

## View from the Chair: Richard Poole, Greater East Tāmaki Business Association



**Greater East Tamaki  
Business Association Inc.**



As Executive Committee Chair, Richard forms a strong partnership with General Manager Jane Tongatule, pictured, and her team.



### A decade's duty, more to follow

**Richard Poole, pictured, leads a strong, skilled and stable executive committee (board) with a good grasp of governance.**

For his part, Richard joined the committee in 2008 and has chaired it for the past six years.

Managing Director of engineering multinational MiTek NZ, Richard also serves on the board of the Building Industry Federation of New Zealand.

Home to 2000 businesses and 30,000 jobs, East Tāmaki established its BID programme in 2009 – although the business association itself was founded in 1994. Over the years, it has proven itself to be an effective champion of business interests in the growing industrial precinct.

**We asked Richard about the BID's successful advocacy from a governance-to-governance perspective.**

"I believe it's the good relationships that we have fostered and the credibility that we have built with our members of parliament, councillors and local boards," Richard said. "We've made submissions on key pieces of planning impacting our members in East Tāmaki, taking a strong stance when required.

"We've also collaborated with other industrial business associations including Rosebank and Wiri to address advocacy issues that we have in common, such as the Unitary Plan. This collaboration has given us a stronger voice and shared costs but, more importantly, has meant that we have been able to be more influential by raising awareness not only amongst the decision makers but also amongst other key influencers in the region," he said.



The GETBA BID targeted rate area crosses the boundaries of two local boards: Howick and Ōtara-Papatoetoe, and the business association has built strong governance links with both.



“We have a non-voting representative from each local board on our committee. We allocate them a slot on the agenda each meeting and they provide an update on any local issues or plans.



“We find the two-way information sharing very useful and we are able to question the local board member on issues or projects within the East Tāmaki precinct,” Richard said.

### The GETBA board has a strong sense of continuity.

“I’ve been fortunate that our committee members have been experienced business owners or managers with the necessary strategic skills and a strong commitment to contributing to our business precinct. A good example is Henry Jansen, Partner in law firm Wynyard Wood, who has been our Secretary since GETBA was formed in 1994.



“We’ve also been fortunate in having a good cross-section of sectors, size of business and property owner stakeholders, represented on the committee. We have a good mix of long service experience and fresh blood,” he said.

GETBA has an established induction process for new committee members that starts with an information pack for potential nominees to their election to the committee.

“This includes our constitution, BID Policy and programme agreement with Council, board charter, annual report, business plan, and strategic documents,” said Richard, who signed GETBA’s 2016-17 Annual Accountability Agreement.

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year has seen only minor changes in the major economic indicators in the New Zealand economy and along with stable government the result has been good for business. Interest rates and inflation are at record low levels and although GDP dipped below 2% this year, the next two quarters are expected to see it back over 2% by early 2018.

GETBA members are reporting a high level of activity, covering export, construction, manufacturing and service sectors and this is expected to continue well into next year driven by high immigration, tourism, the construction boom and infrastructure spending.

It has been almost seven years under the single Auckland Council regime and with a new mayor

in place we are finally seeing serious talk around the major issues affecting the city, being transport and traffic congestion, infrastructure spending and housing affordability. Lack of forward planning over several decades has resulted in traffic congestion across Auckland now affecting all businesses, both in the movement of goods and people. GETBA has been a strong advocate of the East West Link which is underway, albeit with the East component set about at 2015, but with the link to East Tāmaki planned for the future.

After many years of vigorous lobbying by GETBA, operational activity at the Government Landfill ceased at the end of last year. The 50 hectares site will become a fantastic public park for the enjoyment of all, with Auckland Council finally

“Once elected we add them to the related parties register, get them to sign the board charter, provide them with copies of GETBA policies (fraud, related party transaction, financial and accountability, media, associate membership, capitalisation, HR, OHS), a committee contact list, event/meetings calendar, minutes of the last committee meeting and introduce them to the staff.”

### So what advice would Richard Poole give to someone who is considering putting their name forward for election to a business association board?

“I would encourage them to spend time on their local business association website and get a feel for exactly what the organisation does and how it assists the local business community. Then have a chat with someone who has been on the committee to get an understanding of how the governance process works and the time that would be involved.

“Don’t stand back - get involved – it’s a rewarding experience being part of the local BID committee. I’ve enjoyed meeting with business owners and operators in the area and experiencing first-hand how the business association really does make a difference.”