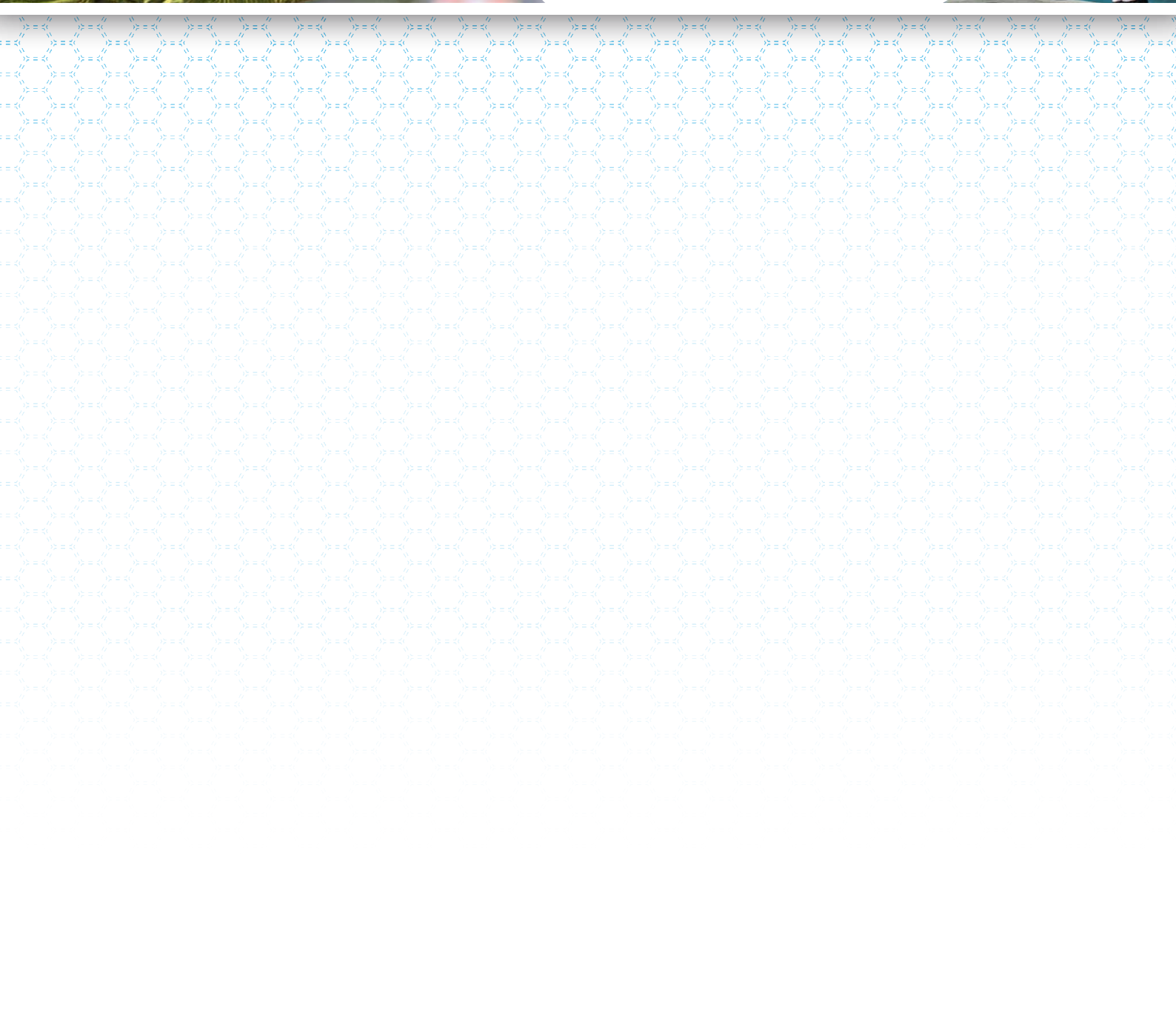


**Local Government
New Zealand**
te pūtahi matakōkiri



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Introduction

1. *Local Government New Zealand* thanks the Government Administration Committee for the opportunity to make this submission in relation to the Crown Entities Reform Bill.
2. *Local Government New Zealand* makes this submission on behalf of its National Council, representing the interests of all local authorities of New Zealand.
3. It is the only organisation that can speak on behalf of local government in New Zealand.
4. Some councils will also choose to make individual submissions. The *Local Government New Zealand* submission in no way derogates from these individual submissions.
5. *Local Government New Zealand* prepared this submission following:
 - an analysis of the Crown Entities Reform Bill
 - feedback from *Local Government New Zealand's* Alcohol Reference Group.
6. This final submission was endorsed under delegated authority by Lawrence Yule, President, National Council.
7. *Local Government New Zealand* wishes to be heard by the Government Administration Committee clarify the points made by this written submission as necessary.

Recommendations

8. *Local Government New Zealand* recommends that:
 - the new entity, the Health Promotion Agency, being formed by the Crown Entities Bill, maintain the wide range of functions currently provided by the Alcohol Advisory Council, in particular its independent statutory advice, research and policy capability, and dedicated staff support to the local government sector.

***Local Government New Zealand* policy principles**

9. In developing a view on the provisions in the Crown Entities Reform Bill we have drawn on the high level principles below that have been endorsed by the National Council of *Local Government New Zealand*. We would like the Committee to take these into account when reading this submission.
 - **Local autonomy and decision-making:** communities should be free to make the decisions directly affecting them, and councils should have autonomy to respond to community needs.

- **Accountability to local communities:** councils should be accountable to communities, and not to Government, for the decisions they make on the behalf of communities.
- **Local difference = local solutions:** avoid one-size-fits-all solutions, which are over-engineered to meet all circumstances and create unnecessary costs for many councils. Local diversity reflects differing local needs and priorities.
- **Equity:** regulatory requirements should be applied fairly and equitably across communities and regions. All councils face common costs and have their costs increased by Government, and government funding should apply, to some extent, to all councils. Systemic, not targeted funding solutions.
- **Reduced compliance costs:** legislation and regulation should be designed to minimize cost and compliance effort for councils, consistent with local autonomy and accountability. More recognition needs to be given by Government to the cumulative impacts of regulation on the role, functions and funding of local government.
- **Cost-sharing for national benefit:** where local activities produce benefits at the national level, these benefits should be recognised through contributions of national revenues.

Comments

PART 1: DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE ALCOHOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

10. This submission focuses on the disestablishment of the Alcohol Advisory Council (ALAC), and the transfer of its functions to the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) being established by the Crown Entities Reform Bill.
11. *Local Government New Zealand* and the local government sector have been very well supported by ALAC.
12. This support is wide-ranging and includes statutory advice, its research capability, independent policy advice, as well as active practice guidance to the local government sector.
13. In addition, *Local Government New Zealand*, the local government sector's Alcohol Reference Group, ALAC, and the Ministry of Justice are working closely together on implementation implications of the Alcohol Reform Bill.
14. *Local Government New Zealand* is encouraged that the functions (CL58.1.a-d) of the HPA are to:
 - promote health and encourage healthy lifestyles
 - prevent disease, illness, and injury
 - enable environments that support health and healthy lifestyles
 - reduce personal, social and economic harm.
15. We support the broad focus of the HPA so that not only the reduction of chronic disease is addressed, but also the acute harms that occur in areas

such as alcohol misuse and problem gambling, where the impacts range from injury and criminal offending to financial loss and family dysfunction.

16. With the incorporation of the functions of the Health Sponsorship Council, ALAC and some Ministry of Health functions, we encourage the HPA to use an integrated set of interventions in its health promotion work, such as the practice advocated by the Ottawa Charter¹ for example. Interventions work best when they are integrated, reinforce each other, and deliver the best return on investment in terms of change in people's attitudes and behaviours.
17. The health promotion / intervention environment is dynamic; this means the HPA must be able to reassess priorities and the allocation of resources to adjust its mix of activities and responses to changing situations. It cannot simply be a provider of social marketing products.
18. *Local Government New Zealand* also supports the alcohol-specific functions (CI58.2.a-b) to be given to the HPA.
19. Local government and its communities, places great value on the independent, evidence-based, and practical guidance provided by ALAC.
20. We trust that this range of services will be maintained by the HPA and in particular that the new agency will have adequate research and policy capacity, as the health promotion environment is dynamic and public health issues cannot be simply solved through promotion or social marketing activities.
21. *Local Government New Zealand* is pleased that the HPA will be obliged to 'have regard' (CI58.3) rather than 'give effect' to Government policy as far as its alcohol specific functions are concerned. This supports the continuation of ALAC's current autonomous, evidence based advisory and research functions.
22. We support the provision in the Bill that funds from the current alcohol levy continue to be used to address alcohol related harm. This is an equitable way of funding alcohol harm reduction and it goes a considerable way to assuring the very important element of sustainability in the effort to minimise the damage and cost of alcohol misuse.

Conclusion

23. *Local Government New Zealand* is generally supportive of the changes proposed.
24. *Local Government New Zealand* thanks the Government Administration Committee for the opportunity to comment on the Crown Entities Bill.

1

http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bharticles.nsf/pages/Ottawa_Charter_for_Health_Promotion?open

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