

CHAMBER CHAIR'S WRAP UP 2017 – ALISTAIR KING

After ten enjoyable and stimulating years serving members on the executive of Ignite Wanaka Chamber of Commerce, I've chosen not to seek re-election in the executive elections at today's AGM.

It has been a privilege to be part of the executive over the years working with the executive officers Lisa then Naomi and being able to make change to the Chamber over this time and put my stamp on Wanaka's business community.

There are a number of people who are passionate about Wanaka business, who care about how the business community develops and how it will be shaped for our children's future. To those people, past, present and future it has been a pleasure working with you and I look forward to still being part in some way; of shaping business going forward.

Although I am still energised as the organisation's Chairman, I've chosen not to seek re-election. Another two-year term would mean 12 years on the board and seven years as Chairman. Consequently, I feel the time is right for fresh leadership. We have a strong and capable executive, which leaves me confident in the ongoing governance of Ignite Wanaka Chamber on behalf of its members.

I was first elected to the executive in December 2007, and elected Chairman December 2012 taking over a healthy Chamber from Leigh Stock. During my time, the challenge I have taken on is business development and growth among the other Chamber services of informing, networking, training, and advocacy.

Major achievements I would like to highlight during this time:

- September 2010 - Chamber economic think tank commissioned due to the concern of the GFC affecting Wanaka community and families. WCC, LWT, WCB, QLDC and business individuals brought together. Lack of diversified economy outside of construction and tourism identified as underlying issue. A number of key growth sectors identified;
- June 2011 - Plan Change 23 Wanaka Airport where we sought to change to allow larger aircraft to land to allow future generations to develop the airport. Ironically turned down and now QAC having to consider given growth of the district;
- Mid 2012 Govt. announced \$1.5b fibre package across NZ. Wanaka missed out. October 2013 - To help drive the growth sectors identified in the 2010 Economic Think Tank, a PPP was formed between the Chamber, Chorus and QLDC to put fibre and high speed internet across the CBD;
- November 2013 Gigatown competition announced to promote the use of fibre. Wanaka entered. Community unified on the understanding of the benefits. Wanaka number 1 finalist of 5. Did not win;
- March 2014 the launch of the Wanaka Ambassador program;
- November 2014 Gigatown Wanaka Business Development Plan written for the competition, then modified to the CUBE business plan. The Cell and CUBE initiatives run in collaboration between Chamber, QLDC and Gigatown Wanaka;
- November 2014 – Post Gigatown Wanaka firmly put on the map nationally as a premium business lifestyle destination with connectivity and accessibility;
- November 2015 first Business Skills Day launched

- April/May 2016 new vision, values, strategic plan, goals and brand identity developed. Chamber now branded Ignite Wanaka Chamber;
- November 2016 inaugural business awards a success;
- November 2016 Town Centre/CBD Aspiration plan developed to testing at QLDC;
- January 2017 – Wanaka and surrounding townships to get fibre under the Govt. UFB2 program
- March 2017 – after 20 plus years of lobbying, legal Easter trading adopted;
- November 2017 – CUBE governance function moved 100% to the Chamber;
- November 2017 second business awards celebrated and again a huge success.

To be able to achieve these there has been tens of thousands of dollars committed by a number of businesses and a huge amount of volunteer hours given by the Exec and people in the business community. Of those I would like to give special mention to Kelly Good and Arna Craig who worked large hours on the Gigatown and CUBE initiatives.

The Wanaka Chamber in my view punches above its weight given the financial resources it has. We have one of the strongest memberships per business capita in NZ of any Chamber; we have a lot of fun and are always at the envy of other Chambers when we attend the National Chamber conferences. At the conferences we have a reputation of being one of the ‘partying instigators’ which is a reputation the incoming Chair will need to uphold!

Going forward. The business environment will continue to change that is guaranteed with the 4th industrial revolution being the ‘Internet of Things’. We need to be able to adapt to this change to continue to drive a sustainable and diverse Wanaka business community. Infrastructure, affordability and skilled labour will continue to be challenges for all of us. We need to be a united business community on these topics as well as being proactive to find solutions.

To the new executive and Chairperson I wish you all the best. Again it has been a pleasure and a privilege to represent members over the last ten years and I’m grateful to all the individuals who have provided support and encouragement during that time, especially my wife Barbara who has supported me over this time with long hours at the office.