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**REPORT 5**  
(1215/52/IM)

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW ZEALAND CONFERENCE 2011 – REPORT BACK**

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### **1. Purpose of report**

This paper is a report back on the Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) Conference 2011, attended by the Mayor and Councillors Jo Coughlan, Andy Foster and Paul Eagle.

### **2. Executive Summary**

The Mayor and Councillors Coughlan, Foster and Eagle attended the LGNZ Conference in Wellington in July 2011.

The theme of the conference was *Future Focus* and a range of related topics were covered including building intelligent communities, the role of peak oil in green growth, spatial planning and what cities need to consider for growth, digital strategies and the ultra-fast broadband project, and how to lead for the future.

The Prime Minister and Mayor Wade-Brown opened the conference, which was also addressed by the leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Local Government.

### **3. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*

### **4. Background**

Through a combination of key note addresses and workshop sessions, the conference explored a number of topics relating to the role of local government with a future focus, particularly on the role of local government in economic development. Not surprisingly, given the significant amalgamation of local government that took place in Auckland, and the tragic earthquakes that struck Christchurch, much of the discussion had a particular focus on what is happening in those two cities.

## 5. Discussion

**The Prime Minister, the Right Hon. John Key**, opened the conference and addressed specific issues that New Zealand, and the local government sector, has faced over the last twelve months – the tragedies of Pike River and the Christchurch Earthquake, and the creation of the Super City in Auckland with the amalgamation of the existing territorial authorities. He also emphasised the key role that local government played in underpinning economic success and his desire for a genuine partnership between central and local government. In particular he stressed that the Government was keen to hear ideas from local authorities on more efficient and effective operations, and that changes in the sector should be community-led, not central government-led. Communities had different needs and a one-size-fits-all wasn't the way to go.

**Mayor Wade-Brown** welcomed the delegates to Wellington – a city of paradox as one of the world's youngest and smallest capitals, but with ambitions to be a world-leading city - in arts, in digital creative developments, as a fair trade city, and a peace city that led the nuclear-free status of our country almost 30 years ago.

She spoke of a city economy increasingly diversified - with financial traders, global accountants, artists, fashion designers, software engineers, film effects gurus, actors, sound engineers, professors, architects and consultants, technical draughts people and project managers - all increasingly pivotal to the success of the city's economy. Wellington's and indeed New Zealand's market must grow overseas if we are to be able to trade in computers and coffee, attract talent and make genuine progress addressing social exclusion and environmental imperatives - and make our mark internationally. While GDP is only part of economic prosperity – and standards of living, happiness and genuine progress are all far wider, it's still instructive to note that tourism jobs earn on average about a third of the value of a knowledge worker in a Lambton Quay office. We could multiply digital exports by orders of magnitude with minimal environmental impact whereas doubling dairy or trebling tourism or quadrupling lignite exports come with significant issues to manage. The Mayor went on to outline work that was being developed on *Wellington 2040: Smart Capital* – the city vision to achieve the success and balance to which Wellington aspires.

### ***Summary of other Presentations***

#### **5.1 Building Intelligent Communities**

*Brett O'Reilly- CEO NZ Information Communications Technology Group  
Deputy CE Business Innovation & Investment, Ministry of Science & Innovation*

NZICT is comprised of over 300 companies; members employ approximately 10,000 people in New Zealand and generates annual revenue of \$4 billion. ICT is continuing to grow and NZICT's priorities are to stimulate social and economic change through broadband connectivity, maximize ICT training and education opportunities, support government productivity, build a sustainable ICT industry and empower our local communities in a digital world. An intelligent community is one that values broadband connectivity, knowledgeable workforce, digital inclusion, innovation, and marketing and advocacy to further our ICT capability.

## **5.2 Growing a Green Future**

*Melissa Clark-Reynolds – Minimonos*

When crisis occurs, we have to step back and examine what we can do to make the future better. NZ needs to be economically sound to provide stability, higher incomes, a richer life and a better quality of life. We have to learn to live within the limits of our finite earth and manage our resources carefully and responsibly. We have to look at a new way of living to achieve energy and food source security, deal with the effects of climate change and globalization. We need to try to do this through urban farms, public transport and building strong communities – any entity that only takes out of the system will ultimately fail.

## **5.3 Future Cities Lighting up the World**

*Harry Verhaar – Philips Lighting,*

Many cities and urban developments are using lighting to increase comfort, safety and security – making areas more attractive, which in turn enhances our sense of wellbeing. We are moving away from a linear mode of living to a circular one – ie being a society that works toward recycling and efficient use of resources, which will be increasingly important with more people living in cities and urban areas, almost seventy per-cent by 2050. Almost twenty per-cent of global electricity usage is spent on lighting. We are phasing out incandescent lighting, moving toward energy efficient lighting and controls, including solar options. LumiMotion (motion sensor lighting) is a product that will help make cities footpaths and streets safer. Lighting can also create vibrancy, effect and help brand a city and its buildings and landmarks.

## **5.4 The Auckland Spatial Plan**

*Roger Blakeley – Chief Planning Officer, Auckland City Council –*

There are four key objectives for the plan – improving the quality of life, socio-economic wellbeing, managing the environment responsibly and having a land use plan that is in the public interest. The Mayor's vision is to create the world's most liveable city: one that is inclusive, prudent, courageous, fair and innovative. Auckland looks to do this by putting children and young people first and reducing inequalities and connecting communities. Additionally, Auckland

seeks to be a business friendly and well-functioning city, grow skills, education and learning, particularly with youth, and create a vibrant, creative world city. Auckland wants to be internationally connected, support a diverse ethnic economy, and facilitate iwi/Maori economy. With the increase in population, the plan is to accommodate one million extra people, creating a quality compact city with greenfields, satellite towns, urban regeneration, suburban intensification and quality centres and corridors. This will be achieved in partnership with developers, the private sector and government, and through financial incentives for quality development and establishing and monitoring credible targets for growth. The primary challenges that need to be addressed are: a disconnected waterfront, car dominated city, an incomplete pedestrian network, lack of open space network, a high city and central city separated from other areas.

The plan was consulted upon in September and October 2011 and will be considered for final approval in early 2012.

## **5.5 Spatial Planning for Greater Christchurch: When will the shaking stop?**

*Simon Markham*

Following the earthquakes, there is a need to provide a progress report on developing an Urban Design Strategy – to consider spatial planning challenges as well as the opportunities presented. The plan seeks to provide for reasonably foreseeable growth, a wide variety of housing choices and better urban design. It also seeks to alter recent growth pattern toward more intensification, to contain urban spread, and to promote integrated land use and transport planning to enable reduced travel/other modes. It argues to make best use of existing zoned land and assets before new investment, and to promote key centres and local job self-sufficiency.

## **5.6 Maori Economy, realising potential**

*Dr Ganesh Nana – Chief Economist, Berl*

The report takes a look at the size of the Maori economy and the potential opportunities, challenges and issues in the New Zealand context. It will require more than just investment, there will need to be communication and behaviour changes to form genuine relationships, collaboration and leadership. The need to develop long-term skills and capabilities of Maori workforce are critical, as is the need to commit to a long-term focus.

## **5.7 Shaping Our Future – Maori and New Zealand potential**

*Dickie Farrar –Opotiki Council*

We need to value our relationships and develop trust, work in partnership and look to the future – sharing our stories, understanding world views and make innovative decisions. There is a need to recognise Maori potential – it has long

been underestimated. Maori need to plan with a long-term and intergenerational horizon, and with a sense of entrepreneurship that is long-standing – the Maori asset base is \$36.9 billion.

## **5.8 The Legacy of Events**

*Peter Cox – SPARC*

The report takes a look at New Zealand hosting major sport and recreational events and which events are likely to provide the most benefit – socially, economically and culturally. New Zealand has a high participation rate in sport and values sport and recreation. We should look at events that showcase our strengths- our landscape, volunteers, partnerships, innovation, committed delivery and track record. We should look to design more events that are recurring and NZ-owned world class events.

## **5.9 Ultra Fast Broadband**

*Graham Mitchell – Crown Fibre Holdings,*

This report speaks about broadband progress to date - contracts agreed and the roll-outs that are underway. It discusses the products available and the fact that demand for UFB is emerging. In the business market UFB offers symmetric services at much lower than current market prices and will enable: cloud computing, improved WAN management, (particularly WAN tails in smaller towns), back-up/disaster recovery, IP telephony/unified communications, remote working etc. There is a need for much wider access for Councils, businesses, health providers etc.

## **5.10 Hamilton Digital Strategy: Focus on Business Engagement**

*Cheryl Reynolds – SODA Inc CEO*

The four pillars of Hamilton's Digital strategy are: cohesion, awareness, innovation and infrastructure. Soda Inc is a joint venture between Wintec and Hamilton City Council working together to develop Hamilton as a vibrant, entrepreneurial city. They will focus on business engagement through forums, international cluster models, young digital entrepreneurial programmes and smart cities and UFB.

## **5.11 Dunedin Digital Strategy – Imagine our City**

*Mayor Dave Cull and Deputy Mayor Chris Staynes*

This report takes a look at Dunedin's digital strategy, its goals and projects, how it will make a difference to the community, businesses and visitors, how it is being implemented and the concept and role of the digital office and their plans to go regional.

The Council has a steering team, has undertaken public consultation and has engaged a consultant to prepare the strategy. The strategy developed across four themes: digitally connected city, digitally confident city, digitally enabled city and digitally capable city. A Digital Office is being established to implement the strategy; operating at 'arms length', but with partial funding from the Council. They also have support from local businesses and communities. The strategy seeks to deliver social, economic and financial benefits to the city, ensuring a digital infrastructure that will meet their needs and help build the skills and confidence to use it effectively.

## **5.12 Local Population Trends: Using and Understanding Population Statistics**

*Kim Dunstan – Statistics NZ Demographer*

This report takes a look at what we mean by population and how can we make the best use of the statistics – for example local government uses statistics for transport planning, electoral boundaries, allocating resources, targeting service provision, answering enquires from community groups, general public and politicians and meeting requirements of LTCP and community outcomes. One key feature that emerges from recent population statistics is the relative mobility of the NZ population.

## **5.13 Changing Futures for Local Government: the new normal for Auckland and Christchurch**

*Jonathan Salter and Pdraig McNamara - Simpson Grierson*

Following the Christchurch earthquakes, there is a need to re-examine the relationship between local and central government. When central government intervenes in local government affairs, there needs to be an overall framework, clear rationale and a look toward realistic outcomes. Auckland is now Australasia's largest local government entity with: a two-tiered governance structure, enhanced Mayoral powers, Maori statutory board, spatial plan and substantial CCO's. Auckland is NZ's city of scale - how will we measure the success of other Councils against Auckland?

## **6. Conclusion**

This report details the attendance of the Mayor and Councillors Coughlan, Foster and Eagle at the 2011 LGNZ Conference held in Wellington in July. A synopsis of the various presentations is provided in this report.

Contact Authors: *Mayor Wade-Brown and Councillors Coughlan, Foster and Eagle*

## Supporting Information

### **1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome**

*Attendance at the Conference supported the development of Council's strategic planning for Wellington 2040: Smart Capital as well as demonstrated Council's commitment to work in collaboration with other local authorities throughout the region and country.*

### **2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact**

*No impact*

### **3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations**

*No Treaty implications*

### **4) Decision-Making**

*This is not a significant decision.*

### **5) Consultation**

#### **a) General Consultation**

*None Required.*

#### **b) Consultation with Maori**

*None Required.*

### **6) Legal Implications**

*No Legal Implications*

### **7) Consistency with existing policy**

*The report reflects on attendance at the LGNZ Conference, in line with the report-back policy of Council.*