

New way forward for Aboriginal land council

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The new board

Out of administration and officially into the community, the new Wellington Aboriginal Land Council chief executive Leanne Stanley says a transparent and credible board is taking charge.

“This is an independent local identity. We are here to empower members of the community to be socially and financially independent,” Ms Stanley said.

“There is a positive feeling and purpose,” she said while speaking with her board at its Simpson Street headquarters.

“This will have a community focus to empower people to stand up for themselves. We will be involved in planning and economic development, help build trust for people and change the course of people’s lives,” Ms Stanley said.

“People lost their way for a while, we need to get them back on track.

“It will be an open door policy here helping out with all kinds of things from those affected by domestic violence, homelessness and other issues,” she said.

New board member Melee West said young people like herself were really excited by the land council.

“These are new beginnings for greater things to come,” she said. “We have been handed enormous trust and we to intend to change lives for the better. I am excited to be part of it.”

Chairman Trevor Elemen says the council will have a credible governance.

“The Wellington Aboriginal Land Council was under administration for six years and we are determined to show the community things can be done right,” he said adding the land council will stick to Aboriginal land rights and the plight of those affected by them.

Deputy chairman Herb Smith believes the Wellington Aboriginal Land Council will be an integral part of the community, doing good things for both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous.

Ms Stanley says the community is backing the land council through donations of goods to the set up of their new offices.

“Wellington Public School has donated chairs and tables, they have been wonderful,” she said.

The community is also part of the new land council.

Ruth West has taken office space for her little lizard tracks and there will be cultural education and art classes run for children by board Laurie Nam.