

# COMMUNITY BOARD CHAIR GUIDE >

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## NAU MAI, HAERE MAI

Welcome to being a Community Board Chair >

# What is the role of a community board?

- // being advocates and champions for your community (cheerleaders)
- // making sure your council knows about and understands the things your community cares about
- // communicating clearly what needs change, enhancement and/or investment and why
- // liaising between the Council and the local community



Community boards are the eyes, ears and vocal chords of their communities.

//  
**LOOK, LISTEN AND SPEAK UP**



Your role as a  
community  
board chair  
**is an exciting  
and dynamic  
one >**

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## **you will ...**

- // be an advocate and champion for your community board (be a super-hero)
- // set the agenda for your community (both figuratively and literally)
- // support your board members navigate their roles in a way that is professional, open-minded and democratic
- // identify opportunities for people in your community to be heard and understood
- // liaise between the board and the council (translator)

# Things for you to consider as the chair of your community board >

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## // YOUR COMMUNITY //

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- // know the demographics – ethnicities, ages, incomes, education
- // know the names of schools/church groups/sports team/community organisations
- // know what things excite people in your community – and what infuriates them
- // understand the pre-European history of your local area
- // what places and spaces are most precious and why

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## // WELL-BEINGS //

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- // balancing the four well-beings (social, cultural, environmental and economic) in your decision-making
- // recognise what “well-being” would actually look like for your community
- // what are the community’s ambitions– what would success look like

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## // DIVERSITY OF VOICES //

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- // take time to identify as a Board those groups of people who deserve a voice
- // ensure that you are not just representing the views of those who are loudest, but also those who are quiet and unable to be heard

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## // RELATIONSHIPS //

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- // between the Board and the Council
- // between your Board and the other Community Boards
- // between your Board the local businesses
- // between your Board and key government agencies
- // between your Board and other neighbourhood governance groups eg School Boards of Trustees, Marae committee

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## // RESOURCING //

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Not just the resourcing for delivery of services such as footpaths, parks, pipes and streetlights, but what resourcing would be helpful for you to better achieve your Board’s ambitions eg training, mentoring, communication support etc

# Making sure your community's voice is being heard.

YOUR AIM IS TO ESTABLISH INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY FOR YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY BY MAKING PARTICIPATION EASY.

## + YOU CAN DO THIS BY...

- // being seen and heard – the entire Board should consider right at the beginning – how to make yourself most visible across your unique and diverse communities
- // making participation at Community Board meetings easy by going out to the people – hold them in schools, on Marae, in business board rooms, in sports clubs – even at the local pub
- // you and the other board members can mentor individuals eg young people from your local schools, representatives of ethnic groups etc
- // newsletters and a website – there may well be someone locally who would love to support your Community Board with these important communication tools – why not ask?
- // provide feedback opportunities at your local library, school, marae, rural service centres etc
- // be bold and interesting and have some fun

# Working with your council...

Think about the kind of relationship that you want to have with the Council.

Your Board will follow the leadership you provide on this.

**// You can make your Board's relationship with the Council a positive and empowering one or a negative and disempowered one. //**

## Things that you need to consider...

### Do you want to:

- // be copied in on all Council and committee agendas?
- // be cc'd into every email between elected members?
- // get regular briefings from the CEO?
- // have speaking rights – at every meeting or just some of them?
- // have voting rights – for every issue or just the ones in your rohe?

- // have regular meetings with the Mayor/Chairs of committees?
- // have regular briefings from the CEO or their delegate?

You do need to have clear lines of communication and ensure that each understands what the other's role is. You can direct this in ways that work for you – you are not required to only agree with the ways that work best for the council.



**The Community Board is not a mini-council.**

**A Community Board should be independent of the Council - expect when the Council has specifically delegated things for your board to do.**



## Your duties as chair

Remember, as Chair of the Community Board you get to determine how meetings will work and the culture of your Board. Your leadership style can be inclusive and open, by giving members a chance to contribute to the agenda and speak freely at meetings, or exclusive and closed.

Don't under-estimate your influence on how your Board performs.



## Useful hints:

- // Attend at least one workshop on 'how to chair meetings' – more if you can
- // Be familiar with your board's Standing Orders – you may have to use them
- // Ask council officers for help – they want you to get it right as much as you do
- // Ask other chairs for advice – they've probably dealt with similar issues
- // Always be clear when you have your 'community board chair' hat on and when you are 'just being you' – sometimes you need to specify this



**For further information:**

**THE GOOD GOVERNANCE GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY BOARDS**

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**AVAILABLE AT**

<https://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/cf6eag1049/Good-Governance-Guide-for-Community-boards-2019-edition-v2.docx>

**THE GOOD GOVERNANCE GUIDE FOR EVERYTHING**

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**AVAILABLE AT**

<https://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Induction/The-Good-Governance-Guide.pdf>

**THE COMMUNITY BOARD EXECUTIVE PAGE**

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**AVAILABLE AT**

<https://www.lgnz.co.nz/about/governance/community-board-executive-committee/>

**GUIDE TO STANDING ORDERS**

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**AVAILABLE AT**

[https://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Standing-Order-templates/StandingOrder\\_16\\_09\\_22.pdf](https://www.lgnz.co.nz/assets/Standing-Order-templates/StandingOrder_16_09_22.pdf)

Being a community board chair is a leading role - you are helping your community design its future.



**ENJOY**  **THE RIDE.**

