

Notice of Motion – Naming parameters for local board members

Submitted on Tuesday 10 October 2017

Attention: Eric Perry – Relationship Manager, Local Board Services

In accordance with Standing Order 3.11.1, I hereby give notice that I intend to move the following motion at the 19 October 2017 meeting of the Upper Harbour Local Board.

Recommendations:

That the Upper Harbour Local Board:

- a) express its deep concern over the recent decision of the Governing Body at its 28 September 2017 meeting to retain the term 'Councillor' solely for members of the governing body, and that members of local boards continue to be referred to as 'local board members' (resolution number GB/2017/122), which is counter to the preferences expressed by 18 of 21 local boards as part of the Governance Framework Review.
- b) restate its position resolved at its 17 August 2017 meeting that the term 'Local Councillor' is the preferred naming convention for local board members as articulated in resolution number UH/2017/121.
- c) strongly request the Governing Body rescind resolution number GB/2017/122 to take account and in recognition of the views of the majority of local boards that indicated a preference for the title of 'Councillor' be applied to local board members.
- d) require that, following the motion being rescinded, all elected members be called Councillor, with a prefix of Local or Ward/Regional, as appropriate.
- e) forward this Notice of Motion and subsequent resolutions to the Governing Body for its consideration at the 11 December 2017 meeting.
- f) forward this Notice of Motion and subsequent resolutions to all local boards for their consideration.

Background:

1. One of the issues identified as part of the recent Governance Framework Review ('the Review') undertaken by Auckland Council is overlap and public confusion about the respective roles of governing body and local board members. In order to try and resolve this confusion, the Review considered the naming conventions applied to members of both arms of governance.
2. The Review sought clarity from elected members to:
 - confirm and reinforce the existing naming conventions, i.e. retaining the reference 'local board member' for local board members and 'councillor' for governing body members; or
 - ensure a consistent approach in the naming conventions applied to all elected members, in that the title of either 'councillor' or 'member' be accorded to all elected members, with the use of the prefix 'local' or 'regional' to signify the focus of the particular role.

3. Consistency in naming convention would serve to reinforce and clarify the complementary and specific nature of the two roles, thus making it easier for staff and the public to understand the difference between the two spheres of decision-making at Auckland Council.
4. The titles currently in use at Auckland Council are conventions only, and are not formal legal titles that are required to be used under any statute, and nor are they legally protected in a way that restricts their use.
5. The governing body holds decision-making on naming conventions for elected members, as no decision-making responsibility on these matters have been allocated to local boards. This decision making falls under the catch-all 'All other non-regulatory activities of Auckland Council' that is allocated to the governing body. In making such a decision the governing body is **required** to consider the views of local boards under section 15(2)(c) of the Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009 (LGACA).
6. Eighteen local boards indicated a preference for the title of councillor, with fifteen of those proposing the use of 'local councillor'. The other three boards stated no preference. A key aspect of the use of the title Councillor is its meaning to the members of the community.
7. Following the consideration of feedback from local boards on this issue, there was division in the views of the political working party with members of the governing body preferring to retain status quo against the preferences of members of the local boards on the PWP which resulted in a split recommendation.
8. The governing body then, at its meeting on 28 September 2017, resolved to retain the existing naming conventions, despite the overwhelming feedback provided by local boards in a report and attachments to this item of the agenda.
9. At its meeting on 17 August 2017, the Upper Harbour Local Board provided a range of feedback on the recommendations put forward as part of the Review. In particular, the board resolved the following in relation to naming conventions for elected members resolution number UH/2017/121):

'That the Upper Harbour Local Board:

 - c) support use of the term 'local councillor' as the preferred naming convention for local board members, as our community does not currently understand the roles and responsibilities of the different arms of governance, and believes that it is the responsibility of the governing body to develop a naming convention that makes sense and provides clarity of their role to the community.'
10. It is understood from the report presented to the Governing Body on 28 September, that 18 of 21 local boards indicated a preference for the title of 'councillor' for local board members, with 15 of those boards preferring the convention 'local councillor.' Therefore, it is deeply concerning that the Governing Body chose to ignore the views and preferences of the vast majority of local boards by resolving to retain the existing naming conventions, despite the overwhelming feedback provided by local boards.
11. We feel that in not taking into consideration the preferences of a vast majority of local board members the Governing Body missed an opportunity to show their commitment to the spirit of the Shared Governance model on this issue.

12. This decision did not threaten the Governing Body's regional decision making delegation, and it would have provided the opportunity to acknowledge that Local Boards should have the right to determine what name best suited the role performed as indeed the Governing Body members have for their own role in resolving to be called Councillors.
13. This decision would have been acknowledgement that Local Boards should know best, what title our communities would relate to best, costs nothing to implement, but it was refused anyway to maintain a status quo where their own naming convention of Councillor was not set down by statute, but by convention by the Auckland Transition Authority
14. If the Governing Body is concerned with legislative correctness then there are no Councillors, just Governing Body Members, and Local Body members. The decision is inconsistent with legislation and unsympathetic to Shared Governance principles.
15. The lack of respect shown for the stated position of the overwhelming number of Local Board Members requesting to be called Councillor or Local Councillor was extremely disappointing during the debate. Valid concerns were dismissed as silly – this is not in keeping with the principles of mutual respect embedded in our Standing Orders.
16. All 169 of us were elected to Auckland Council to represent our Wards and Local Board Areas. In recognition of this fact and the shared governance model, we reiterate that our preference is to be called Local Councillors, in order to clarify our role to the people of Auckland who elected us to serve them in their best interests.

Signed:



LISA WHYTE
UPPER HARBOUR LOCAL BOARD
CHAIRPERSON



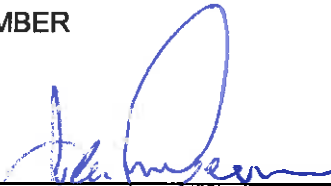
MARGARET MILES
UPPER HARBOUR LOCAL BOARD
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON



UZRA CASURI BALOUC
UPPER HARBOUR LOCAL BOARD
MEMBER



NICHOLAS MAYNE
UPPER HARBOUR LOCAL BOARD
MEMBER



JOHN MCLEAN
UPPER HARBOUR LOCAL BOARD
MEMBER



BRIAN NEESON
UPPER HARBOUR LOCAL BOARD
MEMBER