tools that they can use to be effective advocates and "to act in the best interests" (Oath of Office) of their communities, including for example:

// developing a community plan, including the commissioning of research and surveys as input into this plan, to reflect community preferences and concerns

// making submissions on council policies and plans, including regional council policies and plans, and on proposed legislation and departmental consultation documents

// lobbying councillors and committees as well as other organisations and individuals of influence

// developing communication programmes with a view to influencing opinions.

Community boards' ability to advocate, however, is not unconstrained. For example, they must act within budgetary constraints set by their council, and they will need to rely on the council for staff support for helping to prepare documents and submissions and/or analysis of issues. It is important that boards and their councils agree an annual work programme at the beginning of each financial year.

There are some aspects of the representation and advocacy role that have become controversial in recent years, and not all these have been resolved.

Frequent questions:

Q: *Can boards advocate for positions that are inconsistent or opposed to the policies or positions held by parent councils?*

A: Practice and legal advice varies. Some councils allow their community boards to make direct submissions to external organisations, such as a proposed NZTA transport strategy that affects their community, without the approval of their council (and regardless of whether the view taken is consistent with the council's view), while others do not.

Q: *What role should appointed members play when a board is advocating on issues to its council?*

A: Appointed members must make a choice as to whether they will argue the case for the community board or take part in council processes assessing their board's submission or deputation. Some suggestions about how this might occur are found in the chapter 'Being an effective community board member'.

Q: *Where is the boundary between a council promoting the interests of the city or district as a whole and community boards advocating for the interests of a part of the city or district?*

A: Community boards are designed to 'speak up' for the needs and preferences of their local communities. It is a role that is inherently parochial. Meanwhile, councils are required to consider the interests of all people in the city or district, including future generations. While there is an underlying tension, it is the role of the council to resolve this tension and make whatever trade-offs it feels necessary. In some cases, the city/district interests will prevail, while in other cases mutually acceptable compromises may be found.

Advice and communication

Whereas representation and advocacy involves persuasion, advice and communication is about information, guidance and enlightenment. This role should be 'a two-way street' with community boards, as the 'eyes and ears' of their communities, providing information and advice to the council about local needs, issues and matters of concern; and, at the same time, conveying information and advice back to the community from the council.

To fulfil the role of being 'the eyes and ears' of the community, boards need effective processes and mechanisms for understanding what is going on in their communities. For example, boards should consider:

// holding public forums at the start of community board meetings

// holding board meetings in community settings such as marae and community/school halls

// giving each member of the board a sector in the community to liaise with, such as the business sector, Māori, schools

// setting up committees with members drawn from the community, to provide intelligence on issues

// building local partnerships with community organisations

// holding regular outreach meetings throughout the community, such as displays and presentations at local community events.

Community boards can be a very effective mechanism for conveying and disseminating information and advice to and within the community. For example, community boards can help the council to promote local resilience, by disseminating important information about community risk awareness and the need for emergency preparedness.

For the advice and communication role to be effective, community boards must have good relationships with their parent council. This is the subject of the chapter 'Community boards – how can they be most effective?', but basic approaches include an agreement which specifies how the board will raise local matters; having the community board chair attend council meetings to answer questions; having board members on relevant council committees; and scheduled board briefing sessions for council staff.

Decision-making

Making delegations

As noted, the decision-making role of community boards is different in nature from the other roles of community boards. Community boards are empowered by the legislation to undertake their statutory roles. Decision-making, on the other hand, as provided for in section 52(f) of the LGA, is undertaken at the discretion of the council through any delegations it agrees to make, which can also be withdrawn by the council at any time.

Clause 32(4) of Schedule 7 of the LGA makes the nature of delegations very clear. It states that a community board to which any responsibilities, powers or duties are delegated, may, without confirmation by the council, "exercise or perform them in the like manner and with the same effect as the local authority could itself have exercised or performed them" (emphasis added).

Accordingly, despite a number of councils recording these as "delegations", powers for community boards to make recommendations or advise their parent council on a range of matters are not actually delegations, as boards are empowered to do these things under their statutory role set out in section 52 of the LGA.

Confusion around the true nature of delegations is reflected in some of the answers given to the survey of the country's community boards conducted by Hammond and Hammond in 2018 (2018 Community Boards Survey). The survey, which attracted responses from 39 of the 40 territorial authorities with community boards, found 42 per cent of the boards reported having "formal delegations", yet only 16 per cent "had decision-making powers over local services".

What cannot be delegated

In relation to possible delegations, it is noted firstly there are some things councils cannot delegate to their community boards. These include the following (see clause 32(1) of Schedule 7 of the LGA for the full list):

// the power to make a rate

// the power to make a bylaw

// the power to borrow money, purchase or dispose of assets, other than in accordance with the long-term plan.

Approaches to making delegations

The LGA actually requires councils to consider whether or not to make delegations to community boards and, in particular, "if the delegation would enable the community board to best achieve its role" (cl. 32(6) of Schedule 7, LGA).

When considering whether to delegate decision-making responsibilities to community boards, councils should begin by looking at who benefits from the council's services. Services where benefits are limited to a neighbourhood or community are likely to be more effective if decision-making about those services is made at the community level.

Through utilising the information on community needs and preferences held by community boards, as reflected in a community plan for example, it is more likely that services will reflect local needs and preferences. At the same time, it means that councils themselves will be able to focus on strategic and complex policy issues relating to the city or district as a whole, without the distraction of very local matters.

Councils have adopted two types of approach to delegations to their community boards.

/01.

The first, is a broadly empowering approach, delegating the powers of council that may be delegated, subject to specified exceptions.

/02.

The second involves the delegation of a schedule of specific activities or services.

While the first approach may appear empowering, the exceptions do require constant interpretation. For example, these exceptions often involve responsibilities already delegated to council committees or to officers, or they may involve assessment of the impact of particular local activities or services outside the community board area. On the other hand, delegations of specific activities or services have the advantage of having such interpretations resolved at the time the delegation is made.

Delegation to local boards

Some guidance for councils on delegations to their community boards can be seen in the approach adopted in relation to the local boards in Auckland. Firstly, the local boards legislation provides that decisions relating to 'non-regulatory' activities should, by default, be allocated to the local boards. (N.B. the responsibilities are 'allocated' by the legislation, which is different to 'delegations' made at the discretion of the council.)

The Auckland local boards' legislation does provide, however, that such allocations are not to occur if there are specific good reasons not to allocate them. These reasons are:

// the impact of the decision will extend beyond the local board area;

// effective decision-making requires alignment or integration with other decisions;

// the benefits of a consistent or coordinated approach outweigh the benefits of reflecting particular needs and preferences of local communities.

This approach acknowledges the importance of local decision-making for particular activities and services, being non-regulatory in nature, occurring as close as possible to the people affected by those decisions. It also places the responsibility on the council to justify why any particular decisions should not be made at the local level.

Generally speaking, it can be argued that regulatory decisions, on the other hand, should be made at the council level on grounds of the need for consistency, clear public understanding and cost-efficiency in enforcement. However, there is still some scope for delegations to community boards in respect of the application of particular regulations/bylaws in the local area.

In contrast, non-regulatory decisions should reflect, as far as possible, the importance of local place-making and recognition of the different distinctive local communities. These decisions can, and should, be made at the community level unless it can be shown they need to be made at the council level.

Delegations to community boards

As noted, there are few activities that community boards cannot legally undertake, if given the necessary delegations. As a result, it is not surprising that there is a wide diversity of practice across councils, with many community boards limited to representation, advisory and communication roles, and others having a broader range of decision-making delegations.

The breadth of the roles undertaken by community boards has been the subject of three surveys, with the first undertaken by the Department of Internal Affairs in 1995, the second by LGNZ in 2008 (Mary Richardson) and the third by Hammond and Hammond in 2018.

The 2018 survey found that the three roles in which community boards have the highest levels of responsibility are: decision-making relating to local grants (73.33 per cent), engaging with local groups and leading on local issues. It also found that the most significant advisory roles were providing an overview of local services, advocating for local issues and advising councils on engaging with local communities.

In addition, the survey found that advice was often provided as a result of formal requirements on councils to seek community views prior to decisions being made, although, in some cases, officers were given discretion about whether or not to seek community boards' advice.

The process for gaining advice also varied from formal processes at community board meetings (i.e. a report to the community board); verbal or email comment directly from board chairs or members; or by inviting community board representatives to join working parties, standing committees or advisory groups. Interestingly, since the first survey was undertaken, the range of activities where community boards have decision-making responsibilities has gradually diminished.

Different levels of service in communities

Arising out of its delegated decision-making role, or its other statutory roles, a community board may decide to promote a different level of service for a particular council activity or service in the community from that which applies across the city or district as a whole.

As noted, a council may not delegate the power to levy a rate to a community board to fund this different level of service. In this case, the community board will need to recommend to the council that a targeted rate for the activity or service be levied on the community concerned. Such funding arrangements should be clearly set out in the recommended relationship document between the council and the community boards, as discussed in the next chapter.

Timing of decisions on delegations

The LGA does not specify how frequently councils should consider the question of whether to delegate decision-making responsibilities to community boards.

LGNZ believes it is both practical and reasonable to expect a council to consider this question when agreeing its delegations immediately after a triennial election. This is usually done as part of the process of determining the council's committee structure and terms of reference including associated delegated powers. These delegations should then be recorded in the council's delegations manual/register and in its "local governance statement".

However, if a council is considering a more fundamental review of the responsibilities of its community boards and the relationship between it and the community boards, it will need to take more time than is available immediately after the triennial election. It would be appropriate in such cases for the review to take place at another time during the triennium, and after new community board members have become familiar with board responsibilities and processes.

Examples of delegations made to community boards

Examples of activities or services, mostly non-regulatory, that are commonly to community boards include:

community facilities: governance decisions, within council policies and budgets, in respect of local libraries, swimming pools and community halls including local usage policies and approvals, opening hours, appointments to committees.

parks and reserves: governance decisions, within council policies and budgets, in respect of reserve declarations and classifications, management plans, names, granting of leases and licences, details relating to new developments

community development: governance decisions, within council policies and budgets, in respect of community projects and events, collections and parades, community grants

solid waste and recycling: governance decisions, within council policies and budgets, in respect of the operation of community recycling and resource recovery centres

health and safety: decisions, within council policies and budgets, in respect of the application of legislation and bylaws in the community such as approvals of non-compliance or exemptions, alcohol bans, dog access and exercise areas

roading and transport: acting, within council policies and budgets, as the roading authority for the community under the LGA 1974 in respect of roadways, names, concept/landscape plans, public safety, health, convenience, vehicle crossings, bus shelters, road stopping, traffic control and enforcement, traffic and parking bylaws (approach adopted by Christchurch City Council).

Community boards – how can they be most effective?

// Ngā poari hapori – me pēhea rātou e tino whai hua ai? >

How effective community boards are will depend to a very large extent on their relationships with their parent council and with their community. These relationships need to be based on clear understandings by all parties of the role the community boards are expected to play and the contributions they will make to promoting community well-being. This chapter addresses these key relationships and the factors that will make them successful.

Relationship between the council and community boards

The relationship between community boards and their parent council will determine in large measure whether the boards will be successful and be able to perform their statutory role effectively.

The relationship needs to be open and respectful, acknowledging the importance of the different roles of the council and the community boards, and of their respective sets of elected members and also the role of council staff.

It needs to be acknowledged that maintaining good relationships is challenging given the three-yearly election cycle, and the likelihood of new people frequently being involved. Work is required on a continuous basis to establish and maintain effective relationships and good communication is fundamental.

Encouragingly, the 2018 Community Boards Survey found that the majority of community boards described the relationship with their council as "respectful" or "very respectful" (71.2 per cent). This was higher than the 2008 survey figure, which found that 65 per cent of community board members were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the relationship (Richardson 2008).

While most respondents in the most recent survey were satisfied with the support they received from their dedicated staff and/or secretariat, some boards were dissatisfied with the information they received from other parts of the council, with some highlighting the importance of the attitude and behaviour of council officers.

Feedback from the 2018 survey further noted that relationships might be improved by:

// council staff, councillors and community board members receiving training in community engagement (49.7 per cent)

// regular reviews (48.4 per cent)

// community boards being involved in the development of community plans (39.9 per cent).

The survey found that satisfaction with the overall working relationship was not necessarily directly related to the level of delegations the council had made to the board. Rather, it was noted that conflict can arise between community boards and the council primarily due to a lack of clarity about the respective roles of both bodies with the expectations of each other misaligned.

One fifth of respondents indicated their board had no "guiding documents", identified as: formal instrument of delegation, strategic plan, standing orders, community plan, terms of reference and council policies.

Things councils can do to help relationships

// Be aware of local issues and concerns

// Provide adequate funding

// Provide appropriate administrative support

// Create opportunities for boards to contribute to decisions about services in their area

// Enable boards to participate in processes to set direction such as council-long-term plan

// Allow boards the right to speak at council and committee meetings

// Encourage ward councillors to work closely with their boards.

Council community board relationships

The performance of a community board and the ability of members to achieve the objectives on which they stood depends to a considerable degree on the quality of the relationship between the board and its council. To understand the state of relationships, CBEC commissioned FrankAdvice to survey community board members and mayors across the country. Some of the key findings included that:

// Community boards work best when their delegations and capabilities match the expectations of their communities.

// Training and mentoring were needed to help boards grow capability

// There was a need for formalised agreements between councils and boards to ensure clarity of purpose and mutual expectations

In response to the survey CBEC has developed a guide to improve relationships called "Better Together – a guide for councils and community boards". The Guide found that a strong relationship is built on mutual respect, clarity of roles and responsibilities, shared intent to add value to local decision-making and timely and meaningful two-way communication

To assist councils and community boards develop a partnership accord CBEC has developed three types of community board and encourages councils and their community boards to select one of the options and to negotiate an Accord, based on a template prepared by LGNZ. The Accord provides certainty for both the council and the members of the community board, not only about their role but also about the level of service the board can expect from officials as well as the governing body's expectations of the board.

One size doesn't fit all — and that's okay

Councils and community boards vary in size, complexity and community expectations. But what they shouldn't vary on is having a shared understanding of their roles, responsibilities and potential. These models provide a tiered approach to structuring the relationship between councils and community boards.

They're not rigid boxes — think of them as starting points, with built-in flexibility. Councils and CBs can adapt, evolve and shift between models over time. And importantly: You can't pick a model without first agreeing on the relationship. That's why every model assumes an Accord is in place — clear expectations, roles, and protocols as outlined in the Best practice guide.

Community board roles

Boards are encouraged to engage with their councils to identify the appropriate role, as summarised below, and incorporate the role in a jointly agreed relationship accord.

Model 1: voice and advice

This model is the foundation of strong local democracy. It ensures community boards are a vital conduit between communities and council. Boards bring local voices to the table, advocate for their communities, and provide advice and feedback on issues of local interest. It does not include delegated responsibilities.

Under this model, boards help their council to stay connected and responsive, while remaining grounded in their representative and advisory role.

Model 2: voice + advice + delivery

Advice plus action, with community at the centre. Building on Model 1, this approach includes practical responsibilities and delivery of small-scale services and projects.

Boards become partners in local service monitoring, delivery and community engagement. With delegated funding and planning input, they can directly shape outcomes in their area while still aligning with the council's strategic direction.

Model 3: voice + advice + delivery + leadership

Genuine shared governance at the local level. This model gives boards the opportunity to lead — not just advise or deliver. Boards take a front-footed role in local planning, budget setting, policy decisions, and oversight of significant community services and assets.

This is a true partnership model, with councils and boards working together to co-govern on behalf of communities.

What these models aim to do:

// Give councils a framework for clarity in delegation

// Help community boards understand their scope and role

// Support the Remuneration Authority to better understand what community boards around the motu do

// Enable communities to have clear expectations of their local community board.

More details on the three models and a template Accord can be downloaded from LGNZ website at www.lgnz.co.nz/learning-support/ governance-guides/

Funding community boards

Clause 39 of Schedule 7 of the LGA specifies the obligations on councils to pay for the expenses of their community boards:

/01.

The expenses of the performance and exercise by a community board of its responsibilities, duties, and powers must be paid by the territorial authority within whose district the community is situated.

/02.

The territorial authority may fix a limit within which expenditure may be incurred under sub-clause (1), and no community board may incur expenditure in excess of any limit so fixed without the prior approval of the territorial authority.

/03.

This clause does not apply in respect of any expenditure for which any rate has been made and levied within the community.

The application of this clause does vary between councils. Some meet the expenses of their community boards through the general rate, while others employ a targeted rate that allocates the expenses to the community the board serves. A city or district where there is full coverage of community boards, is more likely to fund their boards through a general rate.

Some councils use a general rate to meet the administrative costs of community boards, such as the cost of supporting meetings and the provision of advice, while also levying a targeted rate on the community to provide funding for local projects or initiatives proposed by the community board. Targeted rates of this sort result in more direct accountability on the community board.

Some councils provide their community boards with a project fund financed through the general rate, along with their administrative costs. Other councils set an annual budget for the support of their community boards, out of which the boards 'purchase' advice and support from their chief executive and staff.

Clearly, there are a range of possible funding options, and councils should consult their community boards before reaching a decision on the best option for the city or district, taking account of the views of the community concerned.

Providing support and advice to community boards

Clause 38 of Schedule 7 of the LGA makes it clear that:

> *"A territorial authority within whose district the community of a community board is situated must provide the necessary administrative and other facilities for that community board."*

The actual level of support for community boards will be set by the council as part of the budget process. As noted above, involving community boards early in the process of budget setting, including community boards' administrative budgets, is recommended. While some compromises may be required, it is best these are discussed early.

It is noted that in the 2008 community boards survey, almost 80 per cent of boards reported they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the level of support they received from staff (Richardson 2008). Respondents reported that they relied on staff support to:

// help organise community meetings

// provide data and profiles of their communities

// manage local research

// provide information regarding council activities

// provide technical advice

// appoint community board members as council representatives on external bodies.

In addition to administrative support, the LGA (s. 42(2)(b)) places a requirement on chief executives to also provide advice to community boards:

> *"A chief executive …… is responsible to his or her local authority for ….providing advice to members of the local authority and to its community boards…."*

This places an onus on the chief executive, or in practice an officer with delegated responsibilities, to ensure that community boards have access to appropriate professional advice to perform their responsibilities; however, it is not an unconstrained responsibility. The chief executive must work within the budgetary constraints set by the council, which apply to both the council itself as well as to the community boards.

Consequently, requests for advice or other work to be undertaken by staff or contractors, must be negotiated with the chief executive – highlighting the value of a mutually agreed work programme.

The requirement that the chief executive provides advice to community boards effectively rules out community board members themselves providing advice at board meetings. Given this, it is recommended that board members who feel strongly about issues and want to facilitate a board discussion on a particular issue, first discuss their interests and concerns with the board chairperson about possible options. This could include organising a public seminar or board workshop prior to a formal board meeting. Such an option provides an appropriate format for members to present their views and any 'advice' they may have for preliminary debate and scrutiny.

Providing equitable support

One of the challenges that councils can face when supporting multiple boards, is how to ensure it is providing an equitable level of service to each board. Not only may boards have different needs or represent communities that have different socio/economic profiles, but some might be more proactive, and utilise more council resources, than others.

There are several mechanisms for ensuring that each board receives an equitable level of service, both administrative and professional advice, such as:

// Negotiate a work plan and budget for each community board, including provision for advice and policy development, at the start of each year, taking into account the community board plan and the relative needs of the board and its community.

// Establish a contestable fund that the community boards can make application to, for additional staff support should that be needed (specific criteria will be required).

// Allow the community boards to recommend a targeted rate to 'top up' the budgeted amount allocated by council.

// Fund basic administrative support through the general rate, while requiring that boards use targeted rate funds to meet the cost of policy and project initiatives.
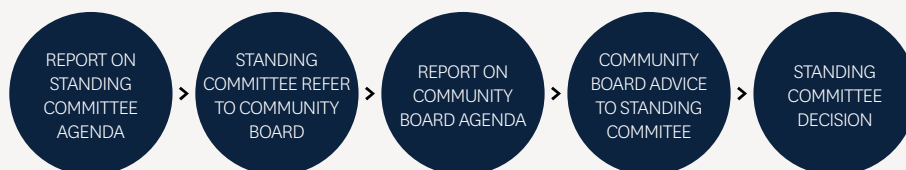
Community boards adding value

Mike Richardson, the former Chief Executive of Christchurch City Council and community board training facilitator, asks community board members who attend his training workshops how they intend "to make their boards valuable to the council?" What is it that community boards can offer that will make them a valuable part of their local authority and be recognised as such by councillors and the community? Some suggestions are set out below.

Councils employ a variety of processes and practices for seeking advice from their community boards. Where necessary, community boards should encourage their council to adopt those such as:

// officer reports being placed on a community board agenda prior to the report going to a council or standing committee meeting

// council reports being referred, from a standing committee to community boards for comment, prior to the matter going to council (or back to the standing committee)

// council agendas being sent to community board chairs with an understanding that chairs will seek input as appropriate

// community board chairs (or other board representatives) being co-opted onto council standing committees and/or working parties

// community board chairs being given speaking rights at council meetings

// officers being encouraged to seek informal advice from chairs or members of community boards

// council advisers monitoring all reports and agenda items to check whether they should be referred to community boards prior to consideration by council or committee

// appending community board minutes to each council agenda

// convening regular community board and council liaison meetings

// enabling community boards to make formal submissions to council meetings.

REPORT ON STANDING COMMITTEE AGENDA > STANDING COMMITTEE REFER TO COMMUNITY BOARD > REPORT ON COMMUNITY BOARD AGENDA > COMMUNITY BOARD ADVICE TO STANDING COMMITEE > STANDING COMMITTEE DECISION

In short, councils should seek advice from community boards early in the decision-making process and boards should take all available opportunities to provide timely input into the process.

Quality of a board's advice to council

While councils support and contribute to a range of networks at the city or district level to enhance their decision-making, it is up to community boards to replicate this at the sub-district or neighbourhood level. Networks enable boards to respond to requests for advice in a useful and timely manner.

In many ways, a board's value to the council reflects the strength and relevance of the local networks it is plugged into. Networks should, therefore, be planned to help community boards be proactive and to respond to council requests for good quality advice and provide input in a timely manner.

When providing advice to their councils, community boards need to consider the budgetary implications of that advice, the possibility of competing priorities that the council will need to consider, and the practicality of any recommendations made by the board.

Boards need to explain the reasons behind any specific recommendations they make to their councils in order to improve the chances of being successful – arguments that are obvious to community board members might not be so obvious to councillors or staff, especially 'the why' that lies behind their views. This will help councils weigh up the different factors needed to make a decision. The more explicit boards are about the reasons behind a request or recommendation, including the underlying intervention logic, the more helpful the advice will be to the council.

Some suggested approaches to providing advice include:

// taking an unashamedly local view, i.e. the community view rather than a district wide view which is the responsibility of the council

// if there are clearly differing views in the community, then these should be communicated (while some believe a community board should communicate a single view, this does not need to be the case and should not be the case unless that view is widely supported)

// a board may pose questions to council on matters it is asking be considered

// a board may wish to give conditional advice, for example: if council decides on option "A" then we suggest it resolve "X"; if council chooses option "B" then we recommend "Y" (Richardson 2013).

Community board planning

Councils are required by legislation to plan for both the short-term and the long-term future. This requirement is set in the principles *(s. 14 LGA)* as well as specific duties like preparing long-term plans *(s. 93 LGA)* and 30-year infrastructure strategies *(s. 101B LGA)*. Councils are also required to review their long-term plans (LTPs) every three years, and to prepare annual plans if they wish to amend their LTPs.

Community boards can play an important role in their council's planning processes. The nature of this role includes:

// identifying local issues for inclusion in the LTP

// providing feedback on the impact and effectiveness of council services

// providing input on service levels for local services

// promoting the council's draft LTP/annual plan in their community and encouraging local residents and businesses to make submissions

// providing a community board submission on the draft LTP and annual plan.

To assist these processes, many community boards develop their own community plan setting out community's preferences and priorities. These plans can be a sub-set of the council's LTP, as is the case for the Auckland local boards, or at least be parallel to it.

While communities are free to adopt a model which suits them best, it is recommended that community boards consider the option of developing three-year plans, or longer-term plans that are reviewed three-yearly, and this be undertaken in the first year of each triennium.

This model allows community boards to address issues raised in recent elections and have input into the council's LTP, which is adopted in the second year of the triennium. Further consultation with the community should be undertaken by the community board in the process of developing/reviewing the community plan, to confirm community preferences and priorities.

While a community plan will not be as detailed as council LTP, it will facilitate community board input into the LTP, if the community plan format relates to the structure of the LTP.

Community board decision-making

The LGA sets out obligations that must be followed when councils make decisions, regardless of whether the decisions have direct financial consequences. These obligations also apply to community boards in the following instances:

// where community boards have delegated decision-making powers

// where community boards routinely make recommendations to their councils on the understanding that those recommendations will be adopted.

Failure to observe the principles, rules and processes set out in the LGA can expose community boards and councils to the risk of judicial review and having a decision over-turned.

The LGA's decision-making principles and processes are designed to create opportunities for public participation in decision-making, increase confidence in local government decisions and strengthen transparency and accountability. Key provisions are set out in section 14 and in the detailed provisions of Part 6, which identify considerations the decision-making body must take into account when making decisions. Key provisions include:

// matters to take into account when making decisions, which relate to the diversity of the community, the interests of both future and current communities, and the likely impact on community well-being *(s. 14(1)(c))*

// the need to provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to decision-making processes *(s. 14(1)(d) and s. 81))*

// requirements relating to decisions, including identifying and assessing all reasonably practicable options, and taking into account the interests of Māori in particular decisions *(s. 77)*

// community views in relation to decisions *(s. 78)*

// identification of decisions inconsistent with council policies or plans *(s. 80)*.

In addition, the LGA sets out consultation principles (s. 82) which must be followed in relation to decisions (see next section for more details).

It is important to note that **when making decisions, a community board must take a 'proportional approach'** to meeting these requirements. For example, an issue of low significance will not require as extensive consultation or options analysis, as an issue of high significance to citizens. Decisions should also be appropriately documented and information about the reasons for decisions made available.

This is only an outline. If community boards are delegated decision-making powers, or make recommendations that will be adopted by their council, boards should seek further detailed guidance.

> " "
>
> **Councils consult "to deliver services better, to make government work better, to be more efficient, more responsive (and), to figure out what people in the communities want and need. And of course, that's crucially important. But implicit in the idea of consultation with communities is another more demanding, more ambitious, you might say idealistic, dimension of democracy, and that has to do with promoting, fostering a richer kind of citizenship and of civic engagement."**
>
> *(Michael Sandel, LGNZ Conference, Christchurch, 2005).*

Consultation and engagement approach

The LGA (s. 82(1), subsections (a) to (f)) sets out principles of consultation to guide councils, and where appropriate community boards, and also a minimum standard that must be met. Key provisions are:

// People affected by or interested in a local authority decision should be *"provided with reasonable access to relevant information in a manner or format that is appropriate"*.

// People affected or interested should be *"encouraged to present their views"*.

// These people should be given *"clear information concerning the purpose of the consultation and the scope of the decisions to be taken"*.

// These people should be *"provided with a reasonable opportunity to present their views"*.

// The views presented should be *"received with an open mind"* and *"given due consideration"*.

// People who present their views should *"have access to a clear record or description of relevant decisions and explanatory material relating to the decisions"*.

Underpinning these provisions is the underlying requirement that *"a local authority must, in the course of its decision-making process in relation to a matter, give consideration to the views and preferences of persons likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in, the matter"* (s. 78(i) LGA).

The challenge is to move beyond consultation simply to meet statutory requirements, to provision of opportunities for communities to participate in a meaningful way so that expectations are met and relationships between community boards and their communities are strengthened. In this way, democratic mandates are strengthened and the ability of boards to influence decision-making and outcomes is enhanced.

There are multiple techniques for strengthening the participation of citizens. One framework that many councils make use of has been developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) and provides a 'five-point spectrum' of public participation to describe different approaches. These five points are: inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower as set out in the following table.

The IAP2 engagement model

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
GOAL	GOAL	GOAL	GOAL	GOAL
To provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding of topic, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work with the public throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including developing alternatives and identifying a preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
TECHNIQUES	TECHNIQUES	TECHNIQUES	TECHNIQUES	TECHNIQUES

// Fact sheets
// Websites
// Open days
	// Public comment
	// Focus groups
	// Surveys
	// Special consultative procedure
		// Workshops
		// Deliberative polling
			// Citizen advisory committees
			// Consensus building
				// Citizen assemblies
				// Referenda
				// Delegated decisions

Another technique under "empower" is participatory budgeting, in which a community board could ring fence a share of its budget and invite a representative sample of its citizens to determine, through a process which involves advice and engagement, how that budget is to be allocated.

Significance and engagement policy

When considering how and when to engage, community boards need to refer to the council's 'significance and engagement policy'. This policy sets out forms of engagement to be undertaken in relation to different types of issues.

Many significance and engagement policies draw on the IAP2 model described above. It is important that community boards contribute when these policies are reviewed to ensure that the style of engagement set out in the policy reflects the values and preferences of the different communities. Councils value feedback on how well policies are working.

If a community board believes that the council's significance and engagement policy fails to give effect to matters that are important to their community, such as failing to recognise community diversity and the need for innovative engagement techniques, then the board should ask for the policy to be reviewed.

Importance of being known by the community

Because of their proximity to local communities, community boards have the potential to play a critical role in building citizens' trust in democracy and connecting citizens with important public institutions.

The reduction in voter turnout over recent decades and consequent loss of trust in public institutions, is related to a perception that government and public decision-making is beyond the influence of many individuals. Addressing this means shifting from the traditional public administration model that involves delivering services to communities, to a model whereby governments deliver services with communities – a 'co-production' approach.

If community boards are to be effective in their local governance role and in promoting local democracy, they need to have a clearly visible community profile. Local citizens need to know that the board exists, what it does, how it adds value to community life and how they can participate in the board's work programme. Boards cannot afford to be invisible.

Community engagement – the value of community boards

Councils are not always well equipped to engage directly with all communities – the complexity and urgency of many issues that we face means that we often lack the time to engage meaningfully.

In these situations, it is often left to the community board to invest the necessary time to establish relationships and help citizens and communities identify options for dealing with matters of local concern.

(Basil Morrison, New Zealand Community Board Conference, Lower Hutt City 2006.)

To create a community profile, boards need a communications strategy setting out their communication and engagement objectives and the way in which these will be achieved. For example, community boards can:

// publish a report of each community board meeting in local newspapers immediately after each meeting

// develop a social media strategy and ensure that the board is easy to find on the council website – ideally having a separate board page with news about its activities

// develop a network of partner agencies and groups and provide regular information to those agencies and groups to share with their members on the board's activities

// develop a presence in local schools which may include promoting civics education and kids voting

// encourage individual members to liaise with local organisations representing residents, business and other sectors

// hold public forums at the start of every regular community board meeting

// get to know and build contacts with the regional council – it often plays a big role in local environmental issues for example.

In short, community boards need to be as visible as possible in their community so as to cement their role in the hearts and minds of local residents. Visibility and connectedness increases the ability of boards to be able to be the 'eyes and ears' of councils and their communities, and to speak with a mandate about local issues and concerns and promote community well-being generally.

Building relationships with māori

Māori organisations, whether because of their traditional mandate, their membership, or in some cases the services they provide, are important stakeholders in communities that community boards represent.

Formal Treaty or statute-based relationships are likely to exist between local iwi or hapū and councils, reflecting the status of the council as a local government and the fact that the council will carry various Treaty obligations as determined by parliament. Within the context of this framework, community boards are free and should be encouraged to develop relationships at the sub-district level that are appropriate for the way in which Māori organisations are structured in the community.

Good practice includes:

// Consultation is most effective when the parties consulting understand, respect, and trust each other.

// Understanding is more than just listening and hearing what is being said; it involves acknowledging where the other person is coming from, recognising their culture and history that has brought them to this point, and being prepared to accept them for where they are.

// In order for councils to understand tangata whenua, regular contact and exchanges are needed, not solely in the council chamber, but at hui, tangi, and other marae-based activities.

// Adequate time needs to be set aside to allow concepts and philosophies to be tested with all of the tangata whenua – not just those who are representing the tribes at the meeting – and the representatives will need to feel comfortable that they are bringing to the consultative process what all of their members are feeling.

// Māori decision-making is usually by consensus rather than by majority, sometimes this will involve compromise.

// Pre-consultation is important. Councils should endeavour to prepare and issue discussion documents before publishing (or notifying) draft plans.

// Councils should talk with tangata whenua about appropriate kawa and tikanga for their area.[2]

Certainty and clarity is important if relationships are to flourish and provide value to the respective organisations. Community boards may wish to develop agreements or protocols with local Māori organisations setting out mutual expectations. Relationships with Māori organisations, as with other sectors, are important if boards are to achieve their statutory role.

[2] Guidelines developed by LGNZ's former Māori Advisory Committee, Nga Matakōkiri (1996).

Community boards – requirements and procedures

// Ngā poari hapori – ngā herenga me ngā tukanga >

This chapter sets out requirements and procedures for efficient and effective operation of community boards. The statutory requirements and procedures are as set out in Schedule 7 of the LGA, which are applied to community boards, with specific exceptions, by section 54 of the LGA.

Getting started

The performance of community boards (and councils in relation to their community boards) is determined to a large extent by decisions made in the first few weeks after the triennial elections. These decisions, often made at the first meeting after the election, include:

// electing the community board chairperson

// adopting standing orders[3]

// adopting a code of conduct[4]

// agreeing the manner in which the board will operate over its three-year term, including style, formality, level of inclusiveness and frequency of meetings

// deciding whether there will be a committee structure and, if so, what committees and their terms of reference

// deciding whether members will have portfolios and, if so, on what topics

// deciding whether the "additional duties" allowance provided for by the Remuneration Authority should be used.

Community boards should look to schedule a full induction shortly after members are sworn in. The induction is not only designed to explain to board members the logistics associated with the community board and the council, it should also engage members in a discussion about their priorities for the community, the way in which they want to work as a team, and further discussion on some of the matters identified above.

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[3] Please note that the Local Government Systems Improvement Bill 2025 includes provisions that mean, if enacted, that central government will impose a centrally designed set of standing orders.

[4] Please note that the Local Government Systems Improvement Bill 2025 includes provisions which mean, if enacted, that central government will impose a centrally designed Code of Conduct.

First meeting

The council chief executive, or an officer acting on his or her behalf, will prepare the agenda for the first (inaugural) meeting of the community board. The business required to be considered at the first meeting is set out in statute:

Notice of first meeting

The first meeting of a community board following a triennial election must be called by the chief executive following the declaration of the final election results. The chief executive must give members no less than seven days' notice of the meeting. However, in the event of an emergency, the chief executive may give notice of the meeting "as soon as practicable" *(cl. 21(1) to (3) of Schedule 7, LGA)*.

Requirements for first meeting

The chief executive or, in their absence, their nominee, must chair the meeting until the chairperson has made and attested the declaration *(cl. 21(4) of Schedule 7, LGA)*.

The business to be conducted at the first meeting must include the following *(cl. 21(5) of Schedule 7, LGA)*:

a)   the making and attesting of the declarations required of members under clause 14

b)   the election of the chairperson and the making and attesting of the declaration required of the chairperson under clause 14

c)   a general explanation, given or arranged by the chief executive, of:

   i.   the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA)

   ii.   other laws affecting members, including the appropriate provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968; sections 99, 105 and 105A of the Crimes Act 1961; the Secret Commissions Act 1910; and the Financial Markets Conduct Act 2013

d)   the fixing of the date and time of the next meeting of the community board, or the adoption of a schedule of meetings

e)   the election of the deputy chairperson in accordance with clause 17.

In addition, a community board will normally adopt its standing orders at the first meeting, although this is not a requirement (unless amendments are made at the meeting) as standing orders remain in force after each triennial election.

As noted below, LGNZ recommends that community boards also adopt a code of conduct. This is not usually approved at the first meeting, however, as it is important that members of the board understand and 'own' the Code. Ideally, a draft code should be on the agenda of a community board induction workshop so that members of the community boards within the district can debate and contribute to its content.

Declaration

Before community board members can act in their role as members, they must be 'sworn in'. The declaration (cl. 14 of Schedule 7, LGA) reads:

> *"I, [full name of elected member], declare that I will faithfully and impartially, and according to the best of my skill and judgment, execute and perform, in the best interests of [name of community], the powers, authorities, and duties vested in or imposed upon me as a member of the [name of community board] by virtue of the Local Government Act 2002, the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, or any other Act".*

The purpose of the declaration is to highlight that members must act on behalf of, and in the best interests of, the whole community board area. In the case where there are electoral subdivisions, members represent their subdivision but must still act in the best interests of the whole board area.

It is also good practice for appointed members, who would already have sworn an oath to act in the best interests of the district, to make a second declaration to the effect that, while making decisions as a member of the community board, they will act in the best interests of the community as well.

In stressing the "best interests" of the community, the declaration may be interpreted as a duty on members to leave their community in a better state than when they were elected.

Electing community board chairperson

As noted, one important item of business to be carried out at the first meeting of the community board is the election of the chairperson.

In relation to this, the first decision involves the voting system to be used. There are two options, which are described in ***Appendix Two***. Once a decision on the voting system is made, the chief executive, or their nominee, will call for nominations for the chairperson's role. Once the chairperson is elected, the chief executive will step down and the new chairperson will chair the remainder of the meeting.

While not a legislative requirement, good practice suggests that the chairperson is an elected member of the board rather than an appointed member. This is because an elected member diminishes the risk of a conflict of interest (see below under 'Appointing members to community boards and their role' for further discussion) and it also builds the capability of the elected board members.

In some cases, board members will not know each other well enough to decide who is best placed to take on the role of chairperson. In the light of this, some boards have adopted the practice of electing an appointed member as an interim chairperson, for an initial three months, during which the elected members have time to get to know each other, their interests and aspirations, and their relative strengths. Following the three month period an election is held for the new chairperson.

Replacing a community board chairperson

Community board chairpersons can be replaced during a triennium should a majority of members (appointed and elected) so decide. The rules that apply to the removal of community board chairpersons are the same as apply to the removal of chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of regional councils and deputy mayors of territorial authorities and involve a prescribed process *(cl. 18 of Schedule 7, LGA)*.

The decision to remove a chairperson must be signalled, by resolution or a requisition signed by a majority of members, not less than 21 days before the meeting scheduled for that purpose. The resolution, or requisition, must indicate whether or not there is an intention to elect a new chairperson at that meeting.

Standing orders

Standing orders are important for bodies that make decisions and allocate public resources. They help ensure the orderly conduct of business and ensure transparency through open voting and public access to meetings. They also provide a mechanism for resolving difficult debates and addressing conflicts in an orderly way.

While community boards must adopt a set of standing orders *(cl. 27 of Schedule 7, LGA)*, in practice many community board meetings are run with little or no reference to standing orders other than the fact that meetings are open to the public, minutes are recorded and, if necessary, a vote is taken.

Often community board meetings will operate on a consensus basis, with members voluntarily acting in a way to facilitate the outcomes of the meeting in a fair and non-disruptive manner. However, if difficult issues arise or some members tend to dominate debate, the chairperson should apply standing orders to ensure all members get a fair hearing and that decisions are made based on evidence, so that the public can have confidence in the quality of decision-making.

While councils operate more formally under their standing orders, by, for example, defining how often a member may speak to a matter, community boards should generally operate in an open and inclusive manner to encourage public engagement. They should avoid, as far as possible, replicating the formality typical of the way in which governing bodies operate.

It is still important, however, for community board chairpersons to be familiar with standing orders, even if they are seldom used. Advisory staff, appointed by the council, will be able to advise members on any technical standing order issues.

While it has been common practice for councils and community boards to select their own standing orders, as of July 2025, the Government has signalled its intention to require all local authorities to adopt the same standing orders. This is expected to come into effect in early 2026.

Code of conduct

All members of a council must abide by that council's code of conduct (cl. 15 of Schedule 7, LGA). Section 54 of the LGA, explicitly excludes this provision from applying to community boards.

The requirement that councils adopt a code of conduct was introduced with the LGA in 2002 to provide a mechanism for setting standards of behaviour amongst council members. The code of conduct sets out the expectations agreed by members themselves, about how they will act (as members) towards one another and the public, as well as including a range of provisions concerning disclosure of information and obligations under statutes, such as the Local Government Official Information Act 1987.

The role of a community board differs from that of a council to the extent that community boards cannot employ staff and thus, for example, are not directly responsible for meeting the good employer obligations. However, the behaviours of community board members may have a direct impact on such obligations. Ensuring members behave ethically, and in accordance with the expectations which apply to councillors, is therefore important. It will also help ensure the effective functioning of community boards themselves.

While the adoption of a code of conduct has been discretionary for community boards, this will no longer be the case once the Local Government Systems Improvement Bill is adopted. The Government has signalled its intention to require all local authorities and community boards to adopt the same code of conduct. This is expected to come into effect in early 2026.

Appointing members to community boards and their role

Community boards frequently comprise a combination of elected members and members appointed by the council. Councils make this decision as part of their representation review. Following the triennial election, councils will then need to consider:

// If council elections were at-large, what is the process for deciding which councillors will be appointed to the community boards?

// Are appointments to be made for the whole 3-year term, or should councillors share the role (that is, should appointees rotate)?

Community boards have no statutory role in determining whether there are appointed members and, if so, who they will be. However, it is not unusual for boards to take a view, and it is reasonable for the chairperson of the board, or any board members, to communicate their preferences to the council.

Appointed board members are full members of the community board they are appointed to. They can vote in board meetings the same way as elected members, including the votes to choose the chairperson and deputy chairperson. They are also eligible to be elected as the (deputy) chairperson of their community board.

However, as previously noted, an appointed member being chairperson can put both that person and the board in a difficult position. Problems can include:

// Having to wear two hats, as councillor and board chairperson, which may result in an inhibiting of the board's ability to take a community perspective, as opposed to a city or district view.

// It can confuse public and media perceptions about the nature and role of the community board.

While elected and appointed members are equal members of the community board, the different processes by which they became members can influence the way in which they contribute to their board. Some of the issues that members need to consider and resolve to their own satisfaction are:

// How best can appointed members represent the interests of the council and community board area at the same time?

// Should appointed members act as advocates or champions for their community board area when local issues are discussed at the council?

Problems can arise when an appointed member is representing both their board's position at a council meeting while also acting in the interests of the city or district as a whole. This can occur, for example, when a community board is preparing a submission to the council and then when the council comes to consider the submission. In these situations, appointed members will need to choose whether they are wearing their 'community board hat' or their 'councillor hat'.

To address these situations, some councils/community boards have adopted policies which require appointed members to stand back and not take part in any decisions (and at times discussions) that are intended to be considered by the council. This removes any risk that appointed members, when operating as councillors, might be seen as having a conflict of interest.

In some councils, appointed members act as their community board's advocate, while in other councils this role is undertaken by community board chairpersons who have been given permission to sit at the council table and speak on relevant issues.

Being an effective community board member

// Kia whai hua te mema o te poari hapori >

By being elected, community board members have been given the trust of local citizens to represent and advocate for their interests, to exercise community leadership, and to make decisions on their behalf.

Your constituents will treat you with respect and will expect you, in return, to represent their views and concerns faithfully, while acting with integrity. They will also expect you to work diligently for the benefit and enhancement of the whole community.

It is a significant honour that few New Zealanders get to experience. But with the honour comes responsibility, as your actions and decisions can have major short and long-term consequences for your community.

Your role as a community board member

The role of a community board member is varied. Like the role of a councillor, it contains a mix of duties which can be summarised as both representation, that is, giving voice to the issues and concerns of your community; and governance, which is seeking to enhance the well-being of your community.

When compared to the role of councillors, community board members spend a greater proportion of their time on representation matters and proportionally less on governance matters. It may be helpful for you and your board to find the right balance between the two roles, and then to raise this with the council.

To carry out both the representation and governance roles successfully, community board members need particular attributes, such as:

"Attributes of a successful community board member:

// Have a sound knowledge of and commitment to the Local Government Act 2002 and a firm resolve to lead decision-making for the future of your community.

// Have a genuine interest in and understanding of issues facing the community.

// Have an ability to relate to a wide range of people at all levels, including an ability to listen.

// Have an ability to express ideas clearly and be prepared to ask questions.

// Previous involvement in community organisations or networks will help.

// Demonstrate integrity and ethical behaviour.

// Be politically independent and always inquisitive and innovative.

// Have the ability to see both sides of an argument and respect the views of others even if you don't agree with them.

// Retain a sense of humour.

// Having commercial experience is helpful, but being an elected member should not be equated with being a company director.

// Have an empathy with all members of your communities."

(Adapted from advice prepared by Wynn Raymond, former Mayor of Timaru and member of the National Council of LGNZ).

To be an effective community board member, you need to know that it consists of more than just attending community board meetings. Effective representation and governance involve attending many other meetings and events in your local community, especially being a great networker.

Your community board will only be as good as you and your colleagues make it. A model job description for community board members can be found in ***Appendix Three*** and a self-assessment tool for board members in ***Appendix Four***.

Understanding conflicts of interest

Being an effective community board member includes avoiding, where possible, or otherwise addressing conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest.

The Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968 (LAMIA) provides rules about members discussing and voting on matters in which they have a pecuniary interest and about contracts between members and the council.

A pecuniary interest is likely to exist if a matter under consideration could reasonably give rise to an expectation of a gain or loss of money for a member personally (or for their spouse or a company in which they have an interest). In relation to pecuniary interests, the LAMIA applies to both contracting and participating in decision-making processes.

How to determine whether a pecuniary interest exists

Elected members are often faced with the question of whether they have a pecuniary interest in a decision and, if so, whether they should participate in discussion on that decision or vote. When determining if this is the case or not, the following test is applied:

> *"…whether, if the matter were dealt with in a particular way, discussing or voting on that matter could reasonably give rise to an expectation of a gain or loss of money for the member concerned." (OAG, 2001)*

In deciding whether there is a pecuniary interest, members should consider the following factors:

// What is the nature of the decision being made?

// Do I have a financial interest in that decision – do I have a reasonable expectation of gain or loss of money by making that decision?

// Is my financial interest one that is in common with the public?

// Do any of the exceptions in the LAMIA apply to me?

// Could I apply to the Auditor-General for approval to participate?

Members may seek assistance from the community board chairperson or other person, to determine if they should discuss or vote on an issue, but **ultimately it is their own judgment as to whether or not they have a pecuniary interest in the decision**.

Any member who is uncertain as to whether they have a pecuniary interest, is advised to seek legal advice. Where uncertainty exists, members are encouraged to adopt the 'least-risk' approach which is to not participate in discussion or vote on any decision relating to the issue in question.

Members who do have a pecuniary interest should declare the pecuniary interest to the meeting and not participate in the discussion or vote. Declarations and abstentions need to be recorded in the meeting minutes (further requirements are set out in the board's standing orders).

Non-pecuniary conflicts of interest

In addition to the issue of pecuniary interests, rules and common law govern conflicts of interest more generally. These rules apply to non-pecuniary conflicts of interest, including common law rules about bias. In order to determine if bias exists or not, members need to ask:

"Is there a real danger of bias on the part of the member of the decision-making body, in the sense that he or she might unfairly regard with favour (or disfavour) the case of a party to the issue under consideration?"

The question is not limited to actual bias, but relates to the appearance or possibility of bias, reflecting the principle that justice should not only be done, but should be seen to be done. Whether or not members themselves believe they are not biased may be irrelevant. Members should focus on the nature of the conflicting interest or relationship, and the risk it could pose for the decision-making process. The most common risks of non-pecuniary bias are where:

// members' statements or conduct indicate that they have predetermined the decision before hearing all relevant information (that is, members have a "closed mind")

// members have a close relationship or involvement with an individual or organisation affected by the decision.

In determining whether they might be perceived as biased, members must also take into account the context and circumstances of the matter under consideration. For example, if a member has stood on a platform and been voted into office on the promise of implementing that platform, then voters will have every expectation that the member will give effect to that promise. Despite this, he/she must still be seen to be open to considering new information (this may not apply to decisions made in quasi-judicial settings, such as a Resource Management Act hearing).

Spectrum of conflicts of interest

ACTUAL > PRESUMED > PERCEIVED > PROBABLY OK
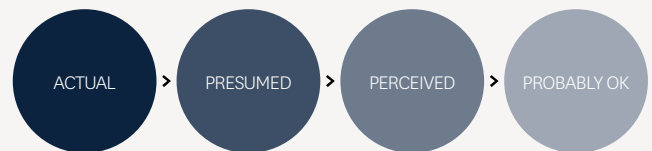
When deciding whether or not a member has a non-pecuniary interest in a decision, it is important to look at:

// What type of decision it is, for example, is it policy with political content or an individual issue?

// Where in the overall decision-making process the meeting is at, for example, whether it is a preliminary or final decision?

// How pervasive the member's interest is, for example, does it affect the whole decision or just one small part?

// What statements has the member made and/or actions taken in relation to the matter prior to the meeting?

The contracting rule

A member is disqualified from office if he or she is "concerned or interested" in contracts with their council where the total payments made, or to be made, by or on behalf of the council, exceed $25,000 in any financial year. The $25,000 limit includes GST.

The limit relates to the value of all payments made for all contracts in which the member is interested during the financial year. It does not apply separately to each contract, nor is it just the amount of the profit the contractor expects to make, or the portion of the payments to be personally received by the member.

The Auditor-General can give prior approval, and in limited cases retrospective approval, for contracts that would otherwise disqualify a member under the LAMIA.

It is an offence under the LAMIA for a person to act as a member of the council (or committee of the council) while disqualified.

Elected members' remuneration

Responsibility for local government elected members' remuneration rests with the Remuneration Authority (the Authority), which also has responsibility for the remuneration of Members of Parliament and the Judiciary. In addition, the Authority is responsible for setting rules regarding the reimbursement of costs incurred while engaged in local authority business.

Remuneration for community board members (also for local boards) sits outside the remuneration pool which determines councillor remuneration.[5] The reason for this, according to the Authority, are "the distinctive structures and responsibilities of boards".

The Authority originally thought that community board remuneration costs should be included in the governance pool of the council. However, it noted the significant variations in the data on community boards (such as residents per head of board member, ranging from 72 to 13,000) and also significant differences in what community boards do (relating to the level of delegations). It concluded that, despite these variations, "the primary responsibility of the overwhelming majority of community boards is representation and advocacy … and that having community board remuneration linked to population is fairer to board members. It is reasonable to expect that the time, effort and expertise required to represent a large number of people would be greater than that for a board representing a smaller number of people."

On this basis, the remuneration for community board members serving a large population is greater than that of members of a board serving a small population. This does not mean, however, that community board remuneration is an exact fixed multiple of its population. Rather, it means that there is relativity between a community board's population and the remuneration of its elected members. There is also a minimum level of remuneration reflecting common activities such as board meetings.

Where a councillor is appointed as a member of a community board, she or he is not automatically entitled to remuneration as a councillor as well as remuneration as a community board member. If a council wishes to pay some extra remuneration to that councillor, it will come from the council's governance pool.

Until such time as there is a further review, community board members are likely to receive remuneration increases in line with public sector pay increases. Remuneration determinations for each council, including community boards, are made on an annual basis for the year commencing 1 July.

Chairperson's and deputy chairperson's remuneration

The remuneration of the chairperson of a community board is twice that of a board member (including additional remuneration for that board's members, if any). The Authority, however, requires confirmation that the chairperson will carry out the additional responsibilities for that role.

The deputy chairperson of a community board is remunerated as a board member. This reflects the Authority's view that the role of deputy chairperson is not sufficiently different from that of a board member to warrant additional remuneration.

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[5] The exception is when the Remuneration Authority determines that a community has been given responsibilities that have traditionally sat with the governing body. To compensate boards for the additional workload the Authority can require that community board member salaries are "topped up" by transferring funding from the governance pool.

Increase in remuneration to reflect additional board responsibility

There is provision for a community board's remuneration to be increased to reflect additional responsibilities undertaken by the board. The increased remuneration is recognised for the board as a whole and not for individual members.

Additional responsibilities may include responsibility for services formally delegated to the board by the council. Or it could be responsibility for representing the views and position of the community board to external parties, again where delegated to do so, and with a clear understanding that only formal community board decisions can commit the board to any particular course of action.

While the Authority has determined that community board remuneration should not be part of the council's overall governance pool, it has advised that if any council wants to delegate additional responsibilities, and wants community board remuneration to increase accordingly, the value of the increase will come from the council pool. This is on the basis that the additional work by community board members relieves councillors of this work.

The Authority states that each proposal will be considered on a case by case basis, with boards required to show how it is operating "above and beyond the role of community boards". The maximum amount that can be added to the community board remuneration is 30 per cent of the annual remuneration.

For more information on community board remuneration generally go to: www.remauthority.govt.nz/local-government-elected-members/

Allowances

Allowances for elected members are determined entirely at the discretion of the council, but within limits set by the Authority. Current allowances identified by the Authority are for vehicle kilometres, travel time (within New Zealand), ICT and childcare.

Information relating to these allowances can be found at www.remauthority.govt.nz/local-government-elected-members/allowances-elected-members/

ACC levies

All elected members, including community board members, are responsible for paying their own ACC levies.

Many members, both new and experienced, have questions about the amount of ACC that they should pay. When investigated, it is surprising to discover that members can be paying a very wide range of levies, depending on the ACC office that provided the advice on the appropriate code.

Official advice from ACC suggests that self-employed people, such as elected members, should be classified by the nature of their work rather than the nature of their industry. The official ACC code for elected members is code 78550 – the code for the "business management services" classification. However, this code only applies if being an elected member is a person's only or primary form of income.

Elected members with multiple sources of income are charged at the highest ACC rate applying to the different activities they undertake, unless the sources of income are less than 5 per cent of that person's total income. This factor tends to be the main explanation for differences in what elected members are paying in ACC levies.

For more information, visit the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) website (www.acc.co.nz).

References and useful resources

// Ngā tohutoro me ngā rauemi whaihua >

ACELG (2011) EVOLUTION IN COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE: BUILDING ON WHAT WORKS

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AVAILABLE FROM:
www.mdl.co.nz/site/mckinley/Evolution_Community_Governance_200312.pdf

CBEC/LGNZ (2025) BETTER TOGETHER: A GUIDE FOR COUNCILS AND COMMUNITY BOARDS

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AVAILABLE FROM:
www.lgnz.co.nz/learning-support/governance-guides/

HAMMOND AND HAMMOND (2018), SERVING NEW ZEALAND? A SURVEY OF COMMUNITY BOARDS

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AVAILABLE FROM BUSINESS LAB:
www.businesslab.co.nz/insights/community-board-survey

RICHARDSON, MIKE (2008), SETTING COMMUNITY BOARDS IN CONTEXT

A report prepared for the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance

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AVAILABLE FROM:
http://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/ArcAggregator/arcView/frameView/IE1055203/http://www.royalcommission.govt.nz/

REID, M, (2021) THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY BOARDS

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AVAILABLE FROM:
www.lgnz.co.nz/news-and-media/2021-media-releases/back-to-the-future-aotearoa-needs-community-boards-now-more-than-ever/

Appendix one: establishing and disestablishing community boards

// Āpitihanga tuatahi: te whakatū me te whakakore i ngā poari hapori >

Territorial authority representation reviews

At least once every six years, territorial authorities must review their representation arrangements in accordance with Part 1A of the Local Electoral Act 2001 (LEA). Reviews are required to give effect to the principle of "fair and effective representation for individuals and communities" (s. 4(1)(a) LEA).

In addition to determining the number of councillors and how they are to be elected (at-large, by wards or a combination of both), a territorial authority must, as part of its representation review, also determine whether or not there should be community boards in the city/district. If there are to be community boards, they need to decide the number and nature of the particular communities and their associated community board – that is, its boundaries, number of members and whether members are to be elected across the whole community or by subdivisions. Community boards can only be disestablished through the representation review process.

The Local Government Commission's (LGC) "Guidelines to Assist Local Authorities in Undertaking Representation Reviews" explain the key factors to be taken into account when councils determine their representation proposals including those relating to community boards. These factors involve:

// identifying communities of interest

// providing effective representation for these communities of interest

// providing fair representation for electors.

As part of their representation review, a council must not only look at whether any new community boards should be established, but also whether existing community boards are still required or should be altered.

When councils are addressing this question, community boards are entitled to provide input into the representation review process. The input needs to set out the arguments for the ongoing community board role and, if appropriate, any need for variations to board structures and representation arrangements.

While councils must, under the LEA, publish an initial representation proposal and invite submissions, a council may first decide to undertake preliminary non-statutory consultation. Community boards should consider whether they believe more open-ended community consultation should be undertaken and, if so, encourage the council to do this, and also seek their involvement in designing the consultation process.

Whether preliminary consultation is undertaken or not, questions community boards need to consider before providing input to the council include:

// How proactive should the board be in seeking community views and support?

// If they choose to be proactive, what is the best way of doing this?

// How are the arguments for establishing and maintaining community boards best developed?

// What is the best way of showing community support for community boards?

If the council's resolution on its initial representation proposal involves changes to current representation arrangements, the resolution must include an explanation of those changes (s. 19K(2) LEA). The council must then, within 14 days after the resolution (but no later than 8 September in the year before the election) give public notice of the proposal and call for submissions and allow a period of at least one month for the making of submissions.

It is important for community boards to make a submission on a council's initial representation proposal as only submitters can appeal against a council's (unchanged) final proposal. (N.B. If a council changes its initial proposal, any person or party may object to a final proposal.)

After hearing submissions on its initial proposal, the council must then, within six weeks of the end of the period for submissions, resolve its final representation proposal and give public notice of the proposal. The public notice must specify the right of appeal and objection to the LGC against the council's proposal, and advise the date by which appeals/objections must be received, being not earlier than one month after the date of the notice.

If a community board (or any member) is unhappy with the council's final representation proposal it can appeal or object to the LGC.

After hearing appeals/objections, the LGC will make a final determination on all representation arrangements for the city/district including community board arrangements.

CBEC can provide further advice to community boards on how to respond to a council's representation review.

Constitution of communities

Communities may also be constituted, and community boards established, for any part of a city or district under a separate process set out in Schedule 6 of the LGA.

The Schedule provides that such proposals may be made by either:

// not less than 10 per cent of the electors of a continuous area in a city or district having a population of 1,500 or more people

// not fewer than 100 electors of a continuous area of a city or district having a population of fewer than 1,500 people, being at a meeting called by public notice and being the majority of the electors at that meeting.

The proposal must be delivered to the chief executive of the council who will check all requirements are met including that the signatories are qualified electors of the area concerned. Subject to this, the proposal will then be submitted to the council for consideration.

The council must either resolve to give effect to the proposal and invite public submissions, or reject the proposal and give public notice accordingly.

If the council has resolved to give effect to the proposal, it must then consider the submissions received. In deciding whether or not to constitute the proposed community and establish a community board, the council must have regard to certain statutory criteria relating to the promotion of good local government (set out in clause 19 of Schedule 3 of the LGA).

If the council resolves not to constitute a community, a signatory to the proposal may appeal that decision to the LGC. The LGC will then determine whether the community is to be constituted and community board established. If the community is to be constituted and board established, an Order in Council will be prepared and this may include the functions of the new community board for a period up to three years.

Appendix two: voting systems for the chairperson

// Āpitihanga tuarua: ngā pūnaha pōti mō te heamana >

The following extract is taken from the LGNZ standing orders template for community boards.

5.1 Elections of chairpersons

When electing a chairperson or deputy chairperson, the community board (or a committee making the appointment) must decide by resolution to use one of two voting systems set out in Standing Order 5.2:

5.2 Voting system for chairperson and deputy chairperson

When electing a chairperson or deputy chairperson, the community board must resolve to use one of the following two voting systems.

System A

The candidate will be elected or appointed if he or she receives the votes of a majority of the members of the local authority or committee who are present and voting. This system has the following characteristics:

a) There is a first round of voting for all candidates;

b) If no candidate is successful in the first round, there is a second round of voting from which the candidate with the fewest votes in the first round is excluded; and

c) If no candidate is successful in the second round, there is a third round, and if necessary subsequent rounds, of voting from which, each time, the candidate with the fewest votes in the previous round is excluded.

In any round of voting, if two or more candidates tie for the lowest number of votes, the person to be excluded from the next round is resolved by lot.

System B

The candidate will be elected or appointed if he or she receives more votes than any other candidate. This system has the following characteristics:

a) There is only one round of voting; and

b) If two or more candidates tie for the most votes, the tie is resolved by lot.

(cl.25 of Schedule 7, LGA 2002)

Appendix three: community board position description

// Āpitihanga tuatoru:
te whakamārama i te tūranga i te poari hapor >

Community board member

Representation and advocacy

// promote residents' issues and initiatives to the community board and the council

// 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)

// be an advocate for local issues and initiatives on behalf of residents, to other community organisations, to the council, and to central government

// monitor the range and level of council services provided within the community board's jurisdiction, and advocate changes as necessary

// respond to residents' and community issues and submissions, and act as leaders in the community where problems may arise and where issues or initiatives need to be promoted

// engage in community development activities in conjunction with council officers (board members frequently assist with initiating and facilitating community development initiatives and may liaise with council officers who are responsible for taking action and reporting back)

// liaise with, and communicate with, community groups regarding local issues and initiatives, and on the processes, services and decisions of the community board and the council

// clarify and promote the role of the community board in the area and wider communities

Information gathering

// actively seek good quality information and keep well informed on community priorities, broader issues and local initiatives

// attend to information directed to board members, such as emails, submissions, deputations and financial reports

Governance

// prepare for and attend meetings of the community board and other bodies the member has been asked to serve on

// engage in decision-making processes without bias, including hearing panels (if delegated), acting at all times in accordance with legislative requirements, and with integrity and professionalism

// 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

// contribute to the development of community board policies, and set and monitor key performance indicators

// ensure that the structures and systems used by the board, such as meeting agendas, support and encourage effective democratic decision-making

// scrutinise council policies and services within the community board area, and advise the council on ways of enhancing effectiveness

// work in co-operation with the council (community boards are part of the local government structure and must work within the framework of the powers and functions set out in statute and as delegated by the council)

Accountability

// act in accordance with the principles of democratic accountability to residents within the area

// act in accordance with the community board's code of conduct

// 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

Community board chairperson

Being the chairperson of a community board will vary according to the operating style of the board, however some aspects are common to all:

// meet with the relevant council officer to review items for the forthcoming meeting agenda

// prepare and deliver, if so agreed, a chairperson's report

// effectively chair meetings of the board

// act as spokesperson for the board

// meet regularly with members to provide them with an opportunity to raise matters for board agendas and identify and address any behavioural issues that might be developing

// facilitate good relationships with the mayor, chief executive and councillors

Appendix four: self-assessment tool

// Āpitihanga tuawhā: utauta arotake i a koe anō >

Community boards (and councils) need to know how well they are performing and how well members of each board understand their collective goals and objectives. This form, to be completed by individual board members, provides examples of questions that could be asked to enable boards to undertake a necessary self-assessment. The results could then be discussed at an annual board planning and strategy session.

	Possible questions	Yes	No	Comments
/01.	Do you receive adequate general information relating to your community?			
/02.	Do you get council/council committee agendas and/or reports?			
/03.	Does your board prepare a community plan?			
/04.	Do you know your board's desired outcomes, goals and projects for the year?			
/05.	Does your board have a formal agreement/ charter/ terms of reference with the council?			
/06.	Do you know your board's delegations?			
/07.	Are you familiar with the requirements of the LGA and LGOIMA relating to community boards and their meetings?			
/08.	Are you satisfied with how your board's meetings are organised and run?			
/09.	Is there a public forum at the beginning of each board meeting?			
/10.	Are you satisfied with the support provided by the council for your board meetings?			
/11.	Do the mayor/councillors attend any board meetings?			
/12.	Do any regional councillors, representing your area, ever attend a board meeting?			

Possible questions	Yes	No	Comments
/13. Does your board have meetings with other relevant agencies who are working in the area?			
/14. Are there joint community board meetings across the city/district?			
/15. Does the council consult your board before setting board delegations?			
/16. Does the council consult your board before setting member remuneration?			
/17. Is your board invited to take part in council workshops to discuss its long-term and annual plans?			
/18. Does your board regularly make submissions on the council's long-term and annual plans?			
/19. Are members of your board invited to attend LGNZ zone meetings along with councillors?			
/20. Are members of your board invited to council training sessions e.g. Treaty training?			
/21. Have any of your board's members received training to be hearing commissioners under the RMA?			
/22. Does your board/chairperson have regular meetings with the council chief executive?			
/23. Does your board chairperson have speaking rights at council meetings?			
/24. Are any members of your board on council committees?			