

**MEETING:** COUNCIL 3 October 2019  
**Name of item:** ELECTED MEMBER TRAINING AND CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REPORT  
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**Date of report:** 20 August 2019  
**Document number:** A2628884

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## **Event**

LGNZ Conference 2019, AGM and Awards dinner, Wellington

## **Purpose**

This year LGNZ's annual conference and EXCELLENCE Awards was held in Wellington from July 2019.

Delegates that attended included 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**

Firstly, I attended **Te Maruata Hui** on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July, at Waiwhetu Marae, Lower Hutt. The hui is an opportunity for Maori elected and appointed members, and members of Te Pae Urungi (the Maori staff network), to share whanaunga, hear guest speakers, discuss matters of common interest and plan.

Guest speaker Minister Nanaia Mahuta, gave us an update on everything local government. And some thoughts we need to consider:

- Council involvement in the Treaty settlement process. Councils need to know well in advance of settlement, what expectations there will be on council, with regards to negotiations. Are we talking to the Minister? And our Treaty partners?
- Localism. Consider use of matauranga across Council. S33 and transfer of powers. Consider procurement process and the barriers that need to be removed to enable localism. Policy and/or tender process may need review.
- Climate change. Important that any retreat is community led.

Bonita Bigham, chair of Te Roopu Whakahaere (our governing committee) gave us an update on her work over the year. At conference Te Maruata will hand over a harakeke basket, "Te reo o Hiwa" and a challenge. To write down two things your council will do to actively for Maori, something to achieve and improve on year on year. The basket will be handed over to the hosting Council, of next year's conference.

Creative NZ gave some great insight on the funding available. So much information from this topic. It would be good to include them in Inductions of new elected members. And, they also can assist Councils in the development of Arts and Culture Strategy. Given the submissions on Art through the Kerikeri Domain Reserve Management Plan, and our Long-term plan consultation, where are we with the development of our own strategy on Arts and Culture?

Dave Cull, President of LGNZ and Dunedin City Council Mayor also gave us an update on the Localism Kaupapa. Prompting us to consider, are there already mechanisms in place that deliver on localism? We already have the local community fund, administered by our community boards. Consider how we can further empower locally based decisions. With the priority to fund towards things such as creating vibrant communities. Continue projects that are collaborative with Far North Holdings, iwi and hapu. Review what the barriers are, remove, and enable further.

The following day, **LG NZ conference began with the AGM**. Highlights of this were the vote to have Te Maruata represented on the National Council of LGNZ. The remits were mostly non contentious this year, with voting going rather quickly. Further details on remits are online here <https://www.lgnz.co.nz/news-and-media/2019-media-releases/local-government-debates-remits-at-agm/>

The conference was opened with a powhiri. Dave Cull introducing the conference theme, "Riding the localism wave: Putting communities in charge", delving deeper into how Council can enable community led decisions and action.

Alex Walker, Mayor - Central Hawkes Bay District Council spoke on **Localism: No.8 wire fixes to New Zealand's challenges**. Alex shared the engagement process they went through to develop a wellbeing strategy. At Far North District Council we too, are facilitating the development a district strategy. I like that CHBDC have developed a wellbeing strategy. We keep saying what council "must" do. We don't know, what we don't know. Perhaps through the district strategy we will discover what council "needs" to do, for our people, for our environment.

**Dr Lance O'Sullivan** shared with us some ideas on how we can create localism. Mainly what he would do with local government and DHBs, roll them into one. Meeting the needs of health awareness and compliance through local authorities. He shared sobering data to get the message across that the gap between Maori and other New Zealanders for life expectancy is still significant.

**Phil O'Reilly, Managing Director, Iron Duke Partners** spoke on business and local government. The key message, "What business wants from local government is what everyone wants from local government!"

**John Mauro - Chief sustainability Officer, Auckland Council on Climate Change:**

- Integrate, Innovate - to solve tomorrow's problems and build resilience for an uncertain future, Include - to create a stronger, fairer and more equitable society
- Invest - build value and restore multiple capitals and don't settle /invest for anything less

Auckland Council actions include hosting a Climate Conference and joining with the Climate Change Leaders Forum (C40 Cities) and Developing a new plan, with real outcomes - Te Taruke-a-Tawhiri

**Sophie Handford & Raven Maeder (School Strike 4 Climate NZ Organisers)**

Want climate change mitigation and adaptation at the centre of all council decisions. Want to see bold and visionary leadership. Doing all they can to ensure we have an Aotearoa that is liveable for future generations.

**Nanaia Mahuta** Fantastic address on community led decision making. "Make it the norm not the exception". Make sure communities are a part of the picture.

## **Housing and building in New Zealand - can we fix it?**

**Justin Lester** – kicked off the session showing the reality of home ownership now, vs the ability for your children and your grand-children to own their own home. He talked about Associate Minister of Housing availing access to funding for social housing that WCC has tapped into.

**Adrian Orr, Governor of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand:** Save, invest and incentivising ourselves to get into that housing conversation. He left us asking ourselves is the Infrastructure needed? How is local government being inclusive? Are you working with all the parties you should over climate change?

## **Managing fresh water - best practice, breakthroughs in innovation and barriers.**

### **A panel discussion on fresh water:**

Doug Leeder, Chair of LGNZ Regional Sector: Solution is in the way we measure he asserts.

Terry Copeland, CE Federated Farmers

In the lab and on the ground, what are the farmers doing?

- variable rate irrigation
- Targeted fertiliser application - only hitting the spots where it is needed
- Slow release fertilisers and alternative crops
- Nitrogen fixing rye grass - gene editing

Concerns from the farming perspective

- Biggest frustration is the number of policies coming down from government now. The zero-carbon bill, the essential freshwater, the billion trees program (the impacts on economics aren't
- "Farmers don't go out and think, oh today I'm going to think about my emissions, tomorrow my cows"
- Farmers do want to be a part of the solution. They haven't been involved in any of the groups advising the minister around these issues. That's a huge concern for FF
- National std oversight long standing regional planning processes that have been developed together with the community
- Likelihood of blanket regulations which do not allow for planning
- Expensive planning reporting and mitigating actions required which may not address the environmental concerns

What do Federated Farmers Propose?

- Local planning processes
- Develop action plan with communities that identifies and focuses on the relevant contaminants and actions
- Adoption of industry agree good management practice - want it to form the framework agreement for going forward
- Recognition of current investment in land infrastructure and fair time to transition where change is needed.
- The rate of change is what is upsetting farmers now
- Up to date and effective monitoring. We don't know enough around aquifers in our country

### **Geoff Simmons, Leader the Opportunities Party, Former CE, My River**

**Programme** If we don't have scarcity you soon will. Scarcity is either here, or it is coming. It is way cheaper to keep the good water we have than restore the ones that are already damaged. Don't delay in allocating the rights. Act early.

Quota management system - generally successful. Better than 1986. We closed access. We allocated rights, which created a price for access, and the fishermen had vested interest in maintaining. When existing water takes expire, review the take limit. Water takes are being looked at catchment by catchment. Should not be done

from a central government level. Intensification of dairy has an effect in terms of nitrates in the water.

There is a Maori saying; Kei te ora te wai, kei te ora te tangata – when the river is well, the people are well."

### **Out of the Shadows - Puta i te Atarangi, on Waipa District Council and Hamilton City Council. Natalie Palmer.**

- Out of the shadows, & a pretty simple guide to COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- CAPTURE THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY AND TO HELP DECISION MAKERS TO USE THESE INSIGHTS

Our strategy was to link past and present. Capturing our land wards heritage. It guided our whole 10 year plan.

- ensure all elected members are aware of Waipa history
- In an environment where all people's stories were herded
- A platform for iwi to share their stories
- The TOP 10 Principles of engagement:
- Engagement is before, consultation is after draft
- 1. Be Adventurous! People don't buy what we do they buy WHY we do it!
- Explain. Roading example - explaining the WHY on a road closure or delays is more acceptable to people
- Tours with staff host and iwi so both versions of story can be shared
- Discover Waipa Website
- Tour was successful because it bought the story to life
- 2. THINK BIG Have a clear vision.
- 3. BE BOLD personalisation and creativity and relevance to make it as fun and engaging as possible. Understand your community think innovatively and understand there's more than one way. Put people at front of mind at all times. Traditional methods are still expected. Radio and newspaper. And still step up and embrace technology. They interact with us online, and the perception that council is available 24 hours. Google analytics help us with intel on who is using our site. If we really want to be truly accessible, we need to seamlessly blend our online and offline tools. One of the key tactics we used were Virtual reality goggles providing birds eye view of our precious Maunga. Useful for training and marketing. Doesn't have to cost a lot. Used VR gear Hamilton
- 4. GO TO THE PEOPLE People care and are passionate about what goes on in their community. NIMBY comes up a lot. Frustrated when something happens near them and they don't understand the why. Libraries, outside shops, events, schools at 3pm at the gate for parents and guardians and students. People are busy so we went to them. We made it easy.
- 5. BE GENUINE Breaking news vs Faking news. People quickly pick up when words lack authenticity. Engaging compelling, creative and dynamic. If effective it also needs to be listening, admitting and explains. Honesty and being real. Plan in place. Authenticity builds trust. Listening to the needs of people. Were one of the five top areas viewed least positively.
- Local Government Act reminders. Compare a chat with your close friend compared to the way council invite having your say.
- 6. BE INCLUSIVE Stop the jargon! Plain English is key. Does your council have a plain English guide? Check on the number of acronyms that are used. Youth engagement - the LG wellbeing's focus on current and future ratepayers. We challenged youth to get involved. Young people add a refreshing take on life. They don't see barriers.

- 7. LET IT GO - when we treat our communities as partners we end up with much more effective results. This requires us to be uncomfortable and let it go. Letting go is a risk, but it can be managed.
- 8. TIE THE BOW - report back in the community engagement process. Letting interest parties know what has happened with the feedback. If someone has taken time to give feedback the very least, we can do is let them know what's happened.
- 9. KEEP IT GOING
- 10. BE BRAVE step up give it a go, let yourself be brave!

**Creating Change: Inspiring leadership in local communities; Te kawē ke i te ini o te waka: Te whakahihi i te manawa o nga kaihautu i nga hapori a-takiwa  
Colin D Ellis**

71% of Millennials don't trust politicians. Tips to ponder: When you're the worst of you, you bring out the worst of you! Real change requires you to do things differently! Celebrate the good stuff, but there is room for change.

Those that have high emotional intelligence:

1. Know what you are good at and what you are not

Emotional intelligence is about knowing who you are. What you're good at and what you're not.

2. Admit to mistakes and learn from them

3. Can control their emotions regardless of the situation

4. Are great listeners - undivided attention. Strategy for recalling what you've heard.

Public meetings - They aren't looking for an answer, they just want you to listen!

5. They facilitate Effective conversations - they do not happen on email. You must listen, take on what they say. Politely disagree without getting angry. Provide feedback. Doesn't come naturally to everybody. But you can learn it. It's our job to have effective conversations so we go to be great at it.

6. They understand the emotions of other people. To feel what another person is feeling. To get to know someone so well, you can potentially feel the way they feel.

As an elected member you think of it from the persons or public's point of view.

Takes you stepping outside of yourself. Know your personalities around the table.

Action orientated, people person, extrovert, introvert. You need to know, so that you can work with the people.

I thank you very much for the opportunity to attend the LGNZ 2019 Conference. For me, this conference highlighted some of what we already do, but it's mainly through our community board members that it happens. We are very privileged to have community boards and as a council we need to review how we interact with boards and their members. What we delegate – and how they are supported.

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