



Better together:

A framework for councils
and community boards

Foreword

Kia ora koutou

Drawing on the full potential of our communities has never been more important. Community boards are a powerful expression of local self-determination and play a vital role in building connected, responsive and resilient places.

This relationship framework represents more than just a set of guidelines. It is an invitation to reset and strengthen the relationship between councils and community boards. That means having honest conversations about trust, responsibility and opportunity. We need to recognise that councils and boards are stronger when they are aligned in purpose and when they are clear about how to work together for the people they serve.

We acknowledge that not every community has a community board – and where they do, community boards look and feel unique to their local setting as they bring local knowledge, local relationships, and a deep understanding of the lived realities of whānau, businesses and communities at place. When properly enabled and resourced, community boards bring decision-making closer to the people most affected. This supports richer discussions and stronger civic engagement.

This framework outlines three models of council-board relationships: voice + advice, voice + delivery, and voice + leadership. Each offers a different depth of engagement and responsibility, allowing councils and boards to choose the model that best fits their context and aspirations. The accompanying Accord templates support these models with clarity and structure, ensuring expectations are shared and agreed.

Good relationships don't just happen. They require investment of time, energy and care. That's why this framework emphasises whakawhanaungatanga – taking the time to build and maintain relationships of trust and understanding. It encourages joint professional development, shared access to tools and resources, and a clear kaupapa for collaboration.

This framework is written to elevate the role of community boards where they exist and to advocate for good implementation as they are set up. Place-making is not just the domain of planners or policy-makers but the work of every citizen, board member and councillor.

Ngā mihi nui,
Sarah Lucas, Chair of the Community Board Executive Committee
Mayor Sam Broughton, President of LGNZ

Community boards: localism in action

Community boards are where localism lives and breathes. They bring democracy closer to home and give communities a stronger voice in shaping their place.

Under the **Local Government Act 2002 (Section 52)**, the role of a community board includes:

- > Representing and advocating for the interests of their community
- > Considering and reporting on matters referred by council, and other issues the board identifies
- > Keeping an eye on council services delivered in the area
- > Making an annual submission to council on local priorities and expenditure
- > Connecting with local organisations, groups, and voices
- > Taking on any other responsibilities delegated by council

How these roles are understood and carried out can vary widely across Aotearoa. Some councils and boards operate as tight-knit teams; others ... not so much.

That's where this guide comes in.

CBEC and LGNZ believe there's real value in building stronger, more consistent relationships between councils and community boards. Not just for harmony's sake — but because better collaboration leads to better outcomes and efficiencies for our communities.

This resource offers a practical framework to support councils and boards in deciding **how they want to work together**. It includes relationship models, ideas for reflection, and conversation starters — all designed to bring the intent of the Act to life in a way that suits your local context.

It's not a rulebook. It's a **starting point** for conversations that matter.



Keen to kōrero more?

We'd love your feedback. Drop us a line at cbec@lgnz.co.nz and let us know what resonates — or what could be even better.

Introduction



**“Community boards are a
mechanism for local government
to ensure that communities are
involved in decisions.”**

— FrankAdvice, February 2024

This **Community Board and Council Relationship Guide** is part of a wider conversation sparked by the **FrankAdvice report**, commissioned by the **Community Board Executive Committee (CBEC)** and **Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ)** in 2023.

The goal?

To find better, smarter ways to support the mahi of community boards across Aotearoa — and to strengthen the relationships that help them thrive.



How we got here >



In late 2023, FrankAdvice surveyed **community board members and mayors** across the country. A follow-up workshop in early 2024 helped test and deepen what came through in the survey.

Some key findings stood out:

- > **Community boards work best** when their *delegations and capabilities match the expectations of their communities*.
- > They're **less effective** when there's a mismatch — when they're either under-resourced, unclear, or both.

From that, FrankAdvice recommended:

- > Creating a programme to **encourage best practice** at the council level
- > Expanding **training and mentoring** to help boards grow capability
- > Advocating for **formalised agreements** between councils and boards to ensure clarity of purpose and mutual expectations

The remuneration link >



Alongside this work, the CBEC has been talking with The Remuneration Authority to explore ways to better reflect the range of responsibilities held by community board members — which vary significantly across the country.

They're interested in whether a tiered delegation framework might help shape a fairer, more transparent approach to setting remuneration levels.

What this framework aims to do >

CBEC and LGNZ teamed up to create this discussion document with two key goals in mind:

01

A guide to best practice council–community board relationships

Introducing the idea of **Relationship Accords** — simple, practical agreements that define how councils and community boards will work together in good faith.

02

A set of models (voice + advice + delivery + leadership)

Offering **three scalable models** that apply the Relationship Accord principles in different ways, depending on how each council and community board interprets the legislative responsibilities in their local context.

Importantly, these two pieces are designed to work together.

It is best to choose and apply a model before agreeing on the Accord — the shared understanding that forms the foundation for the relationship. The model is simply the shape that grows from that foundation.

RELATIONSHIP ACCORD

(Defines how we work together)



**Choose a
model that fits**

Model 1/
Voice + advice

Model 2/
Voice + advice + delivery

Model 3/
Voice + advice + delivery
+ leadership



Delivers clear expectations,
aligned responsibilities, and
better outcomes







Part one:

Best practice guide:
building strong
council–community
board relationships

Community boards and councils are two arms of local democracy — and when they're working well together, communities thrive.

This **best practice guide** is designed as a springboard for effective relationships. It's a living tool — something councils and community boards can shape together to reflect their shared purpose, local character, and the needs of their people.

A strong relationship is built on:

-  Mutual respect
-  Clarity of roles and responsibilities
-  Shared intent to add value to local decision-making
-  Timely and meaningful two-way communication

At the heart of this guide is the idea of a **Council–Community Board Accord** — a relationship agreement that's drafted together early in the triennium, and forms the foundation for how both parties will work together.

We recommend:

- > Drafting the Accord within three months of local body elections
- > Finalising it within the following three months





Clarity:

speak the same language

Even when we think we're on the same page, words can mean different things to different people. That's why clarity is key.

Before diving into decisions or plans, it's important that councils and community boards **agree on the meaning of commonly used terms** — especially those that appear in legislation or come up often in day-to-day mahi.

This can be one of the first activities during induction — a shared kōrero about language, meaning, and expectations.

Why it matters:

Shared definitions help avoid misunderstandings, reduce assumptions, and create a solid foundation for collaboration.

Recommended words to define together:

- > Represent/representing
- > Advocate/advocacy
- > Local community/communities of interest
- > Submission
- > Communicate/engage/consult
- > Delegations/responsibilities
- > Appointment to ... /liaison to ...
- > Meeting/hui/workshop/training
- > Administrative facilities

A set of **starter definitions** can be included in the Accord template, but each council–community board pair should tweak these to reflect local context and preferences.



Induction:

starting strong, together

The best time to set the tone for a great working relationship? Right at the start.

Induction is more than just reading the rules — it's a chance for councils and community boards to **get to know each other, build understanding, and lay the groundwork for trust.**

Joint induction is best practice

Where possible, community board members should be inducted alongside councillors. This helps reinforce the shared goals of both groups and creates space for early dialogue — including drafting the Council–Community Board Accord.

Know your people

As part of induction, councils are encouraged to run a simple **skills, interests, and community connections survey** for community board members.

Why? Because these insights can:

- > Highlight untapped talents
- > Inform appointments to council committees
- > Help spot gaps or opportunities for local engagement
- > Support deeper, more relevant community representation



Tip: This survey doesn't need to be fancy — just practical. A few good questions can go a long way.



Roles and responsibilities: who does what (and why it matters)

A good relationship works best when everyone knows their role — and respects each other's part in the bigger picture.

While legislation offers a starting point, **it's not enough to assume roles are understood just because they're written down.** Every council–community board partnership should take the time to unpack what these roles look like in practice.

Council + community board: complementary, not competing

- > The **council** makes the formal decisions, as prescribed under the Local Government Act.
- > The **community board** informs those decisions through advocacy, local insight, and direct connection with communities.

Within the community board:

It's also important to talk about **internal roles** — beyond just electing a chair and deputy. For example:

- > Will members be **spokespersons** for specific issues?
- > Will there be **liaison roles** with local schools, clubs, marae, or interest groups?
- > Who represents the board when engaging with iwi, youth councils, or other networks?

Within the council organisation:

Clarity is also needed about the roles of:

- > Chief executive and general managers
- > Democracy/governance services team
- > Iwi or community board liaison staff
- > Any council staff working directly with or supporting community boards

These roles should all be captured in the **Accord** — so there's no confusion about who to go to, what's expected, and how collaboration flows.

Why it matters:

When roles are clear and well understood, things run smoother, relationships strengthen, and decisions are better informed.



Input to council decision-making: getting the right voices at the table

For councils to make decisions that truly reflect their communities, **community boards need clear pathways to provide meaningful input** — not as an afterthought, but as part of the process.

Speaking rights at the table

As a baseline best practice, **community board chairs should be granted speaking rights** at council meetings, committees, and subcommittees (under Standing Orders).

- > These rights help elevate community voices into the council's formal decision-making processes.
- > The board chair can choose to delegate these speaking rights to another board member when appropriate.

Voting rights? Depends on the model

Some councils may choose to give **voting rights** to community board members on certain committees, depending on the model they adopt (see Item Two of this document).

Timing matters

To ensure boards can engage with their communities before feeding into council decisions:

- > Reports relevant to a community board area should be provided to the board **at least six weeks** ahead of the council meeting where a decision will be made.
- > Community board meetings should be **scheduled at least three weeks prior** to the relevant council meetings.

This lead time gives boards a chance to:

- > Engage meaningfully with their communities
- > Develop well-informed positions
- > Provide clear, collective input back to the council



It's not just consultation — it's collaboration.

This isn't about ticking a box. It's about ensuring community voices are present, valued, and actioned in a timely way.



Delegations:

clarity, confidence and capability

At the heart of every strong council–community board relationship is **clarity around who does what.**

Delegations aren't just a bureaucratic necessity — they're **an expression of trust and empowerment.** The more clearly responsibilities are outlined, the more confidently everyone can get on with the job.

Set it out clearly in writing

Delegations should be:

- > **Formally agreed** between council and each community board
- > **Clearly expressed**, with specific responsibilities, authorities and limitation
- > **Tailored** to the model your council chooses to adopt (see Item Two of this document)

What might be delegated?

This will vary, but examples include:

- > Local facilities and services (e.g. halls, playgrounds, local roads)
- > Community engagement or events
- > Discretionary funds or grants
- > Input into annual and long-term plans

Delegations can grow

Delegations don't have to be static. They can grow over time as trust builds and as boards demonstrate capability. Think of them as a framework for **growing local decision-making.**

Transparency builds trust

Clear, well-communicated delegations help avoid confusion, reduce duplicated effort, and set realistic expectations — for both councils and the communities they serve.



Agenda setting:

shared ownership, better meetings

A well-planned agenda doesn't just make for a tidy meeting — it sets the tone for **genuine collaboration** and ensures everyone's time is respected.

Shared responsibility = shared direction

Agendas should reflect both council priorities and local community concerns. That means **councils and boards co-own the process.**

For community board meetings:

- > The agenda is developed collaboratively between the **community board chair (or deputy chair)** and the **chief executive (or their delegate)**
- > Ideally, this happens **at least two weeks before** the agenda is publicly notified
- > Items provided by council for community board meetings should be approved via this process
- > Board members should be kept in the loop throughout the meeting cycle

For council meetings:

- > Items from community boards that are intended for the **council agenda** should be submitted through the chair to the chief executive (or their delegate)
- > This ensures the community board voice is present at the table — and heard

For joint community board meetings:

- > Agendas should be agreed between all participating community board chairs and the CE
- > These meetings offer a great opportunity for regional collaboration or shared advocacy

A little admin goes a long way

When everyone knows the process — and that their input matters — you build a culture of respect and readiness. That's when the real magic starts to happen.



Community and board plans: the bridge between vision and action

Community boards don't just *represent* their areas — they actively shape the future through **localised plans** that reflect their people, places, and priorities.

These plans are gold. But they only create value if they're **taken seriously** in council decision-making.

What needs to happen?

- > **Agreement up front:** Councils and community boards should agree on *how* community or board plans will feed into the **Annual Plan** and **Long-Term Plan** processes
- > This agreement should be **written into the Accord** and embedded in planning cycles — not left to chance or personality

Why it matters

When community board plans are aligned with council strategy, it strengthens the whole system.

- 💡 It builds trust.
- 💡 It avoids duplication.
- 💡 It shows communities that their voices actually make a difference.

Without that alignment, community input can fall through the cracks. This guide is here to help seal those gaps — and build something stronger.



Operating models: the how behind the what

Every council is different. Every community board is different. That's a strength — but it also means **having a clear operating model** is essential.

An operating model is simply:

“How we agree to work together so we can get things done.”

This isn't about turning boards into mini-councils. It's about creating practical, agreed processes that **support good local decision-making**.

What should the operating model cover?

Here are some key elements to agree on (a simple template can help!):

- > **Meeting frequency and location**
- > Whether the community board uses the **council's Code of Conduct** or has its own
- > When and how **Standing Orders** apply — for example, formal decisions vs general discussion
- > Council reports to community boards should include a **one-page cover summary**: what's it about, and what's needed from the board
- > Which elected members and staff are expected to **attend community board meetings**
- > A clear process for **questions and clarifications** from community boards to staff (e.g. via the chair, in advance of meetings)
- > If council staff are presenting to a community board, they should send a quick brief beforehand — even a couple of bullet points helps:
 - / What's the topic?
 - / What are they asking of the board?
- > **Community board communication and engagement plan**: What does the board want to achieve locally, and how will the council support that?

Built for real life

The best operating models are flexible enough to fit the flavour of each board, while structured enough to keep everyone clear and aligned. This makes space for innovation, local responsiveness — and fewer headaches for everyone.



Whakawhanaungatanga

strengthening the relationship

At the heart of every great working relationship is... a relationship.

Whakawhanaungatanga is about building that connection — through shared time, open kōrero, and mutual understanding.

Councils and community boards function best when there's trust and a sense of partnership. That doesn't just happen at the formal table — it grows in the spaces where people connect, share ideas, and get to know each other's perspectives.

So here's what we propose:

- > At least **two hui per year** between:
 - / Community board members
 - / Council elected members
 - / Chief executive and senior leadership
- > These hui are informal, collaborative spaces — designed to strengthen relationships and allow open discussion on shared challenges and opportunities.
- > Up to **two additional hui per year** just for **all community boards within a district or city**, focused on their own priorities or shared concerns. Inviting relevant council staff should also be considered, including leadership and lead roles, to build a team ethos. Community board members could also be invited to council waiata practice sessions.

These are not decision-making meetings. They're a chance to ask questions, offer ideas, test thinking — and build the human connection that powers better governance.

Why this matters

When we make time to connect outside of the formal chamber, we create the conditions for everything else to run more smoothly. Trust. Respect. Common ground.

Whakawhanaungatanga turns “us and them” into “we.”



Growing the good

professional development for community board members

Strong community boards are made up of strong, confident and well-supported people.

Just like councillors and council staff, **community board members deserve training and development** that grows their skills, supports their leadership, and helps them bring the best of themselves to the table.

This isn't a "nice to have" — it's essential if we want boards that can genuinely represent their communities and contribute meaningfully to council decision-making.

What good looks like:

- > **At least one fully funded leadership training session** for all community board chairs and deputy chairs — beyond the standard post-election induction — to build capability in governance, advocacy, and relationship building.
- > **Tailored induction for community board chairs** at the start of each term, even for returning chairs. Every term brings new challenges, new councils, and new community priorities. Fresh induction = fresh momentum.
- > **Agreed access to paid training** for individual community board members, signed off between the Chair and chief executive (or delegate), so boards can build capability where it's needed most.
- > **All community board members to be offered training in Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM)** — from basic awareness to active response, as appropriate in each role.
- > Each council should also give thought to how they ensure board members are effectively steeped in **tikanga**, and whether workshops or training would help to build trusted lasting relationships with hapu and iwi.
- > Good also looks like having processes in place to identify under-performing board members — and being able to have good solid processes in place to work through any issues arising with trusted officers, chairs and members.

Why this matters:

Community board members come from all walks of life — that's their strength. But it also means people arrive with different levels of experience and confidence in governance spaces. Offering solid, respectful development shows we value their role and want them to succeed.



Tools of the trade

allowances and resources

You can't do a good job with no tools, no support and no snacks.




Community board members need the right **resources, access and practical support** to carry out their roles effectively and equitably. These aren't luxuries — they're part of recognising and resourcing the work.

What councils are already required to provide:

- > Reasonable expenses for community board members
- > Administrative facilities and advice

But “reasonable” can vary wildly — and sometimes community board members are expected to stretch their own resources just to show up and do the mahi.

Baseline expectations for allowances and resources:

-  **IT support** and council-managed email addresses
-  **Accessible venues** for board meetings
- \$ Travel reimbursement** that matches council elected member entitlements
- \$ Childcare costs reimbursed** (up to an agreed amount) to allow full participation
-  **Parking fees covered** for in-person meetings and hui
-  **Refreshments provided** at community board meetings and workshops
-  **Support staff access** for agenda coordination and follow-up

Why this matters:

If we expect community boards to contribute like pros, we need to support them like pros. Practical support enables wider participation — especially from working people, young parents, and others for whom time and money are real barriers.



Putting it into practice

Negotiating agreements between council and community boards

Constructive and well-functioning relationships require that the parties to that relationship understand each other's expectations and acknowledge their mutual obligations. To assist councils and community boards to articulate their expectations of one other, and agree mutual obligations, CBEC has developed a template for councils to use.

The matters included in the template are:

- > the community board role (based on the three models outlined in this Guide)
- > standards for collaboration
- > how communication between the council and board(s) will occur
- > responsibilities of the council and its staff
- > responsibilities of community boards
- > service levels for community board meetings
- > how community board members will be supported
- > professional development and training for community board members
- > conflict resolution and review process

When designing the process for formalising the relationship, and signing the accord, it is important that local circumstances are taken into account, so the process may vary from council to council.

While recognising local differences, a signing process could involve the following:

- > A joint workshop between the governing body (or their representatives) and members of the community board(s) (or their representatives) to brief members on the three community board models and the matters to be included within the Accord
- > A process through which officials, drawing on the outcomes of the joint workshop, prepare a draft Accord for consideration by members of the governing body and community board, potentially at their first meetings in the new year
- > A signing ceremony involving the board chair(s) and mayor/CEO

Where councils have multiple boards then all boards (or their representatives) should be involved in the process, together. In cases where at least some boards have unique needs, breakout sessions may be needed.

The template can be [downloaded here](#)

Part two:

The models >



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 community boards 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.

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 boards

Model 1: voice + advice

The foundation of strong local democracy. This model 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. They help the council 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.

MODEL ONE



voice +
advice

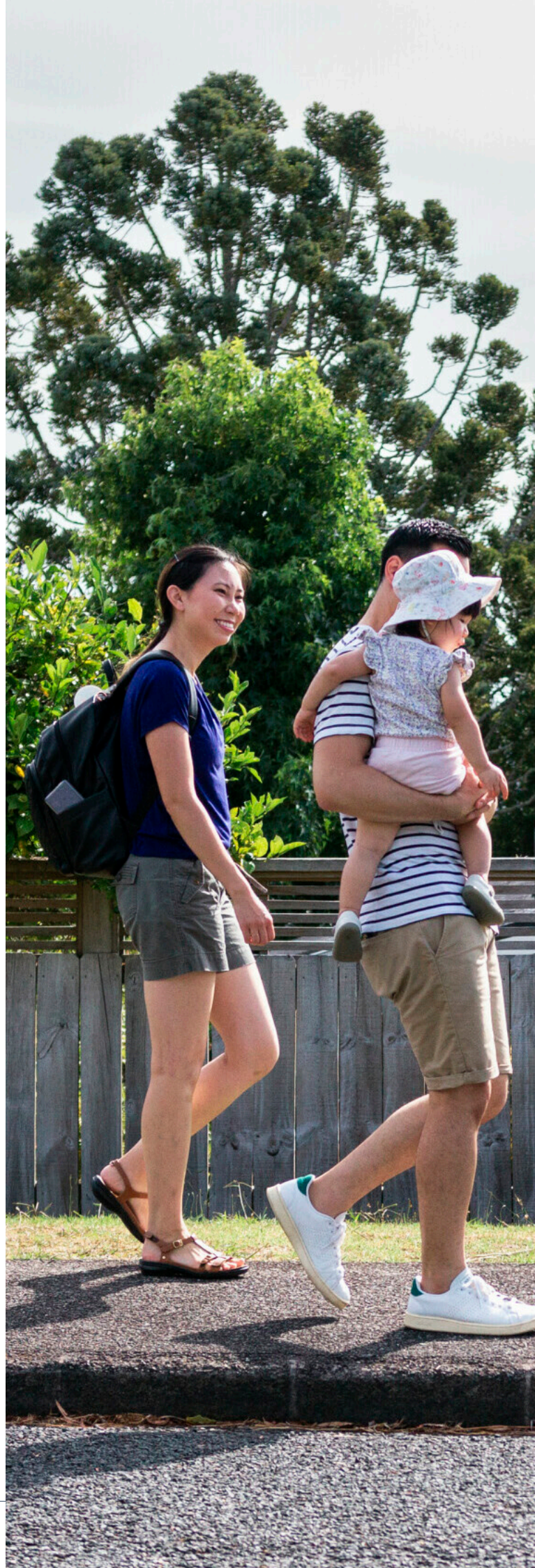


“ We’ve got the basics right

This model reflects the **core legislative role of community boards** as outlined in **section 52 of the Local Government Act 2002**. It serves as a foundation for how boards and councils can work together effectively — with a shared understanding of expectations, responsibilities and relationships.

Boards operating in this model are active and engaged in their statutory duties. Their value to the council is recognised through consistent processes for communication, reporting and collaboration.

This is the starting point for a good council/ community board relationship — where each side understands its role, trust is building, and there is room to grow.



Core functions in practice >



Representing and advocating for community interests

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL ACTIVELY:

- > Hear from their local community through informal kōrero, meetings, workshops or targeted outreach.
- > Represent their community's views at council and committee meetings via:
 - + Public forums
 - + Formal presentations
 - + Submissions or letters
 - + Supporting submitters to speak for themselves
- > Elevate community concerns and aspirations to inform council decision-making.



Considering and reporting on matters referred to the board — and raising matters of interest

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL ACTIVELY:

- > Consider and provide feedback to council reports on issues that impact their local area.
- > Provide reports to council on issues they've identified as important to their community.
- > Contribute local knowledge, context, and insights that shape better decisions at the council table.



Maintaining an overview of council services in the community

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL:

- > Stay informed about council activities and services in their area — via updates from council staff or reports.
- > Share this information with their community, helping to demystify what the council does.
- > Feed back to council about:
 - + Levels of community satisfaction
 - + Service gaps
 - + Community concerns or emerging trends
- > Are routinely notified of relevant resource consent activity in their community.



Making an annual submission to the council on expenditure

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL:

- > Prepare and submit feedback on:
 - + Long Term Plan (LTP)
 - + Annual Plan (AP)
 - + District Plan changes
 - + Strategies, policies, and bylaw changes
- > Speak on behalf of their local area during consultation, with input from residents and community groups.



Communicating with community organisations and special interest groups

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL:

- > Build and maintain relationships with local groups and networks.
- > Share relevant updates through newsletters, social media, local papers or hui.
- > Receive community feedback informally and pass it on to council, helping ensure community voices shape council thinking.



Carrying out other responsibilities delegated by the council

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL:

- > Have clear and well-documented delegations from council (if any).
- > Understand the boundaries of their authority and receive appropriate support from council staff to carry out their responsibilities effectively.



Key principle

This model is about getting the foundations right. Community Boards are doing the work they were created to do — consistently and clearly — with respectful, two-way support from the council. It's not just a box-ticking exercise: it's where real, local democracy starts to take root.





MODEL TWO



voice +
advice +
delivery

“ We’re in this together

Model 2 builds on the foundations of **Model 1**, strengthening the relationship between councils and community boards by adding shared delivery responsibilities and deeper community engagement.

Boards operating in this model do more than provide advice and advocacy — they **help drive the work**. They have influence over local delivery, take on extra delegated responsibilities, and are increasingly viewed as trusted local partners in decision-making.

This model suits councils and boards that have **built mutual trust**, see real value in collaboration, and are ready to work together on meaningful delivery for their communities.



Everything in Model 1, plus:



Representing and advocating with deeper insight

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL GO BEYOND SURFACE-LEVEL FEEDBACK BY:

- > Gathering evidence to support their advocacy — through independent surveys, community workshops, or collation of submissions.
- > Making formal submissions on behalf of their communities to any relevant organisation — not just council.
- > Contributing to decisions about the allocation of funding to community groups operating within their area.

This ensures that their voice is **credible, community-informed and timely**.



Actively monitoring local service delivery

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL TAKE A **HANDS-ON ROLE** IN MONITORING COUNCIL SERVICES IN THEIR COMMUNITY. THIS INCLUDES:

- > Receiving regular reports on service delivery performance.
- > Providing **formal and structured feedback** to the council on what's working well and what needs attention — through agreed channels and timelines.

They help close the loop between council delivery and community experience.



Leading formal community connection roles

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL SERVE AS **OFFICIAL COMMUNITY CONDUITS**. THEIR MEMBERS MAY:

- > Be formally appointed as representatives to local community groups, attending AGMs and providing regular liaison.
- > Lead or support public information sessions hosted in their local area — ensuring messages from the council reach the community clearly and consistently.

Are routinely notified of relevant resource consent activity in their community.



Carrying out additional delegated responsibilities

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL HAVE WELL-DEFINED, **RESOURCED RESPONSIBILITIES**, WHICH MAY INCLUDE:

- > Developing a **Community Board Plan** each year — aligning with the council's LTP and setting a programme of delivery for local projects and services.
- > Allocating and managing **discretionary funds** for local priorities, either as a bulk fund or on a project-by-project basis.
- > Spending approved funds within specific budget areas (e.g. beautification, minor infrastructure, events).
- > Participating in **co-design** of community facilities with local input — ensuring new spaces reflect the needs and aspirations of those who use them.
- > Contributing advice to **Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM)** planning — with roles clearly documented in a written agreement.
- > Making formal decisions such as **approving street names**, based on staff recommendations.

Boards are supported to deliver these responsibilities with the right tools, support, and accountability structures.



Key principle

This model is about **shared delivery and deeper trust**. Community Boards aren't just telling council what the community thinks — they're actively shaping and delivering on that vision. They're known, respected, and relied on as a critical part of the system that helps local democracy thrive.



MODEL THREE



voice +
advice +
delivery +
leadership



“ Partners in leadership

Model 3 represents the most advanced level of collaboration between councils and community boards. It goes **beyond consultation and co-delivery** — into **true decision-sharing**.

Boards operating under this model are **formal decision-makers** in local matters. They help shape not only what gets delivered in their community, but how, when and by whom. Their work is strategic, place-based and embedded in council systems. Trust, resourcing and alignment are high.

This model is best suited to councils and community boards that have invested in **strong systems, mature relationships,** and a **shared commitment to empowering local voice and action.**



Everything in Model 2, plus:



Formal decision-making powers

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL AREN'T JUST HEARD — THEY **VOTE**. THEIR REPRESENTATIVES MAY:

- > Sit as full voting members on specific council committees or subcommittees.
- > Participate in formal decision-making forums with direct influence over outcomes that affect their area.

They are considered **peers and partners** in governance — helping ensure council decisions are grounded in local insight.



Strategic oversight of services and investment

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL TAKE AN **ACTIVE ROLE IN SHAPING SERVICES AND INVESTMENT** IN THEIR AREA. THIS MAY INCLUDE:

- > Providing input to investment and service delivery decisions, backed by insight from the community.
- > Guiding risk and resource deployment through local reporting and analysis.
- > Confirming the final design of community facilities (within council-approved budget constraints).

They help ensure that every dollar spent is **place-based, purposeful, and community-aligned**.



Deep, embedded community relationships

IN THIS MODEL, COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS ARE FORMALISED AND STRENGTHENED. BOARD MEMBERS:

- > Are appointed as official representatives to key community groups.
- > Are expected to attend all committee meetings and participate in activities run by those groups.

Boards serve as **deeply embedded connectors** between council systems and the diverse interests of their local area.



Broad, clearly delegated responsibilities

BOARDS IN THIS MODEL OPERATE WITH A **COMPREHENSIVE SUITE OF DELEGATED POWERS**, ENABLING THEM TO MAKE OR INFLUENCE A WIDE RANGE OF DECISIONS. THESE MAY INCLUDE:

- + Developing a **place-based future development plan** aligned with the council's long-term and strategic goals — shaped by local aspirations and priorities.
- + Determining **policy settings** for specific local matters (e.g. street naming, notable trees).
- + Approving **site selection and final design** for specified community facilities — with local input and within council policy.
- + Setting **budgets for service delivery** in their local area, within the funding envelope allocated by council.
- + Advising on or undertaking **procurement** of local contractors to deliver specified services, within council's procurement policies.
- + Exercising specific **regulatory powers** as agreed and documented.
- + Granting **leases or licences** on local reserves (in line with policy).
- + Approving **traffic control signs**.
- + Making **appointments to external bodies**.
- + Performing **Civil Defence and Emergency Management** duties as assigned through formal agreements with the council.

Boards in this model operate like **local governance units**, managing a distinct but integrated piece of the council's work programme.



Key principle

This model is about **power-sharing, responsibility, and mutual accountability**. Community Boards are not just contributors — they are local leaders. This model works best where the council and community board are committed to joint delivery and see local governance as a powerful tool to achieve better outcomes for everyone.



Why create an Accord?

Councils and community boards operate in different ways across Aotearoa New Zealand. While flexibility is good, *uncertainty* is not.

An Accord provides:

- + Clarity of expectations
- + A shared sense of purpose
- + A practical way to navigate tension or grey areas



Best practice: building a Relationship Accord



A Relationship Accord is not a legal contract — it’s a shared understanding.

It captures how councils and community boards agree to work together, based on mutual respect, clarity of roles, and community-centred outcomes.

Key principles for partnership

We recommend grounding your Accord in these shared values:

PRINCIPLE	What it means in practice
TRUST	Information flows freely, and both parties can rely on each other to follow through
RESPECT	Roles are understood and valued — not overlapped or dismissed
MANAAKITANGA	Meetings are welcoming, inclusive and community-first
CO-DESIGN	Major local issues are tackled together from the start
TRANSPARENCY	Decisions are explained, not hidden. Board voices are acknowledged and visible.

C@mmunity board model



Community
Boards' Executive
Committee



VOICE + **ADVICE**

The community board represents local interests, advocating on behalf of the community and providing meaningful advice to council.



VOICE + **DELIVERY**

In addition to advising, the community board has delegated responsibilities for service delivery, budget management, monitoring and engagement.



VOICE + **LEADERSHIP**

Decision-making and leadership are added, such as setting budgets, co-designing services, and developing future-focused plans.





**We connect, champion and
support local government.**