

## 2. Community Councils: Champions of Inclusive Communities

Welcome to CLBC's province-wide network of 13 Community Councils which have been established in British Columbia to invite adults with developmental disabilities, family and community members and service providers to work together to help CLBC achieve its vision of fostering "lives filled with possibilities in welcoming communities" for people with developmental disabilities. The vision is that we will all live in inclusive communities where no one is excluded.

Each Community Council operates within a defined geographic area to encourage, inspire, lead and support community inclusion and participation of all people, including those with developmental disabilities, in all aspects of community life.

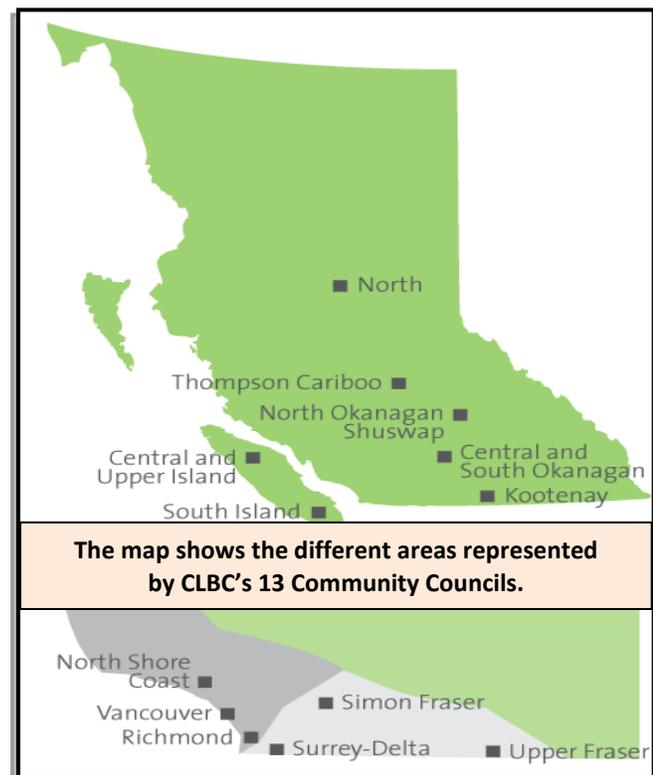
In an inclusive community, people feel like they belong. These are places where all citizens, including adults with developmental disabilities, have choices in where they live, in the work they do, and in the community activities in which they participate. These are communities in which people have friends, they feel safe and they play an active role.

Supporting full participation of **ALL** citizens benefits everyone. An inclusive society values all of its members and the role each plays in enriching lives and reducing isolation. Inclusion also increases the pool of customers and volunteers that make communities better places to live.

Including everyone also has a positive economic impact on a community that comes from a more diversified work force, positive business relationships and social networking.

Below are the 13 Community Councils and their locations.

1. **Central and South Okanagan Community Council**
2. **Central Island Community Council**
3. **Kootenay Community Council**
4. **North Community Council**
5. **North Okanagan / Shuswap Community Council**
6. **North Shore Sunshine Coast Community Council**
7. **Richmond Community Council**
8. **Simon Fraser Community Council**
9. **South Island Community Council**
10. **Surrey / Delta / White Rock Community Council**
11. **Thompson Cariboo Community Council**
12. **Upper Fraser Community Council**
13. **Vancouver Community Council**



## 2.1 Terms of Reference

Councils' Terms of Reference set out four key areas that Councils can focus on in their work.

### 2.1.1 Work with your local CLBC Integrated Services Manager and staff to strengthen the communities' inclusion of all people, including

- Planning or helping implement an event or activity that helps build the capacity of communities to be more inclusive
- Actively recruiting and networking with local community organizations, associations, faith and cultural communities, and representatives from within and from outside community living to work together to address needs and opportunities related to belonging and inclusion
- Building awareness within the local community about the challenges, capacities, gifts and contributions related to people with developmental disabilities
- Identifying and addressing opportunities for collective efforts by leaders and organizations at the local level towards building inclusive communities
- Being a sounding board, and providing information and advice to the Integrated Services Manager on current issues and plans, including those related to inclusion, or on related policies, projects or practices
- Introducing the Integrated Services Manager (and CLBC staff, as appropriate) to friends, families and allies of Council

**This first area of the Terms of Reference provides a great opportunity for Councils and CLBC to work together to support each other to achieve common goals. Available resources can be used more effectively and efficiently, and the expertise of one group can complement the expertise of the other, resulting in more successful community building.**

### 2.1.2 Initiate projects to strengthen the communities' inclusion of all people, including

- Planning and implementing strategies to
  - ◆ educate communities about a concern or practice
  - ◆ celebrate community practices and resources that demonstrate inclusion and full participation of all citizens in community life
  - ◆ identify, initiate and / or inspire greater commitment and follow through on inclusion
- Gathering information and ideas from adults with developmental disabilities and families to inform Council work plans on
  - ◆ their needs related to participating in their communities
  - ◆ how they can play valued roles in their communities
  - ◆ strategies and structures in their communities that support their full participation
  - ◆ their experience of barriers to participating in community
  - ◆ changes that would help them to participate more fully

### 2.1.3 Inform the CLBC Board and Management through the Provincial Advisory Committee about province-wide barriers to inclusion and citizenship for people with developmental disabilities that require change, including

- Talking with other Councils about trends and concerns related to barriers to inclusion to determine if identified issues are local or province-wide
- Keeping local (and if appropriate) provincial staff informed about the successes, gaps and challenges that have been identified by talking with other Councils to see if there are common experiences
- Bringing a concern or information forward to the Provincial Advisory Committee for its consideration (See **Appendix 3** for information about the role of Council members and the process to be used when a Council wants to bring an issue of concern to the attention of the Provincial Advisory Committee)

### 2.1.4 Provide opportunities for individuals and families to connect and share information, including

- Facilitating meetings, workshops, conferences, forums, etc. to present information on topics of interest to people with developmental disabilities and families. When focusing on issues like individualized funding, housing, person-centred planning, youth transition, representation agreements, recreational opportunities or employment, Councils can identify and build on community strengths and resources, and link them to one another and to individuals and families. Councils can also identify events around local community needs and ensure participation of people with disabilities and families
- Bringing families and individuals together to share information and create opportunities for them to meet and learn from one another
- Helping individuals and families identify and connect with people and organizations whose networks, resources, skills, and capacity are available within the local community and that will enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities



With an understanding that Community Councils are not responsible on their own for creating and supporting inclusive communities, a way for Councils to think about how they do their work is to consider the following four roles.

- **Convenor** - Bringing people together to explore issues or identify opportunities to act
- **Catalyst** - Stimulating change by identifying and mobilizing the different elements needed to make something happen, for example, resources and information
- **Connector** - Linking with others in community in support of a common cause
- **Advisor** - Sharing perspectives, information or insights to support something to be achieved

Each role can be applied to the four key areas of focus described above that make up the Terms of Reference.

See **Appendix 4** for a condensed Community Council Terms of Reference.

## 2.2 Linkage to the CLBC Board and Management

The CLBC Board of Directors stays informed about Councils' work through the Quality and Service Committee of the Board. At least two members of this Committee attend all Provincial Advisory Committee meetings. They bring updates from the Board to the Provincial Advisory Committee and report back to the Board about the work of the Provincial Advisory Committee and Community Councils.

Once each year, Community Council Chairs meet with the Board of Directors, Provincial Advisory Committee members, Integrated Services Managers and CLBC's senior management team. The meeting provides an opportunity to learn about CLBC's priorities for the coming year, and to discuss issues of mutual concern. Councils also issue an annual report to the CLBC Board of Directors and senior management team on their key achievements.

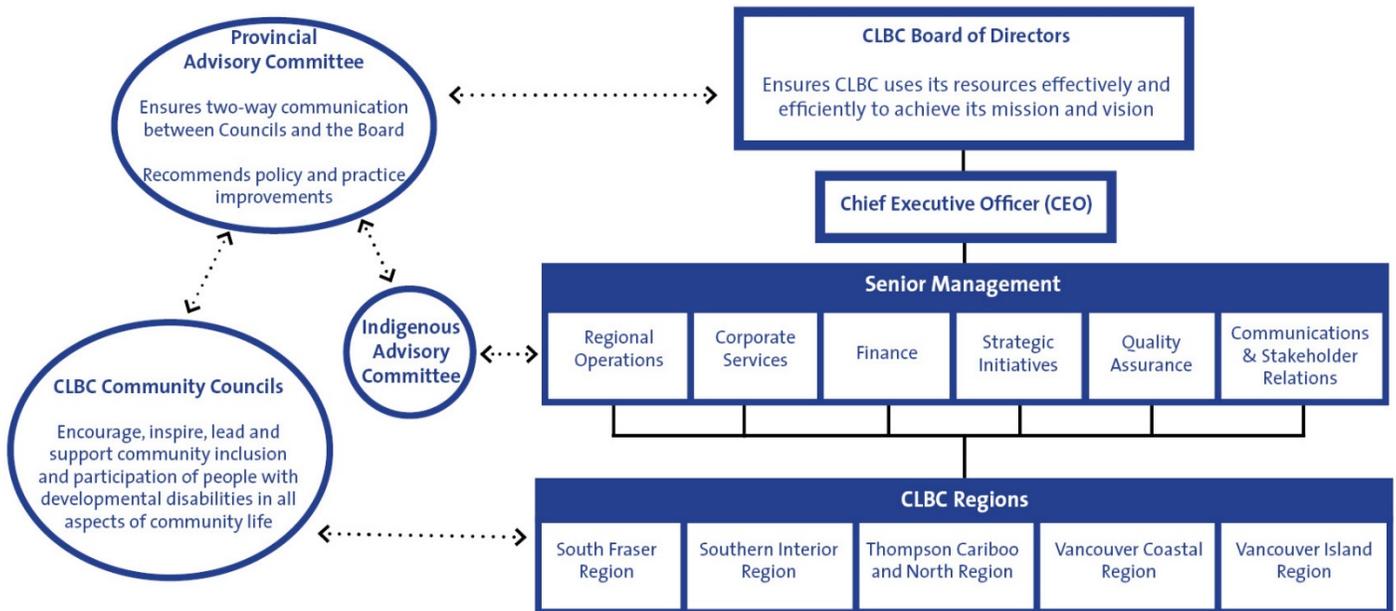
The Provincial Advisory Committee, which is a requirement under the [Community Living Authority Act](#), is made up of adults with developmental disabilities and family members who represent the 13 Community Councils. Members are recommended to become a Provincial Advisory Committee representative by their respective Council and are appointed by the CLBC Board to serve a term of two years; members may be reappointed for a maximum of two terms or four years.

The Provincial Advisory Committee meets four times a year to share what Councils are doing, discuss issues and challenges, identify ways they might be addressed, and recommend improvements to policy and practice for Board and CLBC staff consideration to enhance the quality of life for people served by CLBC. The Provincial Advisory Committee may also examine particular issues from time to time at the request of the CLBC Board. (See **Appendix 5** for Provincial Advisory Committee Terms of Reference).

The CLBC Board of Directors meets primarily in the Lower Mainland; however, board members spend time visiting communities around the province. These board tours and community meetings are rotated to the different areas represented by Councils and provide an opportunity for Board members to meet and hear from different Council members.

The Executive Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations supports the Provincial Advisory Committee and Community Councils and updates CLBC's senior management team about these two groups.

The graphic on the next page shows the working relationship between management staff in CLBC's organizational structure, Community Councils, the Provincial Advisory Committee and the CLBC Board of Directors.



## 2.3 Council Membership

Community Councils consist of 7 to 15 voting members who reflect the geography and cultural diversity of the area covered by the Council, including Indigenous representation and people of different ages and life stages. Council membership reflects the principle that those most impacted by the service delivery system should have an opportunity to influence decision-making, particularly as this relates to building inclusive communities.

Each Council member is appointed to a two-year term and can be reappointed but can only serve a maximum of three consecutive terms or a total of six years before needing to step off from Council for at least one year. Councils determine the number of members.

Membership criteria include the following:

- At least 50% plus 1 of Council members are adults with developmental disabilities and family members
- At least one Council member is an adult with a developmental disability
- At least 25% of Council members are people from the community, including business people, community leaders and other interested citizens - **inviting people with no community living experience is one way to bring new energy and a different perspective to the task of creating more inclusive communities**
- Up to 25% of Council membership can be drawn from local service providers
- All members must sign and be guided by the Community Council Membership Agreement that lays out important expectations for each member (**Appendix 6**)
- All members must clear a Criminal Record Check before they can be appointed (See **Appendix 7**)

## 2.4 Recruiting New Council Members

To maintain an active and fully enlisted Community Council, it is important that Councils strategize and focus on new member recruitment throughout the year. Councils recruit members with the support of the Integrated Services Manager and CLBC facilitators. There are a number of ongoing and one-time member recruitment strategies and activities that can create awareness and interest in Community Councils. These are described in **Appendix 8** and some key ideas are summarized here.

Since members are appointed for a two-year term and can serve up to three terms in a row, it is in the Council's interest to stagger members' terms. This will help ensure that no more than one or two members leave a Council at any one time. In this way, there will always be some experienced members to guide and mentor new recruits. To help Councils with their recruitment plans, the Head Office CLBC Administration sends the regional Supervisor of Administrative support a membership roster each month, noting members who are due to leave or whose terms are coming to an end.

Remember, not all Council members need to be familiar with or have personal experience with CLBC or with developmental disability. In fact, your Councils are made stronger when members are recruited from the broader community. For example, a number of Councils have recruited people who work in their local college or university, or local business people who are unfamiliar with CLBC or with developmental disability.

When inviting new people to join the Council, personal invitations are best. As the Council determines its recruitment needs, it is helpful to have a discussion about people who members know and would recommend and if any of these people might be interested in hearing more about and / or in joining the Council. These are examples of places and ideas to explore for recruitment:

- Where do you buy your groceries?
- Who is your accountant or banker?
- Who are your neighbours?
- What does your faith community know about your Council's work?

Once an individual is identified to be recruited, find out if a Council member knows this person. If no member has personal knowledge of the individual, find out who is recommending this individual as he or she may be willing to help the Council make a connection with the individual to be recruited.

New member recruitment is made easier when there is a clear, understandable description of the Council and members' roles and expectations. The Terms of Reference (**Section 2.1**) can be shared with people interested in joining the Council. Future members will be inspired by hearing how the Council (and maybe other Councils) are making a difference in the community. This is a good reason to make sure that the Council shares its past work, current projects and future plans with the different communities it is involved in. CLBC's Community Relations Specialists can help the Council draft and publicize its efforts; their role in supporting Community Councils is discussed in **Section 3**.

**A simple strategy Councils can use is to encourage members when they join the Council to begin to think about who they might recruit to replace themselves when they eventually leave. The Council Chair and local Integrated Services Manager should monitor this strategy to ensure Council diversity is maintained.**

## 2.5 Appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair

The maximum term for a Council Chair is two years. However, Councils may choose to select a Chair and Vice Chair on an annual basis at the first meeting of the fiscal year (on or after April 1 of each year). Members are nominated for these roles by fellow members and nominees need to accept the nomination prior to the appointment being voted on by Council. Members interested in being nominated can ask a fellow member to put their name forward. If more than one member is willing to assume either of these roles, a vote should be taken by secret ballot.

The Council Chair provides leadership to the Community Council and works closely with the Integrated Services Manager to ensure meetings run effectively and that the agenda and discussions are consistent with expectations set out in the Handbook. The Chair encourages members to participate and facilitates discussions that help the Council to address its work plan goals. The Chair is the official spokesperson for the Community Council.

A full description of the Chair's and Vice Chair's responsibilities is found in **Appendix 9**. A service provider **cannot** hold the position of Chair or Vice Chairperson.

## 2.6 Expectations of Council Members

Council members volunteer their time because they are passionate about and dedicated to using their knowledge and expertise to help create more inclusive communities and to break down societal barriers associated with disability. It is important that each member is clear about the member role. Expectations are set out in the Council Membership Agreement (**Appendix 6**). In summary, members are asked to agree to:

- Focus on what matters
- Contribute their thoughts and ideas
- Be open and honest
- Respect confidentiality and not share other peoples' stories unless they have permission to do so
- Use respectful communication with a focus on listening in order to understand others
- Recognize that everyone's time is valuable
- Be aware of and, where necessary, remove barriers that may limit member participation

In addition to these expectations, Council nominees should understand and agree to the following conditions before being appointed:

- Be committed to the vision of more inclusive and welcoming communities for all citizens
- Be able to make time to participate in Council meetings, planning, and activities
- Live in the area covered by the Council

It is suggested that nominees meet with the Chair and / or other members (e.g. Membership Committee) to learn about the Council's purpose; the time required for meeting schedules, Committee work, events, and so on; and the requirements and process for references and criminal

record check. Attending a Community Council meeting as a guest is a good way to learn about the work Councils do.

All members share responsibility for supporting one another to follow the Membership Agreement. If a member has concerns about the participation or behaviour of another member, he / she is encouraged to talk with the person in a respectful way. If that does not resolve the concern (or if the member is not comfortable to talk with the other member about the concern) a member can share the concern directly with the Council Chair or Vice Chair, or with the Integrated Services Manager who will assist in seeking a resolution to the concern.

Members can expect the Community Council to:

- Have a work plan with goals that are achievable and connected to the Council's Terms of Reference and CLBC's vision
- Evaluate the Council's work in meeting its goals, both informally during meetings and at the end of the year

## 2.7 Member Nomination and Appointment / Reappointment Process

The authority to appoint or re-appoint Community Council members has been delegated by the CLBC Board of Directors to the Directors of Regional Operations.

### 2.7.1 Process for new Council appointments

The nomination and appointment process involves the following steps:

- Council members are recruited by a Membership Committee working with the Integrated Services Manager
- The potential member will complete the Community Council Nominee Questionnaire (**Appendix 10**)
- The Integrated Services Manager will ensure the nominee has a completed criminal record check.
- The Council Chair and Membership Committee Chair (or designate) will check references for the nominee, and document responses using the Nominee Reference Check (**Appendix 11**)
- When positive references and the criminal record check process are complete, the Membership Committee will present the nomination to the Council membership at a meeting with a quorum and members will vote whether to recommend the nominee for appointment by the Director of Regional Operations
- The Integrated Services Manager (working along with the Council Chair), will complete the new Member Appointment Checklist (**Appendix 12**) and send the checklist together with the nominee questionnaire, reference and criminal record checks to the Director of Regional Operations
- If the Director of Regional Operations confirms the nomination, he / she will send an appointment letter to the nominee confirming his / her appointment to the Council and specify the start and end dates for the membership term. A duplicate copy of the appointment letter

will be given to the Council Chair, Integrated Services Manager and Supervisor of Administrative Services

- The Integrated Services Manager will advise the Supervisor of Administrative Services when a new Council appointment occurs and endorse the new member's files / papers for record keeping
- The Supervisor of Administrative Services will enter the member's contact information, term start and end dates, validity date of criminal record check and other necessary details into an EXCEL file that tracks all Community Council member appointments (**N:\COMMUNITY COUNCIL\Community Council Membership Monitoring**)
- The regional Supervisor of Administrative Services will update the membership tracking file on a monthly basis and will email [CLBCAdministration@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CLBCAdministration@gov.bc.ca) copies of both Council and PAC member nomination forms and reappointment letters
- To help Councils with their recruitment plans, Head Office CLBC Administration will send Councils a membership roster each month, noting which members are due to leave the Council or whose terms are coming to an end.

### **2.7.2 Process for Council re-appointments**

Members who have reached the end of their two-year term may be reappointed but can only serve a maximum of three consecutive terms or a total of six years before needing to step off from Council for at least one year. The reappointment process includes the following procedures:

- Council members are reappointed by the Membership Committee working with the Integrated Services Manager. Both are responsible in taking note that the maximum three consecutive terms have not been served
- The member will complete the Community Council Reappointment Questionnaire (**Appendix 10**)
- The Integrated Services Manager will ensure the nominee has a completed criminal record check, which has not expired. Criminal record re-checks will be redone when necessary
- The Membership Committee will present the reappointment to the Council membership at a meeting with a quorum and members will vote whether to recommend for reappointment by the Director of Regional Operations
- The Integrated Services Manager (working along with the Council Chair) will complete the Community Council Member Re-appointment Checklist (**Appendix 10**) and send the checklist together with the reappointment questionnaire (and if applicable, criminal record re-checks) to the Director of Regional Operations
- Once the Director of Regional Operations confirms the endorsement for reappointment, he / she will send a reappointment letter to the member confirming his / her reappointment to the Council and specify the start and end dates for the renewal of membership term. A duplicate copy of the reappointment letter will be given to the Council Chair, Integrated Services Manager and Supervisor of Administrative Services

- The Integrated Services Manager will endorse to the regional Supervisor of Administrative Services the reappointment forms (checklist, reappointment questionnaire, criminal record re-check, if applicable, and reappointment letter) for record keeping
- The regional Supervisor of Administrative Services will update the member's start and end dates of renewed term, validity date of criminal record re-check and other updates of contact information into an EXCEL file that tracks all Community Council member appointments (**N:\COMMUNITY COUNCIL\Community Council Membership Monitoring**)
- Duplicate copies of the member's complete reappointment papers will be forwarded by the regional Supervisor of Administrative Services to [CLBCAdministration@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CLBCAdministration@gov.bc.ca)

## 2.8 Council Self-Evaluation

Councils complete an annual self-evaluation at the end of the fiscal year (March 31<sup>st</sup>). Members discuss the results as a group, and take action, if this is indicated, to improve how the Council works as a group to achieve its goals. The self-evaluation form is found in **Appendix 13**. Councils can also regularly monitor how well they are working together as a group at each meeting. This can help to ensure that the experience of being a Council member is a positive one for everyone involved.