

Input to the Review of Citizens Advice Bureaux services

Resolution number WHK/2017/121

MOVED by Chairperson P Walden, seconded by Deputy Chairperson C Handley:
That the Waiheke Local Board:

- approve member J Meeuwsen to provide input on behalf of the Waiheke Local Board to the Review of Citizens Advice Bureaux services by 18 August 2017

CARRIED

Waiheke Local Board Feedback on the review of CAB Services

The board is concerned that the review is a budget cutting exercise and instead an increase is needed to sustain the current service. The local CAB serves many of our more vulnerable and Waiheke needs to retain this frontline service.

Current relationship

What is your relationship with your local CAB?

The Board has a positive relationship with the local CAB in a proactive role. They receive a six monthly/annual report.

Value of the service

What is the value of your local bureau service to your community?

The board see the present CAB system as very good and essential that it is retained. It is meeting a significant need that is not being met elsewhere and needs to be flexible enough to meet Waiheke's needs.

The local CAB is very busy particularly with older members of the community who have a wide range of needs. There is an absence of care facilities, social housing and affordable housing on Waiheke Island as well as a chronic shortage of permanent rentals. CAB is often the first port of call for those who have urgent unmet accommodation needs. Additionally, the CAB assists members of the community with a variety of issues including employment contracts (e.g. foreign workers/payments), employment advice (bullying, exploitation) and accommodation issues. These relate to the high level of seasonal work and the significant hospitality industry on Waiheke Island.

Equity and Fairness

The bureau is funded on a population basis what would you like to see in terms of responsiveness to social issues in your community and how the bureau is funded?

Waiheke is isolated from other Auckland CAB offices so can't amalgamate. With an ageing population (relative to the whole of Auckland) and a significantly lower average income (relative to the whole of Auckland) equity of provision needs to take those factors into account. Moreover, CAB on Waiheke Island serves to provide advice in a vacuum of services. On the Auckland isthmus there are a multitude of other social and health agencies (NGOs, churches, marae, and government services) that are available to provide advice and services, whilst Waiheke only has a very small number of agencies/services, so equitable provision needs to take that into account.

For these reasons CAB funding is needed on a by-site basis rather than by a strictly per capita basis as fair baseline funding is required to continue operations.

Auckland Citizen Advice Bureau ACABx

What is your understanding of ACABx role?

ACABx has explained its role to some members of the Local Board and it is clear that there is some central coordination, support, advocacy and reporting/policy/quality control role required.

Aspirations for the future

What would you change if you could?

Board members are not aware of any issues and welcome open dialogue if there are any. A greater understanding of the Council contract funding obligations would be useful.

The CAB report could have wider awareness from both board members and the community. The relationship with other community groups needs to be better understood.

Note: Waiheke hosts more than 1 million visitors per annum and there is a significant gap in the provision of visitor information in the main village, Oneroa. Because of the high profile central location of the local CAB it is frequently asked to provide this service to visitors informally. The local board would be keen to see a diversified funding model explored across Council to formalise the existing CAB to include a visitor service and therefore to support its viability going forward as CAB is an essential service.