



Waitakere Ethnic Board

***Tui tui – tuia nga herenga tangata
Bringing Cultures Together***

Draft

2010 – 2013

Strategic Plan

11 May 2011

Board Mission statement:

WEB is the connection to and the voice of the west's ethnic communities.

Introduction

The Waitakere Ethnic Board (WEB), a registered incorporated society, was established in September 2003 to provide a shared platform for advocacy on the needs of ethnic communities in the Waitakere area. WEB has signed a formal three year Community Partnering Agreement with Waitakere City Council that runs until 30 June 2012.

WEB has an Executive Committee of 15 people elected by the wider membership. The members of the Executive Committee elect office bearers from their midst.

Membership of WEB is open to ethnic individuals and organisations from the wider West Auckland area covered by the Waitakere and Whau Wards.

Council supports the operation of the Board through officer advice, providing meeting space and financial support towards meeting costs and administrative staffing.

1. Key Stakeholders

The WEB has identified a number of key stakeholders at both local and regional levels. It is critical that the WEB engages effectively with these stakeholders in order to meet shared objectives over time. These stakeholders include:

- Individuals, groups and organisations from diverse ethnic communities within Waitakere and Whau wards and the wider Auckland region that may or may not be current members of WEB, e.g. Waitakere Indian Association, New Lynn Chinese Association, NZ Korean Society
- Auckland Council i.e. councillors in the Waitakere and Whau Wards and Local Board members in the Waitakere Ranges, Henderson Massey and Whau Local Boards; members of the Ethnic Peoples Advisory Panel; local board and council staff
- Central government MPs and agencies e.g. Office of Ethnic Affairs, Department of Labour (Settlement Support), Ministry of Social Development (Settling In), Human Rights Commission (Race Relations Commission), Ministry of Health and District Health Boards (Asian Health Support Service of Waitemata DHB), NZ Police
- Regional bodies e.g. Auckland Regional Migrant Services, Auckland Regional Ethnic Council, English Language Partners NZ, Refugee Services Aotearoa New Zealand, Auckland Refugee Council, NZ Refugee Council, NZ Federation of Ethnic Councils
- Ethnic Service Providers e.g. NZ Ethnic Social Services, Shakti, Migrant Action Trust, Chinese New Settlers Services
- Media e.g. ethnic media, mainstream media
- Academic and Research Networks e.g. AUT, Unitec, Aotearoa Ethnic Network (AEN)

2. Context

Representation for increasing diversity in Auckland and the west

During the course of its development, WEB has witnessed increasing ethnic diversity, a demographic trend that is projected to continue, particularly in the Auckland region, where there are now over 180 different ethnic groups represented in the resident population. The West has been a traditional area of settlement for new migrants due to the availability of affordable housing relative to some parts of Auckland and this is likely to lead to growing numbers of residents of migrant or refugee backgrounds.

WEB has seen an increase in the number of individuals becoming members and a decline over time in organisational membership, compared to a lower proportion of individual members during the establishment phase of the WEB. The challenge and the opportunity for the WEB lie in successful engagement with a large number of ethnic communities so as to be able to effectively represent their interests to other stakeholders such as central and local government and service providers.

Changes in Auckland local authority structure

The local government environment has also shifted significantly since the WEB was established. The signing of a Community Partnering Agreement with Waitakere City Council, with associated allocation of rates funding on a three year basis has been confirmed for a further three years to 30 June 2012. However, changes to Auckland's governance led to the disestablishment of Waitakere City Council on 31 October 2010 and the establishment of a new Auckland Council to represent the whole Auckland region from 1 November 2010. As part of the governance changes, new Local Boards have been created and the WEB will need to establish an effective working relationship with the Henderson-Massey, Waitakere Ranges and Whau Local Boards. In addition, the Mayor has established an Auckland-wide Ethnic Peoples Advisory Panel to advise the Council on ethnic issues and policy as it affects ethnic communities of wider Auckland. The implications of changes to Auckland's local government for the WEB and ethnic communities in West Auckland will become more apparent as the governance changes are implemented.

Ongoing development of capacity of the Board

WEB is essentially a volunteer based community organisation that is largely dependent on the good will and commitment of members and friends to deliver on its vision, mission and objectives. This has been a significant barrier for the WEB maintaining institutional knowledge, administrative systems and forward momentum. The employment of an administrative employee and the establishment of clear processes will support the WEB in this area of organisational sustainability.

3. Challenges

- **Demonstration of the representative nature of WEB in relation to the ethnic groups in Waitakere/West Auckland:** As ethnic diversity increases, the WEB will need to be able to better engage with a growing number of groups and communities in order to represent them adequately. It will also need to be able to show how the Board gets its mandate from those communities and groups for its position on various issues.
- **Demonstration that it is operating as a viable, fully functional community organisation:** The changing Auckland governance context may place uncertainty around future funding from the Council beyond 2012. The WEB will need to be able to demonstrate value to the Council in terms of achieving shared objectives, particularly

engagement with and participation of ethnic communities in wider society and Council's specific consultation and wider democratic processes.

- **Straying from the core purpose.** The WEB is not a service provider as it has been established as a vehicle for advocacy. If the WEB moves into service delivery, it would be duplicating the work of existing service providers and shifting away from its mission - the WEB needs to ensure it does not move into direct service provision. The WEB Executive Committee and wider membership need to be clear about the core purpose of the WEB being a platform for lobbying and advocacy NOT service delivery.
- **Developing a strategic voice:** The WEB will need to be well informed on ethnic issues to be an effective advocate and will also need to build the capacity of ethnic communities to be effective advocates so that leadership continues to be exercised on matters of interest and importance to the ethnic communities of the West.
- **Retaining the confidence of the membership:** in order to effectively represent the interests of ethnic communities, the WEB will need to attract and retain membership from diverse communities and will need to be able to engage sufficiently with their membership so that it has the mandate to speak on their behalf. As the current balance of WEB's membership shifts away from organisational membership to individual membership, the WEB will need to re-engage with ethnic community organisations so that it can continue to be seen as the acknowledged vehicle for advocacy on diverse ethnic issues and interests.

4. Vision, mission and objectives

The vision of the Waitakere Ethnic Board is that:

Residents of West Auckland's diverse ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated into the communities they live, work and play in. They are able to express their unique ethnic and cultural identity in a supportive and enabling environment. Ethnic people in West Auckland have a strong sense of belonging and inclusion in wider society. They are proud to call West Auckland home.

The mission of the Waitakere Ethnic Board is:

WEB is the connection to and the voice of the West's ethnic communities.

The three major objectives of the Waitakere Ethnic Board are:

- a) To provide a forum to discuss matters that are of interest and relevance to West Auckland's different ethnic communities.
- b) To provide feedback and influence policies and service delivery where these have an impact on ethnic communities.
- c) To support the integration and settlement of the ethnic communities of West Auckland into New Zealand society.

5. Priorities for the next 2 years

- **Topical Member forums:** In order to have a stronger mandate for advocacy, to encourage participation in Council and government consultative process and to participate in issues and projects relevant to them, the WEB will have regular forum meetings to encourage the exchange of information with Council, central government and its agencies, and existing and potential WEB members. The forums will be structured in order to bring the different groups together in a friendly and supportive environment and to assist in increasing shared understanding of different cultural values and aspirations.
- **Regular and Effective Communication:** The development of regular communications in a timely and accessible manner with members and the wider ethnic communities and also with stakeholders including Council elected members and staff. This will assist the WEB to:
 - interact with members and potential members
 - interact with stakeholders including Council
 - learn what members expectations are, how and what they would like to see the WEB advocate on.

This will be achieved via the quarterly newsletter, email, website and Facebook presence. The WEB will investigate establishing a regular clearing house of all ethnic notices similar to the Community Waitakere noticeboard.

- **Representation of different ethnic groups:** The WEB needs to extend ethnic representation of diverse ethnic communities to ensure it is comprehensive in its advocacy on behalf of all ethnic groups in the area. Broad representation will help bring different groups together to work on common issues and also assist smaller or newer groups to develop their capacity to articulate their interests and concerns more effectively. This will be achieved by regular analysis of the existing membership base to identify groups that are not currently represented and contact these groups and organisations with a target of reaching all non-member groups by December 2011. Board members will attend other ethnic group meetings to promote the WEB's work. Regular contact will be initiated and maintained with major ethnic organisations. The WEB will review its structure to ensure it supports the inclusion of diverse groups, including consideration of a second tier below the Executive Committee governance level.
- **Financial Sustainability:** The WEB needs to examine whether it can ensure effective functioning of the organisation if the current Council funding were discontinued in future. This will be done by identifying the role the Board plays, what current funding is expended on, the funding sources available and eligibility of the WEB to apply for funding to support its activities. The WEB will achieve financial sustainability if it can demonstrate value and accountability to ethnic communities and key stakeholders.
- **Relationship with the Council:** The WEB needs to establish effective methods of communication with the Auckland Council to ensure valued feedback and advice are provided. This will require connections being developed with local councillors, local boards and staff to ensure that input into Council policy and service delivery is sought and provided in a timely and useful manner. The WEB will also examine ways to connect with the Ethnic Peoples Advisory Panel established by the Mayor.
- **Relationship with other Key Stakeholders:** The WEB needs to identify key stakeholders in central and local government, community sector and the academic and research communities and develop effective and mutually beneficial relationships with

these key stakeholders. This will be achieved through an analysis of current relationships with key stakeholders and identification and implementation of a stakeholder engagement strategy over the next 15 months. This will be achieved primarily through email and personal contacts with targeted stakeholders by members of the Executive Committee of the WEB.

- **Relationship with Service Providers and Representative Bodies:** The WEB needs to further develop existing relationships with service providers, particularly local providers that are part of the New Out West network. In addition, the WEB will need to develop trusting and effective working relationships with regional bodies such as the Auckland Regional Migrant Services Trust and representative bodies like the NZ Refugee Council so that the needs of ethnic communities can be better served.
- **Media:** The WEB will continue to build a profile as a credible voice of ethnic peoples, primarily through the timely and considered issue of media releases on topical matters.
- **Younger Generation:** The younger generations of ethnic communities are not currently well represented in the membership or on the Executive Committee of the WEB. The WEB will consider ways of bridging the gap to reach the younger generation, potentially through sport or cultural activities and through the identification and development of young leaders.
- **Participation in local, regional and national governance:** The WEB will promote participation of ethnic communities in the decision making processes and structures of the Auckland Council and central government. This will be through promoting voter participation in elections, input into policy development through submissions and lobbying, nomination of individuals onto decision making bodies and developing credibility as a mandated voice for ethnic communities in the democratic processes of local, regional and national governance.
- **Employment of a Coordinator:** The employment of a Coordinator will provide the WEB with someone who has the skills and ability to act as an advocate, project manager and strategic broker on behalf of the organisation. The Coordinator will assist to drive the WEB's priorities from planning to implementation by supporting and guiding the members to take forward key actions that fall out of the Strategic Plan.

6. Conclusion

The priorities outlined in this Strategic Plan will help WEB realise its objectives and deliver on its vision of cohesive communities. The WEB aims to develop into an organisation that can effectively and credibly represent the ethnic community in West Auckland. The WEB will bring communities together and support the integration of ethnic groups into wider society.