

**MEETING:** GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS  
COMMITTEE 26 SEPTEMBER 2018

**Name of item:** ELECTED MEMBER TRAINING AND CONFERENCE  
ATTENDANCE REPORT

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### **Event**

LGNZ Conference 2018, AGM and Awards dinner, Christchurch

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### **Purpose**

This year LGNZ's annual conference and EXCELLENCE Awards was held in Christchurch from 15-17 July 2018. The 2018 conference theme was "Firmly focused on the future: Future-proofing for a prosperous and vibrant New Zealand".

Almost 600 delegates attended, such as mayors, chairs, chief executives, councillors, community board members and senior management from New Zealand's councils, along with key players from the private sector, business, government and non-government agencies.

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### **Report**

Conference began with locally hosted tours around Christchurch. I set off on a walking tour in the rain. Learnt about technology advancements that Christchurch City Council are leading. Rubbish bin sensors which are reducing contractor visits to an empty bin, therefore council spend; parking sensors which can calibrate with mobility access vehicles, that alert wardens if car is not showing as mobility impaired occupant. People and cycle counters, which are assisting with planning and implementation of infrastructure. Development of seismic testing, and a dust monitor that cost 20K yes, that's right 20k!

I then attended the LGNZ Annual General Meeting where thirteen policy remits were voted on. This year remits focused on infrastructure and funding, waste, climate change, the environment and social issues.

Climate change remit was the most controversial. The remit asked that LGNZ advocate to all major banks that they transition away from investments in fossil fuel industries and consider opportunities for long-term investments in low- or zero-carbon energy systems.

Proposed by Greater Wellington Regional Council the remit was designed to reinforce the Local Government Leaders' Climate Change Declaration 2017, which advocated that "A clear and consistent pathway toward a low carbon and resilient future needs to provide certainty for successive governments, businesses and

communities to enable transformative decisions and investments to be made over time.”

Following a vigorous, lengthy debate, the remit was narrowly lost by 50 per cent to 45, with 5 per cent abstaining. A remit requires 51 per cent or more to pass.

I attended the hui hosted by Te Maruata Roopu Whakahaere the board of representatives providing a support network for Maori elected members and local government staff. Unfortunately, I missed the hui held the day before as my flight was delayed. So, this was a great opportunity to catch up on our kaupapa.

Ngai Tahu opened the conference with a beautiful powhiri. Dave Cull introducing the conference theme, “focus on future proofing for a prosperous and vibrant New Zealand”, which included the launch of the new project on localism.

Minister of Finance Grant Robertson was warmly welcomed. He talked about Local Government and Central Government roles, and how the Coalition Government wants to work going forward. “Local issues require local leadership” is an assurance Hon Grant Robertson made in his address. Significant changes to how 3 Waters for example is managed is on the cards, and Central Government wants the sectors buy in before final decisions are made.

Sam Johnson spoke about local leadership and local governments role in facilitating volunteerism or a movement where people can participate whole heartedly in their community. One example was the Christchurch man who spends 40 hours a week mowing in the red zone, doing his bit to look after his community. The red-tape had to be worked around for this volunteer. But they made it happen!

Kylie Legge of Place Partners spoke passionately and challenged peoples thinking on placemaking. Its people focussed places, people are the centre of your decision-making - think of all the systems together. Important to look at what attracts or builds attachment to a place or project for people. What are the barriers? Vs what keeps people, makes them care? Very thought provoking.

Building a strong community – a tale of a new region was a collaborative session with NZTA, Ngai Tahu, Christchurch City Council, ChristchurchNZ, Pacific Youth Leadership Council and Christchurch Airport. It was a great session showing the focus of solution-based outcomes addressing their infrastructure and social issues as the city rose from the quakes.

NZ Initiative session was very enlightening. “We think there should be more Councils, not less... Central government... hand over your dollars”, they said. Very validating for local government and empowering for communities.

Dr Te Maire Tau, director of Ngai Tahu Research Centre, spoke on the treaty settlement process, and possible future role of iwi in local governance. It gave everyone a good understanding of Tino rangatiratanga and what this means for future relationships with Maori. He shared successful co-governance models and some ideas for potential relationships.

Minister for Climate Change James Shaw took part in the climate change panel, good interaction from the crowd on this important issue adapting to climate change and mitigation. I also attended the workshop session on climate change. It was good to hear the diverse range of climate related challenges happening around the

country. Very different priorities. Business and bottom lines, vs people and wellbeing. I know which one I choose. And I got into some debates in this workshop! Jonson Cox from Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat – the organisation responsible for economic regulation of the English and Welsh water sector holding companies to account to deliver for their customers and society) shared the original framework that they operated under and the challenges they overcame, with the new framework. The question I found myself asking, is “our water services regulation authority is?”

Minister of Local Government Nanaia Mahuta presented the Local Government EXCELLENCE Award to Trevor Maxwell, he spoke about his service and why he loves what he does. I got to talk at length with Trevor, he was an inspiration considering he’s been in local government for 41 years as a Councillor, he is now cultural ambassador for Rotorua Lakes City Council. A council doing a lot of things right when it comes to working with their treaty partner.

At the awards dinner, Far North District Council was highly commended for Nga Kuri Auau o Kaikohe our targeted, community-based project co-funded by FNDC and the Department of Internal Affairs project to assist with dog compliance and promote responsible dog ownership.

Minister Mahuta also conducted the opening address for our final day at conference. It was one of my highlights. No notes, real questions on issues affecting councils in relation to central government, answered well.

Harnessing localism and empowering communities to succeed was a great session which included representatives from the Selwyn Youth Council. We have a youth council too. But we are not connecting to them in the way other youth councils are. Selwyn Youth Council, for example, report to Council a couple times a year to keep council in the loop of projects that they are progressing. There is mentorship, and a pathway for youth councillors onto council encouraged.

Kaikohe based Deidre Otene delivered a moving speech on building the capacity of communities to be able to take on success. She shared the workings of Maori world view concepts of connectedness to place, to whenua and whakapapa. And how these concepts have been related to health and wellbeing of our communities. A truly inspiring speech, especially when she shared her meeting with Barack Obama and what “Go local, go deep” means in the context of connecting with communities to invoke change.

Daniel Flynn brought the conference to a close as our keynote speaker. He shared a journey of passion and emotion, of social enterprise and growth through resilience and perseverance.

On return, I flew into Auckland, and continued to the School Board of Trustees Conference in Rotorua, this is separate to my role as a Councillor. But who did I run into at the powhiri - Trevor Maxwell! Small world.